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THE VIRGINIA INFORMER

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The common sense paper of record on campus

An independent publication of the College of William and Mary.



Joe Luppino-Esposito

Still here: The College Delly will remain in business with a new owner operating the property.

College Delly is here to stay

Reports in local and campus media proven false as Starbucks does not buy out property

Joe Luppino-Esposito
Editor in Chief

According to the Virginia Gazette, the College Delly has been sold, but not to Starbucks. Instead, the popular eatery and bar has been sold to a local businessman who promises to keep the name and the atmosphere of the establishment.

When other campus media outlets reported in early fall of 2006 that the College Delly was to be sold to Starbucks, protests arose on campus and piqued alumni interest as well. Facebook groups formed and the Student Assembly put together a petition against what

it considered a business unfriendly to students. *The Virginia Informer* correctly reported that the business was not sold in the fall, starting an on-campus controversy.



Joe Luppino-Esposito

Open bar: Despite reported rumors of closing, The College Delly will remain open for the foreseeable future.

W&M ranking drops to 33rd in nation

College now 10 spots below University of Virginia

Matthew Sutton
Managing Editor

U.S. News and World Report recently released their influential college ranking guide for 2008, in which the College fell from thirty-first to thirty-third place in a ranking of the best national universities but maintained its sixth place rank in a list of the top 50 public national universities.

Leapfrogging the College this year, were Brandeis University, a small private school in Waltham, Massachusetts, and Lehigh University, a mid-sized private school located in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

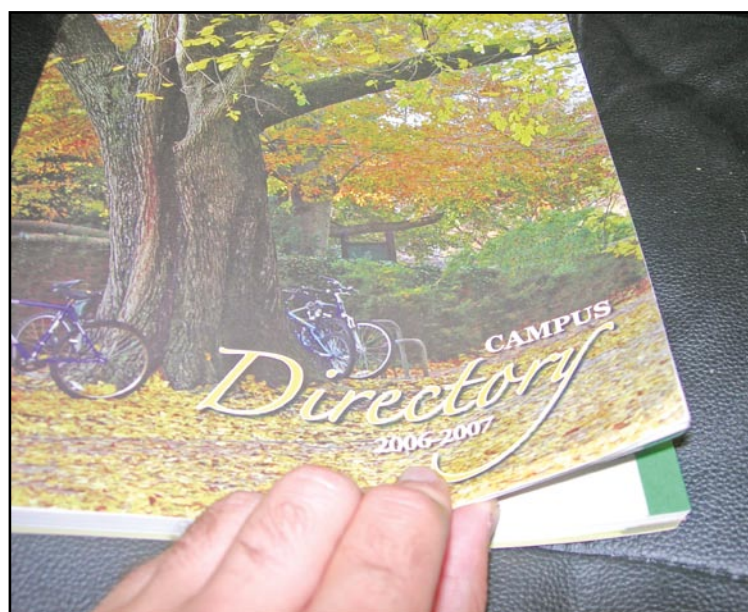
The drop into thirty-third place, which almost certainly was related to the College's financial resources rank, 106th, the worst showing among the nation's top 50 schools, was downplayed by college administrators and University Relations.

William and Mary Provost Geoffrey Feiss was quoted in response to the news, "It's no secret that William and Mary, as a small public university, faces financial challenges that don't impact many private and large public universities." He went on to discount the unusual fall in national rankings, saying, "But whether we go up or down a spot or two is not an indicator of academic excellence for any given year."

Brian Whitson, the Director of News Services for the College, largely echoed Feiss' sentiments. "We can only speculate but William and Mary's reputational score is higher than all three of the privates ahead of us - so this points to finances."

He added "Our finance rank has actually improved from 124th or 125th several years ago to 106th but we're facing challenges that your mega universities and privates don't. State funding for higher education in Virginia has been unstable in recent years. The College faced significant budget cuts for a number of years at the beginning of the century-- and according to the governor's

COLLEGE RANKINGS
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Joe Luppino-Esposito

Eviction guide: Last year, *The Informer* discovered that the directory was used by the city to evict students.

Informer investigation leads to policy change on student directory

Stephanie Long
News Editor

At the start of the academic year, Vice President of Student Affairs Sam Sadler announced in an e-mail that students now had an option to not list their address in official student directory. Last April, *The Informer* reported that college officials handed over these directories to the City of Williamsburg, leading to the eviction of students in violation of the three-person-to-a-house rule.

Following the slew of eviction order in the spring, Alex Randy Kyrios discovered that Zoning Administrator Rodney Rhodes had used the College's Student Directory as an

"investigative source" and a means to evict listed students who were living in homes in which more than three unrelated persons resided. This revelation stunned Student Assembly President Zach Pilchen ('09) and Senate Chairman Matt Beato ('09), who oppose the housing regulation.

"I believe that the law is too extreme and punishes students who are otherwise law-abiding" said Beato. "There are many students who just want to have four people living in a four bedroom house, or even four people living in a three bedroom house, and there is no reason

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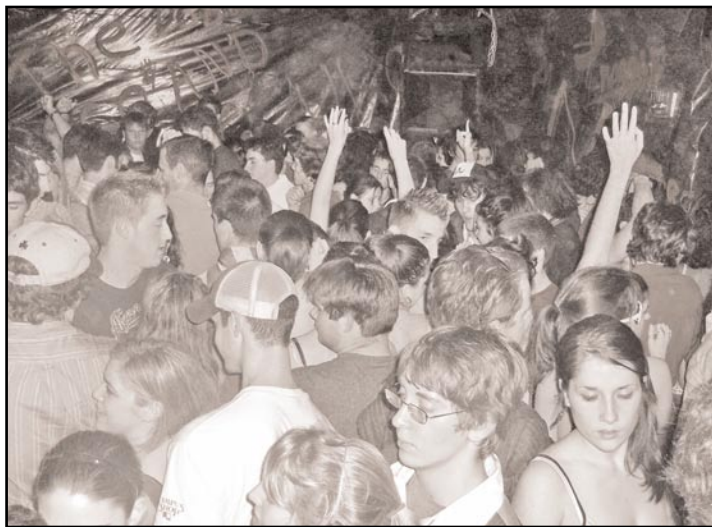
Three fraternities ready to return to row after expulsion

John R. Kennedy
Staff Writer

Three Greek organizations will be new to Frat Row this school year. Two of those fraternities, Pi Kappa Alpha and Kappa Alpha, will be returning after suspensions. Beta Theta Pi will be new to the row but not to the College. A previous incarnation of Beta Theta Pi had a row unit some years ago. The move-ins come after a troubling year for fraternities in general.

Beta Theta Pi will be moving into Unit M in the back row. Nick Faulkner ('08), a Beta Theta Pi brother, stated that the fraternity requested to live in Unit M. As for Pi Kappa Alpha and Kappa Alpha, they will be returning to their old houses; Kappa Alpha will once again be living in Unit G and Pi Kappa Alpha will be returning to Unit H.

Last year, the two fraternities were removed from the row for penalties and fines. Kappa Alpha was denied housing for broken bottles in their basement, among other fines. Kappa Alpha contends that they were not responsible for the broken bottles.



John R. Kennedy

Packed houses: Parties like this one at Lambda Chi Alpha will be more frequent with frats returning to the row.

The administration contended that regardless of who did it, the fact that the bottles were found in Kappa Alpha's house was enough to remove the fraternity

from campus housing. This decision was made despite the fact that entrances to fraternity row remained unsecured even at the end of the school year, allowing anyone to enter and vandalize the buildings.

Pi Kappa Alpha lost its housing when an insufficient number of brothers turned in their completed housing contracts to Residence Life on time.

With more fraternities filling the row, Greek students remain optimistic that rush and other activities may return to normal. Lambda Chi Alpha treasurer Andrew James ('08) said about the upcoming year's changes: "I think it is definitely a plus to have fraternities come back to live on the row. In general, our lifestyles are more comparable than to a non-Greek WM student, and they are less likely to have a problem with the daily occurrences in the row."

Optimism may begin the school year; however, it remains to be seen what the Nichol Administration has in store for fraternities during the upcoming year.

Briefly...

Compiled by Adam Boltik and Stephanie Long

Admissions Office completes move to Jamestown Road

After a \$2.8 million renovation project, the old Student Bookstore on Jamestown Road is now home to the Office of Admissions in a move which several admissions staffers consider a positive step towards attracting new applicants. The building, which sits just next to the Taliaferro residence hall, is larger than the space in Blow Hall; it features a larger welcoming area and more conference rooms to handle what the office hopes will be a larger application class. The space was being used for the office of historical biology, but it has most been unoccupied after the College bookstore moved to its current location in Merchant's Square. The new and improved admissions office opened in June, nearly a year after work began on the project.

Digs around Wren Building shed light on 18th-century gardening

Archaeological digs around the Wren Building earlier this summer have uncovered evidence of an 18th century garden that once adorned the college campus. According to the researchers, the Wren yard contained hedges and pathways far different from the current layout; all of this was discovered from hints provided by a photo plate discovered in the 1920s. The team conducting the dig, which is the third yet in the quest to find the missing Wren Gardens, is pleased by the discovery of planting holes and paths that have been preserved for hundreds of years. Research will likely continue in the future.

Kathy Hornsby replaces Alvin Anderson on Board of Visitors

William and Mary announced a new member of the Board of Visitors, Kathy Hornsby. Hornsby is an alumna of William and Mary and has remained active in the College since she graduated. Governor Tim Kaine appointed Hornsby over Alvin Anderson, whose term expired this summer. Kathy is married to Bruce Hornsby, musician and active community member. Many members of the board, including John Gerdelman and Anita Posten, have been quoted as saying they are glad she is joining their membership.

Valuable copper gutters and spouts stolen from campus buildings

Over \$2000 of copper was taken from downspouts at William and Mary this summer, according to Associated Press. In late July copper was taken from the Dillard Complex and Small Hall, but a few weeks earlier over \$7500 had been taken from the Dillard Complex. This trend has also been common among private homes in James City county. The perpetrator(s) have yet to be found.

Changes in Williamsburg's Electoral Board, Registrar's Office

According to *The Daily Press*, Douglass S. Wood is replacing Marilyn McGinty on the Williamsburg



File Photo

Abandoned dorms looted: Buildings at the Dillard Complex, including Munford Hall, were stripped of their copper gutters.

Electoral Board. Wood is a retiree living in Williamsburg but is also heading up a chapter of the alumni society at William and Mary. McGinty resigned from the board in July for unknown reasons right after the board put former Registrar David Andrews on administrative leave before the end of his term. Andrews' replacement was Winifred Sower. Sower, ironically, had trouble establishing residency in Williamsburg before she took office over the summer. The issue of domicile and voting rights have mired relations between the city and students in recent years.

Andrews had not allowed students to register to vote in the city of Williamsburg. It remains to be seen if Sower will permit students to register.

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The Virginia Informer is an independent, non-partisan, student run publication devoted to reporting the news to the William and Mary community. We exist to provide an alternative to school sponsored news sources. We do not, and never will, receive any financial support from the College of William and Mary. We will not shy away from controversy or be afraid to challenge the norm. We strive to inform and engage our readers via responsible journalism and in-depth reporting, while fostering and giving voice to opinions that are often shut out by the campus establishment.

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A political firing?

Accusations and rumors fly in spat over Philosophy department review

Steven Nelson
Assistant News Editor

In the midst of last year's Wren cross controversy there were only two department chairs who did not stand behind a faculty endorsement of President Gene Nichol's decision to remove the cross from the Wren Chapel. One of them no longer holds that position.

Noah Lemos, then-chair of the Philosophy department, was one of them. He has since been fired from his position, effective July 1.

His replacement is English professor Terry Meyers. Meyers has been with the school for decades and has solid credentials, including time spent as English chair.

Meyers, who specializes in English Romantic and Victorian poetry, has worked at the College since 1970. A review of his c.v. shows has no particular experience or connection with the philosophy department.

Meyers also introduced last year's endorsement of Nichol, the same endorsement that Lemos refused to sign.

The leadership change came as a shock to senior department members, including Lemos, who claims that Dean of Arts and Sciences Strikwerda never came to him with concerns prior to his removal.

Strikwerda has justified his decision to the *Daily Press*, insisting there was a "persistent lack of mentoring and encouragement of junior faculty [and] a general climate in which junior faculty have been made apprehensive about meeting standards for tenure."

This climate is attributable to an ongoing dispute within the department over whether junior professors should be given the right to vote on new hires. Two senior professors, Paul Davies and George Harris, insist that they should not have a right to vote, in order to preserve standards as well as to protect the non-tenured professors from feeling pressured into voting one way or the other.

Davies and Harris suggest that should junior professors not vote as senior ones would like, they would be put them at risk of retribution during tenure votes. They also believe newer faculty may feel affinity for new hires on a personal, rather than academic basis.

This internal argument caught the eye of at least one student majoring in philosophy, who asked not to be named due to his occupying a position that requires frequent administrative interaction. The philosophy major has taken classes with both junior and senior department members, and has noticed "good-natured sniping on both sides."

He continued, however, that "never, in my presence, were the comments anything more than joking, as opposed to being denigrating."

Disagreement, he notes, "seems to be in the nature of philosophers, as I do not think you could put two

philosophers in a room together and have them not argue."

Lemos, as chair, had supported the right of all professors to vote on new hires. The fact that the dispute occurred under his leadership, though, has been used to justify his replacement.

The College administration is practicing "receivership," in which an outsider is made chair in the attempt to bring stability to a department.

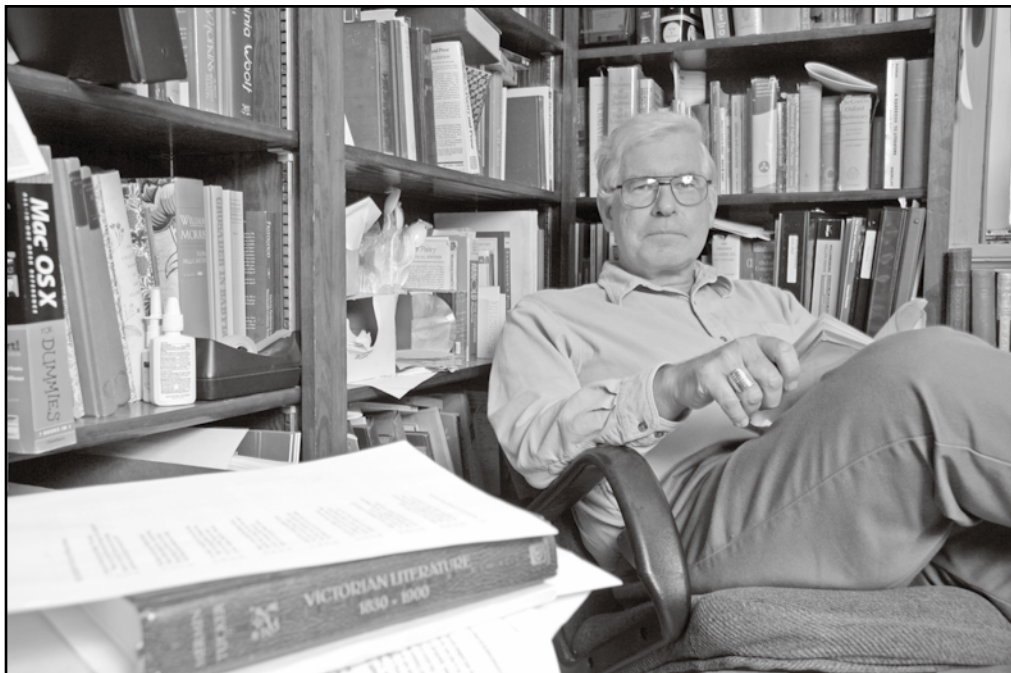
As posts on the Facebook group "Renew Gene Nichol's Presidency" recognize, however, replacing the Chair will likely do nothing to quell the inter-departmental dispute, seeing as how the two dissenting professors remain, and the chair will likely remain sympathetic to junior professors.

According to a *Daily Press* article, junior professors have in the past felt unwelcome and unsupported by senior department members. One example is Brie Gentler, who left the College in 2001 and is now a tenured Professor at the University of Virginia.

Gentler perceived the Philosophy department as being "at risk of developing a reputation [where] junior faculty felt insecure...and worried they'd be judged unfairly." Gentler was also quoted calling Lemos' removal "courageous" and "for the good of the college."

Davies and Harris, however, charge in an essay to the *Daily Press* that the Provost and the Dean of Arts and Sciences have been "deliberately eroding academic standards" and "smearing the reputations of several senior members of the philosophy department."

They assert that these administration officials have eroded standards and smeared reputations through overzealous implementation of what they consider "the hospitality norm." This norm, they continue, "was evoked in the Wren cross decision" as well as "in the administration's abuse of the philosophy department." The hospitality norm, they purport, appeases as many people as possible in order to make



Courtesy of University Relations

Meet the new boss: Terry Meyers of the English department has been named chair of Philosophy, leading many to question the College administration's motives.

everyone feel accommodated. As their essay mentions, "[the administration] say[s] our insistence on standards hides a hostile attitude toward junior faculty." Davies and Harris are strongly opposed to implementing the hospitality norm when, as they feel, academic standards are on the line.

It appears to many that in the case of Lemos' firing, fellow department members claimed that he had committed a violation of the 'hospitality norm' during the Wren Cross controversy as a pretext for his removal.

Lemos has been quoted saying that his removal is evidence that "certain kinds of intellectual dissent are not welcome on college campuses."

As a former student of Lemos stated, "I hope the College makes public the reasons for his removal, as I have personally not seen or evidenced any." The student speaks to the fact that dissatisfaction and astonishment over the decision cross political boundaries, as he has been an avid supporter of President Nichol.

Davies and Harris have publicly called for the Board of Visitors to intervene. They make clear that they are: "accusing not the President but the Provost and the Dean of Arts and Sciences of wrongdoing."

A disagreement among philosophers has now snowballed, with suggestions of political payback, administrative interference, and substantive distrust in the institutions of the College. Should it escalate, the College community may see the beginnings of another major controversy.

College institutes emergency alert system for safety of students in response to Virginia Tech tragedy

Nick Hoelker
Online Editor

In wake of the shooting at Virginia Tech last April, William and Mary has unveiled a new emergency alert system.

According to the school's press release, the new system will allow members of the William and Mary community to select six emergency contacts, and the new system, "has the capacity to send voice messages to recipients' landlines, cell phones and e-mail addresses and to send text messages to their cell phones, e-mail addresses, TTY/TDD devices for the hearing impaired and other text receiving devices."

The system will also have the power to target specific demographics such as a residence hall or the college's Emergency Response Team if there is a localized

problem.

Prior to the new system, the most efficient way of notification was through a campus-wide e-mail which could take hours to reach all students, faculty and staff.

The school had been considering improving its alert system since January but accelerated the process after the Virginia Tech shooting and finally signed a contract with the NTI Group in July.

According to William and Mary spokesman Brian Whitson the College "will spend about \$20,000 a year on the NTI system."

The system is currently in operation and the College is in the process of updating contact information for students, faculty and staff. There will also be an emergency test of the system early in the school year.



William and Mary
**College
Republicans**

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Weekly campaign trips in the fall and a wide range of speakers make William and Mary College Republicans one of the most active groups that you can join this year

First Meeting:

September 6

7:00pm

Tucker Hall 215

A revealing look at the class of 2011

Steven Nelson
Staff Writer

William and Mary prides itself on its diversity, most especially that of each incoming class, and the class of 2011 is no exception.

Preliminary statistics for the class of 2011 indicate a class of around 1,367 students. Of the class, 23% are “students of color” according to Earl T. Granger III, associate provost for enrollment.

The figure of 23% is virtually unchanged from the record of 24% in the class of 2010. Both classes, however, are markedly more diverse racially than prior years, with minorities comprising only 20% of the class of 2009.

A record 12% of 2011 students are first-generation college students, meaning that neither parent attended college. This is evidence of some success of the Admissions Office’s effort to diversify student backgrounds.

The class of 2011 also scored slightly better on the SATs. The middle 50% range is 1270-1430 compared to 1260-1420 for the class of 2010. Both lower end scores are less than 1280 in 2009.

WM Class of 2009	WM Class of 2010	WM Class of 2011 (preliminary data)
20% “of color”	24% “of color”	23% “of color”
1280-1420 middle 50% SAT range	1260-1420 middle 50% SAT range	1270-1430 middle 50% SAT range
10610 applicants (up 10%) 31% acceptance rate	10722 applicants (up 1%) 32% acceptance rate	10845 applicants (up 1%) 33% acceptance rate

	Acceptance rate Class of 2009	Acceptance rate Class of 2010	Acceptance rate Class of 2011
University of Virginia	38%	36%	35%
William and Mary	31%	32%	34%

Preliminary statistics indicate that 54% of the incoming students will be female. This is an increase from recent years. Recently, many reports in the national media have discussed schools such as William and Mary that have tried to level their male-female ratio.

Another figure cited by Granger is that 3% of the class will be international students, far above the .3% represented in the class of 2010. Virginians will be slightly less prevalent at 65%. State law mandates that two-thirds of the College’s students be Virginia residents.

Though many statistical indicators reflect well on the College, a glaring detractor from the proud records and the solid academics of the incoming class is the sluggish growth in applications received.

According to Granger, the rate of growth in applications has been 12% over the course of the past three years. However, the growth rate for the past two years has been only 1%, resulting in a slight increase in William and Mary’s acceptance rate.

Meanwhile, the University of

Virginia, as well as other schools, have had much higher single-year growth in applications, with UVA up 11% from last year, prompting its acceptance rate to fall below William and Mary’s for the first time in years.

Granger suggests that this often-cited indicator of school prestige reflects that the College is not as interested in “just adding volume to our pool,” and that “we are much better served to have a strong applicant pool with students who are good matches for William and Mary.”

Associate Provost Granger asserted that, “this year’s class is one of the brightest and most diverse to enter the College,” as well as “quite accomplished and poised to contribute in very meaningful ways.”

Federal elections contributions report reveals large donations coming from College

Nick Fitzgerald
Executive Editor

On August 9, 2007, the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) released a report documenting private political donations (limited to the 2008 election cycle thus far) by faculty members and employees of colleges and universities across the country. The report stated that William and Mary’s faculty and staff had donated the third largest amount of money nationally, overwhelmingly to the Democratic Party.

The report documented how much money was privately donated by a given university’s employees, and the percentage breakdown of what political party to which these donations were being given. Harvard University came in first place. Their faculty and staff have donated a total of \$266,044 in private funds thus far in the 2008 election cycle. 81% of this money went to candidates in the Democratic Party, 19% to candidates in the Republican Party.

In second place was the University of California,

whose faculty and employees together donated a total of \$248,488. 90% of this money went to candidates in the Democratic Party, 10% to candidates in the Republican Party.

In third place was the College of William and Mary. While the College’s faculty and staff only donated \$136,200 of their private money to political candidates compared to Harvard and UC, a staggering 99% of this money went to Democrats—leaving only 1% for candidates of the Republican Party.

Most of the donations were made by Government chair, Professor Ron Rapoport and his family. The Rapoports are often the largest donors from the College community every year.

The CRP is a non-partisan, non-profit group based in Washington, D.C., which “tracks money in politics, and its effect on elections and public policy.” The information contained in the report is public record, based on statistics from the Federal Elections Commission.



Courtesy of University Relations
Words of wisdom: Whitehurst-Cook will tell her story to the class of 2011.

Alumna and VCU dean to give opening convocation

Matthew Sutton
Managing Editor

Dr. Michelle Whitehurst-Cook, William and Mary alumna, class of 1975, will address the College’s Opening Convocation for the Class of 2011.

Dr. Whitehurst-Cook serves as an associate dean of admission for Virginia Commonwealth Medical School and also works as physician in the MCV clinic. She had a distinguished career at William and Mary, where she majored in biology and was active in student organizations ranging from the Williamsburg Area Tutorial Service to the sorority Delta Sigma Theta.

President Gene Nichol commented on the selection of Dr. Whitehurst-Cook saying, “We’re proud to welcome her back to her alma mater, and know she’ll be an inspiration to our newest students and to us all.”

The current president of the Richmond Medical Society, Dr. Whitehurst-Cook, is a prominent figure in the Richmond volunteer community. In 2007 she was named “Woman of the Year” by the Richmond YWCA, and in 2006 was awarded the VCU Distinguished Service Award.

Opening Convocation will be held at 4:30 in the courtyard of the Wren Building and Rector Michael Powell will deliver the introductory remarks.

UCAB Fall 2007 Preview
www.wm.edu/ucab
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Student Assembly members have grand plans for 07-08

Students' rights and voter registration seen as top priority

Nick Hoelker
Online Editor

As the 2007-2008 academic year begins, leaders of the Student Assembly (SA) vow to reform the previously furtive body into one that is more lucid and friendly towards students. While the Student Assembly has little formal power, they control the student activities budget and can make recommendations to the school administration that can change policy. The Student Assembly also serves as a liaison between students and the City of Williamsburg. It consists of an executive branch, led by President Zach Pilchen ('09) and Vice President Valerie Hopkins ('09), which contains seven cabinet departments and almost fifty sub-departments and a Senate composed of four members of each undergraduate class as well six graduate students.

Pilchen says that his role as president is to be the "Chief facilitator of the student assembly and to make sure everyone is doing their jobs." Pilchen added that so far he and Hopkins have "assembled a top notch team to achieve goals consisting of the most knowledgeable, organized and motivated people on campus."

According to Senate Finance Chairman Walter McClean ('09), the role of a Senator is twofold. "First is service to the class. Senators work with class officers to do class events, fundraising, and planning. [...] The [second and] main focus on senators is on improving conditions for students by creating initiatives and being the advocate to the administration for them."

The Student Assembly members are excited about the upcoming year based on what they have been able to accomplish so far. McClean stated that "never before has the SA done so much before the semester even started." Senate Chairman Matt Beato ('09) provided an example of this saying that since March's elections,

students now "have a way to remove their addresses from the student directory, since the student directory had been used by the City to find students violating the three-person-to-a-house rule".

One of the SA's main goals is to increase dialogue with students. Senator Matt Skibiak ('08) wants the assembly to focus "less related to internal relations and more work done for students". Beato added that the "SA should be reacting to what the most important issues to students are, not the other way around."

To accomplish this, Pilchen mentioned that previously "referenda [were only held] during elections. The Student Assembly cannot be a substitute for the student body." Pilchen wants to "put forward more referenda on monthly or bimonthly on issues that 22 people in senate room can't decide on."

To make the Senate more student-focused, Pilchen also will be encouraging a plan that he expects will meet opposition from some of the senators. He will propose to "abolish the internal affairs committee, which spends entire year looking over SA code for stuff that does nothing for students." He wants to replace this with a more student-friendly "Senate outreach committee to work on getting student voices

heard in the SA and to have SA comment cards to be similar to the ones found in the Caf where question askers will get a response within 48 hours from the SA member most knowledgeable on the issue"

The SA also hopes to make students more knowledgeable on their rights. Skibiak wants to work on "defining the boundaries of the campus

police in both fraternity houses and also residential dorms." Former Senator and the current Undersecretary for Disciplinary Policy Scott Morris ('10), whose new role is to work to change any disciplinary practice that is not favorable to students, added that "students, particularly freshmen, should be aware of their rights when in an alcohol-in-the-dorm situation and be shown the respect they deserve when being confronted about alcohol use by an RA or any other member of the administration."

Another issue facing the SA is the relationship between students and the City of Williamsburg. McClean says that student voting "holds the key to having real affordable off campus housing, it could mean the introduction of student oriented businesses, it could improve parking in Williamsburg, and it could reduce evictions." Chief of Staff David Husband ('09), whose job is to "work with President Pilchen and Vice President Hopkins in helping to create and implement an agenda that will most benefit the student body," wants more students to "[exercise] their right to participate in the civic process".

The leaders are also had some individual goals they would like to accomplish this year. Husband wanted to focus on "developing institutionalization within the SA, so that knowledge gained at great cost is not forgotten when people depart."

McClean hopes to offer a "free ride service to MedExpress, Sentara and any local doctor 24/7 so students always have a way to get health care even when the health center is closed."

Morris is focused on "changing the Student Handbook to allow any member of our community to represent any other student during a judicial proceeding on campus." He also wants to work with the "Honor Council to improve the manner in which the Honor Council is elected, attempting to make sure the best and most qualified students receive the positions."

In all, there are many different people with many different goals, though the assembly is more united than it has been in years past, and the common themes of student rights and voter registration will likely rise above the rest.



Joe Lupatino-Esposito

Heavy lifting: The Student Assembly fundraises through projects such as the annual rug sale.

COLLEGE RANKINGS: William and Mary falls behind

continued from page one

announcement this week more cuts are likely on the way."

According to information provided by *U.S. News*, the rankings are based on weighted formula that incorporates factors such as peer assessment, faculty resources and student selectivity.

Peer assessment is the most important category in the formula, ranked at 25%; the College received a 3.7 on a five point scale, a drop from the 3.8 it received in last year's rankings. Several schools ranked ahead of William and Mary received lower scores in this category, including Lehigh, Brandeis and Wake Forest. Some more highly ranked schools include UVA with a score of 4.3 and the top public school, University of California-Berkeley which received a 4.8.

Graduation and retention rates along with faculty resources account for 20%, on these measures, the

College was respectively in 18th and 46th place. Averaging a 95% freshman retention rate, combined with a 92% actual graduation rate from 2006, William and Mary placed ahead of schools like University of Chicago, University of California-Berkeley, and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, which were ranked respectively, 20th, 25th and 32nd.

Another important measure, student selectivity, weighted at 15%, ranked the College in 31st place, behind UVA in 26th place and University of Michigan in 23rd place.

The top five national universities according to the 2008 rankings were Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Stanford and the California Institute of Technology. Private schools continued their traditional domination as no public school was ranked in the top twenty.

The thought police rule ...
If you let them.

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Making the healthy choices



File Photo

Mandatory insurance: The College now forces all incoming students to have health insurance or they must pay for the policy and be insured through the school.

Part one in a series investigating the new health insurance requirement

Nick Fitzgerald
Executive Editor

Over the past few years, many colleges and universities across America have begun mandatory health insurance programs for their full time undergraduate, graduate and international students; William and Mary is no exception. All full-time students admitted to the College after the fall of 2006, including international students, have been required to participate in the school's universal health care plan.

More generally, advocates of universal health care at the college level claim that there exist untold benefits from instituting such programs. Markel Insurance Company—an organization that specializes in offering health insurance to college students, although not affiliated in any way with William and Mary—states that “health care costs continue to rise at an ever alarming rate, [and] the burden of costly medical expenses could jeopardize a student’s future. Student health insurance is a relatively low cost alternative and offers peace of mind for that unexpected injury.

Additionally, Markel states that with a mandatory health insurance policy, a college or university cuts back on litigation for on-campus accidents, “provides a certain level of protection for all students” regardless of what the student can afford and “provides equal access to medical care” for students who “cannot afford...[or] do[sic] not want to pay for care.” William and Mary cites similar concerns on its health insurance Web site (www.wm.edu/health/insurance.php), as it states that “the extremely high cost of health care in the United States” and the importance of having “adequate health insurance coverage” are reasons for implementing the program, which has an annual premium cost to students of \$1,020.

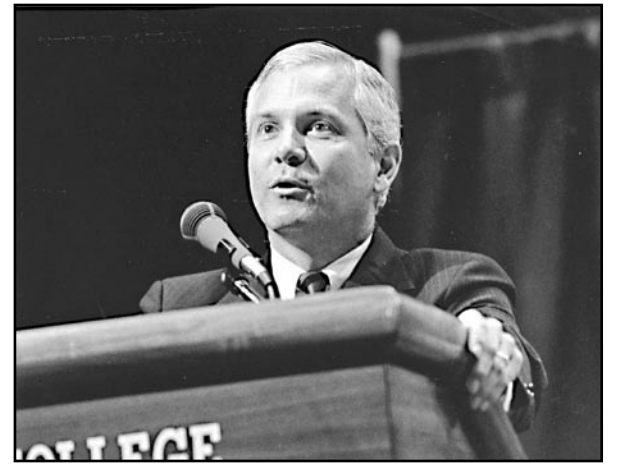
The only way to refuse participation in William and Mary’s program is by submitting a waiver request by

a preset deadline—in the case of this fall’s incoming students, the deadline was July 15th, 2007—and wait for approval. The health insurance Web site is explicit in that “submission of a waiver request does not guarantee that a waiver will be granted.” The school demands “proof” of preexisting, adequate coverage, and will not guarantee that those who do submit a waiver request will be approved.

The insurance policy designed for William and Mary has been contracted through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company. Their other clients include Penn State, Rutgers, University of Colorado, Notre Dame, University of Kansas and Wake Forest.

The plan’s highlights include providing 24-hour coverage anywhere in the United States and while traveling abroad, while 100% of “covered medical expenses at the Student Health Center (SHC) will be paid. Benefits for laboratory services performed at the Student Health Center will be payable after a \$10 co-pay.” All covered prescription drugs will also be paid by the insurance company 100%, with no co-pay, provided the student fills the prescription at the SHC pharmacy. Prescriptions filled at outside facilities will have a co-pay of \$15 for generic medications, \$30 for formulary and \$50 for brand name, “up to a \$1,200/year maximum benefit.” Additionally, “Emergency Room visits are covered 100% of Preferred Allowance” once a \$75 co-pay has been paid by the insured.

This continuing article series aims to analyze, dissect, and answer a range of questions concerning William and Mary’s health insurance policy, its different aspects, student and faculty reaction, statistics regarding its administration and implementation and, more generally, its overall success. Please continue to read *The Virginia Informer* for upcoming articles regarding the health insurance program; if you have a question you want answered regarding the program, feel free to e-mail editor@VAInformer.com.



Courtesy of University Relations

Nothing like Jon Stewart: Robert Gates, current Secretary of Defense, graduated from the College in 1965 and spoke at last year’s commencement for the Class of 2007.

Alumni Spotlight:

Gates shares his love for public service by words and deeds

Jon San
Features Editor

Ranging from politics to entertainment to professional sports (albeit more rarely in the case of the latter), College alumni can be found in a variety of careers. Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and John Tyler were instrumental in the founding of the United States. John Stewart and comedian Patton Oswalt are frequently featured on Comedy Central. Darren Sharper is no slouch in the NFL. And just recently, Robert Gates was appointed Secretary of Defense.

Gates graduated with a B.A. in European History with the class of '65. He was a very active member in the college community and immersed himself in everything political. Gates was involved in Alpha Phi Omega, the largest service fraternity on campus, Young Republicans, and was also the business manager for the William and Mary Review. He received outstanding grades from the College and was given the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award which honors stand-out students that make the greatest contribution to their fellow man. After graduation, Gates attended both Indiana University and Georgetown University where he received his Master’s degree in History and Ph.D in Russian and Soviet history respectively. While at Indiana, Gates was tapped by the CIA, an association that he would lead in less than 30 years.

After a brief stint with the Air Force in Vietnam, Gates returned to the US as an intelligence analyst for the CIA. Between 1970 and 1991, Gates occupied numerous positions at the CIA and the National Security Council. However, it was not until 1991 that Robert Gates made national headlines. In that year, President George H. W. Bush appointed Gates the Director of Central Intelligence for the CIA.

Unfortunately, Gates’ series of successes was tainted in the 1980s when it was revealed that he had close ties to the Iran-Contra scandal. Critics argued that he had supported bombing Nicaragua and while it was never decided how much Gates knew of the situation, the incident did not impede his nomination for Director of the CIA.

Before his appointment as Secretary of Defense, Gates enjoyed the rare opportunity of a job outside the political spectrum. He served as the President of Texas A&M University, a position which brought him much praise.

And finally, 41 years after graduating from William and Mary, Gates was appointed Secretary of Defense – a position previously occupied by Donald Rumsfeld.

With the exception of the Walter Reed Medical Center scandal, Gates has received far less criticism than his predecessor.

Just last year, Gates was the keynote speaker for the graduating class of 2007 at the College. His speech focused on the necessity of public service, an area in which he has served for his entire life.

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FIRST MEETING FOR *THE INFORMER*:
Monday, Sep. 3, 7:30pm in Blair 223

Common sense for students:

Avoid getting caught in the coming storm

The future of the market lies in avoiding mistakes of centuries past

Andrew B. Blasi Jr.
Business Editor

This summer could not be classified as nothing short of a roller coaster ride for investors in the stock market. Reaching an all-time high on July 19th, the Dow proceeded to plummet over 1,150 points by mid-August. Why did this happen? For those of you who have been monitoring how much you've been spending at the gas pump as well as heard your parents complaining about their falling home value this summer, those only just begin to scratch the surface.

If you have taken macroeconomics, you may recall an important section called monetary policy. For those of who are not familiar with this term, it refers to the actions of this country's Federal Reserve Bank (formerly led by Alan Greenspan and now by Ben Bernanke) are in charge of determining exactly how much money is floating around in our economy. Hence their actions determine how much each dollar we hold is worth. When they believe

that the value of the dollar is too cheap, the things that we want become very expensive (commonly known as inflation), they have a number of options to take money out of circulation and hence make the bills in our wallet worth more. When they believe that the value of the dollar is too expensive, meaning that the things that we want become cheaper (commonly known as deflation, which occurs can if people no longer have/make as much money or other countries start sending us cheaper stuff), they have a number of options to put more money into circulation and thus make the bills in our wallet worth less. This is monetary policy in a very brief nutshell.

Now going back to the subject of our

stock market's fall this past summer, you may be wondering what exactly this has in common with monetary policy. Ever since September 11, 2001 this country has been in a period of "recovery", where Americans as a whole have been making "more" money and the Federal Reserve Bank has responded by taking away only a small amount of the money supply away (this is what is happening when you see interest rates heading upwards) every so often to prevent runaway inflation. Few have many noticed or cared that this so-called "recovery" has been entirely debt financed. To make further sense of this point, it would be similar to you borrowing money from your parents following graduation to purchase a home, car, and anything you really could ever want, living way above your means in your new job all with the caveat that you can pay them back sometime later on when your ready. Then seemingly out of nowhere and when your not ready, your parents give you a call and demand you pay them back in full with interest. You don't panic until you start to realize that the home you are living in can't be

“ Other world governments, most notably, the Chinese... have loaned the US economy and our banks huge amounts of money to keep us afloat. ”

sold, the car you are driving is worth a tiny fraction of what you paid for it, and your salary doesn't nearly cut it. Your parents, in retaliation for not being able to pay, repossess your home, car, and other possessions.

Now supplement your parents in this story with banks and yourself with millions of Americans. This is what happened over the past four months in what has been dubbed the subprime mortgage fallout. Now let your mind venture into a scenario where banks can no longer stay afloat because they have all of these houses that they cannot sell and have hundreds of billions in outstanding loans that nobody

can afford to pay back. This, when combined with the reality that millions of Americans and businesses owe trillions in growing credit card, auto, education, and prime mortgage debt is the true reason behind the steep fall in stock prices over the summer.

But if this is the case then why do things still appear to be fine?

This brings us back to monetary policy. Other world governments, most notably the Chinese (to the tune of nearly \$1 trillion alone), have loaned the US economy and our banks huge amounts of money to keep us afloat. If and when these foreign governments face economic hardship or no longer trust the American economy they will surely recall these loans as well. In addition, what is perhaps the strongest indicator of an impending storm also occurred this summer. On Tuesday, August 7th the Federal Reserve Bank decided that the money supply (via interest rates) should not be changed (as had been their policy since the summer of 2006). The bank was still not sure whether the potential for damaging inflation outweighed the possibility of a credit crunch. Just two days later on Thursday August 9th, when some of America's largest mortgage banks declared bankruptcy and the Dow fell nearly 400 points, the Federal Reserve injected

tens of billions of dollars directly into the economy to keep it afloat. Then, on Friday August 17th, when the Dow had fallen by another 750 points, the Federal

“ Every century in American history has been marked by at least one economic depression resulting from overwhelming debt. ”

Reserve Bank decided to lower the discount rate at which banks can borrow money from the government. The last time moves like this were made by the Federal Reserve was following the 9-11 attacks, in which

a recession shortly followed. Every century in American history has been marked by at least one economic depression resulting from overwhelming debt. I am afraid that our country has just cashed in on one of its last lifelines, a lifeline that existed following 9-11. It is unfortunate that such a predication has been made as we prepare to enter the job market, but many signs exist alluding to such an outcome. I am recommending that any of you with stock positions start to pull out as soon as comfortably possible. Do not get caught in the coming storm that will hit home.

The information contained in the article is for informational purposes only and the Virginia Informer nor the author of this article provided certified financial advice. The investments and decisions mentioned involve risk and uncertainty and they are not guaranteed by any enterprise. Any equity investment has the potential to lose value.

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Drinking beer: the greatest college tradition

Matthew Sutton
Managing Editor

Since the Flat Hat boldly began its experiment in covering the seamier side of William and Mary with its infamous sex column, we at the Informer have decided to initiate our own hard-hitting look at the most prevalent vice at our illustrious College, the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

This column will cast a wide net; from the periodic tasting and rating of fine beers, wines, and liquors, to an exploration of W&M unique drinking culture. To start this journey, this columnist would delve into the vast history of drinking that permeates the college experience; a history that began in 1693.

During one of my repeated visits to the Swem Secret Archives, I discovered a long forgotten dissertation by an eccentric William and Mary graduate student and what follows are selected excerpts from the work of this misunderstood genius.

An Ode to Drinking

By I.M. Boozehound (1930)

The very foundations that our school floats on, our titular namesakes, have longed been linked with the fruit of the vine. William of Orange received his colorful moniker after the frequent heavy



Matthew Sutton

Ambrosia of the gods: Pabst Blue Ribbon, along with Natural Light, Busch and Keystone Light, remain beverage staples for the College community.

drinking bouts with his courtiers left him with a permanently flushed complexion. W&M's own royal charter itself was issued by the two merry monarchs while they were in a state of heavy inebriation, how else could you explain the bizarre syntax and composition of passages like, "And forasmuch as our well-beloved and trusty the General Assembly of our Colony of Virginia aforesaid, has humbly supplicated us, by our well-beloved in Christ, James Blair, Clerk, their agent duly constituted".....

...Thomas Jefferson and his fellow

students were known to consume tankards of ale and numerous jugs of wine to complement the liberal arts education that inspired a revolutionary generation to revolt against its imperial master. Much of the groundwork for the uprising took place in the many taverns of Williamsburg, whose number I fear will only diminish in future generations, once the struggle for freedom grows distant....

...Many pieces of literature and works of art can be linked to the muse of

alcohol, either from the consumption of too little or in rare cases too much. From trusty Jeeves making his patented restorative for a recovering Bertie Wooster to the shadowy past of Jay Gatsby as a bootlegger, modern literature is dominated by the spirit of hooch.

...Even our ancient forebears, the Grecians and Romans were known to indulge in frequent carousing that produced some timeless works including Plato's *Symposium* and Petronius's *Satyricon*...

...The most shocking spectacle of the current Prohibition experiment is the role of so called Christians in the temperance movement. The Bible itself mentions drinking in a positive light throughout the Old and New Testament. Jesus, attending a hard drinking wedding at Cana, works his first miracle by transforming the jars of water into wine, hardly the actions of a prohibitionist (Jn. 2:1-11)....

The document continues on in the same vein for many pages. To obtain an unabridged copy of the work, just present your ID at Swem's front desk and ask for a cold one. They know the code.

In accordance with the regulations set forth by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Cheers, *Salute!*, *L'Chaim* and *Sláinte* to you imbibers at William and Mary.

Swemming off the deep end:

Coming soon from the Office of Multicultural Affairs



Nick Fitzgerald & Matthew Sutton
Humor Columnists

What college experience would be complete without an overbearing, socially active school administration? One whose time and money is spent not on updating school facilities or improving overall campus life,

but on campus-wide cultural sensitivity training which teaches students that you don't have to be white to feel guilty about living in America. Sound silly? If so, you should immediately report to the Office of Multicultural Affairs, located in room 107 of the Campus Center. You enter plagued with a disease whose symptoms include common sense, America-centrism, a clear understanding of what "normal" is, and a mind that is willing to hear out others' opinions and ideas without sacrificing your own; you leave with none of the above, but with a new, more "enlightened" moral and cultural relativism that would even embarrass Protagoras. Not only that, but you also get a handy list of upcoming events sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the highlights of which we have conveniently excerpted for you below:

Demolition of the Tyler Gardens and Groundbreaking for the new Diversity Garden
September 20, 2:00-4:00 PM

Pursuant to the new diversity diktat of President Nichol, join us for the demolition of this bourgeois monument next to Blair Hall in order to erect a more fitting memorial, crafted from 100% recycled papier mache.

Instead of honoring John Tyler, a notorious slaveholder and political reactionary, the College will commemorate the true diversity of our modern university. Among the secular saints to be honored will be Hugo Chavez, Sean Penn, Ho Chi Minh and

Jimmy Carter.

Light refreshments will be served along with a selection of paranoid diatribes ranging from "Ronald Reagan: Not Your Grandfather's Greedy Warmonger" to "Bush: Worse than Hitler, or Just as Bad? An Open-minded Roundtable."

Rethinking the Business School
October 15, 8:00-9:30 PM, Tidewater A, University Center

Join the Office of Multicultural Affairs in a wide-ranging discussion centered on the question, "Should the School of Business be abolished?" While the answer for all right thinking people is undoubtedly yes—all perspectives will be heard on this issue, from the Maoist to the Trotskyite. A special guest appearance will be made by the ghost of Che Guevara, specially paroled from *Tierra del Fuego*, to attend this one time event.

The board game "Monopoly," popular among bloodthirsty capitalists, is the major curriculum tool used by the Mason School and it will be critiqued. Mr. Moneybags, the board game's main character and model for all incoming business school students, will be analyzed from a post-structuralist feminist perspective with a particular emphasis on his marginalization of Baltic and Mediterranean Avenues. At the end of the presentation, several copies of *The Wall Street Journal* will be burned in an *avant-garde* production to show solidarity with the oppressed peasants of Belize.

Multicultural Film Festival
December 15-21, 7:00 to 10:00 PM

This diverse selection of films will offer students a visual perspective on the growing importance of appreciating an ever-changing, ever-relative post-Enlightenment world. To this end, the Office of Multicultural Affairs has taken classic films and has edited them to become more culturally and ethnically sensitive. While actors and directors of the past, not as enlightened as we, cannot be blamed for their racial and cultural insensitivities in filmmaking, we

have pardoned them by editing their movies using the latest digital technology. A brief sampling is contained below:

- o *Patton*: Franklin J. Schaffner's culturally insensitive film about the trials of an illegal war against the misunderstood Axis powers has been changed to better reflect the realities of a 21st-century America. George C. Scott plays General Patton, an illegal immigrant who, with the help of a forged Social Security card, works his way up to the rank of general and leads the army to Washington, where he topples the evil Chancellor Bush and his fascist cohorts.

- o *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*: This heartwarming teen comedy tells the tale of Ferris Bueller, a confused, transgender Sherpa, whose journey into the city of Chicago is an extended metaphor for self discovery and heavy drug use. Accompanied on this journey by Sloane, the militant, lesbian member of al-Qaeda, and Cameron, the post-modern socialist Beatnik, Ferris and company engage in lengthy, Marxist debates and make conclusions about the uselessness of Christianity, the meaninglessness of life and the utility of \$400 haircuts, a la John Edwards.

- o *Blue Hawaii*: Elvis Presley portrays a draft-dodging drag queen in this musical comedy about the horrors of fighting for your country. Returning to Hawaii with his transvestite boyfriend, Elvis and the woman-man dazzle the audience with show stopping performances and a jaw-dropping tribute to "whore culture." Clips from last year's Sex Workers' Art Show have been tastefully edited into the film.

Editor's Note: The above is a fictional, satirical piece of writing that is in no way connected to, conceived by or approved by the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Any similarity between these fictional events and ones that are actually put on by the Office of Multicultural Affairs—past, present or future—is strictly coincidental, tragically hilarious and extremely upsetting.

Start the new school year at New Town

Megan Locke

Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

Lots of exciting changes have been taking place in New Town, the 365-acre business, residential, retail, and entertainment development that is emerging bit by bit in Williamsburg. Students who have been out of Williamsburg for the summer will be pleasantly surprised to learn how much New Town has transformed in such a short time.

A plethora of stores have opened in New Town in the late spring and summer. If you're in the mood to expand your wardrobe, you can now shop at clothing stores like Chico's, J Jill, and White House Black Market. All manner of accessories can be found at The Icing store. Everyone's favorite lingerie retailer, Victoria's Secret, is now opening its doors in New Town as well. Looking for a chance to indulge yourself? Then head over to the new Bath & Body works to pick up the perfect fragrant lotion or a bottle of soothing bubble bath. Athletes, and the shoe-savvy, can go to the new



Joe Luppino-Esposito

The latest fashion: New Town offers many new clothing stores to keep up on modern style.

Foot Locker for all of their sportswear and shoe needs. Many William and Mary students will be happy to hear that the popular Williamsburg restaurant The Green Leaf Café has expanded and opened a branch in New Town called The Green Leaf Gourmet. The Green Leaf Gourmet serves pastries, sandwiches, soups, pastas, calzones, and a large selection of specialty coffees, wines, and beers in an upscale setting. Beth Wallace, Vice President of Green Leaf Incorporated, says that the Green Leaf Gourmet is different from the Green Leaf Café because "it offers more gourmet foods than the traditional American foods" that the Café offers, and that it has "a different type of atmosphere" than the Café.

The Green Leaf Gourmet opened in late June of this year, and Wallace describes business in July, the first full month that the restaurant has been opened, as "successful." Wallace says that one of the advantages of having a restaurant now located in New Town is the "wonderful association that advertises the area." She is also excited that the Gourmet is located on the ground floor of the large new Green Leaf Building that will soon house offices as well.

The Green Leaf Gourmet is currently opened

for lunch and dinner from 11 a.m. – 10p.m. It will eventually be expanding its hours and offer breakfast as well. Besides stopping in the Gourmet for a bite to eat, students might also be interested in attending "Party on the Patio" where they can dine and listen to an acoustic guitar performer on Friday nights at the restaurant.

An event not to miss is William and Mary Night at New Town on September 20th from 6:30 p.m. to midnight. Many New Town stores and restaurants will be staying open until midnight, and there will be discounts offered to those with a college ID. A drawing exclusively for William and Mary students will award various prizes and gift certificates from participating merchants in the area.

Live entertainment will be at Sullivan Square from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., and at Civic Green from 10:30 p.m. to midnight. A shuttle bus will run directly to New Town from campus every 15 minutes for students who need a lift to New Town.

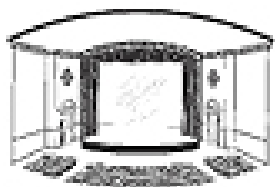
It may soon be easier than ever to get to New Town, because a permanent direct bus service from the College to New Town is currently under consideration. So don't delay, and head over to the development to experience all of the latest dining and shopping experiences that New Town has to offer.



Joe Luppino-Esposito

The grass is always greener: The new Green Leaf at New Town has a very different menu from the famous cafe near campus, focusing on the food over the bar scene.

development to experience all of the latest dining and shopping experiences that New Town has to offer.



Kimball Theatre

WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

August/September Schedule

Movies

Once (R)
Fri., Aug. 17-Fri., Aug. 24
7 and 8:45 p.m.
Aug. 19, 20, 22, 23 screening room (35 seats)

Ten Canoes (Not rated)
Fri., Aug. 24-Tues., Aug. 28
6:45 and 8:30 p.m.
Aug. 24, 25, 27 screening room (35 seats)

Crazy Love (PG-13)
Tues., Aug. 28-Mon., Sept. 3
7 and 8:45 p.m.
Aug. 28-31, Sept. 3 screening room (35 seats)

Paprika (R)
Tues., Sept. 4-Fri., Sept. 7
7 and 9 p.m.
Sept. 4, 7 screening room (35 seats)

Brand Upon the Brain Not rated
Tues., Sept. 4-Mon., Sept. 10
6:45 and 8:30 p.m.
Sept. 5-6, 8-10 screening room (35 seats)

A Mighty Heart (R)
Sun., Sept. 9-Mon., Sept. 17
7 and 9 p.m.
Sept. 11-12, 14-15, 17 screening room (35 seats)

Sicko (PG-13)
Sat., Sept. 15-Fri., Sept. 28
6:30 and 8:45 p.m.
Sept. 16, 18-22, 27-28 screening room (35 seats)

Sponsored by the Historic Triangle Substance Abuse Coalition
Freedom Writers (PG-13)
Thurs., Sept. 27 at 7 p.m.
This screening is free but tickets are required. Donations are welcome

Manufacturing Dissent Not rated
Fri., Sept. 28-Wed., Oct. 3
7 and 9 p.m.
Sept. 29, Oct. 1-2 screening room (35 seats)

Live Performances

The Kimball Theatre and Virginia Premiere Theatre present
Smith! Being the Life and Death of Cap'n John
By Ivor Noel Hume
Aug. 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 30 at 5 p.m.
General admission \$15, Seniors/Students \$12

Laughing Redhead presents
Clean Comedy Night
Featuring **Tim Hawkins**
Sat., Aug. 25 at 7:30 p.m.
General admission \$15, Seniors/Students \$12

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation presents
The Cobham Consort in Concert
Wed., Aug. 29 at 7:30 p.m.
Colonial Performance Ticket \$12

Anthony Lee Wood and Friends present
Up and Away to the Hits of Yesterday
Fri., Aug. 31 at 8 p.m.
All seats \$20

The Williamsburg Symphonia presents
Pops Over America!
Sat., Sept. 8 at 8 p.m.
All seats \$35

Virginia Premiere Theatre presents
The K of D
A Supernatural Thriller by Laura Schellhardt
Previews Sept. 11-12 at 7:30 p.m.; special preview price \$9 Opens Sept. 14 at 7:30 p.m.
Plays Sept. 18-22 at 7:30 p.m. and Sept. 16 and 23 at 2 p.m.
Tickets: \$18, \$16 students/seniors/military

The Kimball Theatre presents
The Second City Touring Company: One Nation, Under Blog
Sat., Sept. 29 at 7:30 p.m.
General admission \$25, Seniors/Students \$20

Nooks and Crannies of William and Mary

**Within the walls of PBK Memorial Hall, a secret garden?
A mysterious courtyard only accessible from the roof has unclear purpose**

Steven Nelson
Assistant News Editor

Within the walls of William and Mary's Phi Beta Kappa Hall, a building dedicated to the oldest collegiate fraternity in America, there exists a suspicious interior courtyard. Clearly visible via online aerial photos the courtyard is a 15'x50' walled-in area of empty space, with no obvious purpose. This mysterious area has no entrance; the only way to gain access is to use a ladder to descend into it from the roof of PBK Hall. Why was this area built in the first place?

As anyone who has read the plaques outside the Wren Building knows, Phi Beta Kappa is renowned as the oldest Greek letter fraternity and secret society in the United States, and was founded at William and Mary in 1776. Significantly, the second PBK chapter was founded at Yale, and later gave rise to the well-known Skull and Bones society, which was modeled on the older fraternity. This infamous descendant, makes PBK's parallel mystique all the more fascinating, on the surface at least.

William and Mary's current PBK Hall was built in 1956, replacing its former namesake (now renamed Ewell Hall) after it burned down in 1953. Inside one can find a reconstructed 'Apollo room' that is modeled after the revolution-era original, interestingly the object of ridicule, including a historic comic suggesting it was as a locale used for astrology.

The *Virginia Informer* contacted Associate Director of Facilities, Wayne Boy, for information about this space, who in turn put the paper in contact with the Office of University Relations. College staff members, seemingly unaware of the area's existence themselves, were dispatched to investigate. They reported back to Mike Connolly, the Director of University Relations, that the area is mostly empty, save for an access area



Steven Nelson

A view from the top: This mysterious area can only be accessed from the roof of Phi Beta Kappa Hall and is only visible from above the building. PBK Hall was built in 1956.

to an electrical pump. The verdict of school officials: it is a "routine mechanical space." Interestingly enough, no other buildings on campus have these "routine" spaces.

To confirm this, *The Informer* contacted an alumni member of Phi Beta Kappa. At first, the description of the courtyard sounded similar to another room routinely used by PBK members, but upon viewing

the aerial photos, alumnus Doug Bunch said that he was unaware that the area existed and confirmed that it likely has no connection to his society.

The courtyard's existence continues to puzzle faculty, students, and fraternity members alike. Although no secret fascinating use has yet been uncovered, the PBK courtyard remains an intriguing and mysterious part of the William and Mary campus.

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Why we watch movies
Film critic Joe Pirro considers
the motives behind cinema

Welcome back to Williamsburg, William and Mary, and a special welcome to the Class of 2011. Freshman year is an exciting time, and you couldn't have picked a more vibrant, exciting town in which to attend college.



Joe Pirro
Film Critic

Alright, so everyone who's been here before will tell you that this is not a true statement. However, we are William & Mary students, which means we are inventive and intelligent, so we don't have difficulty creating entertaining diversions for ourselves in town. By the time October rolls around, you'll be asking yourselves these questions: How can I financially handle four nights a week at the Leafe? Rush is over, so how come there are fewer dance parties at the Units? I should be writing that paper, but really, it's Saturday, so what should I do?

Movies play a vital role in the life of

a William & Mary student. From provocative movies at the Kimball Theatre in Colonial Williamsburg to the mainstream offerings of New Town, movies provide something that we rarely give ourselves as students of this fine institution: an escape. So go, enjoy a foreign film that transports you to another

country or another time; or even go to a blockbuster flick that defies all the rules of reality. Make a Target run and waste some money on a couple new DVDs. Trust me, you'll need the downtime.

At William and Mary we put ourselves through a great deal of stress and it sometimes seems overwhelming, so it becomes necessary to put down that Psychology textbook or your gripping Thomas Hardy novel and escape from Williamsburg through film, if only for a few hours.

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to go online.*

Film Review:

Comedies score big in the summer of sequels

Studios begin gearing up for fall films and Oscar season



Joe Pirro
Film Critic

Another summer has come and gone. Hollywood has dishd out its biggest blockbusters along with some smaller fare for the film elitist in all of us. Pretty soon, autumn will be in full swing and studios will be releasing films and whispering of the Oscars to come in the winter. Before then, though, *The Virginia Informer* looks back at summer 2007 and grades some of its offerings.

Pirates of the Caribbean: At



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Drink up me hearties yo ho: "World's End" rescued the "Pirates" series after the disappointment of the second film.

World's End: As always, it was fun watching Johnny Depp take on the role of Captain Jack Sparrow. While the movie was muddled by its attempts to take on multiple plots, it was still an improvement over the second film. **B**

Waitress: It's hard to mention this gem of a movie without speaking of writer-director Adrienne Shelley's tragic death, but her legacy will be untarnished by her final film. The story of a woman looking for life's answers, the film launched Keri Russell into the hearts of America and showed that not all summer movies have to be big and filled with stunts. **A-**

Knocked Up: Judd Apatow continues to show that he is the brightest of all comedic directors and producers in Hollywood. With a stellar cast, he took an unusual plot for a movie and turned it into the funniest, yet most poignant movie of the summer and possibly the year. **A**

Ocean's Thirteen: A vast difference between the humorless muck of the second film. Returning to Las Vegas and dropping



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"Rats" off to you: According to Pirro, Disney-Pixar's "Ratatouille" was the best movie of 2007 to date.

Julia Roberts and Catherine Zeta-Jones, the third segment in the Ocean's franchise injected some life and humor into an enjoyable movie. **B+**

Evening: Touted as a film starring the greatest actresses of our time, *Evening* floundered every opportunity it had to be a good movie. It had a poor script and a pretentious direction. **C-**

Ratatouille: As of publication, this is easily the best film of 2007 to date. Funny, touching, and with a crossover appeal to all ages, this Disney-Pixar masterpiece latched on to the fancy food craze, but showed that a classic story with interesting characters and witty dialogue still conquers all. **A**

Transformers: Start sending in the hate mail, but this was nothing short of a despicable attempt at a movie. Michael Bay must have assumed that watching totally awesome robots fight each other makes up for a terrible script and a paper thin plot. **C**

Hairspray: This was everything a summer movie should be, as it was silly and almost meaningless, but still enjoyable and fun. John Travolta is way too believable as a fat woman, though. **B+**

So, there it is: a summer of hits and misses along with some true classics. We here at *The VA Informer* hope you enjoyed a movie-filled summer and have a great fall semester!

Book Review:

Absurdistan is a comedic masterwork

R.C. Rasmus

Arts & Entertainment Editor

The crafting of a comedic novel is a notoriously difficult and under appreciated feat. Not only does an author have to come up with relatable characters, a good setting, and an interesting story arc, they also have to sprinkle in enough humor to keep their readers chuckling through 300 pages of literature. This is no small order, and to date the only contemporary writer who has consistently proven himself up to the task has been the intrepid Christopher Moore, author of such clever gems as *Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ's Childhood Pal* and *Bloodsucking Fiends: A Love Story*. However, the release of Gary Shteyngart's new novel, *Absurdistan*, may represent the rise of a new heir to the comedic throne. With a garish parade of whores, oil executives, talking parrots, rabbis, and homosexual fast food employees, Shteyngart has constructed a novel that is at once raucously comedic and strangely touching. This beautifully achieved balance makes *Absurdistan* a book to rival the best of the modern classics.

The hero of Shteyngart's book is Misha Borisovich Vainberg, a morbidly obese Americophile whose great loves are food, ghetto rap, big women, and New York City. However, when Misha's gangster father, the 1,238th-richest man in Russia, shoots and kills an Oklahoman, it looks like Misha will never again see his beloved apartment in the South Bronx. With his requests for an American vista being repeatedly denied, the protagonist decides to flee St. Leninsburg, the city of his birth, for the small, former Soviet satellite state of Absurdistan. There, he plans to buy himself a Belgian passport from a corrupt embassy counselor and eventually make his way across the Atlantic as an EU citizen. Unfortunately, when Misha arrives in Svanī City,

the Absurdi capital, he finds himself sucked into the middle of a budding civil war. A hilarious chain of events sees Misha ingratiated with the local government, set up with the governor's daughter, and eventually made the Absurdi Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Now inextricably caught up in what is quickly becoming a brutally violent conflict, Misha must use all of his wile, charm, and influence to escape from Absurdistan before it's too late.

As with all great humor, Shteyngart's is rooted in truth. Many of his jokes hit home with those who have studied or traveled to Eastern Europe ("I'm *not* flying Aeroflot," I told my friend, "I don't want to die just yet"), while others appeal to anyone who has seen the effects of globalization anywhere outside the United States (Misha describes billboards in St. Leninsburg which feature "an American football player catching a hamburger with a baseball mit"). At other times, the author turns his pen on Misha's heft, making each of his main character's dining experiences into disgusting mystic encounters that cause him to rock back and forth while slopping food all over himself and moaning in ecstasy. Every page sparkles with Shteyngart's wit and even the most stolid readers will find themselves cracking smiles at the author's astute and relentless humor.

However, *Absurdistan* is not just a barrel of laughs. The author is also adept at tugging on his readers' heartstrings, making them feel for the often pathetic Misha and, in turn, for the deeply flawed characters that he professes to love: his Mafioso father, his cheating girlfriends, and his opportunistic college buddies. With this odd blend of humor and pathos winding its way through the whole of the novel, *Absurdistan* truly gives the best literature of the new millennium a run for its money.

R.C. rates this book ★★★★★ 1/2 out of 5



Joe Luppino-Esposito

A walk in the park

In honor of the former William and Mary president who was an integral part of its creation, New Town developers have set aside Timmy J. Sullivan Square for all to enjoy.

Want to know what else is new at New Town? **Check out page 9** for a review of new places to shop and eat.

Movies, music and hypnosis with UCAB

Student programming board has busy schedule for first month including popular Screen on the Green

Megan Locke
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

The time has come again to crack open the books and get down to business now that the lazy days of summer have passed. However, UCAB has several events planned for this

month that are the perfect cure for the back-to-school doldrums.

One of the first UCAB events this year is the popular "Screen on the Green" series, which shows movies in the Sunken Gardens. *Shrek 3* and *Knocked Up* are on the bill for August 31 starting at 8 p.m. In *Shrek 3*, the titular green ogre must save the kingdom of Happily Ever After from being taken over by the scheming Prince Charming. *Knocked Up* follows the story of a young couple who are forced to confront the responsibilities of parenthood after their one-night-stand.

On September 1, popular hypnotist Tom DeLuca returns to William and Mary to perform in the new

Lake Matoaka amphitheater on campus. DeLuca is known for his creative shows in which the audience members are a crucial part of the entertainment. *Campus Activities Today* magazine proclaims that DeLuca is "the best in his business and campuses are crazy about him."

The next event at Lake Matoaka will be the musical stylings of Stephen Kellogg and Sixers, with Rudy Currence as the opening act. The show takes place on September 7 at 5 p.m. Stephen Kellogg and the Sixers are from Massachusetts, and combine the talents of singer/songwriter Kellogg with bassist and keyboard player Keith "Kit" Karlson, drummer Brian Factor and lead guitarist Chris Soucy. The band tours almost nonstop year round, and has played over three hundred shows within the past couple of years. Rudy Currence is himself an R&B soul artist who has written songs for Mya and had one of his songs included on the soundtrack for the movie *Minority Report*.

UCAB will hold its Late Night Kick Off, featuring a multitude of entertainment options, on September 8 at 8 p.m. Laser tag and the 3D movie *Creature of the Black Lagoon* will be offered at the University Center along with Comedian Rob Paravonian, who is famous for combining music with his stand-up acts. His video "Pachabel's Rant" has become extremely popular on YouTube.

Before the home football game vs. Liberty on September 15, sports fans can enjoy UCAB's Super Tribe Tailgate from 3-7 p.m. Vendors from around Williamsburg will be setting up food stalls in the Sunken Gardens and will accept meal plan points. Finally, Recycled Percussion will perform at Lake

Matoaka on September 22 at 8 p.m. UCAB Director of Public Relations Brett Roth ('08) describes them as "An awesome 'Stomp'-like band," whose unique style of "junk rock" music utilizes everything from trash cans to scuba tanks to chain saws to create a high-energy

blend of rock and hip-hop melodies.

UCAB is definitely offering a little something for everyone this month, so be sure to take advantage of these exciting events and add a bit of fun to your back-to-school schedule.

**UCAB
schedule
highlights for
Aug/Sep**

**Screen on the
Green**
Aug. 31, 7 p.m.
Shrek 3 and
Knocked Up

**Tom DeLuca:
Hypnotist**
Sep. 1, 8 p.m.
Matoaka Theatre

**Late Night
Kick Off**
Sep. 8, 8 p.m.
University Center

**Super Tribe
Tailgate**
Sep. 15, 3 p.m.
Sunken Gardens

ETIQ 314: Dining out in Williamsburg

One of the best entertainment outlets in the city of Williamsburg is its wealth of fine dining establishments. In most of these restaurants, the food is excellent, the atmosphere is good, and the prices, while sometimes a bit steep, are certainly reasonable when compared to similar menus in Hampton Roads or NOVA. The problem? The wait staffs at many of these places are downright spoiled. They have grown accustomed to serving the rich, snobby retirees that make up Williamsburg's townie population, and, as such, they've been led to believe that anyone who isn't aware of basic dining etiquette isn't worthy of good service. Regrettable though it may be, this situation is something that William and Mary students need to be aware of if they want to be treated right when they go out to eat. I've decided to use this column to lay out a few little common sense tips that, together, can constitute a passkey to the often exclusive world of enjoyable fine dining in the city of Williamsburg.

First, for God's sake people, if you're going to eat out at a restaurant where the entrees cost more than \$20, make a reservation two or three days beforehand. On the day of your meal, show up fifteen minutes before your reservation time and check in. This simple step cuts out the frantic scrambling that often characterizes dinner out and ensures that you will get a good table as well.

Next, if you're going out to a nice place, get off your lazy ass and dress the part. "Oh, I'm a college student" is not a valid excuse for wearing jeans and a hoodie to the Center Street Grill, as the unbelieving stares you will get coming through the front door will tell you. At the very least, dress should be smart casual: Polos or button-downs with dress pants or khakis for guys and a blouse with slacks or a thigh-length dress for ladies.

I know that when you are out with a group there's often a strong temptation to split the check. The thing is that for a spoiled Williamsburg waiter, a split

check translates into immaturity on your part and unnecessary work on their end. Just suck it up and split the bill up yourself. It isn't that hard. If you insist on asking for separate checks, do so the first time you see your waiter and never ask for it to be divided more than 4 ways.

When ordering your entrée, try not to do it like a ten-year-old; you should never read out a dish's whole name when you ask for it. Thus, "Savory Duck Breast Medallions Drizzled with Light Plum Sauce and Garnished with Scallions" can be ordered simply by saying "I'll have the duck." Also, it's fine to ask for something on the side, but it's not okay to ask for a change to a dish itself. Ordering the chicken pot pie and then requesting that it be made with steak but without peas or carrots is uncouth; just get something different that you can eat as is.

Finally, never forget that you're doing the restaurant a favor by eating there, not the other way around. If you see *bouillabaisse* on the menu and don't know what the hell it is, feel free to ask your waiter about it. If you need assistance because your food is cold or improperly prepared, use a raised hand with two fingers extended to flag your server down. If you're displeased with the service, hit your waiter where it hurts: in the pocketbook. Good service should be rewarded with a 15% gratuity, excellent service with 20%, and poor service with 5-10%. If your wait staff was abysmal, you should never feel bad about leaving no tip at all. Gratuities are rewards for good service, and should not be thought of as compulsory.

So there you have it, a few ways that you can ensure you're treated like an adult in a fine Williamsburg restaurant. These common sense tips, combined with basic table manners, are the most important things for you to keep in mind while eating out. Give them a try the next time you're at Opus 9 or the Fat Canary. You might be pleasantly surprised at the results you get.



R.C. Rasmus
Arts & Entertainment
Editor



Not always a piece of cake: Dining out as a student at places like the Fat Canary means that you need to be even more aware of etiquette to receive proper service.

Get a caffeine fix and more at Aroma's

A campus favorite still delivers after all these years

Megan Locke
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

Whether you are looking for a mid-morning coffee break or a cozy place for a snack with your friends, Aromas fits the bill. Located right across the street from William and Mary's Old Campus, this coffee shop is easy to walk to, making it a great choice for new students who do not have access to a car and have yet to unravel the Williamsburg bus system.

Aromas has a wide selection of teas and coffees that offers something for everyone. The house blend is a good choice for those who enjoy strong coffee, while milder options like Colombian are

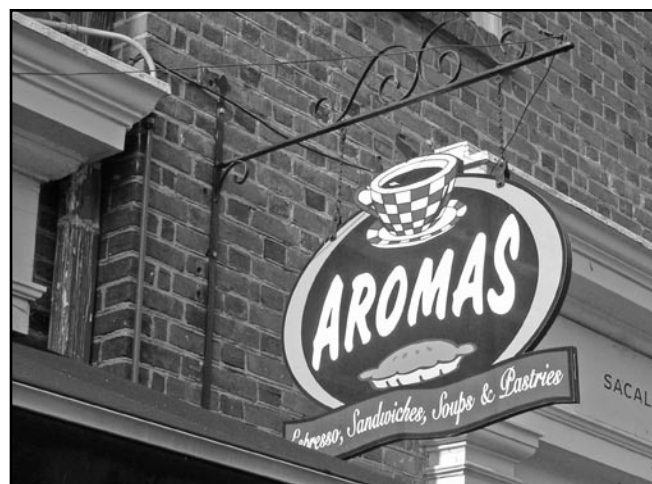
better for coffee-lovers who want a smoother brew. Other selections include French, Magnus, flavored, decaf flavored and decaf regular coffees. If you are not a java lover, chamomile tea with honey, Irish Breakfast, and vanilla rose tea come highly recommended. Additionally, Aromas offers lattes, espressos, hot chocolate, apple cider, and smoothies. A medium cup of coffee costs \$1.40 and the price of a medium cup of tea is \$2.35.

In addition to drinks, Aromas serves a variety of pastries and meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Their muffins, croissants, and bagels are excellent and their selection of mostly simple foods like sandwiches and soup are generally quite filling. Roast beef and chicken salad sandwiches are always tasty there, and the Greek salad is a popular favorite. Finally, the nacho plate is a good choice if you do not want a full meal. Entrées usually cost about \$5.00.

To round out your meal, there are plenty of cakes and cookies to choose for dessert from the bakery at Aromas. It is especially fun to order the fondue platter and dip marshmallows and fruit into chocolate sauce. If you get s'mores, Aromas provides the both the ingredients and an open flame for you to roast the marshmallows. The only downside is that the chocolate fondue and s'mores both only serve about two people, and can get expensive if you order more for a group.

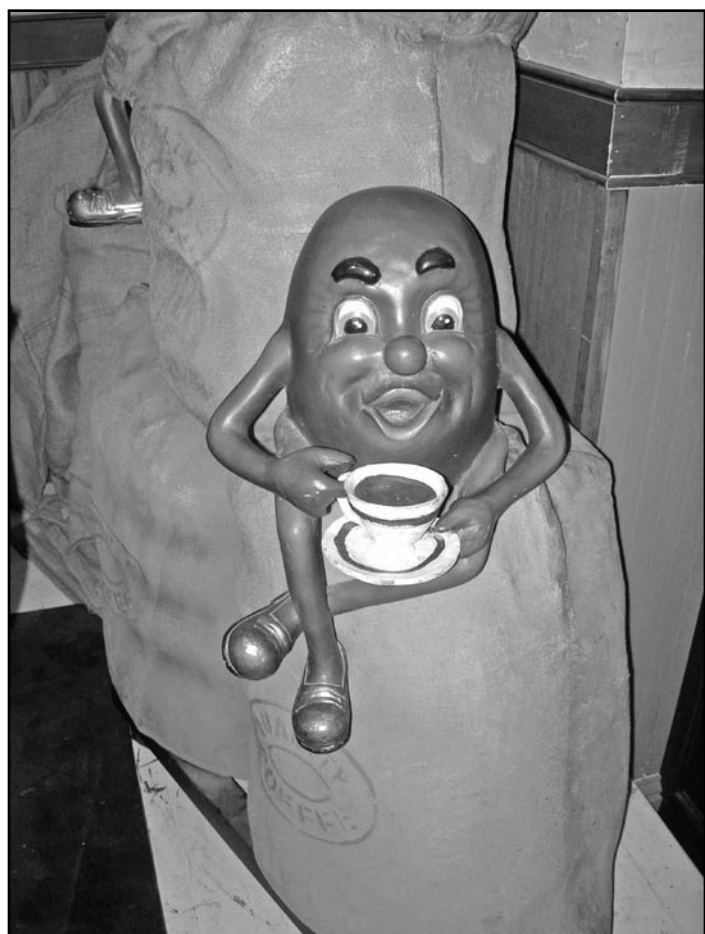
While you are enjoying Aroma's fine food and drinks, you can also listen to live music from performers who usually come on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. The music is often pretty low-key and performers range from jazz musicians to cover artists. The restaurant is also a popular study spot, since it offers free wireless internet access. Due to its small size and popularity, the restaurant can get quite crowded, especially during colder weather when outdoor seating is unfeasible.

Aromas is located on 431 Prince George St, right off of N Boundary St., which winds past Old Campus. Its hours are Monday to Thursday from 7am-10pm, Friday to Saturday from 7am-11pm, and Sunday from 8am-8pm.



Joe Luppino-Esposito

You can smell it from on-campus: Aroma's is right across the street from Brown Hall, making residents of the building quite lucky.



Joe Luppino-Esposito

"Bean" having a good time here?: Aroma's is filled with many quirky items, creating a unique atmosphere very unlike any other place in Williamsburg.

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Staff Editorial:

Hate to say we told you so

Anyone who reads *The Virginia Informer* regularly will notice a telling pattern. In fact, many of the big stories we reported on in this issue seem a bit redundant. Don't be alarmed—*The Informer* is not becoming lax in our commitment to bring you the most in-depth independent news coverage on campus. Instead, we are proud to say that *The Informer's* coverage of past events has been resoundingly confirmed in these follow-up stories

In March, *The Informer* ran a front-page story entitled "College Delly's future still undecided." While other campus papers

hysterically reported that "the Delly will close its doors for the last time this summer to make room for a new Starbucks...Come July 1, the Delly will cease to exist"—inciting a deluge of outraged student petitions and protest-minded Facebook groups—*The Informer* kept a level head and dug deeper. Getting the truth about this beloved establishment's future was important, and we at *The Informer* wanted to make sure that we had the story right.

We interviewed the College Delly's manager and learned that while Starbucks had made a bid on the property, no sale was final. Later *The Informer* learned that owner Dean Tsamouras would prefer the property remain the College Delly and he was talking to a group that had offered to buy the property and preserve it.

Turns out we were right. Students arriving in Williamsburg may have noticed a bright yellow banner hanging from the College Delly's awning confirming that the College Delly is indeed still open, under new ownership—an outcome that we at *The Informer* correctly identified months ago.

The Informer ran another story in that March issue that has been validated by recent events. We reported that the "evictions" of 38 William & Mary students from off-campus houses occurred after the College gave the city of Williamsburg—which has waged a long and persistent battle against students who wish to live off-campus—private student information. Citing the infamous "three-person-to-a-house-rule," the city declared that these students were in violation of the law and asked them to leave their homes or face legal action. *The Informer* found out that the City had obtained the names and addresses of these students through the campus directory, which had been given to city officials each year, contrary to College policy. The

College denied such accusations, saying that the city accessed the directory information on their own.

Sure enough, Vice President of Student Affairs Sam Sadler sent out an e-mail in the beginning of August notifying students that they actually have "the right to prohibit the release of directory information" by completing a "Request for Confidentiality" form on the University Registrar's Web site. He also noted that "This year you may ask that your local address

not be published in the directory and still have your other contact information printed there." Sadler assured students that the College

was committed to preserving students' privacy in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

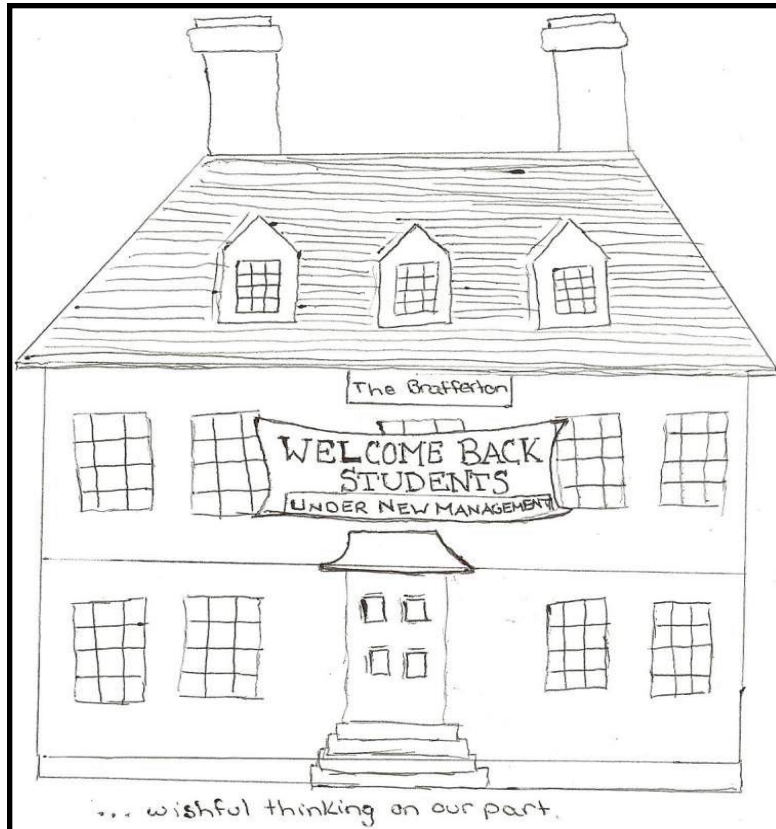
This somewhat sheepish and subtle admission of the College's guilt in this matter comes as no shock to us.

Finally, *The Informer* was ahead of the curve in predicting the College's drop in the national rankings. In April, we ran a story predicting that President Gene Nichol's shoddy administration of the College would have a detrimental impact on the standing of the College, including its spot in *U.S. News and World Report's* national rankings of top American universities. We highlighted Nichol's lackluster record during his tenure as dean of the law school at the University of Colorado at Boulder and at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In both cases, Nichol's administration of these institutions led to a significant negative impact in the status and ranking of these programs. We noted that William and Mary law school's ranking had already begun to drop since Nichol took office and predicted that Nichol's actions during the past school year would have similar repercussions for the College as a whole.

Again, we were right. *U.S. News and World Report's* annual report, released in mid-August, showed that William and Mary dropped two spots in the national rankings, from 31st to 33rd. Though we are by no means happy to have been right in this case, we must ruefully point out again that *The Informer's* analysis correctly predicted this outcome far in advance.

As the school year continues, we will remain dedicated to our commitment to lead the way in bringing students the most accurate, in-depth, and cutting-edge information possible. Our record speaks for itself.

“As the school year continues, we will remain dedicated to our commitment to lead the way in bringing students the most accurate, in-depth, and cutting-edge information possible. Our record speaks for itself.”



Stephanie Long

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Professor Bechtold is undoubtedly one of the most well-informed and knowledgeable academics on the Middle East; I am a student in his seminar on the Arab-Israel conflict. His lectures are captivating and spark intellectual discussion within the small but diverse seminar. His first-hand experiences alongside various Presidents and Secretaries of State serve to educate his students about many of the facts unrevealed and often tainted by the media. His objectivity on the conflict is unparalleled by most in his field, which distinguishes him in a positive manner. Professor Bechtold is in no way, however, anti-Israeli. He reports both sides of the story, which is, unfortunately, often considered taboo in society today.

The article only mentioned one of the two primary books on our reading list. We are required to read both Jimmy Carter's *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid* and Dennis Ross' *The Missing Peace*. While last week's article touched on the partiality of Carter's book, it failed to mention that Professor

Bechtold also assigned an equally, if not more, partial text. Ross states that he "identified with [the Israeli] people, and [his] own Jewish identity became more important to [him] as a result." The two authors maintain different accounts on the conflict, but that is precisely where the value in reading both texts lies. This dichotomy embodies the dynamic of Professor Bechtold's class, whereby he respects each of our contributions.

Professor Bechtold ensures that his students are well-versed in both sides of the conflict, a quality lacking in many diplomats and a significant obstacle to the solution of this ongoing problem. He is indispensable to our college, and it has been a distinct privilege for me and for many others to learn from him. Perhaps, in the future, you should consider interviewing the subject your article before you craft flawed accusations.

Christine Daya
Class of 2008

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Diversity is not all it's cracked up to be



Alex Mayer
Opinion Editor

Quite a provocative title, I know. “Diversity” has become something of a modern-day Holy Grail on American campuses. It is the most sought-after quality for university administrations, a supposed moral and societal triumph that is boasted of in each university’s list of annual accomplishments. The first goal listed in William and Mary’s Mission Statement is “to attract outstanding students from diverse backgrounds.”

But in reality, the term “diversity”—helpfully defined as “differing from one another” by Merriam-Webster—is so broad and vague as to be almost meaningless without a precise explanation of exactly what kind of diversity we are looking for.

The Informer’s news section this issue features a story about the demographic statistics of William and Mary’s Class of 2011. Taking a quick glance at the graphs, one can see that 23 percent of the freshman class is defined as “people of color,” a statistic that is trumpeted by the administration as a shining example of “diversity” in the student body. In fact, the Class of 2010 (24 percent) and 2011 (23 percent) both showed a significant increase in racial diversity over my own Class of 2009 (only 20 percent “of color”).

There are other measures of diversity

besides race, of course. So why is race the most important measure of diversity on a college campus? The truth of this statement is irrefutable—when each reader of this column saw the title, the first word that undoubtedly leaped into each person’s head was “race.” “Diversity,” as a term in the current American and global lexicon, is inextricably linked to race.

It has been assumed for decades that diversity—read: racial diversity—is beneficial to students attending institutions of higher learning because

it gives them exposure to people from “different backgrounds.” This is seen as a way to broaden a student’s horizons and open their mind to different ideas and cultures

that they might otherwise come into contact with. The argument follows that students in such an environment are assumed to obtain a more fulfilling educational experience as a result than those in less (racially) diverse settings. It prepares them to go out and succeed in our increasingly globalized and multicultural world.

But is that actually the case?

Duke University economics professor Peter Arcidiacono recently released an academic paper on the economic benefit of attending a “racially diverse college.” His research concluded that diversity

actually has no effect on an individual’s productivity or life satisfaction. In his findings, he states that “diversity capital may not exist. That is to say, two individuals’ ability to profitably interact in the marketplace is not impeded by any racial or ethnic differences between them.”

“Well, so what?” some might argue. It’s not the economic or material benefits that matter—it’s the intangible psychological benefit that students get from learning and interacting with people who are different from them.

That argument sounds reasonable enough. It is hard to disagree that students who are exposed to and interact with people who have different beliefs and who hold different views are enriched as a result.

The real question comes down to whether or not race is really the most beneficial type of diversity. Certainly it is the most publicly visible, the most tangible, and the most politically correct. It is easy to measure, easy to quantify with charts and pie graphs.

It is also obviously misleading. The plain truth is that a black student and a white student can come to William and Mary from nearly identical upper-middle class backgrounds—and often do. They can easily share the same basic life experiences; attended similar private prep schools, bought clothes from the

same designer stores, got cell phones at the age of 16. They can have nearly identical opinions and perspectives on life.

The problem with the present focus on “diversity” is that it emphasizes the wrong kind of diversity. If educators truly seek a more enriching educational environment for students, they should focus less on the racial aspect of diversity and instead on truer aspects of diversity—ideological diversity, for instance, or political diversity. Even religious diversity would be a more effective way of bringing together students who truly have different ideas and beliefs.

Unfortunately, this sort of diversity isn’t easily measured, nor a policy for increasing it easily implemented. Most administrations would feel uncomfortable asking students about their political beliefs on an admissions application. It would be deemed offensive and probably illegal to offer admission to a public university based on an applicant’s religion. Yet somehow, taking race into consideration during the admissions process is regarded as completely natural and desirable.

There are a few positive signs that the focus on racial diversity is beginning to shift. The administration also points out that a record 12 percent of the Class of 2011 will be “first generation college students,” meaning that neither of the student’s parents attended college. It’s a start. But this campus—and most others in this country—have a long way to go before they can truly claim to be “diverse.”

Big Nick’s not so big on W&M’s values

Stephanie Long
News Editor

Since William and Mary’s pointless politics do not sleep over the summer, I received an invitation to a facebook group entitled “Rename McGlothlin Street Hall!” The main premise of the group was that James McGlothlin, a long-time generous donor should be erased from the building he helped to fund because of his principled retraction of a \$12 million donation from his will due to his disagreement with the Wren cross removal. In actuality, though, all this proves is that he does not agree with the values of our president, Gene Nichol, and that he is unwilling to provide money to a college that is run according to values with which he disagrees and under the authoritarian control of Nichol. I challenge the creators of this Facebook group and all other members of this community to consider what exactly William and Mary’s values are and whether or not the president actually adheres to them.

In general, the student body is split on whether the president’s actions are in accord with what they want for the college. The reason for this is that Gene Nichol has put his political beliefs first in almost every aspect of his presidency since he’s come to Williamsburg. Unable to live up to his promise to stay out of politics, Nichol has pushed for racial preferences at William and Mary under the guise of increasing diversity. He has lowered the once high standards of our school and decreased William and Mary’s reputation for competitiveness, which is perhaps why the College fell two spots in *U.S. News and World Report’s* annual rankings. Furthermore, the acceptance rate for the Class of 2011 actually increased compared to previous years due to a slim 1 percent increase in the number of applications. Other top Virginia schools’ acceptance rates declined—in fact UVA’s acceptance rate fell below William and Mary’s for the first time due to a 14 percent increase in applicants.

Nichol’s favoring of certain ideas on campus is

evident in his unilateral decision making. On several occasions he has promised, but has not delivered, open dialogues on campus regarding critical situations such as what to do about the number of sexual assaults on campus and the purpose of a chapel at a state university. The Wren cross controversy arose from his decision to whitewash the religious heritage of the school, even though he had only received complaints about the cross’s presence in the chapel from one or two students. After receiving much opposition from the William and Mary community due to his disregard for the Wren Chapel’s Anglican history, a compromise was reached that enabled the nondenominational chapel to remain welcoming but also to proudly display its historical roots. Perhaps if President Nichol had included students, alumni and faculty in his initial decision making, the value of William and Mary’s history would not have been overlooked by his instinctual need to enforce political correctness.

Nichol continues to take action to limit the diversity of ideas on campus. He replaced previous Philosophy chair, Noah Lemos, one of two chairs not in support of Nichol’s Wren cross decision, with former English professor Terry Meyers, who was a strong supporter of the decision.

William and Mary, as an institution, cannot have values in direct opposition to those given to it by the community that has composed its history. The most important thing to the school is its history and traditions. If we are meant to forget our past for the sake of conforming to the rules of the government of the state of Virginia, the commotion over Queen Elizabeth II’s visit last May was completely uncalled for since we are no longer under English rule. If the president’s logic is followed to its inevitable conclusion, then walking through the Wren building at convocation, crossing the Crim Dell, or throwing a holly leaf on the Yule Log should no longer be cherished ceremonies for William and Mary students, for these “ancient” traditions no longer hold any special significance for

our lives.

And yet we relish in our history and our reputation for being the best small public school in the country. It is unfortunate that President Nichol has compromised this positive environment on campus by dividing it on numerous issues that have been created in the pursuit of his singular and unpopular decisions.

The true purpose of our school should be to educate and enlighten its students in order to prepare them to be positive members of their communities. President Nichol, though, has demonstrated his limitations by sticking to his personal and narrow agenda at any cost. Nichol was applauded when he defended the Tribe moniker while it was under scrutiny by the NCAA. He said that the American Indian tribes worked together for a common goal, and William and Mary’s community mirrored that positive atmosphere. But since Nichol wrote these words, he has made clear that he did not mean for those sentiments to apply to any other aspect of his presidency. It is time for either Nichol to start practicing what he has preached, or time for the college to find a new leader who will.

**Love us?
Hate us?**

**Think you know something we
don’t know?**

**Please send letters to
the editor.**

We will print them... probably.



Joe Luppino-Esposito

Who's keeping score?: The new scoreboard is set to be ready for Thursday's game at Zable stadium.

Are you ready for some football?

First game under the lights for 2007!

Come see the Tribe take on Delaware

**Thursday
August 30, 2007
7:30 p.m.
Zable Stadium**

STUDENT DIRECTORY:

College changes critical policy on privacy following March report of Williamsburg's abuse of directory to evict students

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why any of these things are inherently bad. I understand why a community might not want to have eight students in a two person apartment, so I'm obviously open to some restrictions on occupancy in houses, but a flat three-person rule is far too restrictive."

Beato and Pilchen pursued the issue with Sadler's office over the summer. Sadler stated in his e-mail that despite the restrictions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), some personal information of students can be released to the public without the consent of the student.

Beato and Sadler have alerted the campus to the dangers and possible penalties of releasing personal information such as one's name, birth date, phone number, and even address to anyone outside of the proper college officials. This notice went out in Sadler's annual continuing undergraduates informational letter along with the news of a simple three-step process on the Information Technology billing site on Banner for removing personal information from this year's Student Directory. Removing that information from the directory, though, does not prevent the College from accessing that information in case of an emergency, as the previous option

for students to put a "hold" on that information did.

Beato helped develop this new process for students and expects it to be relatively simple to follow. "It was far too cumbersome for students to place a 'hold' on their directory information and this procedure also was very extreme—the College couldn't even verify if you were a student."

Pilchen also highlighted the importance of the new option. "Especially in light of recent events at Virginia Tech, William and Mary needs to know how to contact students in case of an emergency. Students, respectively, need to make sure that the College has accurate information about where they live." He continued, "This new option allows students to honestly share address information with the College in case of emergency, without having to fear eviction or prosecution for violating a law that is fundamentally flawed."

Following the March report, Sadler told *The Informer* that his office was not responsible for the release of the information and that it was internally investigated. It is still unclear who delivered the copies of the directory to city hall.

Cross returns to Wren Chapel... in a glass box



Joe Luppino-Esposito

The Wren cross has finally returned to the chapel, albeit encased in a glass case on a historic walnut table—an outcome that resulted from the compromise orchestrated by William and Mary law professor Alan Meese and his fellow committee members tasked to solve the divisive issue.

The Committee on Religion at a Public University, handpicked by President Gene Nichol, handed down the decision shortly after long time donor and alumni, James McGlothlin revoked a 12 million dollar planned gift to the College. The controversy attracted local and national media attention.

Are you a "Triathlete" with a story to share?

Send your tales and photos to editor@VAInformer.com and we may print it in an upcoming issue!