



The Breeze

James Madison University's Student Newspaper

Vol. 84, Issue 38

Thursday, February 15, 2007

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Senior center JMU's
resident record breaker.



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Massanutten diner a
throwback to 1950s malt shop.



Reckless Driving



photo courtesy of BECKY MARTINEZ

A woman coming from Burger King swerved into Blakemore's Flowers Monday afternoon. There were not life-threatening injuries.

Lower tuition wanted

BY RACHANA DIXIT
news editor

The Virginia House of Delegates Higher Education Subcommittee recently proposed to decrease state funding if state institutions did not agree to keep tuition increases at a minimum.

Higher Education Subcommittee member Del. Joe May, R-33rd District, said the proposal was created about a month ago. The situation, he said, was that the General Assembly was providing state institutions with more funding than in years past, in hopes that tuition rates would decrease. Despite this, costs went up at almost all state-supported schools in Virginia.

"The expectation was [more funding] would allow tuition to have minimal or no increases," May said. "Instead, they went up rather dramatically."

The proposal does allow for a "reasonable increase" in tuition rates, which would be lower than 5 percent, but May said the 18 and 19 percent tuition increases the subcommittee discovered were too high.

Local officials have expressed approval of the proposal as well. Del. Matthew Lohr, R-26th District, said, "It's a great idea. We have to make sure schools are accountable and that they're managing their money in the best possible way."

Lohr, who graduated from Virginia Tech 10 years ago, said he has always watched college tuition rates, especially since his wife graduated from JMU with a master's degree two years ago.

"We noted every semester that tuition went up," Lohr said.

Although many agree with the proposal, legislation such as this does not come without risks.

Charles King, JMU's senior vice president of administration and finance, said the university may not generate enough revenue for the university to operate if tuition rates are decreased before the end of this fiscal year.

King said tuition costs are influenced by state mandates like salary increases and fringe benefit rates, energy and utility costs, facility costs and market costs.

"The big risk is the legislation says the revenues necessary for this program have to be certified by the governor at the end of the current fiscal year," King said. "That means if we set our tuition to the required amount of 4.25 percent this March, and then the revenues

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Kaine wants more students in-state

BY BEN BAYNTON
staff writer

Virginia Gov. Timothy M. Kaine recently released his economic development strategic plan, which is required by Virginia state law. The plan introduces nine broad goals, which are to be completed by 2010.

The goal of primary interest to JMU is an increase in the number of Virginia students between the ages of 18 to 24 in a higher-education program. The goal is a 5 percent increase in participation, from 34 percent to 39 percent, or about 34,000 students.

How can JMU and other state public universities handle this increase?

"I think the proposed increase is realistic," wrote Douglas Garcia, the Virginia assistant secretary of education. Through dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate, students can earn credit toward college, decreasing the amount of

time students spend in college, and creating space in required 100- and 200-level courses.

Agreements between community colleges and traditional four-year universities such as JMU have created feeder colleges. This allows students to pass from community college to four-year university without losing many credits.

Another issue is how to get students into college that are currently unable or unwilling to go.

"The main incentive that I feel will get students to come is the realization that we live in a global society where we are not just competing against students from the United States, but students from India, Japan and China," Garcia said.

It says in the Economic Development Strategic Plan: "Establish tuition reimbursement or tuition forgiveness for students in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, nursing, education and

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3 percent of profs minorities

BY KIM CHU HA
staff writer

Despite various efforts to diversify faculty, JMU still falls short when compared with the nation. The national average of African-American professors at colleges and universities is 5 percent, compared to JMU's 3 percent.

In fall 2006, JMU's faculty included 25 African-Americans, one Native-American, 22 Asians, 11 Hispanics and 731 Caucasians. Minorities comprised 7 percent of the faculty, a fall from 10 percent in 2000, according to statistics from JMU's Institutional Research Center.

"First, there is competition for minorities with Ph.D.s; the pool is very limited," said Daniel Wubah, special assistant to the president. "Nationally the number of minority Ph.D.s is very small."

JMU saw a steady rise in minority faculty through the 1980s and 1990s, but the numbers have dropped slightly since their peak in 2000.

"We are doing more than you can imagine, though," Wubah said. "Another problem is retention; those who are here want to be here, but the recruited ones often get better offers and JMU's best may not be as competitive."

see MINORITY, page 3



AARON STEWART/senior photographer

Young Choi, a professor in the College of Business, came to JMU because he liked the atmosphere and the "beautiful" campus.

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www.thebreeze.org

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POLICE LOG

BY ALICIA STETZER/senior writer

Vandalism

A JMU student reported graffiti sprayed on a bench at the Physics and Chemistry Building bus stop Feb. 9 at an unknown time.

Property damage

A JMU student reported \$400 worth of damage to drywall in a hallway in Gifford Hall between Feb. 9 at 6 p.m. and Feb. 10 at 1 p.m.

Trespassing

A JMU student reported a brown-haired white male of medium build (about 6-feet tall, 165 pounds), entered an unlocked dorm room and fled when confronted by the room's resident Feb. 9 at 4:45 a.m.

fronted by the room's resident Feb. 9 at 4:45 a.m.

Larceny

A JMU student reported the theft of a Motorola V3M cell phone, valued at \$100, left unattended in a Weaver Hall study lounge Jan. 26 between 5 and 6 p.m.

A JMU student reported the theft of a calculator, valued at \$90, a JAC Card and keys left unattended on a desk at Carrier Library Feb. 8 between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m.

A JMU student reported the theft of a JAC Card from a White Hall residence room Feb. 8 between 3 and 10 a.m.

Number of drunk in public since Aug. 28: 55

Be sure to read *The Breeze* every Monday and Thursday, and visit us online at www.thebreeze.org.

Remember, applications for editor positions are due today on joblink.jmu.edu!

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Governor's Fellows Program

Program Goals

The historic and prestigious Virginia Governor's Fellows Program offers a select group of outstanding and highly motivated individuals the opportunity to experience firsthand the administration of state government in the Commonwealth. Established in 1982, the Governor's Fellows Program brings exceptional students with creative ideas to state government — an experience that often leads to careers in public service.

Eligibility Requirements

Qualified applicants must be graduating college seniors or enrolled as degree candidates in a graduate or professional school. Applicants must be enrolled in a Virginia college or university or must be a Virginia resident if enrolled in an out-of-state institution. They must also have a demonstrated commitment to excellence in academics, proven leadership ability, and involvement in extracurricular activities and community service. The selection of Fellows will be based solely on merit, without regard to race, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, or political affiliation.

Length of Program

Fellows will be required to work full-time in Virginia state government. The 2007 Governor's Fellows Program will begin Monday, June 4, 2007 and continue through Friday, July 27, 2007.

Assignments

Participants are placed in different positions in the Governor's Office and in various agencies throughout the Executive Branch. The program attempts to match Fellows with compatible assignments according to background, interests and future goals.

Funding

State funds are not allocated for the Governor's Fellows Program. However, in previous years, colleges and universities have distributed stipends to the Fellows selected from their institutions. Institutions are urged to make summer grants available. Applicants who will require financial assistance in order to participate in the program should discuss this matter with school officials before applying. Office of the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and University Planning 568-3685.

Application

The deadline for applying for the 2007 Fellows Program is
5 p.m. February 23, 2007.

For application and additional information please see this website:
<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/ServingVirginia/fellows.cfm>

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Around Campus

Career and Academic Planning hosts open house

Career and Academic Planning is hosting an open house in Wilson Hall Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The open house will recognize seniors Elizabeth Holena and Danny Cohen and junior Kasey Gage during an award ceremony for redesigning the office's logo and motto. Career and Academic Planning was formerly known as Academic Advising and Career Development.

German musical comes to Anthony-Seeger

The Freiberg Opera Theater will present two performances of "Babytalk," a German musical, at JMU on Feb. 25 and 26 at 7:30 p.m. in Anthony-Seeger Auditorium.

There will be a pre-show lecture and the performance is slated to begin at 8 p.m. The production will be in both German and English.

The performance is free and open to the public.

In the Valley

Authorities face difficulties in baby case

HARRISONBURG — The *Daily News-Record* reported yesterday that without a body, authorities face an uphill battle in bringing felony charges against a woman they suspect threw her newborn in the trash last month, according to several lawyers who are not involved in the investigation.

The Rockingham County Sheriff's Office is still investigating the 19-year-old woman who they suspect gave birth to a child and then threw the newborn in a trash bin Jan. 25.

World & Nation

Nigeria discusses banning gay relations

ABUJA, Nigeria — Nigeria's House of Representatives has held a public hearing on a new bill seeking to outlaw gay relations, according to yesterday's BBC News.

The bill, which could become law before April's elections, proposes a five-year sentence for anyone convicted of being openly gay or practicing gay sex.

Critics say the bill is anti-freedom, but religious leaders say it will help "protect society's morals and values."

Drug gangs may use Internet as tool

MEXICO CITY — Police in Mexico are investigating claims that rival drug gangs are using the Internet as a new battle ground, according to yesterday's BBC News.

An official said police were monitoring the pages of the YouTube Web site for bloody video clips and slideshows apparently posted by cartel members.

Some clips contain gruesome scenes of violence, while in others gangsters appear to taunt their rivals. Their authenticity has not been confirmed.

EU Parliament approves report on secret flights

BRUSSELS — According to yesterday's BBC News, the European parliament has approved a damning report on secret CIA flights, condemning member states that colluded in the operations.

The UK, Germany and Italy were among 14 states that allowed the United States to forcibly remove terror suspects, lawmakers said.

The EU parliament voted to accept a resolution condemning member states that accepted or ignored the practice.

MSA strives for acceptance

BY ASHLEY HOPKINS
staff writer

Imagine turning on your radio to hear an announcer say every member of your religion is now required to wear an identifying armband.

This is a reality for the many Muslims around the world, who struggled to uphold their reputations despite negative stereotypes stemming from the Sept. 11 attacks.

This sort of backlash is a reality for senior Samier Mansur, president of the Muslim Student Association at JMU, who heard the radio broadcast as it was being aired. While the program ended up being a farce designed by the announcer to expose prejudice in American society, Mansur thinks it exposes negative stereotypes, as members of MSA are trying to do as well.

"I think JMU is a very insulated community, but there are things that come up," he said. "It's scary to think that it's out there."

The vice president of MSA, senior Rashdi Ahmed, agreed with Mansur, adding that the focus of MSA is to create an outlet in which people can "get together peacefully and tolerantly."

"We want to dissolve the negative stereotypes that we've encountered, just to show what we're about," he said.

The group's efforts at understanding have been extensive, as it sponsors many events that focus on contemporary issues that everyone, not just members of the faith, can relate to. Anyone, regardless of his or her religion, is permitted to join the group and attend the events, everyone has the opportunity to learn more about Islam.

In past years, the group has brought in a wide variety of speakers, including Kuba Telemania,

son of the Iraqi president, and hosted a multitude of events, such as the annual Interfaith Ramadan Dinner.

In addition, last year the group hosted a Sept. 11 memorial, in which Del. Bob Goodlatte R-6th district, spoke. This event, like many others hosted by the group, was designed to break stereotypes often ingrained on the minds of society.

"Stereotypes are deeply imbedded," Ahmed said. "People may be acting unconsciously, so we try to educate. We definitely want to display the truth."

Students appreciate this aspect of the group, as many agree that MSA is doing a good job at working past the prejudices.

"I feel proud of how Muslims through MSA handle themselves and portray Islam," senior Sara Toosarvandani said. "Also, it has helped me to be able to find people I relate to, due to similar upbringings and interests."

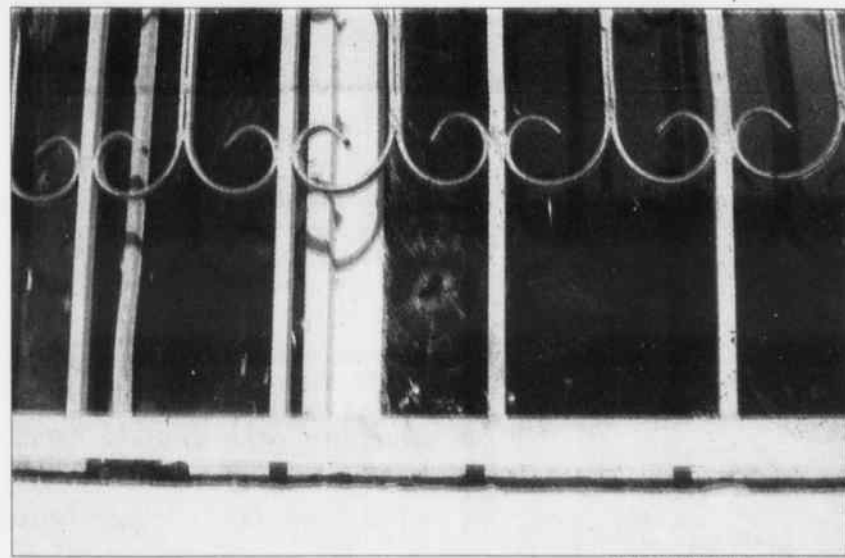
Efforts to display the truth will continue for MSA members, as the group plans to host a Conference for International Peace and Justice on April 3.

As Mansur believes that the true purpose of religion is to bring people together rather than separating them, he has high hopes for the conference and what it could mean for students.

"We want students to realize that it's up to them to take the initiative," he said, adding that all students need to become involved in the group. As students involved in the group are given the opportunity to speak openly about their beliefs and concerns, they will be able to question and learn from one another in a peaceful atmosphere.

"We definitely love everyone's input," Ahmed said.

Violence changing college campus



ZEENA KAREEM/the los angeles times

At Mustansiriyah University in Baghdad, classroom windows are pocked with bullet holes. The campus increasingly finds itself caught in sectarian crossfire.

BY MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE AND
ZEENA KAREEM
Los Angeles Times

BAGHDAD — Zala Ghefori was walking out of her dormitory at Mustansiriyah University to buy a loaf of bread when the sniper struck.

He was waiting for her by the brick back gate, opposite the bakery. Ghefori, 31, who is working on her doctorate in Arabic, was preoccupied with an exam she had taken.

In the moment it took her to cross, the sniper fired.

"I felt that there was some sort of heat around me and a sound like that of the wings of birds along the way," Ghefori said. She heard the crack once, twice, many times. She kept walking toward the bakery, not realizing what was happening. One of the workers, an old woman, shouted to her to take cover.

"What brought you out at such a time when snipers were shooting at you?" the woman said. "They just missed you."

Mustansiriyah, in a mainly Sunni Arab neighborhood, is home to a student body that's predominantly Shiite Muslim, mostly from Shiite-dominated southern Iraq. It has long been coed. But violence is changing that demographic.

Today, with militias and insurgents increasingly threatening young men, Mustansiriyah has become a mostly female campus and a battleground where the stakes for getting a degree grow by the day.

Sandwiched between the Shiite stronghold of Sadr City and the most-

ly Sunni Adhamiya neighborhood, the university has seen numerous professors and students — mostly men — killed in sectarian violence since it reopened three years ago. Last month brought the deadliest attack yet: a pair of car bombs that killed 70 and wounded more than 170.

Mustansiriyah's female students increasingly find themselves caught in the sectarian fighting. University guards allow Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's Al Mahdi militia to search the women's dorm for snipers. Militia members have cut the dorm's power lines, held protests on campus and threatened women who don't wear head scarves. Sunni insurgents drop pamphlets on campus demanding that students move out. And Iraqi soldiers set up checkpoints at the university gates.

The bombings, shootings and kidnappings initially targeted men, forcing professors to disguise themselves and male students to drop out, which thinned the ranks of men on campus.

A round-faced woman with a ready smile, Ghefori is stubborn and unshakable. Living in a women's dorm, surrounded by about 175 other female students, Ghefori felt safe.

Ghefori, who needs at least two more years to complete her studies, didn't tell her family about the sniper attack. She would transfer to a university in the north, she said, but there's no space. Too many other students have transferred.

And so she is stuck at Mustansiriyah, studying ancient Arabic poetry in her dorm, danc-

ing out once or twice a week.

"Terror is living with us," Ghefori said. "There is not a day when there is no terror."

Mustansiriyah officials say attacks have increased in recent months. Classroom windows are pocked with bullet holes. When shooting intensifies near Ghefori's dorm, the building supervisor often turns off the lights and moves students to the first floor, where they are in a better position to flee if necessary. More students than ever are postponing their studies because of the unrest, according to the university's assistant dean for student affairs, who asked that his name not be used for fear he would be targeted.

Female students are not targets, the assistant dean said. They just are increasingly caught in the crossfire as Sunni insurgents from the surrounding neighborhood fire on the nearby Health Ministry, dominated by Shiite extremists.

"When shooting starts, women start screaming and the strong ones try to protect those who are freaked out," said Fatima Selami, 29, who came to Mustansiriyah to earn a doctorate in mathematics.

Selami wears a head scarf and loose, conservative clothing. But she's still afraid that she'll be targeted.

She said the recent bombing left her feeling hopeless. Her first thesis adviser, Mohammed Remadhan, was killed last year by insurgents who followed him home.

see VIOLENCE, page 4

MINORITY: JMU created subcommittee to take on diversity issue

MINORITY, from front

JMU made a distinct effort to increase diversity among faculty by creating a faculty subcommittee on the topic. Another opportunity for minority professors is the Coors fellowship, of which the most recent recipient was Daphne Thomas, a professor in the College of Business.

"A problem is unless individuals are aware of a receptive environment, they won't look at JMU," said Alexander Gabbin, head of the faculty subcommittee on diversity. "The issue is the spirit of the place; JMU is not located in a place where minority faculty would usually consider."

Gabbin added JMU lacks diversity because of its rural location and minority faculty usually do not consider moving here, but if they were able to visit the campus because of other reasons it might persuade them to stay and teach, Gabbin said.

"When I first came to JMU for an interview, it was in the fall, and I was looking around the quad, there were students playing in the trees," said Young Choi, professor in the College of Business.

"It was so beautiful, and I just made a decision without hesitation."

“A problem is unless individuals are aware of a receptive environment, they won't look at JMU.”

— ALEXANDER GABBIN
Head, faculty diversity subcommittee

Though it was not designed to attract minority faculty, "The Furious Flower Poetry Conference in 1994 and 2004 attracted noted African-American poets," Gabbin said. "It raised awareness of an environment where minority faculty can possibly go and thrive."

Wubah said: "In an environment where the faculty is not diverse, it can determine if [new faculty] choose JMU or not."

Aashir Nasim came to JMU as a result of one of those exchange programs where Ph.D. students, in their final year come to an institution to teach. Nasim was given a job in psychology and chose to stay, Wubah said.

AALANA, which stands for African-American, Latino, Asian, Native-American, is another program created for faculty and staff. The organization on campus holds informal socials for members to be acquainted with one another.

"I have a very diverse international experience," Choi said. "To help students prepare for the Internet age emphasizing globalization, the diversity of languages, cultures and technologies as some of the essential assets, it is vital they are taught by a diverse group of faculty and members around the world."

VIOLENCE: Adviser threatened

VIOLENCE, from page 3

Her new adviser has been threatened by militias, so he scaled back his class schedule and stopped announcing class times. To advise Selami, the professor arranged a series of off-campus meetings.

"He drives his car to a certain street. After, he calls me and tells me where to find him. When the car stops, he hands me the corrected draft and I hand him a new draft before he drives off," she said. "This is how I finished writing the dissertation."

Last month, as she walked from the dorm to the classroom where she would successfully defend her thesis, Selami was sure she would be attacked.

"I thought that I was dreaming and that a car

bomb or an IED would wake me up and bring me down to earth," she said during a break, giving a wavering smile.

Moments later, the dorm supervisor arrived to inform Selami and a crowd of friends in the audience that fighting had broken out between U.S. troops in helicopters and insurgent snipers in the surrounding neighborhood. Shops had closed, she said, and people had taken to the streets. Women were hiding in the dorm again.

Dorm residents in the crowd grew pale. Selami was angry.

"Where do we go to hide out tonight?" she said. "It will shower bullets."

James Madison University Health Center Men's Health Minute No. 9: Eating Disorders in Men by Barbara Brennan ND, FNP

A recent study by Harvard Medical School indicates that the number of men affected by eating disorders (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder) may be much higher than previously thought: men may account for up to 25% of those affected, perhaps 850,000 men nationwide.

Eating disorders in men are largely under-recognized and under-treated because they have been thought of as female diseases. While relatively little research has been done to date, some trends are becoming clear: men are more likely to binge than to restrict food intake and they are much less likely than women to seek treatment.

The most common eating disorder in men is binge eating disorder which is characterized by episodes of uncontrolled eating which is not followed by purging, or vomiting (as occurs in bulimia nervosa). Those who binge eat may have a feeling of loss of control over themselves when eating and may feel guilt or shame about bingeing.

Negative body image is associated with eating disorders and in men this is more likely to lead to bingeing than food restriction. Anger also seems to be a trigger for men who binge eat. The health consequences of bingeing are primarily those that result from obesity - high blood pressure, high cholesterol, joint pain, diabetes, gall bladder disease and heart disease.

Other, less common, eating disorders in men are anorexia nervosa (characterized by fear of weight gain, by limiting or avoiding food and, sometimes, excessive exercising) and bulimia nervosa (fear of weight gain with binge/purge

cycles). Some studies over the last 10 to 15 years indicate that an increasing number of men are concerned about their body image and are using unhealthy methods to reduce weight such as laxatives, vomiting and restrained eating. These disorders can lead to heart problems, ulcers, brittle bones and reduced muscle mass.

Risk factors for anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa include athletic competition in sports for which low weight and low body fat are important such as figure skating, high jump, pole vaulting and wrestling. Gay men have higher rates of eating disorders than do heterosexual men. Those with a history of alcoholism, physical abuse and obesity may also be at increased risk.

Treatment for men with eating disorders involves nutritional counseling to normalize eating and weight. Other types of therapy attempt to decrease the preoccupation with food and body weight. Additionally, treatment of depression and other psychiatric problems is often necessary.

If you think you have an eating disorder, or would like more information about them, you may go to the UHC website at: www.jmu.edu/healthctr/eatingdisorder. You may also make an appointment at the Health Center, 568-6178, or call the Counseling and Student Development Center at 568-6552.

Email brennabp@jmu.edu with comments or suggestions. The Men's Health Minute can also be seen on the UHC website.

STATE: JMU has grown faster than state funding, says Obenshain

STATE, from page 3

of Virginia in need of those skills for a required period." This aspect of the Strategic Plan hopes to increase the accessibility of higher education and decrease brain drain from Virginia.

Rick Siger, deputy secretary of commerce and trade said he believes that the highly specialized programs in Virginia universities will attract students.

One example is the information systems security professional program at JMU. JMU is one of only seven designated centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education in the nation.

"Because of the success of

our universities, companies are attracted to Virginia," Siger said. This is why an increase in student population is an important component of the Strategic Plan.

Said Sen. Mark Obenshain, R-26: "The thing I find curious is that we have adapted some policies that are an impediment to those goals."

Obenshain, who formerly served on the JMU Board of Visitors, said that the problem is not attracting the students to universities, but making them economically accessible.

"I think those are laudable goals, but we'll see if the governor enacts a tuition freeze," Obenshain said. "JMU has grown faster than state funding."

In fact, The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, a non-profit non-partisan organization, gave Virginia an "F" for affordability last year. However, the organization also gave Virginia a "B" for participation.

"The last thing we want to do is increase enrollment without increasing economic accessibility," Obenshain said.

While the details and effectiveness of this plan are yet to be seen, many agree that universities like JMU cannot take the burden of increased enrollment without some way of either reducing the amount of time individual students are at a university or increasing funding.

TUITION: Summer figures set

TUITION, from front

don't materialize on June 30, 2007, we will be short in the revenue we need to operate the university."

For the 2006-07 budget, the university generated \$176,552,101 in total revenue. Approximately 59 percent of that, or \$103,397,450, came from tuition alone. General funds from the state accounted for approximately 40 percent of total revenue, or about \$71,084,352.

But, King said, if the university received \$4.2 million in new general funds from the General Assembly, tuition rates could be kept at the proposal's standards.

"Hopefully the state would provide adequate general funds to minimize the cost of education for students attending the university," King said.

JMU's 2007 summer school tuition rates have been set using the university's six-year funding model, which includes revenue and expenditure projections. In-state undergraduate students will be required to pay \$187 per credit hour, a \$43-per-credit hour increase from summer 2006. Rates for out-of-state undergraduates are set at \$556 per credit hour, which shows a \$68 per credit hour increase from the previous year.

Tuition and fees for the 2007-

08 academic year have not yet been determined.

If the proposal does become law, May said these changes would not be instantaneous; the General Assembly would monitor tuition increases as necessary. In addition, May said universities may have to redistribute funding from other areas so they can feasibly run on their current operating costs and abide by these rules.

"Universities have a fixed amount of money to work with," he said. "Universities have the same attributes as a large business, and they have to operate within a set budget."

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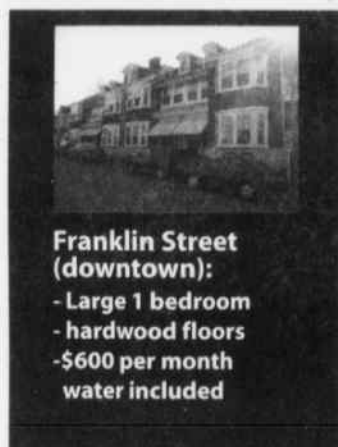
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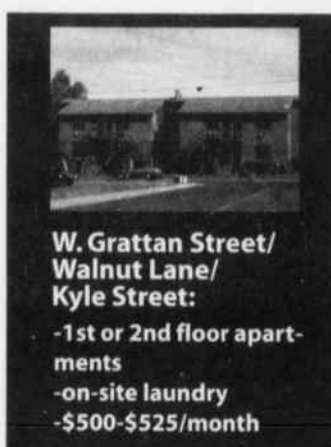
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From a girl who braved the purported "state of emergency" to read the cancellation sign on the door of the venue.

Letters to the Editor

Attention paid to global warming appropriate and necessary

Thank you for Patrick Callahan's Feb. 9 article, "President must speak from the gut on global warming." The polar ice caps are melting, causing polar bears to drown. Tropical storms are increasing in intensity due to global warming (global climate change). The future of our health, animals and the environment is at stake.

We cannot wait for the government to take action against global warming. We need to start making some changes now in our individual lives. Switching to a vegetarian or vegan diet is a major step we can take to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Meat production contributes to carbon dioxide from the burning of forests to make land for farm animals. Methane from the animals and nitrous oxide from the animals' wastes are emitted. Switching to a vegetarian diet saves the equivalent of 1.5 tons of carbon dioxide. More information on is available at earthsave.org/globalwarming.

William McMullin

Western Michigan University alumnus, class of 2004

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 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.

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
Caite 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.

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If you are interested in writing, contact Brian Goodman at opinion@thebreeze.org.

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JMU's best ever?

Meredith Alexis is rewriting the record books

BY BRIAN HANSEN
sports editor

Meredith Alexis has done it all for JMU's women's basketball team.

All-time conference leader in rebounds, check. All-time leader in double-doubles, well she's more than doubled the previous record. More starts than any other player in Dukes' basketball, check. All-time leading scorer, that one should come tonight.

So what is the only thing JMU's senior center wishes she could do more of?

"The only thing she ever asks me is if she can shoot a three," JMU coach Kenny Brooks said. "Usually I have to tell her no, not because she can't make them, but because we need her inside rebounding."

Even without the 3-point

shots, Alexis enters tonight's game against George Mason just 10 points shy of Holly Rilinger's (1992-97) record of 1,607 career points as a Duke.

Alexis, who is leading the Dukes in both scoring and rebounding this season with 18.5 points per game and 11.7 rebounds a game, knew this team could be special but didn't really know how great she would be.

"I didn't know the records would come like they are for me, but I knew I would be a part of something special," Alexis said. "To be on a Top-25 (Associated Press) team and doing all of this, you couldn't ask for a better senior year."

Part of what makes the records so special for Alexis and the Dukes is that they aren't doing this as a Colonial Athletic Association basement dweller. They are doing this as the top contender to end Old Dominion's run of 15-straight CAA championships.

Since their freshman year, when Brooks made the bold move to start playing four freshmen, (Alexis, guards Lesley Dickinson and Andrea Benvenuto, and forward Shirley McCall) large minutes, everything for both the team and Alexis, as an individual has been building to this season.

see RECORD, page 8



Alexis



EVAN DYSON/file photo

JMU senior center Meredith Alexis is both JMU's and the Colonial Athletic Association's all-time leading rebounder. Tonight she'll try to become the Dukes' all-time leading scorer. She is 10 points shy of Holly Rilinger's scoring mark.

Rumor Has It...

A Tale of Two Convo

For JMU basketball, it is the best of times. It is the worst of times.

Kenny Brooks and his women's team sit at 22-2 overall, 13-0 in the Colonial Athletic Association and are the most likely team to unseat 15-time CAA champion Old Dominion as the top team in the conference.

The men's team sits at 7-18 overall, 4-11 in conference, which is good enough to "improve" to just the third-worst team in the CAA, and have failed to ever win three consecutive games since Dean Keener took over head coaching duties for Sherman Dillard.

To say these teams are at opposite ends of the spectrum would be an understatement.

To truly grasp the contrast of these teams, you need only compare their success at the Convocation Center.

The women's team has won 24-straight at home dating back to March 3, 2005 against Delaware. Last season the team went undefeated in Harrisonburg, winning all 13 games at home and this season they currently sit at 11-0 at home. All that stands in their way of a second consecutive unbeaten season at home are contests against George Mason and Towson.

The men, on the other hand, have a current winning streak of zero games at home, and sit at a less than impressive 4-9 at the Convo this season.

Keener, though, is fully aware of the dichotomy between the men's and women's success at home.

"Make no mistake, we need to make the Convo a difficult place to play," the Dukes' third-year head coach said. "It needs to be a place where our guys never take for granted but just assume this is a place where we're going to win tonight. The women have done that now over the course of some two years."

While it has been nearly two full years for Brooks and his crew since they've dropped a home game, it hasn't always been that they were unbeatable at home.

"It hasn't been every year, but it seems like it," Brooks, who is in his fifth year as the Dukes' coach, said. "However, now that our crowds are starting to get bigger, it has definitely become a great home-court advantage for us."

During his tenure, JMU has gone 52-9 at the Convocation Center but were just 8-5 in his first full year as head coach, which was also the same year that four of this year's five starters joined the team.

With seniors Meredith Alexis, Lesley Dickinson, Shirley McCall and Andrea Benvenuto along with junior Tamera Young, the Dukes make up the most experienced team in the nation. Over the last four years the group has started a total of 384 games, which is 35 games above the second-most experienced team, Oklahoma.

Playing so many games at home has bred a familiarity with playing and eventually winning at home for Alexis and crew.

The men's team is starting one junior (Terrance Carter), who is in his first season at Madison, three sophomores (Juwan James, Colby Santos and Kyle Swanson) and a freshman (Pierre Curtis). So it may just be that they are still learning to win at home and how to use the home court to your advantage in close games.

"As you're putting together a program, that is certainly something you have to do and we haven't done it," Keener said. "Not to the level that we would like to."

Whatever it is that lends to the disparity between the two teams, only time will tell. But, for Kenny Brooks and his team, the time to win at home is now, and coach Keener and his team can only hope their time is in the not too distant future.



BRIAN HANSEN

Brian Hansen is a senior SMAD major with a concentration in print journalism.



JONATHAN TAYLOR/file photo

The JMU softball team was picked to finish third in the CAA behind Georgia State and Hofstra. The Dukes finished sixth in the conference last season.

Softball picked to win CAA bronze

Early conference battles highlight Dukes schedule

BY JOHN GALLE
sports editor

After missing the Colonial Athletic Association tournament by just one game last season, the JMU softball team is ready to return to postseason play after returning all but one starter, adding fresh talent and being picked to finish third in the preseason polls.

"The polls aren't a motivating factor," JMU coach Katie Flynn said. "The polls aren't always accurate; I pretty much ignore what they say. [But] not making the tournament [last year] is a motivating factor for us."

JMU finished the 2006 season sixth in the CAA with a record of 9-12, 24-28 overall. However, despite that, JMU was the only other team besides first-place pick Hofstra to receive first-place votes (two) from this year's preseason coaches' poll.

"Last year, I'm not sure why we struggled," senior captain and shortstop Katie George said. "It was more like a fluke thing last year, because we usually do make it to the tournament. So, [being picked to finish third in the CAA] helps us with our confidence and it's good to have them recognize that we are a good team."

This year, the Dukes will get the chance to prove themselves as a better team early, as they draw the No. 1 and No. 2 preseason picks in Hofstra (six

first-place votes) and Georgia State for their first two conference series, at the end of March.

"We have to go out and prove ourselves right away," sophomore right-handed pitcher Meredith Felts said.

And it won't be easy.

Hofstra has dominated the diamonds of the CAA, winning five consecutive conference championships. The Pride returns a roster with three first team all-conference performers, including senior Ashley Lane (.383, 13 HR, 67 H, league-leading 63 RBI), the 2006 CAA Player of the Year. Also highlighting the Pride's roster are senior pitcher Courtney Oliver (2.27 ERA, 14-7, .260, 40 H), sophomore pitcher Kayleigh Lott (2.35 ERA, 18-10) and junior outfielder Pam Dreslinski (.293, 48 H).

Georgia State is no pushover either, as the team is the reigning CAA regular season champion. With 2006 CAA Coach of the Year Bob Heck at the helm, the Panthers finished last season 15-6 in conference, falling to Hofstra in the tournament championship 7-3 last year. On top of that, Georgia State returns sophomore catcher Jackie Jaegle (.344, 52 H), the 2006 CAA Rookie of the Year.

Under Flynn, JMU has never been afraid to start freshmen. Last year, five freshman players started for the Dukes and were thrown into the fire of the conference. Now, those five make up a talented core of sophomore talent, and they

Softball Friday-Sunday

College of Charleston
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First to fifth?

Dukes looking to disprove preseason CAA predictions

BY JOHN GALLE
sports editor

The JMU baseball team enters this season with a chip on its shoulder, despite defending a Colonial Athletic Association regular season title.

Late in the season and into the tournament, the Diamond Dukes struggled with the bullpen and with intangibles, as a weather curse of sorts zapped momentum away from JMU's explosive offense, which was led by the National Co-Player of the Year and CAA Player of the Year in then-sophomore outfielder Kellen Kulbacki. As a result, JMU was ousted from a promising run in the CAA tournament — a tournament the Diamond Dukes have never won.

"It's hard to believe," head coach Spanky McFarland said. "We've been to seven regionals, we've been ranked since I've been here in the Top 25 ... just for some reason — karma — whatever it is — [we've never been able to win it]. Last year we were in position, until we had the two-and-a-half-hour rain delay. It's just one of those things."

Going into this season, JMU has been picked to finish fifth in conference, according to the coaches' preseason poll.

Kulbacki said although he doesn't agree with the votes, he

understands why the coaches have knocked JMU from first to fifth.

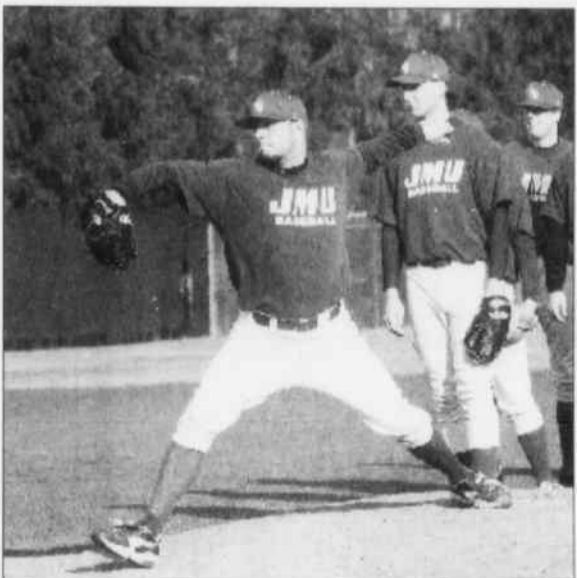
"We have some other teams in our league that have some more experienced guys," Kulbacki said.

"I think fifth isn't really where we feel we are in this conference ... we just need to use that as motivation to get us back to where we need to be and just to prove these people wrong, [and] that we're a better team than where they ranked us."

Another reason for the drop-off was the departure of second baseman Michael Cowgill (291-23-62 11 SB), right-hander Ryan Reid (10-4, 3.43, 124 K in 94.1 IP) and left-hander Greg Nesbitt (6-3, 3.54 ERA, 80 K in 81.1 IP). All three were drafted into the major leagues. The Diamond Dukes also lost right-hander Travis Miller (6-2, 3.67 ERA, 60 K in 56.1 IP), first baseman Nate Schill (.419-14-68), catcher Matt Sluder (.326-4-40) and outfielder/first baseman Matt Bristow (.318-9-39).

Kulbacki, who led the league in homers (24), batting average (.464), slugging percentage (.943) and on-base percentage (.568), will be hard to hide from opponents. Thus, McFarland said they will

see BASEBALL, page 8



KELLIE NOWLIN/file photographer

After losing their top three starters from last season, the Dukes' pitching staff looks to rebuild itself this season.

SOFTBALL: CAA preview

SOFTBALL, from page 7

have enough experience to be leaders in 2007.

Outfielder Kaitlyn Wernsing, catcher Julia Dominguez and third baseman Amber Kirk all led the Dukes offensively in batting average as freshmen. Pitchers Meredith Felts and Jenny Clohan also started for the Dukes in their first year.

"We hope the sophomores have the same kind of season [they had last year]," Flynn said. "But then also other people will have to step up."

Falling into the fourth slot, just one point behind JMU in the voting, is conference foe UNC-Wilmington. Towson, Delaware, George Mason and Drexel are predicted to finish in the bottom half of the conference, in that order.

According to Flynn, George will be their staple, anchoring an infield that will showcase three upperclassmen — something the Dukes did not have last season. Combine fresh talent with experienced leadership and you have the new, more balanced JMU softball squad who are anticipating a big turnaround year.

"I'd like to make it to the tournament and win [a CAA title] this year," George said. "It would be a nice way to end the season."

To do that, George and her teammates will have to keep up their successes of 2006, while targeting their failures — most of which were on defense.

Said George: "We all worked hard in the off-season. So, I'm not too worried about it."

2007 CAA Softball Preseason Poll

1. Hofstra
2. Georgia State
3. James Madison
4. UNC-Wilmington
5. Towson
6. Delaware
7. George Mason
8. Drexel

RECORD: Scoring mark expected to fall tonight

RECORD, from page 7

"I haven't had an opportunity to let it sink in because I want to enjoy the present," the Dukes' fifth-year head coach said. "When I sit down when it's all over with and read all of her records, I'll probably need a bookmark cause I'll have to stop reading for a while."

With the school rebounding record already demolished, and the scoring record expected to fall tonight, Alexis is beginning to make a strong case to be considered the best

player JMU women's basketball has ever had.

"I don't know, I haven't really thought about that," Alexis said. "None of this has really sunk in yet."

Said Brooks: "[When we signed her] I knew we had something special. I just had no idea that it was going to be the best player ever to play at JMU. She is what JMU basketball is."

That's high praise from her coach, with former players like Rilingier, Sarah Schreib (1992-97) and Shanna Price (1999-03) in

the school's history.

"We had alumni come back this weekend, and a lot of alumni that were in attendance were very special players, in the hall of fame, and I told them all 'If you had a rebounding record, it's gone,'" Brooks said. "And if you had a scoring record, it's probably gone too."

Though, the falling of those stats only seems fitting as the Dukes sit at 22-2 overall and 13-0 in conference and are poised to make this season a special one overall.

BASEBALL: Picked to finish middle of the pack

BASEBALL, from page 7

stress team on-base percentage, so teams will have to pitch to him.

Because of the lost talent, JMU must rely on less-experienced players to fill roles and pick up bats to get them back to the top of the CAA.

McFarland said this year is probably the first year that JMU has had a true lead-off guy in the nine years he's coached here. Junior third baseman Joe Lake is that guy, who grew into both the role and his position at third-base just last season.

And though JMU's pitching will be somewhat inexperienced, McFarland said it will be led by up-and-comers with a stronger bullpen to back them up.

"We'll start at the top with Kurt Houck," McFarland said. "He'll most likely be our Friday guy. He really came on last year ... [where] he started out in the bullpen. Then he got better and better, and when Travis Miller got hurt, he stepped into the rotation and did a very nice job. In fact, he

had the lowest run average I think of all the starters, including the guys that got drafted."

Houck's goal for this season reflects the primary team goal.

"We definitely want to be on the first team to win the CAA tournament," Houck said.

If the polls hold up, the Diamond Dukes will have some tough competition. Four different teams received first-place votes: Virginia Commonwealth (four, 88 points), UNC-Wilmington (three, 86 points), Delaware (three, 83 points) and Old Dominion (one, 80 points). JMU, at the next predicted spot, did not receive any votes to repeat as the regular season conference champion (72 points).

But JMU is relishing the underdog role as the team prepares to get into the tournament and surprise some teams this year as a team not to be taken lightly.

"That's something that bothers every one of us," McFarland said of never winning the tournament. "I'm not going to lie to you. We use that as a motivat-

ing tool; we talk about it all the time. We really want to finish the job ... but at the same time we can't worry about that until that comes. Right now, we've just got to worry about the next pitch, and that's our focus."

2007 CAA Baseball Preseason Poll

1. Virginia Commonwealth
2. UNC-Wilmington
3. Delaware
4. Old Dominion
5. James Madison
6. Georgia State
7. George Mason
8. Northeastern
9. Hofstra
10. Towson



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What's going on around here?

JMU arts

artWorks Gallery Exhibition

JMU students Sarah Thomas, Igor Coric, Mike Pratt and Sarah Barth have art on display through Feb. 28.

Sawhill Gallery Exhibition

JMU alumni Robert Stuart and Robert Yoder have an exhibit, "Gestalts: Work by Robert Stuart and Robert Yoder," through Feb. 15.

Warren Art Gallery

Senior Kellie Nowlin displays her photography skills in Warren Hall, outside of Transitions, as a part of Arts Across Campus, through Feb. 19.

JMU theatre

"Thoroughly Modern Millie"

JMU's school of theatre and dance is teaming up with the school of music to present this famous musical. The show runs through Saturday. Tickets are \$6 with a JAC Card.

JMU music

JMU Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Band Concert

Enjoy some jazz music tonight at the Wilson Hall Auditorium at 8 p.m. Admission is \$2 at the door.

'Burg fun

Karaoke at B-Dubs

Show off your singing skills tonight at Buffalo Wild Wings.

Poker Tournament

Try your hand at poker tonight at Gold Crown Billiards. Play starts at 8 p.m.

Little Grill Collective

Doug and Telisha Williams will perform at The Little Grill Collective Saturday night.

Guzman's Mexican Restaurant

Enjoy some authentic Mexican music Saturday night.

Daily Grind Downtown

Sit back and relax this Friday night and soak up the sounds of a jazz trio at 7 p.m.

Send us events at
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Review

Slip on your saddle shoes and visit

Nifty Fifties Dip 'N' Grind

graphics by
LAUREN PACK/
art director

BY ELIZABETH DANIEL
contributing writer

"It's just a happy place to be," Connie Shifflett said of her '50s-inspired ice cream shop, Nifty Fifties Dip 'N' Grind. With music and furniture from the '50s, the diner invites customers to go back in time.

Shifflett's brothers came up with the name for the shop, one suggesting Nifty Fifties and the other Dip 'N' Grind. While the latter may make the establishment sound like a saucy dance studio, the milkshakes offered there are not the latest hip-hop boogie.

Dip refers to the all-natural ice cream, made right here in the Old Dominion State on a hormone-free dairy farm.

"No one has [this ice cream] but us," said Scott Shifflett, Connie's husband and co-owner. Nifty Fifties is the only place to get this special creamery ice cream within 100 miles. The ice cream is so creamy, that when it is drawn out of the bowl by a spoon, it acts more like melted mozzarella than traditional ice cream.

As for the grinding at Nifty Fifties, that process happens at the shop's espresso bar. The organically grown Mission coffee is whipped up into whatever a customer desires.

Nifty Fifties always has 12 flavors that you can enjoy in a homemade waffle cone, four of which are always available. Birthday cake, mint chocolate chip and coffee espresso are just some of the flavors that are available every day. The customer can combine any of those flavors or nine others, including soft serve.

"We go the distance. If somebody wants to be creative, we make it," Connie Shifflett said. It is this attitude that sets Nifty Fifties apart from other ice cream joints — and other customer service experiences altogether. The Shiffletts will make anything that a customer asks for.

Also available are milkshakes, classic malts, ice cream cakes filled with your favorite hand-dipped flavor, Italian sodas, even Belgian waffles — the possibilities are endless.

Visiting Nifty Fifties won't lighten your wallet, either. Prices are competitive and you could easily walk out the door with a hefty treat for under \$5. The ice cream shop also offers a 10-percent discount with a valid student ID.

If you're looking for something less sweet, the lunch special goes all day. Dip 'N' dogs, or corn dogs, and hotdogs are offered as well. Not a dog lover? Mr. J's bagels also tempt customers. The Shiffletts hope that more JMU students will discover Nifty Fifties as a place



AARON STEWART/senior photographer

Nifty Fifties Dip 'N' Grind offers 12 homemade flavors every day. Customers can combine any of these flavors — including soft serve — to make a unique flavor of their own.

to relax after a day at Massanutten or when they need to get away for a while. It's definitely worth the drive for every occasion from a date to a night out with the pals. "Come ski, do your studies — we're open," Scott Shifflett said. Feel free to bring a laptop because Nifty Fifties is the only establishment around it that offers fast wireless internet. If you're short on time, the Shiffletts suggest calling ahead.

Nifty Fifties Dip 'N' Grind is located in the Olde Town Center, near the Thunderbird Café, on Rt. 33. It is about 10 miles down on the right. They are open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., and from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday, but they promise never to turn a customer away even at closing time. Call (540) 289-3476 for a pick-up order or for more information.

Review

Take delight in Simple Pleasures



Simple Pleasures will provide customers with a friendly staff and an extensive menu, including an abundant array of seafood.

EVAN DYSON/
photo editor

With a welcoming decor, Simple Pleasures offers delicious menu at low, reasonable prices

BY CRISTEN LATZONI
contributing writer

Greeted by an elegant décor, a cordial staff and aromas of fresh cuisine, it is easy to understand how Simple Pleasures, located on University Boulevard, earned its name. In addition to its simple entrees and atmosphere, the voyage to the restaurant is effortless as it's a short drive from campus. The restaurant is easy on your wallet and the moderately priced items are worth every penny.

There is much to be said about the ambiance of Simple Pleasures, as its warm colors and soft light fill every corner. In the main dining room is a stylish steel ceiling engraved with charming patterns. Don't be intimidated by this graceful ceiling, however, as Simple Pleasures seems to make guests feel as though they're enjoying a delicious meal in the comfort of their own dining room.

The welcoming staff also plays a role in making the restaurant feel like home with their warm personalities. Additionally, the staff maintains an

extremely professional demeanor that maintains the "customer comes first" mentality. Feel free to tweak any meal or, for the 21-and-older crowd, order any complex cocktail and a staff member will be sure to cater to your cravings.

However, the friendliness of the staff and the beauty of the atmosphere seem to be eclipsed by the lusciousness of the meals at Simple Pleasures. Although the eatery specializes in seafood, it provides an extensive menu that will please even the pickiest of eaters. The dinner menu offers a variety from simple soups, salads and sandwiches to hearty meat dishes and fresh seafood platters. Additionally, it would not be a surprise if you went to Simple Pleasures just to indulge in its bread (a parmesan-encrusted and herb-seasoned loaf). I ordered two appetizers as my meal — French onion soup and a fruit and cheese platter — and I am not exaggerating when I say I still think about how delicious each appetizer was.

The soup was \$5.95, the average price of soup at Simple Pleasures, and the fruit and cheese platter was \$7.95, also the average price of an appetizer, although the restaurant offers some appetizers for \$2.95. Entrees range from \$11.95 to \$19.95 and the portions are very generously sized.

Simple Pleasures is located at 380 University Blvd. For hours of operation and more information, go to simplepleasuresrestaurant.com.

editor obsession

Monday night on the Festival Ballroom stage, it was all about vaginas. And thank goodness, because I have never been more proud to be a woman.

More than 40 girls dressed in hot black and red outfits came out of the audience to introduce "The Vagina Monologues" — a performance of education, empowerment and inspiration, said director Emily Wyatt. In 2001, playwright/actress/author Eve Ensler created the show out of more than 200 interviews with women pertaining to their sexuality. The 15 monologues, which Wyatt notes in the program are "influential because they are every woman's story," range from sad to sassy, but are always stirring.

My favorite was "Reclaiming Cunt," in which sophomore Briana Marcantoni fearlessly takes an orgasm on stage while spelling out the taboo word. The whole audience, including myself, was not only shocked but completely impressed.

Also powerful was "Say it, For the Comfort Women." This monologue featured freshman Meredith Young, senior Sarah Williams and freshman junior Corrine Wilkinson in character as three women used for sex by Japanese soldiers. Comfort Women, as they're called, are currently demanding a formal apology from the Japanese government for the horror these women experienced. In a round-robin delivery, the actresses recall what the women through — being raped with bottles, brooms and rifles, to name a few injustices.

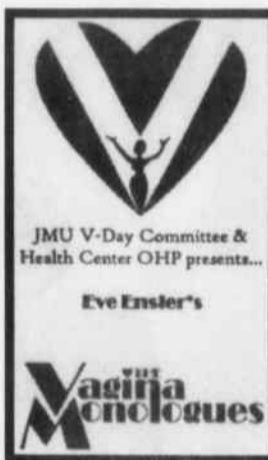
Also notable (as if they aren't all notable) was Jenna Ferguson's performance of "The Vagina Workshop," and Becky Eschenroeder's "The Little Coochie Snorcher That Could," in which the actress delivers her monologue convincingly as a 6-year-old girl all the way to adulthood.

"The Vagina Monologues," as the cast said at the show's end, is a call to women and men everywhere to end violence against women by standing up and speaking out.

Unfortunately, if you didn't get to see "The Vagina Monologues" you missed out. Luckily, you can still get Ensler's book of the same title. It's been translated into more than 24 different languages, so you have no excuse not to embrace the vagina revolution she's started. In the book, she says vagina more than 100 times, so I'm gonna do my part:

Vagina. There, I've said it.

Cate



HA HA HA HA HA

EVAN DYSON/photo editor

AE COMEDY TOUR

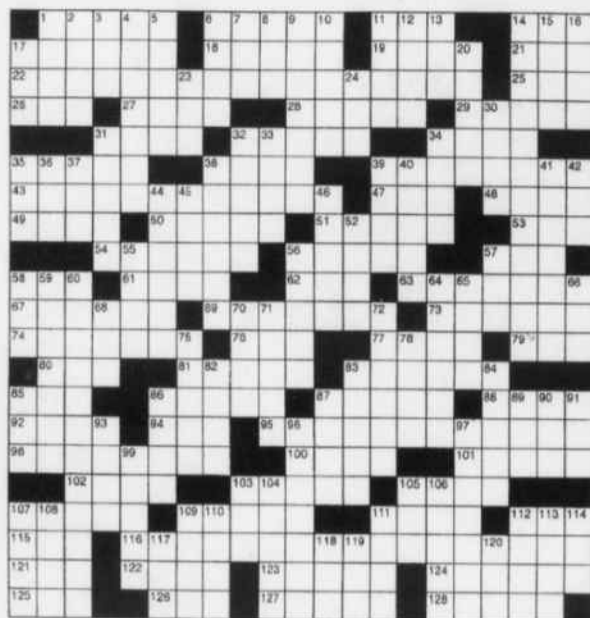
SENIOR DANIEL CRABTREE FROM FAIRFAX, VA, WON THE JMU PORTION OF THE THE NATIONAL AMERICAN EAGLE COMEDY TOUR MONDAY NIGHT. NOW CRABTREE WILL COMPETE ONLINE AGAINST THE WINNERS FROM MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA. TO WATCH CRABTREE'S ROUTINE AND TO VOTE, VISIT AECOMEDY.COM.

SUPER CROSSWORD

I LOVE NEW YORK

ACROSS

- 1 - France
6 Literary genre
11 One of the Bushes
14 Unrefined
17 Chemical compound
18 More advanced
19 Basilica area
21 Paleozoic -
22 RYE
25 New Jersey fort
26 Where the buoys are
27 Article
28 To the point
29 Lighthouse
31 High-pitched instrument
32 Detective Vance
34 Delhi wrap
35 Mrs. Kramden
38 Zip, to Zola
39 Cyd of "Silk Stockings"
43 HARRISON
47 "Doll" ('64 hit)
48 Food fish
49 Chaplin prop
50 Come up again
51 Go



- 107 Symbol
109 Fancy fiddle
111 Like molasses
112 Wee one
115 Blazer part
116 ROCHESTER
121 - bind
122 Balder's dad
123 Willow
124 '59 Marty Robbins hit
125 Cariou or Deighton
126 Prone
127 Stand out in the crowd
128 Use rollerblades

DOWN

- 1 Acknowledgment phrase
2 "Damn Yankees" siren
3 RCA competitor
4 Unit of loudness
5 Melpomene's sister
6 Believe
7 "Treasure Island" mono gram
8 Commercials
9 Rendezvous
10 Synthetic fiber
11 Pantry stock
12 Duel tool
13 Youth org.
14 AUBURN
15 Parched
16 Like some buildup

- 17 Drivers' lics., e.g.
20 Painter Degas
23 Peg for Palmer
24 Buddy
30 Author Murdoch
31 Mid-size band
32 Devout
33 "Mein -" ("Cabaret" tune)
34 Wise guy?
35 Easy as -
36 Massari or Thompson
37 Singer Janis
38 Calculate
39 Seashore sidler
40 Devastation
41 Universally liked one?
42 Author LeShan
44 Pencil topper
45 Fellow
46 Inventor Howe
52 "The Time Machine" people
55 Sign of sanctity
56 Run in the wash
57 Mineral spring
58 Offspring
59 Likely to last?
60 TROY
64 Canada's capital
65 Crooner Collins
66 Find the sum
68 Ben - Wan Kenobi
70 Lohengrin's love

- 71 Powers' portrayer
72 Cheap
75 "I - vacation!"
78 Carry out orders
82 "Cat on - Tin Roof"
83 '39 Wimbledon winner
84 Transmission setting
85 Pound sound
86 A roaring success?
87 Mean Marquis
89 Cockney's abode
90 Pitch
91 Cockpit fig.
93 Reason d'-
96 Woodstock performer
97 Connecticut city
99 It's played with a spectrum
103 Exist
104 Crystal of country
105 Pie - mode
106 Prepares pears
107 Sheep's shaker
108 Sarah - Jewett
109 Cut a cuticle
110 Nomad pad
111 Cartoonist Silverstein
112 "L", c'est moi
113 - majesty
114 To and -
117 Periodontists' org.
118 Catchall abbr.
119 - Guevara
120 No - cruncher

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Grant, Barrymore don't quite hit high note

'Music and Lyrics' intertwines pop music with fun, lovable characters in this romantic comedy

BY AARON ALLEN
Daily Utah Chronicle

SALT LAKE CITY — "Music and Lyrics" feels like the first draft of a much better romantic comedy — one that doesn't coast by on the charm of its two stars, Hugh Grant and Drew Barrymore. The pair entertain us simply by behaving how we'd like them to behave: Grant with his dryly modest way of telling people what fools they are, followed by a grin that's both self-absorbed and self-deprecating, and Barrymore with her cutie-pie sincerity and puppy-dog vulnerability.

Indeed, the two of them are so lovable together, they make Hello Kitty look like a Las Vegas prostitute standing in the rain.

Grant plays Alex Fletcher, a 40-ish washed-up pop star living in New York. He was once part of a British band from the early '90s called Pop, a band with a popularity that lasted about

as long as its name takes to say. During the opening credits, we get to see the music video for the band's biggest hit (also named "Pop" — who says there is no creativity in mainstream music?). It doesn't so much parody similar videos of the time as it directly channels one of them, white blazers and tight pants intact. The video is so dead-on, it's less funny than an exaggerated parody might have been.

Alex makes a living now by performing at state fairs and high school reunions, strutting the stage in tight pants that make the hot-and-bothered housewives go crazy.

Barrymore plays Sophie Fisher, a chatty, adorably neurotic woman who comes over to Alex's apartment every so often to water his dying plants. It turns out she's a moderately talented writer — and he's looking for someone to write lyrics for a song he's been commissioned to create for reigning pop princess Cora Corman (played by Haley Bennett).

Of course, an artificial deadline has been imposed on them by Cora and the movie gods — Alex and Sophie have only one week to deliver a finished cut.

All of these characters are fun, including the lumbering baritone Brad Garrett ("Everybody Loves Raymond") as Alex's loyally dour agent and Kristen Johnston ("3rd Rock from the Sun") as Sophie's pop-obsessed sister. But they are also severely underwritten.

The biggest missed opportunity is Cora, the worshipped pop princess, who has embraced what looks like Buddhism crossed with strip-teasing in her performances. She's poised to be a send-up of Shakira, Britney Spears and Madonna, but the filmmakers never milk the joke like they should.

And Sophie has a whole back story involving an affair with a smug writing professor (Campbell Scott) who wrote her into his newest book, warts and all. Understandably, this is very distressing to

Sophie, but the script never really goes anywhere with it, preferring to steam forward to the happy ending.

There's lots of potential here for satiric jabs at the banal, yet irresistible, allure of pop music, for poking fun at what it's like to peak early in life and for dealing with the frustration of having your life defined by one possibly embarrassing work of art. But "Music and Lyrics" only scrapes the surface of such ideas, and is more comfortable being a cute, "boy-meets-girl" story with a good cast and some good laughs.

Oh, and I almost forgot to mention the pop songs themselves. They're pretty stupid, a sentiment shared by an edgy songwriter played by Jason Antoon who inexplicably attends the big concert at the end of the movie and mimes blowing his brains out with a pistol. I believe he was put there by the filmmakers for the highbrow music snobs in the audience like you and me. That rocks.

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1 Taylor 309 - A.S.O. General Body Meeting (6 pm)

Wednesday, Feb 21st, 2007

2 Celebration of Change: "Africa & Technology" in Transitions @ 7 pm

Thursday, Feb. 22nd, 2007

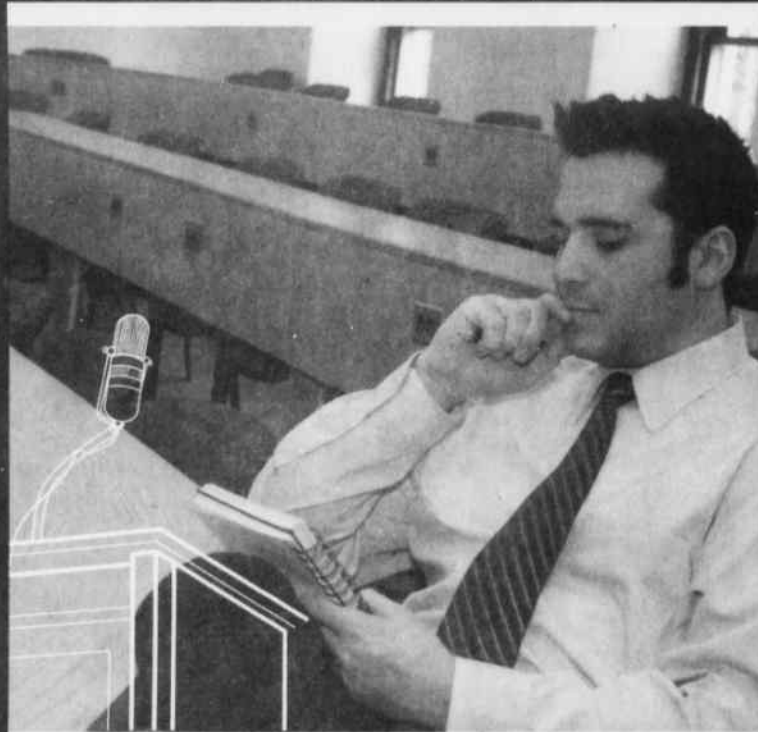
3 On the Commons - Save Darfur Campaign & Music at Noon

Friday, Feb. 23rd, 2007

4 Taste of Africa - Transitions at 6pm
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