



# The Breeze

James Madison University's Student Newspaper

Vol. 84, Issue 35

Monday, February 5, 2007

JMU returns  
to New Orleans,  
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## Opinion, page 5

For Biden, some things are just better left unsaid.



## Sports, page 7

Spring sports get ready for season in winter weather.



## A&E, page 9

Doug Roberts inked to 80 One Records.

## Virginia addresses 'divide'

by KIM CHU HA  
staff writer

The "digital divide" at historically black colleges and universities in Virginia will get a little smaller with a new \$250 million federal technology grant.

The Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act, if passed, will allot \$250 million in federal technology grants to more than 200 Hispanic-serving institutions, more than 100 historically black colleges and universities and more than 30 tribal colleges in the United States.

"Historically, MSIs haven't had the opportunity to build up strong endowments across the board," said Arthur Dean, director of JMU's Center for Multicultural Student Services. "They've not had the resources of state land grant institutions funded by tax dollars."

The Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act, if passed, will allot \$250 million in federal technology grants to more than 200 Hispanic-serving institutions, more than 100 historically black colleges and universities and more than 30 tribal colleges in the United States.

"Bridging the 'digital divide' in minority-serving institutions is crucial in a world where technology goes hand in hand with economic development and success," Webb said in a press release last week. "Investing in our historically black colleges and other minority-serving institutions will allow our students to compete with anyone, anywhere in the world."

In Virginia, this means a technology boost on the campuses of its historically black colleges, such as Norfolk State University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, St. Paul's College and Hampton University.

"We are very delighted and grateful to the Virginia congressional delegation for spearheading this well-deserved effort to close the digital divide that exists in minority-serving institutions," said Adebisi Oladipupo, vice president for Research and Technology at NSU. "Unfortunately, in some cases, the divide is more like a digital ravine. MSIs are known for always doing more with less, albeit painfully."

Members in the JMU community agree the measure seems to be a good idea and somewhat overdue.

"A good friend of mine attends Virginia State University and spends a majority of her time in the library in order to have access to the school's network," said Michael Frempong, a member of the Black Student Alliance. "But with the help that this bill will provide, she'll be able to utilize their network in a lot more places than just the library."

This bill was previously introduced in 2003 and 2005 by former Virginia senator George Allen, and co-sponsored by Warner. Although it passed by unanimous consent in the Senate both years, the House failed to act.

"When it comes to educating and training the workforce ... we cannot continue to do business as usual," Oladipupo said. "That is why the passage of this bill is very critical not only to MSIs, but also to the nation."

The grant will allow traditionally under-funded MSIs a chance to give their institutions a technological upgrade through better equipment and Internet connections, allowing students universal access to networks, and creating network and wireless capabilities and technologies.

"The bill will definitely help to provide instructional technology infrastructure and enable MSIs' faculty and students to participate in high-bandwidth research networks consortia," Oladipupo said. "The available funds will significantly increase the number of schools that will be able to utilize high-tech tools in educational instruction and research."

Said Warner in a press release: "Many of our minority-serving institutions lack the capital to offer assistance to their students to bridge the 'digital divide' between students who are able to develop the skills necessary to succeed in a technology-based economy and those who are not."

## Gas Problems

JMU students create alternative to fossil fuels using algae to make biodiesel

by SHAYNA STRANG  
staff writer

With U.S. consumption of oil at over 20 million barrels a day, researchers have been looking for a sustainable resource to replace that fossil fuel. Students from multiple concentrations in ISAT have joined together to make that transition go green — literally.

The students are making biodiesel from green algae.

"We realized the potential algae had for fuel production," sophomore Ryan Powanda, one of the students involved with the project, said.

Other students involved include Emily Thomas, Kevin Hofmaier, Jon Brown and Ryan Geary, Andrew Flatness, John Kauffman and Billy Broas, who are working on their senior project in ISAT. The group is advised by ISAT assistant professor Chris Bachmann.

"No one has been able to come up with anything to replace oil. That's why we are looking at micro-algae as a fuel source," Bachmann said.

The idea of converting algae into fuel goes back to 1978, when the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fuels Development funded the Aquatic Species Program; since then, advances in technology and the recent oil hikes have made this research significant to everyone.

"It's a big, big issue," Bachmann said. "Without oil, our economy will collapse."

Since algae can grow much faster than most other land crops and don't have to be harvested at one time each year, it is a promising source, Bachmann said. The students are focusing their research on finding which type of algae grows the fastest and which has the highest oil output for fuel production. Corporations, such as GreenFuel Technologies, have been using a process similar to the students' to develop a clean and renewable energy source.

The process begins with a photobioreactor, a system of cylinders, water, light and air bubbles. The algae is put into the cylinders, known as growth tubes. It is fed air, carbon dioxide and light constantly, while nutrients are given at intervals.

"They reproduce so quickly," sophomore Emily Thomas said.

As the algae multiplies, sections can be removed from the ends to extract the oil needed to make fuel.

"If you can construct enough tubes, you can siphon off enough of the algae to take biodiesel fuel from it," Powanda said.

Since plants grow back every year, this seems like a never-ending supply. But according to Bachmann, there is a catch.

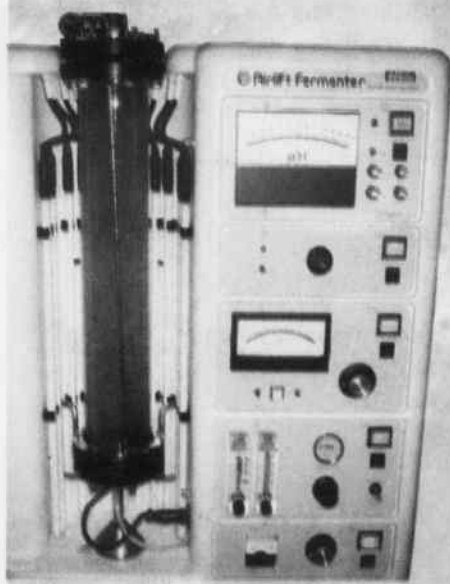
"Even if we develop all these bio fuels, we won't be able to make enough to keep up with oil use," he said. "We really need to start using less fuel."

Bachmann said with the way the world uses oil, the reserves will be gone in 40 years. The cost of research and production of bio fuels has become more expensive than oil because there is more to making them.

Currently the price of gas is about equal with bio fuels, he said.

"It's getting more expensive as we go, but it's very necessary," Bachmann said.

The students will be presenting their findings at the annual CISAT Senior Symposium later in the year.



LEFT: A photobioreactor, which is a system of "growth tubes." This machine feeds algae air, carbon dioxide and light, which helps the algae reproduce more quickly.

graphics by LAUREN PACK/art director



EVAN DYSON/photo editor

A 19-year old Bridgewater College student who threw her baby away shortly after having it, gave birth on the second floor of this Bridgewater College dormitory. The search for the body was called off Tuesday.

## Discarded baby came from BC

Woman gave birth to baby in Bridgewater dorm

**BRIDGEWATER** — Multiple Bridgewater College students confirmed Saturday that the 19-year-old female who allegedly delivered a baby and proceeded to throw it in a dumpster was a resident of the college's Geisert Hall.

Although the student's name is unknown at this time, students said the incident occurred in one of Geisert's second-floor dormitory restrooms.

The search for the infant's body, which was taken from the dumpster to the Rockingham County Landfill last weekend, was called off Tuesday afternoon. As reported in *The Breeze* Thursday, Rockingham Sheriff Department spokesperson Sgt. Felicia Glick said the probability of finding evidence that a coroner could evaluate was "near impossible."

Bridgewater Campus Police declined to comment on the situation.

— from staff reports

## SMADtv to premiere Thursday



photo courtesy of MATT LANGAN

SMADtv is supposed to premiere Thursday before "Grey's Anatomy." On campus, it can be seen on channel 55. Off campus, it can be viewed through a link via the SMAD Web site.

by KALEIGH MAHER  
staff writer

After several years of TV production classes being taught in the local WVPT studio, the school of media arts and design has its own studio again, and along with it, a new TV network.

"SMADtv is a network of shows by JMU students, for JMU students," senior Brianne Casey said.

SMADtv expects to premiere Thursday before "Grey's Anatomy" on campus cable channel 55. Off-campus students will be able to view SMADtv through a link on the SMAD Web site. The idea came about during the spring of 2006, when SMAD professor John Hodges and senior Matt Langan began to talk about a TV production practicum.

After a general-interest meeting, they put together an executive team for the project with Langan as executive producer, senior Connor Mullaney as production coordinator, Casey as creative director and junior Kyle Perron as pre-production coordinator.

"My goal was to really have this be a student-run offering, so that they have the ownership in the project," Hodges said.

Under the executive team are seven line producers in charge of creating their own shows and then a production staff of SMAD students.

"Four weeks ago I had the names and e-mail addresses of 39 SMAD students," Langan said. "Somehow that list has turned into seven shows and a television network."

Some shows the network will air include a cooking show on how to cook good food on a college budget with dormitory resources, an entertainment newscast which will host a two-sided debate on celebrity gossip, a dating show, a

see SMADtv, page 3

## The Breeze

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### MAILING ADDRESS

The Breeze  
 G1 Anthony-Seeger Hall  
 MSC 6805  
 James Madison University  
 Harrisonburg, Virginia  
 22807

### CORRECTION

In the article "Caesar's to reopen today" in the Feb. 1 issue of *The Breeze*, Wayne Fralin's quote about defaulting on an agreement should have referred to general manager David Robinson, not office manager Roy Heinlen.

### Contact Us

The Breeze is published Monday and Thursday mornings and distributed throughout James Madison University and the local Harrisonburg community. Comments and complaints should be addressed to Matthew Stoss, editor.

Telephone:  
 (540) 568-6127  
 Fax: (540) 568-6736

Editor:  
 (540) 568-6749  
 editor@thebreeze.org

### MISSION

The Breeze, the student-run newspaper of James Madison University, serves student and faculty readership by reporting news involving the campus and local community. The Breeze strives to be impartial and fair in its reporting and firmly believes in its First Amendment rights.

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**FEB. 7: PARTNER MASSAGE**  
 8:00 - 9:00 PM

**FEB. 21: BELAY AND CLIMB**  
 7:00 - 9:00 PM

**FEB. 7: TOTAL BODY WORKOUT, HAMMER STRENGTH**  
 5:30 - 6:30 PM

**FEB. 28: SPRING FLING DIVE IN MOVIE**  
 7:00 - 9:00 PM

**FEB. 7: CORE STRENGTH 101**  
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ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

★ Feb. 19: Speak Up, 7pm Festival Ballroom A, Free and open to the public! Featured speaker Kathleen MacDonald and Ron and Sally George, parents of the late Leslie George, former JMU student who died in Sept. 2002 of an eating disorder. Those who wish to share stories and experiences will be invited to speak.

★ Feb. 25: Pub Night! \$3

★ Feb. 26: Super Size Me, Grafton Stovall, 7 & 9:30pm, FREE!

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## Around Campus

### Ben Folds to perform at April show

The University Program Board announced that Ben Folds will perform live at the Convocation Center Tuesday April 10 at 8 p.m. Tickets are not yet available, but more ticketing information will be available in the coming weeks.

For more information, check out [uph.jmu.edu](http://uph.jmu.edu).

### JMU to offer adult piano classes this spring

JMU's school of music and Outreach Programs will offer a beginning piano course for adults this spring.

Small classes in the school of music piano lab will be held Tuesday and Thursday evenings beginning May 8 and continue through June 28. Eight weeks of classes, books and materials are included in the \$255 course fee.

## In the Valley

### Local man charged with sexual battery

**HARRISONBURG** — Harrisonburg police charged Joseph McNamara with forcible sodomy and sexual battery on Thursday, according to a press release from the Harrisonburg Police Department.

Police said the charges stem from an investigation of a report filed by a female patient who reported in January that McNamara, 53, forcibly sodomized and sexually battered her during a patient visit to his office.

## World & Nation

### At least 20 dead from floods in Indonesia

**JAKARTA** — At least 20 people have been killed and 340,000 made homeless by massive floods that have swept through the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, according to BBC News.

Three days of torrential rain have caused rivers to burst their banks, sending muddy water up to 3 meters (10 feet) deep into homes and businesses. The floods are said to be the worst to hit Jakarta in five years.

Meteorologists said the downpour is likely to continue for another week, and with heavy rains falling on hilly regions to the south, more flooding is threatened.

### Gas explosion kills at least 18 in Colombia

**COLOMBIA** — A gas explosion at a coal mine in north-eastern Colombia on Saturday has killed at least 18 miners, according to Sunday's BBC News.

Officials said they were trying to reach another 14 men, who were trapped underground, but their efforts were being hampered by the presence of gas.

The rescue effort resumed early Sunday after being suspended overnight.

### Kidnapped Chinese oil workers freed

**NIGERIA** — Nine Chinese oil workers abducted in Nigeria's Delta region have been freed after 11 days in captivity, BBC News reported Sunday.

The men, seized from the offices of China's National Petroleum Company, were freed after "complex efforts," China's foreign ministry said.

All nine were safe and well and were handed back to their company in Bayelsa state, according to a ministry statement.



photo courtesy of JENNY BAKER

JMU alumni Leah Goodman and Phil Dejong pull nails out of a floor during a relief trip to Biloxi, Miss., in 2005.

# There and back again

## University organizes second relief trip to New Orleans this spring

BY KELLY CONNIFF  
staff writer

JMU students are getting ready to go back to New Orleans.

The first JMU Alternative Spring Break-sponsored relief trip to New Orleans was held during Thanksgiving Break, students and faculty will return to the Big Easy to aid in the Katrina clean-up from May 6 to 13.

"For the first trip, we spent the time gutting houses and trying to get rid of the mess left over," said Heather Roberts, the administrator in Career and Academic Planning who leads the May group. "It was very neat to go back to Mississippi several months later and see some reconstruction happening and it's nice to see development."

Some students believe people have forgotten about Hurricane Katrina directly following the storms, but students like junior Lauren Caskey are looking to change that.

"They forgot about it a month after the fact, less and less in the media," she said. Caskey participated in an earlier trip and is a small group leader this time around.

During previous trips, the group used different agencies to coordinate trips, such as the National Relief Network. This time, the group

is working with Habitat for Humanity at the St. Bernard Recovery in New Orleans, one of the most devastated parishes in the city.

Previously, groups were primarily involved in the gutting of completely unsalvageable houses, and this time, the group hopes that they will be more involved in actual reconstruction.

"You have to be super flexible, because you never know what you'll be doing," Roberts said. "On other trips we've served food, given out free clothes, canvassed neighborhoods, picked up trash, and even proctored SAT tests for students in the area."

The program is utilizing a unique "pay-it-forward" system, in which each fund-raising period is paying for the next trip.

"We promised we'd come back, until the work is done," Caskey said. "It's something we have a lot of passion for, and a lot of people are really benefiting from this experience at JMU."

Part of this sustainability is making the trip cost the same for everyone going.

"This year our students are going to raise money to help sustain next year's program," Roberts said. "Because of this we're able to make the price a flat rate, \$250 for everybody, no matter what."

In order to sign up, students can enter a lottery on the ASB Web site on Monday and Tuesday. Students will be informed within the week. The lottery system was necessary because of the anticipated response to the trip.

"We think there might be more participants than we have spots to offer, because we have 56 spots on the bus, leaving 42 to 43 available spots for students and volunteers," Caskey said.

# Shocking prices force reality check on college plans

BY KATHLEEN DAY  
The Washington Post

**WASHINGTON** — College sophomore Carli McGoff could have attended the University of Maryland directly from high school, a decision her parents could afford and would have supported. But the Silver Spring resident opted instead to attend Montgomery College on a merit scholarship for two years and live at home.

Her parents calculate the decision to attend a two-year community college saved them \$26,000, money her father Chris McGoff says will now help pay for her to graduate from a four-year institution — she has applied to be accepted as a junior at Georgetown University, Gettysburg (Pa.) College and Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. Wherever she goes, she'll get a diploma at a steep discount from what four full years at any of those institutions costs.

"That's the idea," says McGoff, joking that he fears publicity will make the strategy so popular it will be harder for his three younger children to use. "I admit I had a stigma about community college. Not anymore."

As the price of college has skyrocketed, millions of middle- and upper-middle-class families like the McGoffs have juggled to find ways to keep pace. These families earn too much to qualify for need-based scholarships, but few can afford to spend tens of thousands of dollars a year without a significant hit to their finances.

Saving early, as soon as a child is born, is the obvious and best strategy. But financial planners and college experts say for those who couldn't or didn't save enough, there are many ways to ease the pain of paying for a higher education: pushing students to apply for merit awards, choosing less expensive schools, taking classes at community colleges, even beefing up

IRA contributions to reduce the annual income admissions folks will use to calculate aid.

Financial advisers say crafting an effective strategy to pay for college requires three mindsets that some middle-class parents may find tough to embrace: being realistic about what your family can afford; being honest about what the goal of college is; and being willing to choose value over prestige.

"There's a feeling in the middle class that we want our kids to go to the very best school and that that means yearly expenses of about \$40,000, no matter what," says Everett Orr, head of Orr Financial Planning in McLean, Va. "I'm alarmed by the debt people take. They think everyone's doing it. They think it's normal — parents and kids — and it's not."

In big cities, many people who feel of themselves as relatively well-off think the pinch. That's because higher-than-average living costs push the range of a middle-class income for a family of four to anywhere from \$80,000 to \$200,000, depending on many factors, such as the number of other family dependents, financial planners say.

In the past 10 years, tuition, fees and the cost of room and board have increased 31 percent at private four-year colleges and 42 percent at public four-year institutions, according to the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. For the 2006-07 academic year, for example, living on campus at a private university such as Georgetown in Washington costs more than \$180,000 over four years. Four years on campus at a state school can also be daunting — \$68,000 over four years to attend the University of Virginia for state residents, \$130,000 for out-of-state students.

Those spiraling costs mean parents ideally should start thinking about college when their children are born. The first step for parents is to agree on how much they're willing to pay: Should

they foot the bill for everything, or just tuition? Should the student be required to work or take on debt, or will her sole requirement be to perform academically? No matter what, financial advisers unanimously agree that parents should not shortchange their own retirement savings to help pay for a child's education — parents who do will only end up a burden to their children in the end.

Robert Oshinsky, a government economist, and his wife, Stephanie Weinstein, a research scientist, agree that they want to save as much as they can now to eventually cover all the higher-education expenses for their two children, a 4-year-old girl and a 20-month-old son. Oshinsky says they set aside about \$300 a month per child — after saving for retirement — and try to increase it by about 10 percent a year.

"We were both lucky to come out of undergraduate and graduate school without debt," says Oshinsky, of Rockville, Md. "We feel it's the responsibility of the parent to educate the child. Our parents helped us, and we're going to turn around and do the same for our kids."

They put the money into a 529 account, a state-sponsored, tax-advantaged savings plan that financial planners agree is the best way to save for college. An unlimited number of people — parents, grandparents — can each contribute up to \$12,000 a year per child without triggering gift-tax rules. Earnings on the money grows tax-free if it's used for higher education, a benefit that had been set to expire in a few years but that Congress just made permanent. Another feature of 529s, unlike traditional trust accounts, is that if the student the money was intended for ends up not needing it — perhaps he received a scholarship — it can be used for another child's education.

But savers should keep in mind that

see COSTS, page 4

# JMU's private giving rises

BY BEN BAYNTON  
staff writer

In a recent study conducted by the National Association of College and University Business Officers, the size of JMU's endowment was ranked 548th out of 765 participating colleges. The growth rate of JMU's endowment was 16.4 percent.

According to the NACUBO, the fair market value of JMU's endowment is \$39,073,000, which is the value of JMU's endowment if it was all converted into cash.

However, other colleges, whose student bodies are much smaller than JMU's, have seen their endowments increase tremendously. Jessica Shedd, director of research and policy analysis at NACUBO, said it is easier for smaller colleges to put up large percentage increases in their endowment because their endowments are much smaller.

For instance, Eastern Mennonite University's endowment is almost \$22 million and had a 19-percent increase last year, according to NACUBO. EMU's student body's size is approximately one-tenth the size of JMU's. JMU's total enrollment is 16,970 students.

Every year, students receive money from JMU in the form of scholarships. Money for those scholarships comes from endowments, which are usually started with a large monetary gift by a donor who wants something specific done with his or her money.

"If the endowment falls below its original value, then it will not be used that year," said EMU's vice president for Advancement Kirk Shisler.

The amount of stock that is sold depends on university policy.

"We determine what is a prudent amount to release to the university," said Thomas Schaeffer, executive vice president and chief financial officer of JMU Foundation Inc. "We look three years back at how the endowment has performed."

According to Schaeffer, the amount released is determined by the average performance of the endowment over the past three years multiplied by 4.5 percent.

"The larger institutions are more invested in longer-term investments than smaller institutions," Shedd said.

Schaeffer added, "The best way to measure us is the long-term returns. We try and average a 10-percent average return over 10 years."

JMU itself does not handle its own endowments. This is very common for universities to do, with colleges such as William & Mary and Virginia Military Institute having their own subsidiary foundations for endowments. But when it comes to investing, JMU foundations use professionals.

"We hire professional money managers," Schaeffer said. "We evaluate their performance every quarter."

# SMADtv: Network a zero-budget production

SMADtv, from front comedy sketch show and a sitcom.

"We're not trying to be too grown up with it," Perron said. "The process has taken us through a lot of different ideas already, so I'm sure there will be more changes as we get responses."

Langan said SMADtv hopes to give students involved the professional experience they want while providing entertainment for JMU.

Junior Nate Smith, line producer of a comedy drama called "Shuttlecocks" is enjoying working on SMADtv. Shuttlecocks' plot is centered on four freshmen that form an intramural badminton team, but also displays their struggles on and off the court.

"I think it's great for production experience," Smith said. "It's an opportunity to be completely creative and come up with something original."

SMADtv is a zero-budget production using SMAD equipment, studio, and whatever they get "in kind" from businesses and organizations. According to Langan, local establishments have been willing to help.

"That's what we're really excited about, bringing the community into it," Langan said. "Harrisonburg has a lot to offer that a lot of freshmen don't have access to. We want to give them a window to outside of 22807."

Langan hopes SMADtv will grow to include the rest of the campus, suggesting that College of Business students become involved in marketing, or theater majors as performers.

"I'm trying to set this up and leave something that can be built on," Langan said.

Casey added, "I'm hoping that SMADtv will be something that fosters JMU community involvement, JMU creativity and a steady source of entertainment by and for JMU students."

## COSTS: State plans feature tax breaks for contributions

**COSTS**, from page 3

529 funds are much like mutual fund investments, with the accompanying risk of loss as well as gains. They are run by financial firms on behalf of each state, which means the way money is invested varies, as does an investor's ability to control those decisions. Families should check and compare plans.

Many state plans feature the added bonus of state tax breaks for contributions. One trick for the truly organized: Set up a 529 fund for yourself in the years before having a baby, and then transfer it to the child's name once he or she arrives.

Education savings strategies should be adjusted as a child's college enrollment date draws closer, financial planners say. Money should be shifted from stocks to safer investments, such as bonds and money-market accounts, so sudden market shifts don't erode gains just as they are needed.

Before children begin to look seriously at schools, planners recommend that parents calculate what they can spend.

"Whenever you start, involve your kids and make sure they understand what you expect to pay, if anything, and the trade-off between public and private school costs," says William Harmon, of Collegiate Funding Solutions, a firm in North Carolina that provides college-funding strategies to financial planners.

Tom and Janet McGinnis decided early on — and made clear to their three children — that they could afford to pay for each to attend a Virginia state college. The children would have to pay their own way for extras like summer travel. And for graduate school, the kids were on their own.

Their eldest daughter, who works in computer sci-

ence, studied at James Madison University. Their second daughter went to the College of William & Mary and is now on scholarship at Washington University in St. Louis pursuing an advanced medical degree. Their son, the youngest child, is to graduate from William & Mary this year and plans to go to law school. His choice will depend on which institution offers him more money.

"Why would I have spent \$45,000 a year to send them somewhere else?" says Tom McGinnis, a retired Army captain who is proud to say

he paid the college bills for all three without incurring any debt.

Planners argue against sending children to a costly, brand-name college just to impress friends and relatives. At the same time, they urge families not to rule out a school that suits a child's needs simply because of price. That's because it's possible that a family's expected contribution could be the same at a college that costs \$8,000 a year and at one that costs \$35,000, with both institutions offering aid to make up the difference.

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The Best of What's Around

## Unpeaceful protest

'March for Peace' on National Mall was anything but

BY CRAIG FINKELSTEIN  
staff writer

The recent protest marches on Washington, D.C., organized by the advocacy group United for Peace and Justice, have been receiving a lot of softball commentary and gushy reporting from many news agencies. While it is certainly a newsworthy event, it seems as though everyone has shied away from the apparent fallacies of the so-called "Peace March."

If it were truly a march for peace, then terrorism would also have been denounced and there would have been calls for Palestinian terrorists to cease blowing themselves up on civilian buses in Israel. The protest would have called for regimes like Iran and North Korea to cease enriching materials for making nuclear weapons. There would also have been demands for Iraqi insurgents to stop kidnapping Americans, brutally torturing and beheading them. None of these positions were taken up; instead the march was against American foreign policy and the Bush administration. If this was the main goal of the march, then it should not have been portrayed as being a march for "peace."

What really struck a chord with me were reports of how protesters treated war veteran Joshua Sparling all while claiming to be protesting against the war and not the troops.

Sparling served in the army and did a tour of duty in Iraq, where he fell victim to an improvised explosive device attack and had to return to the United States to undergo several corrective surgeries. Sparling ended up losing a leg and now must travel in a wheelchair. Upon returning to the United States for treatment, he received a death threat from an individual who was against the war, stating that he should have died in Iraq.

To show his support for the troops and for the mission, Sparling attended the recent protests in Washington. Seated with members of his family and voicing his opposition to the so-called peace rally, Sparling was attacked by a mob of

angry "peace" protesters and subsequently spit on. Police had to form a barricade around Sparling, since he was handicapped and could not defend himself, and then escort him out. The *New York Times* covered Sparling's story on Jan. 28 and he was interviewed about his experience on Fox News the following week.

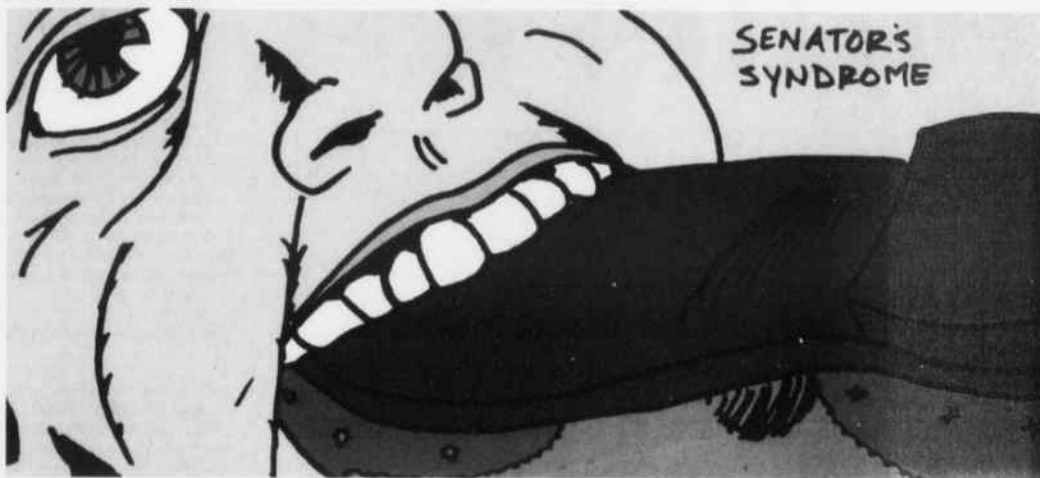
This is a terrible and pathetic display of sincerity for the members of our armed services. A man goes over to Iraq and gets his leg blown off while serving our country, and instead of honoring him, a group of protesters felt the need to attack him. The common saying from those who are against the war is that they are not against the troops; however, such low-class behavior like the way Sparling was treated proves that notion to be completely false.

Additionally, another group of "patriotic protesters" vandalized portions of the Capitol building with spray paint. Again, while protesters of the Iraq war claim that they are not against America, just the war, why is it that they deface a government building? To add to their credibility, a Hollywood celebrity entourage attended the march to use their prestige for strengthening the cause, because after all, overpaid actors are really the most informed citizens of America.

In the end, this gathering will change nothing about the war. Sadly, it is the immature misbehavior of some protesters that makes everyone not want to hear the concerns of those who might not have behaved this way and may possess respectable ideas. The real problem exists when those who are naive fall victim to conspiracy theory and unsubstantiated reasoning much like the messages sent by the protest. My suggestion to UFPJ and those who bought into its logic is to next time approach their disagreements about the war with real, feasible and researched suggestions and to stop relying on Michael Moore propaganda to fuel their cause.

Craig Finkelstein is a senior international affairs major.

House Editorial



## For Biden, silence is golden

It is hard to campaign with one's foot wedged firmly in one's mouth

Is it so hard to be a senator?

Three-day workweeks, optional attendance, free health care. It's a life of public appearances and schmoozing. And in the age of the 24-hour news networks, a congressional existence has become more about style than substance.

Between television appearances, fund raisers and just generally being seen, senators are given ample opportunities to practice public speaking — and seeing as it's become their primary use, you'd think they'd be better at it.

Last week, Joe Biden — a Democratic presidential hopeful and senator from Delaware — failed miserably at this, the most important of senatorial jobs.

Wednesday, Biden said this about Barack Obama, a fellow Democratic presidential hopeful who happens to be black: "I mean, you got the first mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy. I mean that's storybook, man."

Given a senator's reliance on public image, it's almost certain Biden didn't intend to demean Obama's race, but it all comes back to public speaking and perception.

For politicians, it's their lifeblood. Few voters read position papers, or pay attention to how a particular senator votes on bills and resolutions, so the barometer for public judgment is in the pictures on the TV.

The moral of the story is "watch what you say."

If the realm of public opinion can be described by one word, it would be delicate. So much is off-limits to talk about, with race and religion topping the list of unmentionables — especially for white males over 60 (Biden is 64). It's never been so easy to outrage the masses, and it seems the public is almost willing to be offended.

That being said, is it so hard to keep one's foot out of one's mouth? Today it's more important than ever to not say dumb things, as they will be replayed over and over on news networks and picked apart by pundits. It can ruin a career. See Howard Dean.

Political types have a small army of speech writers and advisers counseling them on public sentiment, what to say and what not to say. In the case of Biden, perhaps he tried a bit too hard to be hip — and as a white male over 60, he doesn't exactly meet popular criteria.

Biden isn't a racist. He just isn't very eloquent, but since when has eloquence been a prerequisite for election?

The Democrats have already retaken Congress. In 2008, they're setting their sights on the White House, and in order to do so, they'll need every ounce of good PR they can get.

It won't happen, but here's an idea: If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all.

Through the Looking Glass

## Timely notifications should never be fashionably late

Two-day delay with informational e-mails does nothing to calm nerves, defeating the purpose and feeding the fear

BY SARAH DELIA  
staff writer

You may or may not know what a timely notification is — what with the numerous mass e-mails sent by the excessive amounts of a cappella groups on campus it's likely that you saw yet another mass e-mail and quickly trashed it. Or simply, you could not be receiving these online documents that are supposed to be sent out to JMU faculty, students and staff for no apparent reason at all.

Sending out timely notification e-mails was mandated in accordance to the Campus Crime Statistic Act of 1998 in an attempt to inform the JMU community of any illegal and potentially dangerous activity reported to the police. These notifications essentially keep the public in check and remind us that the bubble effect created by the seemingly safe and secluded environment of college can be popped at any moment. The idea of being alerted to illegal activity going on in the JMU community is a great and important concept — however, this idea has yet to be placed into appropriate practice, as timely notifications are sent out sometimes days after the fact and not even to every member of the JMU community.

Merely supplying a brief, ambiguous e-mail is not enough to satisfy the students and community members who are fearful when they receive e-mails such as the one sent out Jan. 25. This particular e-mail recounted

an instance when, two days prior, a female student had been allegedly abducted and raped in the area of Memorial Hall. This timely notification has been the only information released to the public and the media from JMU, making it impossible for any newspa-

per to report on behalf of the alleged victim or to alert the public. JMU's Media Relations office described the ongoing investigation of the rape of Jan. 23, as one that posed "no potential threat to the JMU community," and that

*Merely supplying a brief, ambiguous e-mail is not enough to satisfy the students and community members who are fearful.*

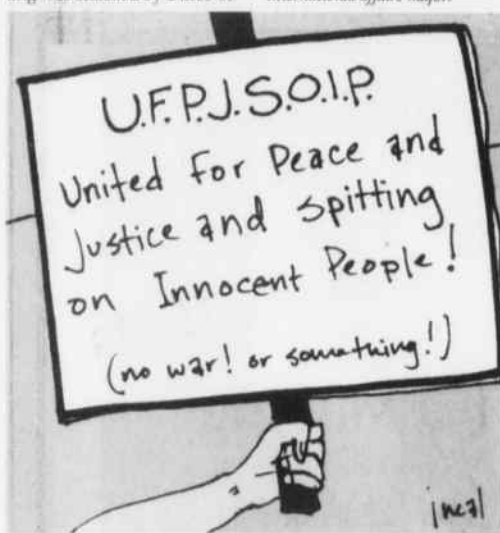
students are not getting them. "The intent," Egle says, "is for the e-mails to be received by all faculty, staff and students," and went on to say that they are working with the tech support group on campus to find students not on the mail-

ing list and place them on it. Egle also stated that law enforcement representatives might have "good reasons for why the investigation is going the way it is." But as a female student who lives within walking distance of Memorial Hall, I wonder what these good reasons could be.

If there is no potential threat to this community because either the victim made false claims or the abductor was taken into custody (neither of which Egle was able to confirm or deny), then why should this information not be shared with the public immediately so there is no unwarranted distress? Media Relations is urging the public to trust the JMU and Harrisonburg police, who are both committed to JMU's safety — apparently the public's right to know their community's safety is not included in this commitment. It is also questionable as to why there was a 48-hour delay when sending out the "timely" notification. Media Relations has to wait for information and then assess the potential threat level. Evidently an alleged rape does not need the immediate notification of JMU students, but rather 48 hours after the fact is an appropriate time frame.

Speaking not as students or employees of JMU but as residents of Harrisonburg, we should not only be informed for the sake of our safety, but because it is our right — regardless of this tight-lipped sentiment spread throughout the university.

Sarah Delia is a sophomore English and art history major.



### Editorial Policies

The house editorial reflects the opinion of the editorial board as a whole, and is not necessarily the opinion of any individual staff member of The Breeze.

### Editorial Board:

Matthew Stoss, editor in chief  
Caitie White, managing editor  
Brian Goodman, opinion editor

The opinions in this section do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the newspaper, this staff or James Madison University.



A "Simon-says-no" dart to the "American Idol" wannabe singing to the song on her iPod while using the treadmill next to me at UREC.

From a junior who didn't find your serenade necessary and will never forget to bring her own iPod to the gym again.

A "whatever-floats-your-boat" pat to all those darted in *The Breeze* for their fashion and lifestyle choices.

From a fellow college student that feels these judgmental people should realize how boring this world would be if we were all the same.

An "I'm-sorry-you-think-you're-so-important" dart to all the people at Mrs. Green's who pretend to know someone at the front of the line and then cut.

From a freshman girl who has more self respect than to cut in front of all the patiently waiting people as though they were entitled.

A "harassment-made-my-day" pat to the guy who attempted to hug a passing friend but instead dive bombed her to the ground.

From an "already sick of school" sophomore whose day greatly improved because of their embarrassment.

A "this-is-not-the-Daytona-500" dart to the JMU utilities trucks for speeding around the sidewalks and almost running over my roommate and me.

From a sophomore girl who enjoyed the sense of security and protection from moving vehicles on-campus sidewalks used to provide.

A "you-restored-my-faith-in-humanity" pat to the guy who drove out of his way to return my JAC Card he found across campus.

From a sophomore girl who realizes her card could have fallen into less-honest hands and is so appreciative of your small act of kindness.

Submit Darts & Pats online at thebreeze.org, or e-mail submissions to breezedp@hotmail.com.

Darts & Pats are submitted anonymously and are printed on a space-available basis. Submissions are based upon one person's opinion of a given situation, person or event, and do not necessarily reflect the truth.

# GAMES AND PUZZLES



## Sudoku

4		8	7	1		5	6	
	2				6			7
3					8			
7						3		
	1						5	
		5						9
			8					1
8			2				3	
	5	3		4	7	2		6

**Rules:** Fill in the grid with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 so that in each row, each column, and each of the three-by-three squares, each number appears exactly once. There is only one correct way to fill in the grid.

**Difficulty:** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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See today's answers online at [thebreeze.org](http://thebreeze.org)

## Letters to the Editor

### Front-page photo 'shoot' inappropriate

I found the picture centered on the Feb. 1 issue's front page to be highly inappropriate. The picture to which I refer is of the rescue worker holding his fingers up to his head as though to indicate a gunshot wound to the head. I understand that the article was about a man who is thought to have committed suicide here in Harrisonburg, and I understand the picture was not intended to be hurtful. However, as a school publication, it is important that we preserve the dignity of the community as much as possible. The pose, although an "action shot" and not planned by the photographer, does make light of the serious situation — some family out there has just lost its son/brother/etc. In the future, I would ask the editors to consider more carefully the scene they are portraying and attempt to preserve the dignity of the individuals affected most severely by it.

Rachael Wenger

junior biology and environmental management major

### Making much of a good economy

Patrick Callahan's Feb. 1 article, "Made in China," serves as another piece of commentary that gets the American public to point the finger of blame at anybody but themselves. The article claims that America's economy is undercut by manufacturing jobs in other countries. How many more jobs do we need in America? While this seems audacious to ask, a December report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics said that unemployment rates remain

steady at 4.5 percent. If I remember my ECON 101 class correctly, that's "full employment." Most of that 4.5 percent is not seeking a job, or they are inbetween jobs looking for another [better] job. For whom are politicians protecting these jobs? Illegal aliens?

Secondly, Callahan's heart bleeds for American companies who "shouldn't have to compete" with poor countries. America needs to wake up and realize that the economy does not operate in a vacuum. General Motors' demise is because of its own hands. Its years of lobbying against higher emissions requirements, such as catalytic converters back in the mid-1970s, have finally come back to bite them in the wallet. Many American cars, unlike their Japanese counterparts, cannot be sold in many foreign markets due to their poor emissions standards.

Finally, Americans do need to save. Mass consumerism is the culprit here, not outsourcing. If Callahan wants to truly make an example, I suggest he bypass the "chain appeal" of Cracker Barrel for a Sunday brunch provided by the local farmers of the Shenandoah Valley.

Sean Lowry

sophomore international affairs and economics major

### Editorial Policies

Responses to all articles and opinions published in *The Breeze* are welcomed and encouraged. Letters should be no longer than 250 words, must include a name, academic year, major and phone number for verification and can be e-mailed to [opinion@thebreeze.org](mailto:opinion@thebreeze.org) or mailed to MSC 6805 G1, Anthony-Seeger Hall, Harrisonburg, VA 22807. *The Breeze* reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and grammatical style.

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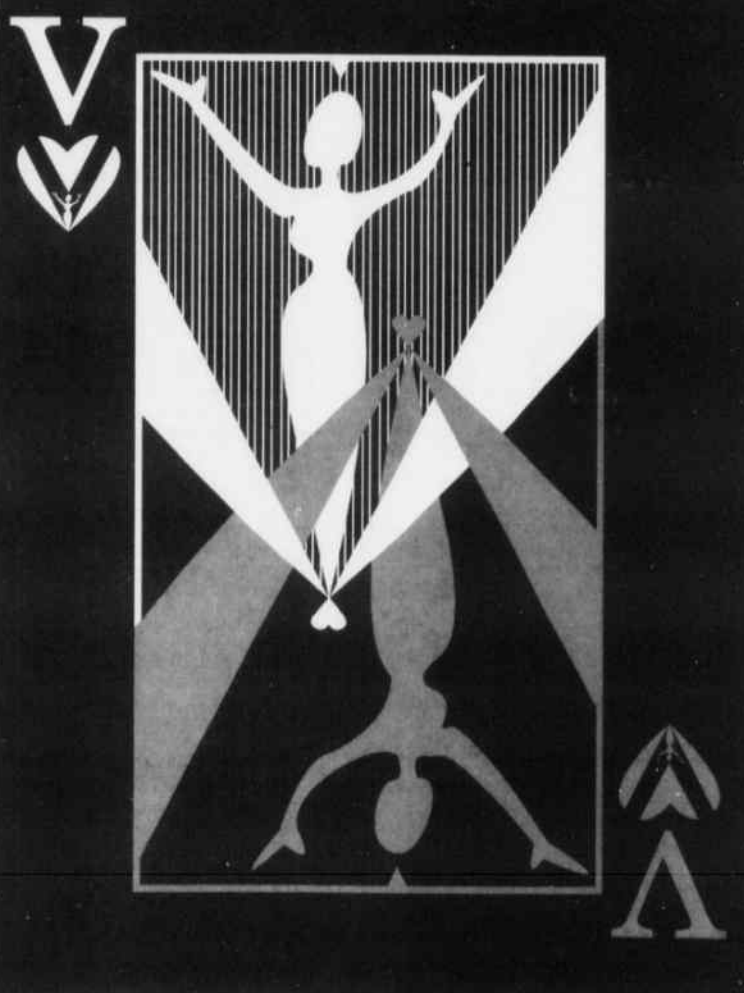
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## Kickin' It Far Post No sweet 16 for the Monarchs

The undefeated women's basketball team finally sits alone atop the Colonial Athletic Association standings after handing rival Old Dominion a royal shellacking Thursday night, 79-50.

But is this just another tease for JMU, who last season won 24 games, had a postseason WNIT appearance, but still could not take the hardware away from the Monarchs?

Not likely, if you listen to coach Kenny Brooks and his team.

The Dukes have a month of regular-season basketball left that includes eight CAA matchups. JMU has won its first 10 conference games this season, beating its opponents by an average of 18 points. With firepower like that and already at 18-2, Madison could easily outdo last season's impressive record. Plus, the Dukes already know they can run the court with the big dogs, as they gave No. 2 Delaware and No. 3 Old Dominion their only conference losses of the season.

Add to that the confidence boost of an Associated Press Top-25 ranking and you have the new Madison women's basketball team.

ODU got its chance to see the new JMU and left with its worst-ever CAA loss. The 29-point loss Thursday shattered its previous worst defeat of 14 (71-57) at East Carolina on Feb. 22, 1992.

Senior center Meredith Alexis was a big reason why.

Despite being doubled on a daily basis by defenses, Alexis found success against the Monarchs, knocking down a game-high 21 points. Junior guard Tamara Young and senior guard/forward Shirley McCall joined Alexis in double-figure scoring, with 15 points each.

The three seniors combined for more points than the entire ODU squad. The Dukes won it easily over an ODU team that has owned the CAA for the past 15 seasons. It was ODU's 16th loss in 251 CAA regular-season games.

Momentum comes in many forms. A 29-point win over the reigning champs is one of them. The Dukes have now won 10 consecutive games and their 15th in their last 17 contests.

Question: Who wants to play JMU in the Convocation Center? Answer: No one.

With the win over ODU, the Dukes' home winning streak has reached 23. And when the Dukes aren't extending streaks of their own, they are ending them for their opponents.

Most recently, JMU snapped ODU's nine-game winning streak Thursday and the Dukes have ended an opponent's winning streak of five or more games seven other times this season.

Brooks has his team focused and even more dominant than last season, especially at home. And after losing to ODU last year in the CAA championship game, there is only one goal and one way for Madison to go, as it has yet to lose in conference since then.

When it's all said and done, the Monarchs of Old Dominion will not be hoisting the CAA trophy this year. Instead, their dominating run of 15-straight titles will end and the championship will be up for grabs. With a senior-laden squad and all the momentum in the world, the time is now for JMU.

John Galle is a senior SMAD major concentrating in print journalism.



KELLIE NOWLIN/staff photographer  
 Senior guard Lesley Dickinson and the Dukes are in the CAA driver's seat after beating ODU.

# Boys of Winter?

## Dukes preparing to defend regular season CAA title

BY TIM CHAPMAN  
 staff writer

In the sub-freezing temperatures of late January, the JMU baseball players began practice last week.

The snow and freezing rain were the last things on the team's mind, though, as they took batting practice Thursday at Long Field/Mauk Stadium.

Coach Spanky McFarland and his staff began formulating this year's lineup that has to replace the loss of three Major League Baseball draftees in Michael Cowgill (Minnesota Twins), Greg Nesbit (Seattle Mariners), and Ryan Reid (Tampa Bay Devil Rays).

"We lost some good players, but we had the opportunity [last season] to play a lot of guys because we scored so many runs," McFarland said.

Madison will look to junior center fielder Kellen Kulbacki to continue providing the offense that earned him the Colonial Athletic Association Player of the Year award, as well as National Co-Player of the Year by the *Collegiate Baseball News*. Kulbacki led all of Division I in 2006 with 24 home runs, while batting .464 and driving in 75 runs to win the CAA triple crown.

"Last year I had a very successful season and I know there's high expectations for the team and myself," Kulbacki said. "I'm just going to try to use the outside energy as momentum on the field."

The Dukes are still tweaking the batting order and are looking for the best combination to surround Kulbacki. They no longer have Cowgill, who finished second nationally with 23 home runs and

is JMU's all-time home run leader with 41, or last year's third-team All-American first baseman, Nate Schill.

"We still have some guys back and they're at the stage where a lot of them need to look to step up," McFarland said.

On the mound, Madison also looks to fill voids left by Nesbit and Reid. McFarland, whose book "Coaching Pitchers" has sold 40,000 copies, will need his expertise to help a young staff mature quickly. Redshirt sophomore Kurt Houck, an Atlanta Braves draft pick out of high school, leads the weekend rotation. Freshman Kyle Hoffman is also expected to be in the three-game rotation for the Friday-through-Sunday CAA series.

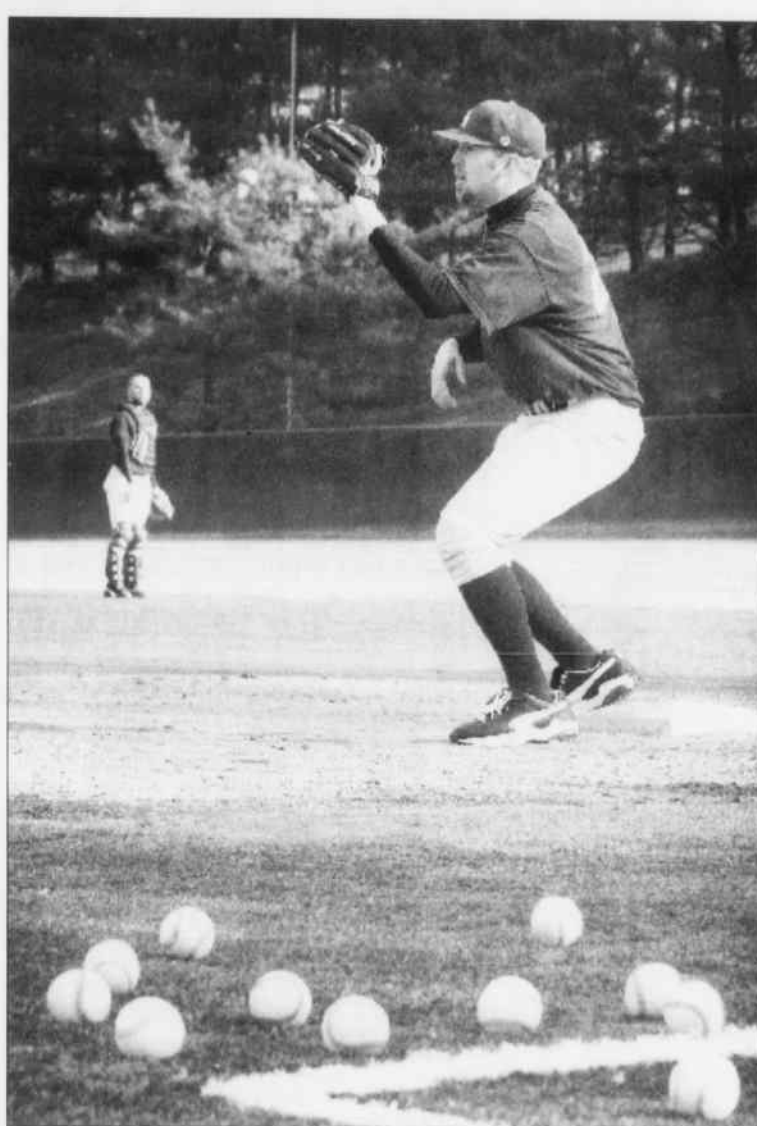
University of Virginia transfer Allie Swanson will add depth to a bullpen that struggled last season. The red-shirt senior, who has been jokingly nicknamed "Grandpa" by his teammates, also brings the "big-program" experience of playing in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

"It's tough to say," Swanson said of what exactly his role on the team will be. "I'm just going to go out there and try to get guys out and help the team win in whatever role I'm given."

After the losses to graduation and an exit in the semifinals of the CAA tournament last season, the Dukes are slated to finish fifth, according to the league's preseason coaches' poll.

"We definitely have higher expectations than finishing fifth," Kulbacki said. "It's almost a good thing, because we can use it as fuel for our fire."

Last season, JMU finished first in the CAA with 36-19 record overall, including a 22-8 conference record. The Dukes open their season Feb. 17 with a doubleheader at home against Fordham.



KELLIE NOWLIN/staff photographer  
 Freshman right-hander Dustin Crouch covers first base in practice last week. The winter temperatures have not prevented the Dukes from hitting the field to get ready for the season.

## Seniors, young guns set for softball season

### Sophomore triple threat on deck for 2007

BY KELLY PUCILLO  
 contributing writer

The 2007 JMU softball team will look to a record-breaking sophomore class to push them into contention for this season's Colonial Athletic Association crown.

A trio of sophomores gives the Dukes hope for the upcoming season offensively. Outfielder Kaitlyn Wernsing and catcher Julia Dominguez both finished the year hitting a team-high .343 while third baseman Amber Kirk finished right behind them with a .299

average. Dominguez also led the Dukes with a JMU single-season record 10 home runs, 28 RBIs and a .628 slugging percentage.

Sophomore pitcher Meredith Felts led Madison with 11 wins while striking 135 batters in 139 1/3 innings pitched. She finished the season with 12 complete games and ranks first in single-season leaders strikeouts while tying for fourth in wins. Felts held opponents to a .222 batting average while walking on 34 batters all season.

The 2006 team finished sixth in the CAA with a record of 24-28, but coach Katie Flynn expects great things for 2007 after last season's defensive struggles.

"It's a game of mistakes," the sixth-year coach said, "but this season we have a lot more

weapons."

Those weapons start with senior captain and starting shortstop Katie George.

George, who was also voted a captain last season, was a dual-threat on offense batting .295, driving in 21 runs and also stealing 15 bases on 16 attempts.

The Dukes also have a strong freshman class that will add depth to a promising rotation. Freshman left-handed pitcher Brandon Moss out of Trinity High School in Richmond will, according to Flynn, be seeing a lot of time on the mound.

Other promising newcomers are center fielder Courtney Simons and sophomore first baseman Shannon Moxey, a transfer from West Virginia Wesleyan College.

As far as experience, the

Dukes lost just one starter from last season — Briana Carrera. JMU has plenty of young returning talent that is ready to step up and lead the team.

"The younger players are contributing a lot more; the freshmen are stepping in right away," George said.

Having nine new additions will always create a different vibe, but the senior leadership on this year's team is working to bring the team together.

"It's always different with new players," senior captain and first baseman Sally Smith said, "but practice has been a lot of fun."

Flynn said this year's team also has depth and more utility players. Thus, not only are injuries less of a worry than past seasons, but now players

are improving faster.

Flynn said that there are no glaring weaknesses. They are a healthy team, and all the players have a really great mindset as they are starting to mesh and develop team chemistry.

The freezing weather has forced the team to practice inside, but the energy and efforts of everyone has successfully brought them together — especially in the past two weeks.

"We are really playing well together," George said.

Added Flynn: "Everything we are doing now is preparing for May."

The Dukes' first game is at The College of Charleston Tournament on Feb. 16.

"I think we're going to be really, really good," George said. "It's my senior year. I want to go out with a bang."

## Rascati leads Nation to victory

### Former JMU QB throws game-winner

EL PASO, TEXAS — In the inaugural Texas vs. The Nation All-Star Classic, senior Justin Rascati attempted to prove just what he can do against some of the best in Division-I football.

Rascati went 6-for-13 passing for 83 yards including the game-winning touchdown with 9:25 left to play in the fourth quarter. The Nation defeated Team Texas 24-20.

Rascati also threw an interception on the opening drive of the game to Iowa State defensive tackle Brent Curvey, after he had led the team down to the Texas 32-yard line.

The former JMU quarterback and all-time leading passer in school history, led the nation in rushing, running it twice for 33 yards. He was

second on the team in passing yards behind Georgetown College (Kentucky) quarterback Jeff Smith, who went 9-12 for 130 yards, but also threw an interception in the game.

The Gainesville, Fla., native broke a number of school records on his way to leading the Dukes to a 29-9 career record, including the 2004 Division I-AA national championship. This past season Rascati took JMU into the Division I-AA playoffs for a second time, but the Dukes fell to Youngstown State in the first round, 35-31.

He threw for 6,089 yards, 52 touchdowns and 18 interceptions in his career.

Rascati is currently training in Atlanta, preparing himself for the 2007 NFL Draft. He is also hoping to get an invite to the NFL Scouting Combine held Feb. 21 to 27 in Indianapolis.

— from staff reports

## Madison steals win on road

### Carter has career night, Dukes down Delaware

NEWARK, DEL. — The JMU men's basketball team (7-16 overall, 4-9 in the Colonial Athletic Association) completed a season sweep of the University of Delaware (4-20, 2-11) Saturday with a 69-64 victory at Delaware.

The Dukes got career highs of 28 points and five assists from junior forward Terrence Carter, eclipsing his previous career-high of 23 points, scored Dec. 30 against New Jersey Institute of Technology. He also grabbed a game-high 12 rebounds to record his fifth double-double of the season.

Madison led by as many as 19 in the first half and took a 14-point lead into halftime. The Blue Hens continued to battle and whittled the Dukes' lead all the way down to one point with just 12 seconds left to play, but Carter sealed the game with four free throws in the final seconds.

JMU trailed 6-2 at the start after Delaware forward Herb Courtney hit on back-to-back 3-pointers. The Dukes would score the next seven points of the game to take a 9-6 lead, and did not trail the rest of the way.

Sophomore guard Joe Posey finished with 13 points to join Carter as the only two Dukes in double figures. Sophomore forward Juwann James had four assists, six points and five rebounds, and freshman point guard Pierre Curtis added seven points and four assists.

— from staff reports



EVAN DYSON/file photo  
 JMU freshman point guard Pierre Curtis had seven points, four assists and three steals against the Blue Hens Saturday.

Mainstreet Bar & Grill Presents

# February Theme Parties

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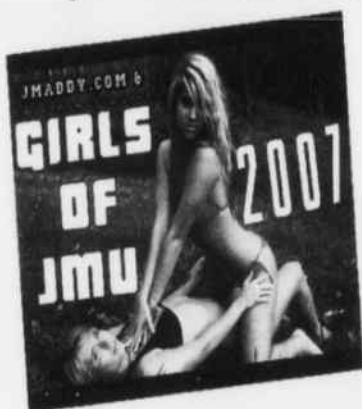
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Graduate student Doug Roberts signs his contract with 80 One Records. Director of JMU's record label Maleika Cole looks on.

SUSAN SOMMERFELDT/contributing photographer



## Doug Roberts signs with 80 One Records

BY KELLY FISHER  
A&E editor

A few months ago, grad student Doug Roberts sat in his bedroom in Stone Gate, furiously writing and recording songs. Now things are bit different for this aspiring musician.

Roberts has recently signed an Artist Development deal with 80 One Records, becoming the fourth artist on JMU's record label, joining the likes of Nathaniel Baker, Nelly Kate and Eddie Cain Irvin.

Having graduated in 2004 with a degree in history and interactive media with a minor in music industry, Roberts continued at JMU pursuing a Master of Science degree in computer science and will finish up this May. Even though he loves making music, he hopes to jump into the working

world after graduation and keep his music on the side — at first.

"I'm trying to do the whole '9-to-5' thing with computer science and do the music thing on nights and weekends at first," Roberts said.

But for now, Roberts is all about his new contract with 80 One Records.

Having written more than 50 songs himself, Roberts calls his style "pop-rock, with country overtones in the production."

Roberts, who is originally from Sterling, has been interested in music since he was a kid and can play a wide variety of instruments, including saxophone, tuba, piano, banjo and accordion. However, his main instrument these days is guitar.

"I grew up listening to Billy Joel, but mainly mid-to-late '90s bands is where I get a lot of my

inspiration," Roberts said, naming off bands such as Cake, the Presidents of the United States of America and Ben Folds.

As for his personal favorite of his own songs, Roberts likes "Go South" best because of its lyrics. Some of his other songs, such as "22," and "Hope, Faith and Love," have a more mellow vibe, and "Figure I'm a 6" adds a little bit of country twang.

Roberts finally moved from his bedroom studio when he joined up with 80 One Records this past fall.

"I had played a couple of open mic nights in TDU," Roberts said. "I knew about 80 One, and submitted a demo."

Junior Maleika Cole, director of 80 One Records, recognized Roberts' talent immediately.

"When I got his demo, I just put it in, heard his gorgeous melodies and I was pretty much done,"

Cole said. "I knew he was going to be signed."

Since signing, Roberts held auditions through UPB and put together a band. They are working on recording their debut album in the coming weeks.

As for other students hoping to sign with 80 One Records, Cole encourages them to submit their demos. They are actively looking for new artists.

Roberts urges anyone hoping to get things rolling with his or her own music career to follow their dreams.

"I just wrote in my bedroom for the longest time," he said. "Get up and go somewhere and see if it works."

It seems to have worked for Roberts. He and his band will perform Feb. 14 at TDU at 9:30 p.m. To hear some of Roberts' songs, check out his MySpace page at [myspace.com/dougrobertsmusic](http://myspace.com/dougrobertsmusic).

### Preview

## Don't waste your time, 'Because I Said So'

Keaton's latest film tries to be funny but fails on all accounts

BY CAITE WHITE  
senior writer

"Because I Said So" wants to be dramatic, but funny. It wants to be a story of romance and love, but still funny. It wants to be a story about a mother's unyielding devotion to her three daughters, but somehow wants to throw in a few things that make it funny. Unfortunately, it fails on nearly all accounts.

The movie opens with the eldest daughter of Daphne Wilder's (Diane Keaton, "The Family Stone") eldest daughter Maggie (Lauren Graham, TV's "Gilmore Girls") getting married. There's a fabulous cake, beautiful dresses and the mother and her three daughters bonding. Next scene: The second daughter Mae (Piper Perabo, "The Prestige") is getting married. There's a fabulous cake, beautiful dresses and the mother and her three daughters bonding.

Next scene: The third daughter, Milly (Mandy Moore, "Saved") is getting married. The third daughter is a notorious relationship screw-up and has yet to find Mr. Right. It's a good thing her mother is there to place a personal ad seeking her daughter's perfect mate. Of course, a lame montage of unsuitable suitors follows where Daphne tries to choose which one she thinks would be best. The very last interviewee, an uptight

architect (Tom Everett Scott, TV's "Saved") waltzes in and charms the 1950s hoopskirt and cravat right off her. Unfortunately, the musician across the room (Gabriel Macht, "The Good Shepherd") also finds Daphne's idea intriguing and "has a feeling" he'd really like her daughter, too. He steals Milly's business card off the table and the audience gets the feeling that that's not the last time we'll be seeing Johnny. But that's just a guess.

Actually, the funniest scene in the movie involves the tattooed (his hand isn't the only place he has one, he lets us know) musician. From across the street, he watches Milly struggle with her static cling until finally she removes the slip she's wearing in the middle of the road and catches the attention of a red balloon, which sticks to her backside. It stays there through the rest of the scene while Johnny charms her with the idea that ice cream gets rid of static cling (as an ice cream truck rolls by). Moore overacts her response to his "What's your favorite flavor?" question, trying too hard to be funny and charming at the same time — a problem she has throughout the entire movie.

Perhaps the most entertaining character in the movie was the one the audience barely sees, save a few scenes in which she counsels Stuart (Tony Hale, "Arrested Development") (conveniently also some-

one who responded to Daphne's personal ad), a suicidal hypoglycemic patient whom Milly eventually opens the window for and encourages jumping through it. Graham, as the wiser eldest daughter, lends a calm realism to the movie that the other three characters don't. Instead, they make you feel nervous.

Even Keaton disappoints. If anything, avoid this movie simply to keep your image of her as Annie Hall or even Annie Paradis in "The First Wives Club." In "Because I Said So," she draws on her stock over-the-top gestures and that same scrunched-up "waaaaaaa" face she's grown so accustomed to using. It's physically uncomfortable to watch her parading through each scene in her ridiculously buttoned-up outfit while she meddles in her daughter's life.

At the very least, the movie is a nice 102-minute escape. Unfortunately, you're escaping to a world where humor is responded to with nervous laughter and creativity is replaced with cliché. Because I said so, wait to get this one on DVD.

### Because I Said So



Diane Keaton,  
Mandy Moore

### Preview

## Theatre II explores family relations

### 'Eleemosynary' provides plenty of raw emotion

BY LINDSAY CASALE  
contributing writer

Although audience members may have trouble pronouncing its name, they certainly won't have any trouble relating to the universal themes presented in Theatre II's latest production, "Eleemosynary."

Written by Lee Blessing, "Eleemosynary" is at its core a glimpse into family relationships and how they ultimately shape individuals into adults.

The Stratford Players' production of "Eleemosynary" is directed by senior Kourtney Merricks. The cast is small — comprised of three female actors. The characters include Dorothea, played by senior Michelle Crouse, Artie, played by junior Lauren Meyer and Echo, played by junior McLean Fletcher.

"Our cast works great together. Everyone is fun and easy to work with — and smart," Crouse said of the cast's dynamic.

Merricks had similarly kind things to say about her three-person cast.

"I am so lucky to work with such talented actors," Merricks said. "They all take direction well."

Blessing's play focuses on the three women of the Westbrook family: Dorothea, her daughter Artie and her granddaughter Echo. Through illness, separation and general familial dysfunction, the characters come to discover new facets of their respective relationships.

"I was attracted to this play because the relationships are dysfunctional, but through this dysfunction something beautiful appears," Merricks said. "I want the audience to gain a sense of appreciation for how their family relationships have shaped them into who they are."

In this production, the actors were faced with the challenge of creating a sense of realism while conveying some rather intense themes.

"Channeling attributes of my parents and putting them together helped me a great deal in shaping my character," Crouse said of her personal experience of preparing to play Dorothea.

The production will prove to be simple yet effective, carrying its impact in heartfelt dialogue and the significant interactions between family members.

"Through this production I want the audience to gain a realization of how every relationship in a family is different,"

**Eleemosynary**  
Merricks Feb. 6 to Feb. 10  
said. "But Theatre II that in the

same sense, there are a lot of things that individual family relationships share."

"Eleemosynary" provides well-wrought emotions that all audience members will relate to and appreciate.

"Audience members can expect to laugh a little, cry a little and hopefully take away a message of hope and acceptance," Crouse said.

"Eleemosynary" runs Feb. 6 to Feb. 10 at 8 p.m. in Theatre II, with a 2 p.m. matinee on Saturday. Tickets will be on sale today from 4 to 7 p.m. and two hours before the shows.



graphic by LAUREN PACK/art director



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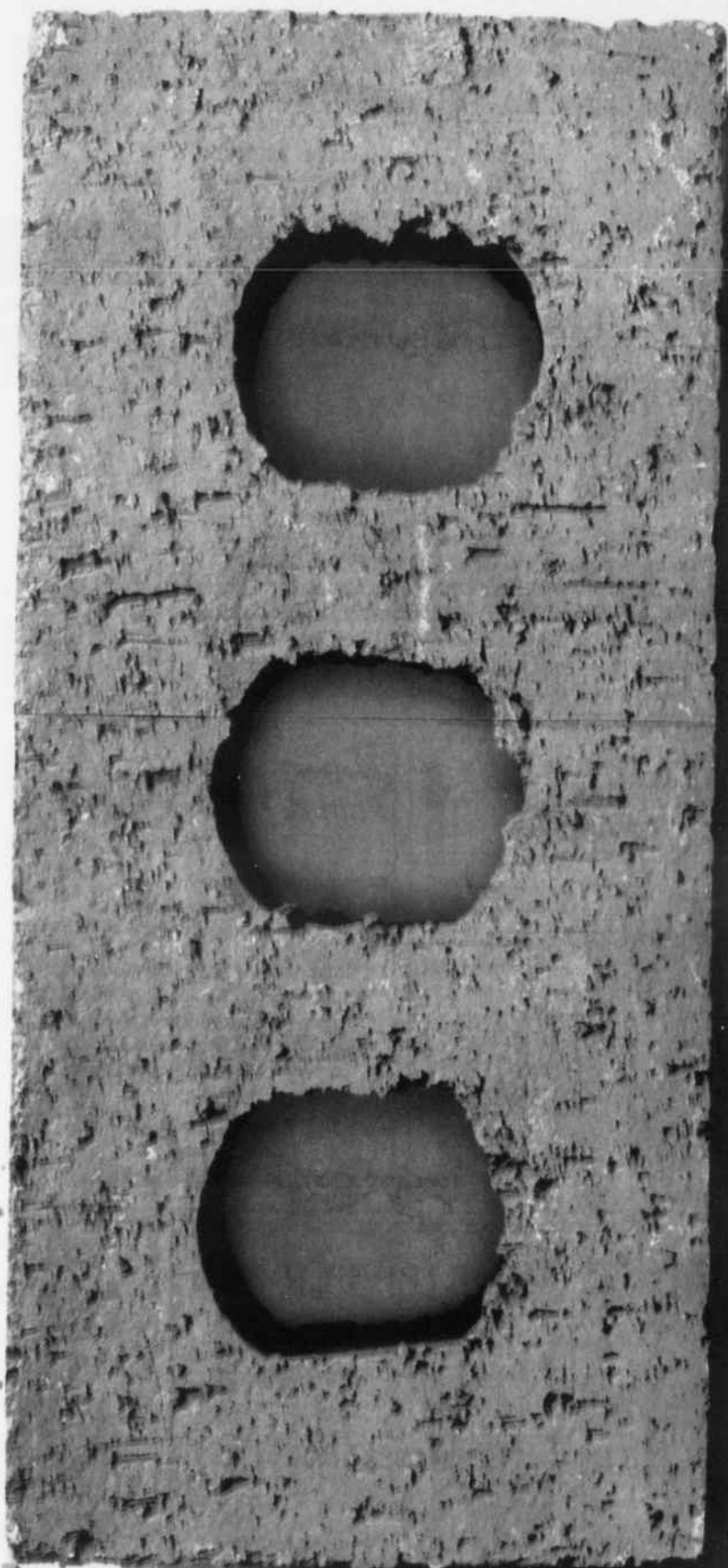
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