

# The MLWGS Jabberwock

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## Talent Show a Huge Success

Talent is found in more than just smarts at MLWGS

**Karthik Ilakkuvan**  
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

With a medley of acts, from rock bands to classical performances to modern dance, the 2006 MLWGS Talent Show ended up being a huge success. Bringing in over 2,000 dollars, it kept in line with previous years.

"There are lots of great bands, and there [was] a lot of good dancing, Indian, classical, and modern," said SCA co-president Eric Wong ('06). "It [was] quite a spectrum of talent we [displayed]."

On Thursday, April 6, around 50-60 performers in 20 different acts performed in a packed auditorium.

"Unfortunately, because of the competitive nature, we had to cut three acts," said Wong. "It was a really hard decision,

too, because everyone was so good."

MLWGS students, including SCA members, have been working since early March to make the Talent Show a huge success. Tryouts were held the very first week of March and lasted two weeks. Rehearsals for the selected acts were held from April 3-5.

Adding to the pressure of attending rehearsals, practicing, and doing homework, was the fact that the Talent Show was the week right before Spring Break. The additional responsibility, including packing for trips and extra homework pushed the participants even more.

"It's kind of hard to find time to do it all, but I guess we basically tried to find any extra times on the weekend or after school to practice and make the dance better," said Naveen Khokhar ('07), a performer in the Talent Show.

Tickets were sold for five dollars and were offered at lunch during the week of April 3. Very few tickets were sold at



**The Deadbeats, including Michael Hoke ('08), Jonathan Houghton ('08), Jackie Laundon ('06), Devon Gray ('06), and Molly Dearhart ('09) rehearse. Photo by Karthik Ilakkuvan.**

the door.

The Talent Show also brought awareness to some people about how much talent there really is at MLWGS.

"I didn't even know that we had bands at this school. I thought it was just a lot of smart people," Meredith Ritko ('09) said. "It's cool to see your friends, peers, and classmates perform something they love to do and are good at, especially when it looks awesome."



**Daniel MacPhee ('07), George Thomas Fulks ('08), Erik Larsen ('07), and Tommy Nicholas ('07) tear up the stage as their band, the Official Performance Machine (OPM), practice during rehearsals on April 3. Photo by Karthik Ilakkuvan**

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## Is "All-School Read" a Misnomer?

The entire student body was required to participate in the All-School Read in March. Unfortunately, the All-School Read lacked participation and was more of a disaster than an event to bring the school together.

The English Department, along with other persons, was responsible for nominating a selection of five books for the students to later vote on. MLWGS students then selected Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* out of that list. Every single MLWGS student was given a copy of the book and was supposed to read the novel and come prepared to hold discussions with other English classes. Unfortunately, many students found themselves unable to complete the book because of both a lack of interest and a lack of spare time.

The biggest problem with the All-School Read was the books that were nominated. The initial selection of the books was based on the pricing rather than the books' quality and merit. This year the students found themselves voting for books that they did not have an interest in reading. The book finally selected was written in a style that is unfamiliar to most students. Many students and teachers complained that the book was extremely hard to read though and not very attention-grabbing, at least for the first few chapters.

Secondly, the month of March, with not a single day off from school, was one of the busiest of the year. Students would rather spend their weekends recovering from the last week and preparing for the next than completing an optional assignment. And with the difficult course loads and extracurricular activities that many students take on, they did not have much free time to read through a dense book. Because the book required a large amount of time to finish, many chose not to read the extra book at all.

From the major lack of participation, it is obvious that some drastic changes need to take place for the next All-School Read. In order to provide the MLWGS community with a more interesting book selection, students should have more input in the initial nominations. Also, if students are allowed more time to read and understand the book's themes, they will learn and benefit more from the All-School Read. The best way of giving students more time would be to "assign" the book during summer, winter, or spring break.

The All-School Read could be a great program for the MLWGS community to participate in order to increase unity; however, all these changes, and many others, will have to be instated to ensure the program's success.

—SS

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The MLWGS Jabberwock covers news events related to the school community and provides a forum for students to share their ideas. However, the statements expressed by columnists do not necessarily reflect the views of the Jabberwock staff.

All members of the MLWGS community are invited to submit letters to the editor on any topic, although the publication of all letters is not guaranteed. The newspaper reserves the right to edit letters for grammar, language and length. Please e-mail letters to: [newspaper@gsgis.k12.va.us](mailto:newspaper@gsgis.k12.va.us).

# Holidays Should be Inclusive, not Exclusive

*Opinion*

By Natalia Virani ('07)

Spring break falls just in time for Easter Sunday *again* this year—similar to how winter break falls in time for Christmas *every* year. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are the top three religions in the United States, but the two major breaks in the school year are planned for the two major Christian holidays: Easter and Christmas.

Clearly this is not a fair treatment of all religions. If one religious holiday is observed, then all religious holidays should be treated equally.

The U.S. Constitution establishes the separation of the church and state in this country. However, schools, not only MLWGS, allow for there to be a link between the Christian holidays and

school observances.

An argument could be made that Islamic holidays are hard to include in a school calendar because they follow the lunar calendar, creating different dates for each holiday, every year. However, Easter also follows the lunar calendar, and it is typically accommodated by school calendars.

Many religious celebrations go unnoticed only because Americans are ignorant of them. Did you know that there is a New Year's celebration in the Islamic religion on March 21, which is celebrated similar to December 31? Or did you know of the Jewish holiday Purim, which was celebrated only a few weeks ago, in which gifts and food baskets are exchanged and children and adults dress up in costumes?

It is true that students who are of non-Christian faiths are allowed to miss school for their religious holidays, but the onus is upon them to completely

**If one religious holiday is observed, then all religious holidays should be treated equally.**

make up work. Christians get one to two weeks to relax and vacation for their holidays.

Clearly there is not an equal observance of all religious holidays in this state or elsewhere in the country. For a country that fought so vigorously for the rights and privileges that we are so proud of today, I would not consider this to be fair to the citizens of the United States.

In a school of a multicultural student body, religious diversity should not be an exception. Holidays of one religion should not be prioritized over others, especially at MLWGS.

# The Current Holiday System is Sufficient

First off, let me remind everyone reading this that I'm a Democrat. I'm not advocating for a Christian America, and I don't believe in the "war on Christmas." I hate the idea of a theocracy, and I disagree with the Christian Right. However, there is a line to be drawn.

80% of Americans identify themselves as Christians; this means that almost 80% of Americans will be celebrating Easter and Christmas every year. It makes sense for the school systems to cater to the 80% of their students who cannot attend during Easter and Christmas.

The schools would have to shut down if they tried to hold classes with only 20% of students attending. What would be the point of holding school with only 20% attendance? The idea of democracy, after all, is majority rule, and 80% is a large majority.

Clearly, moving spring and winter breaks would cause a school shut-down.

What else can be done? Well, there is an argument that we could go ahead and close schools for every religious holiday. This means no school during the Islamic month of Ramadan and during the various Jewish holidays, which are spread throughout the year.

But then the Zoroastrians will want Khordad Sal and Gahambars off... followed by the Hindus with the Diwali festival and Durga Puja. Pretty soon, we'll be swamped with religious holidays because there are hundreds of religions out there and at least one adherent to each of those religions probably attends a public school somewhere in the United States.

The current policy is not perfect; it is

**It makes sense for the school systems to cater to 80% of their students, who cannot attend during Easter and Christmas.**

*Opinion*

By Michael Douglass ('07)

flawed and slightly unfair. But there is not an acceptable alternative. We cannot end the religious holidays for Christians because the schools would effectively shut down anyway with 80% of their populations gone. We can't open up to all religious holidays because there are so many that it would effectively cripple the school systems.

Religious holidays for minority religions (Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) should be respected, and students adhering to those sects should be allowed to take days off where necessary. But our schools must be able to function adequately, which means catering—to some extent—to the Christian majority.

# Letter to the Editor

## Who Are You?

Who am I?

I am the overachiever

I am the brain on a stick

I am the straight-A student

I am a member of:

Model UN, BOB Squad, Model Congress,

Young Democrats, Student Ambassadors and so many others.

I am the president of more clubs than I can count.

I am the person you love to hate.

I am the person who doesn't sleep.

I am the person with 700 community service hours.

I am the one aiming for Ivy League.

I am the one lacking life and learning it.

Who am I?

I am stressed.

I am overworked.

I am under appreciated.

I am the one who can't eat lunch everyday

I am the one who schedules months in advance to meet friends.

I am the one studying before every class.

I come home and do homework.

I get on the bus and do homework.

I have school after school and on Saturday.

I am the one trying to do everything and experiencing nothing.

Who am I?

I am everybody's friend.

I am the writer and the dancer.

I speak 3 different languages besides English.

I am going to a diplomat.

I am going to be President.

I am the one who makes even Physics enjoyable.

I am the biggest Geek and the coolest cat.

I play Magic, Chess, and life.

I am the one who knows where I m going.

I am the one who tipped the stars and am satisfied.

I am the one who figured it out.

-Rory Hatchel

# Actions Speak Louder Than Words

The Day of Silence, which will be observed next Wednesday, was created in 1996 by students at the University of Virginia as a peaceful action to create safer schools for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The action is silent to bring light to the bullying and harassment—in effect, the silencing that many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) students and their straight allies face in the school environment.

At MLWGS, we often take it for granted that we are in a much safer and more open school than most. However, four out of five LGBT students in the United States report to the National School Climate Survey that they have been verbally or physically harassed at school during the last month. While most LGBT students at our school are probably more comfortable being "out" than they would be at other schools, it is important to show our continued support of those at our school and at other schools.

MLWGS might not be visibly LGBT-unfriendly, but walking down the halls, you will still hear students saying, "that's so gay," or "you're gay" as an insult. This is not a direct insult to any particular person, but to the LGBT community itself. Derogatory comments hurt just as much as physical harassment.

But actions speak louder than words. By not speaking, participants in the Day of Silence are announcing how closeted the

LGBT community and its supporters are. Some people have called the rainbow armbands worn during the Day of Silence "fag tags," but again, walking away in dignified silence shows how you refuse to stoop to the level of homophobic students.

It is estimated that about 500,000 students across America will participate in the Day of Silence this year. But true equality and understanding can not be achieved until everyone in the entire country supports this day. Support can be shown on April 26, by coming to the blue stone lobby or cafeteria before school to get an arm band. There will be a silent lunch in room 338 and a breaking the silence party after school with activist Judd Proctor in room 338.

What are you going to do to end the silence?

*Ira Calos is the president of the Gay-Straight Alliance.*



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# Ultraviolet Burns Your Eyes

By **Jarrett Felts**  
Jabberwock Reporter

Just like too much time in the sun, “Ultraviolet” is fully capable of killing you. This movie is so bad, in fact, that the film reel I was watching melted twice. It’s bad—very bad.

The premise behind the film though is, admittedly, okay.

A virus was found, and some genius figured that it could be used to develop better, stronger, faster soldiers.

Something, however, goes terribly wrong. The virus is upgraded and becomes highly contagious. One drop of infected blood on your skin, and you’re now a Hemophage, a vampiric

human with enhanced physical and mental abilities. The world, however, becomes frightened of the Hemophages and begins to isolate and eventually destroy them.

This is the basis behind the subtitle of the movie, “Blood War”, and it’s the only part of the film that’s really good.

Milla Jovovich plays the Hemophage, Violet, and is assigned to retrieve an anti-Hemophage weapon for her people. The weapon, as it turns out, is Six, a nine-year-old human played by Cameron Bright.

Now, Violet has a choice to make: Does she take Six back to her Hemophage friends to be killed, or does she let her maternal instincts

kick in and run away with him?

Although some of the acting is a bit contrived and most of the time you can figure out what’s going to be said next, there are still some moments that catch you off guard or make you laugh.

**In all honesty,  
this film is  
Writer/director  
Kurt Wimmer’s  
sick inside joke.**

The action is another good point. It doesn’t make up for the movie’s bad parts, but seeing Milla Jovovich mow people down with a bladed Tek 9 is pretty cool.

The scenery is interesting but dorky by the end of the movie. Everything is either too futuristic to look good, or it is covered in all sorts of radiological pictures.

In all honesty, this film is probably writer/director Kurt Wimmer’s sick inside joke. While you watch it, you’ll just feel confused. You might piece everything together afterward, but by then the moment is lost.

I caught the whole of the plot as it was being given to me, and yet I still left the theater with a headache asking, “What exactly just happened?”

I really wanted to come out of this movie with a positive view, but I sadly couldn’t find too much positive about it. Ultraviolet tries really hard to catch your attention and feed you a story that has real potential, but instead it ends up choking you to death. It may be that I just don’t quite get the story Wimmer had brewed up, but when you get to the heart of the matter, the story is what really matters, and Ultraviolet’s parts just don’t add up enough to do the job.

In the end, Ultraviolet has only four things going for it: 1) Milla Jovovich owning house while looking hot, 2) cool fights, 3) nifty gadgets, and 4) Milla Jovovich owning house while looking hot...with a sword.

If you’re a Milla Jovovich fan, watch the preview. If not, then get a C.A.T. scan to make sure that being near this radiological spill didn’t give you a brain tumor.



Violet (Milla Jovovich) convincing Six (Cameron Bright) to follow her to safety. *Photo courtesy of IMDB.com.*

# Blocks Still Need Building

By **Karthik Ilakkuvan**  
Jabberwock Staff Contributor

Action adventure movies are known to get your heart beating. Bruce Willis movies are known to get your heart beating. While watching “16 Blocks” at the theatre, it actually made one lady’s heart *stop* beating.

If that doesn’t tell you the thrill and surprises that show up in this movie, I don’t know what will. Back to the lady: the theatre staff turned on all the lights, called it a medical emergency, gave us all free tickets, and resumed the movie after she regained consciousness. So, she was all right, thankfully.

Now, with respect to the movie—it was okay, nothing amazing. Bruce Willis gave a mediocre performance, along with Mos Def, whose nasally voice and inability to stop talking throughout the movie gets fairly annoying at times—

annoying enough for the moviegoer in front of me to scream at Def through the screen telling him to “SHUT UP!” while throwing some popcorn.

The actual plot is about a hung-over, ready-for-retirement police officer, Jack Mosley, played by Willis, who’s only job is to sign in, sign out, and stay out of trouble in between. His

**Bruce Willis gave a mediocre performance, along with Mos Def, whose nasally voice and inability to stop talking throughout the movie gets fairly annoying at times.**

job for today? Escort a prisoner 16 blocks through Manhattan to the courthouse, so that he can testify. Easy



Willis holds his gun right after shooting a fellow police officer who was trying to kill Def. *Photo courtesy of Warner Brothers.*

enough, right?

Unfortunately, there are a bunch of police officers out to kill this prisoner that Willis is escorting. Why? I’d tell you, but then, that’d ruin the fun of you watching the movie.

An action-packed thriller adventure spanning over an hour and 45 minutes, “16 Blocks” is rated PG-13 for violence as well as intense violence and action.

The cast consists of Willis, Def, who plays the prisoner trying to make it in time for the trial, David Morse, the “bad guy” of the film and many more, do an all-right job.

It wasn’t phenomenal acting, and it definitely was not one of Willis’ better movies, nor was it horrible.

The changes that Willis and Def go through during the movie are what keep the movie going, but the movie is amazingly predictable at parts. From the very beginning when their adventure starts, at 8:02 AM, to the

very end, director Richard Donner keeps the plot moving.

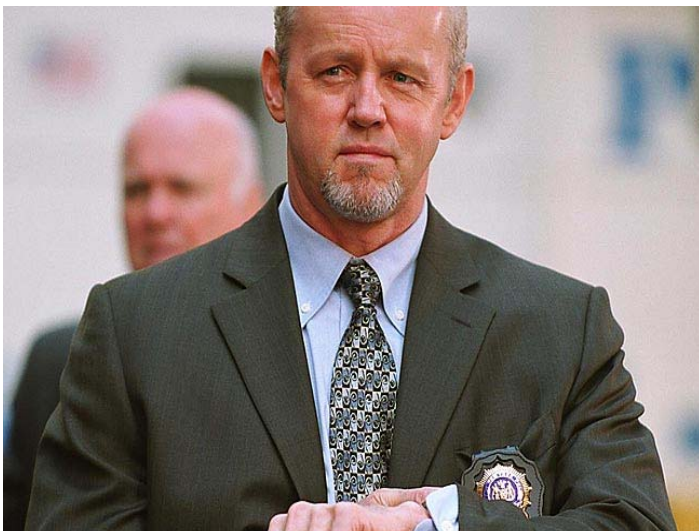
The climax, ending, resolution, or whatever you want to call it, gets your heart beating.

Willis and Def are caught in a showdown with Morse at the climax. The ending is cute, sweet, and

**The changes that Willis and Def go through during the movie are what keep the movie going, but the movie is amazingly predictable at times.**

even funny I daresay.

I’d give the movie, as a whole, six and a half stars out of a possible ten. It’s not one of those movies worth to spend \$8 to go to the theatre for—more one of those you rent for \$1.99 once it comes out.



Morse looks at the time, waiting for the perfect moment to kill Def. *Photo courtesy of Warner Brothers.*

# Real or Virtual...What's the Difference?

**By Isshin Teshima**

Jabberwock Staff Contributor

The most advanced game system out on the market today is the XBOX 360. Released just recently, the state-of-the-art console is the first of its kind to date. And with the Sony Playstation 3 and the Nintendo Revolution not being released until at least the upcoming holiday season, Microsoft has got an edge and a head start on the video game market for this year.

However, that is not to say that technology *does not* come at a costly price. This time, Microsoft is offering the regular bundle for about \$400. This system is compatible with both the old and new X-Box games.

Microsoft has also has offered a \$300 package in which only the X-box 360 games can be played.

Now, there are several other special packages out there for the XBOX 360, but good luck finding one. All of the online packages from Best Buy for the 360 hardware was sold-out...sorry guys.

Regardless to say, despite Microsoft's rather "interesting" marketing strategy, the new X-box really does employ the top of the line technology.

The graphics are so amazing that when I played the demo at Target, I felt really put into a real-life situation. I only got to try out *Call of Duty 2* and *Forza: Motorsport*, but I must say,

whew, the graphics were the best I have ever seen in a console game.

If you thought Halo and Halo2 were pretty, wait until you shoot a couple of enemy soldiers or race at speeds of over 120mph in a Ferrari on the streets of Tokyo...now *that is* gaming.

The sound was as crisp as could be, and the gameplay was fantastic. Although I only played the demos, completing a mission and landing successfully on D-Day gets your blood pumping and head sweating, which is what a good game on a good console is supposed to do.

And do not forget X-box live and the internet capability. Microsoft and the X-box live online player system proves to be the one and only comprehensive online console community as of now. Sony and Nintendo have come nowhere *close*.

Of course, like all good consoles, the 360 boasts the same capability, which will prove to be pretty cool in the months to come.

Overall it is a great system. It introduces the first of the three major next-generation systems that are going to come out in the near future.

Without Nintendo and Sony competition, the X-box as of now is the one true system on the market that introduces the capabilities of next generation gaming.

The one thing I was very disappointed about, however, was the extremely expensive price.



Extremely realistic graphics make XBOX 360 games electrifying. Photo courtesy of GameStop.com.

## Things to Look Out for...

<b>Gamecube:</b>	Kao the Kangaroo	3/29
	Odama w/ Microphone	4/10
	*Major League Baseball 2K	4/24
	Rampage Total Destruction	4/24
	*FIFA World Cup 2006	4/24
<b>Playstation 2:</b>	Kao the Kangaroo	3/29
	*Major League Baseball 2K	4/3
	*NBA Ballers: Phenom w/ BONUS	4/5
	Samurai Champloo: Sidetrack	4/11
<b>X-Box 360:</b>	*Top Spin 2	3/29
	Battlefield 2: Modern Combat	4/11
	*Final Fantasy XI ONLINE	4/18
	FIFA 2006 and MLB 2K	4/23
	*Timeshift	5/9
<b>PSP:</b>	Bust a Move Deluxe	4/3
	*PSP FM Power Tuner	4/3
	*From Russia With Love	4/4
	The Chronicles of Narnia	4/4
	Tomb Raider	4/4
<b>DS:</b>	Top Spin 2	3/29
	DS Universal Game Max	4/3
	Brain Age: Train your Brain	4/17
	*Guilty Gear: Dust Strikers	4/18
	*Top Gun	4/18
* = Key Games		

All information curtsey of www.gamestop.com

# Hungry? Try Some Famous Recipe Chicken

**Danny Yates**  
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

In the mood for moist, tender, succulent chicken? Are you thinking of a fancy French “plat du poulet?” No, no, I’m talking about Lee’s Famous Recipe Chicken!

Lee’s Chicken restaurant is located at 2200 W. Broad Street, right next to Pleasant’s Hardware. If you’re looking for a senior lunch spot, need a quick after-school snack, or if you’re hungry for a post-practice dinner, take my advice and try Lee’s Famous Recipe Chicken.

Before my first visit, I couldn’t believe that such great food and good service could come from a fast food place.

The pleasurable experience began when I was welcomed by friendly servers who seem to keep their smiles even during their busiest dinner hours. In fact, on this same trip, I noticed a homeless man haggling with the manager for a free meal. The manager stayed calm and pleasant as he offered a free drink and escorted the man out.

An eclectic mix of people gathered in the main, spacious eating area, working down their meals while sitting in clean and comfortable booths. In the background, the soft sound of Motown music could be heard. The takeout window is another option, and in the past I’ve been impressed by their speedy drive-thru service.

Lee’s menu resembles that of many fast-food chicken restaurants, but it has a



Lee’s workers always wear smiles. *Picture by Danny Yates.*

unique flair. Southern-style chicken is “what’s for dinner,” but servers offer you three recipes: Famous (original fried), Krispy (spicy), or Herb Roasted (baked).

On my last visit, I opted for the Famous recipe, but their baked chicken is pretty decent and their Krispy recipe is really hot, enjoyed only by those who like to “kick it up a notch!”

I chose the \$5.49 special, which is a two-piece meal (choice of breast, drumstick, or thigh) accompanied by two sides and a fresh biscuit. For dinner, the three-piece meal was available for 50 cents more.

“Would you like wedges with that?” asked my server. Lee’s delicious “wedges,” made of large, lightly fried potato slices, are just one of their many signature side dishes. Most combo meals

include two or more of these mouth-watering sides.

My favorite side was the corn because it has such a sweet, fresh taste. If you have a sweet tooth, Lee’s sugary, baked apples will hit the spot.

For the healthy eater, green beans are available, but they are a bit too spicy for my liking. Other sides

include cole slaw, baked beans, and mashed potatoes with Lee’s famous gravy.

To wash down your chicken and wedges, you can buy a bottomless drink for \$1.10, which means that you can have unlimited refills at the self-serve machine. I think this was definitely a highlight of my trip. If you’re with your family or just really thirsty, you can buy a half gallon of “famous” sweetened tea for \$2.49.

But best of all is Lee’s customer service, as I’ve already mentioned. “The

**“The reason people love Lee’s is that our food is good and we have good customer service.”**

reason people love Lee’s is that our food is good and we have good customer service,” said Jessica, who handled my order.

When I visited Lee’s, the manager let me see the kitchen, and I was amazed by how clean this restaurant is kept.

So, take my word for it and visit Lee’s, I know you won’t be disappointed.



Map courtesy of [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)

# Think Globally, Live Locally

Newtowne West, MLWGS' home neighborhood, is rapidly changing.

**Ira Calos**

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

When James Presley ('07) jogged across Moore Street during track practice, he had to shake his head to keep white cherry blossom petals from settling on him. Behind him, amidst equal numbers of dilapidated houses and new houses, were two children playing on a bicycle.

Across the street were a handful of men, one of them also on a bike.

Presley noted that the men on Moore Street were handing little baggies to each other. He ran on.

Perhaps this is why the track team is instructed to bypass the neighborhood on their runs.

"I'm not afraid of running out here, but I don't think we should go near those guys," Presley said.

MLWGS is in Newtowne West—a neighborhood with a long history of drug problems. Less than a month ago, 18 year old DiVonne Antoine Fields, Sr. was murdered on this same block of Moore Street. The crime was related to a drug robbery.

Aside from parking their cars on Moore Street, many MLWGS students seem to avoid the Newtowne West community.

The neighborhood has seen better days. From 1937-1979, Maggie L. Walker was an all-black high school for neighborhood kids.

"It was always very exciting to drive down Lombardy when school got out because you'd see hundreds of stu-

**"Because African-Americans are here doesn't mean [All Cuts] is a hoodlum shop," said Robert Rivera. "Haircuts don't come in colors."**



**James Presley ('07) jogs past a newly renovated strip of Leigh Street in the Newtowne West neighborhood. Photo by Ira Calos.**

dents hanging out front at the Silver Coach diner," said Mr. Edwin Slipek, MLWGS teacher and longtime city resident.

The neighborhood seemed to be full of energy, but when the school closed, "it sat here like a beached whale," Slipek said.

The school remained vacant for decades, attracting homeless people and illegal activity to the building. Walking down the shiny hallways, one can still see ghost-like images of graffiti on the walls. The images seem like relics of another era.

In the mid-1990's, train tracks running along Broad Street, through where Lowes, Kroger, and the VCU Siegel Center now are, were removed. The tracks had divided the community, creating pollution, noise, and a "brown field"—an area of unusable wasteland. After the tracks were removed, stores and houses were built, and in 2001, MLWGS opened. At about that time, stores began opening where the train tracks used to be, and developers

began reclaiming the neighborhood.

"When people drive by and see an empty neighborhood, they think, 'man, I'm never gonna live there.' But then, when the school was built, they saw it's not so bad," said Rock Rivera, who prefers just to be called Rock. He is barber at All Cuts, a barbershop bordering the school on Leigh Street. Rock is a big man who moved to the area from Harlem last year. He claims to have cut Brad Pitt's hair once and to have dated Jennifer Lopez for three weeks.

All Cuts first opened as Campus Cuts about three years ago, shortly after MLWGS opened. Many neighborhood residents and J. Sergeant Reynolds students come to get their hair cut at the shop. They haven't seen any MLWGS students come to the shop before.

"Because African-Americans are here doesn't mean [All Cuts] is a hoodlum shop," said Robert Rivera, Rock's brother. "Haircuts don't come in colors."

"Even so, the school's doing a great job. In an area like this, the school's

**Continued on page 10**



One of many neglected houses on Leigh Street that have been replaced or renovated since last year. Photo by Cynthia Losen.

#### Continued from page 9

job. In an area like this, the school's gotta be tough," Rock said, looking at the school from the window of All Cuts.

He thinks the school is doing a great job because he sees the photography students out taking pictures.

"Anywhere else, they would've taken those cameras to the pawn shop," he said.

But Rock isn't sure of whom the students really are. He thinks they're good kids, but he'd never spoken to one before.

"We're missing out because of stereotypes of the neighborhood," Rivera said. "Every now and then you want to say hello to the kids, but it's a fine line to cross."

Barber Jamyl "Gee" Al-Malik, a wiry guy with a huge grin, sometimes goes to the school to get his lunch. Al-Malik and his parents all went to Maggie Walker as students, but he never sees the students come to his shop.

"Don't be fearful of what you see across the street," Rock said.

Fearful or not, there is a visible divide, the cautionary line that Rivera mentioned, between MLWGS students and the neighborhood.

During track practice, Junior Sarah Uzel has seen drug dealers park in the school lot.

But "it's not the people in the houses," she said. "They seem nice.

Sometimes they'll tell us to have a good day at school."

Despite many well-intentioned neighbors, Uzel still moves her car to the school parking lot if it's late.

Newtowne Civic League president Athea Pinkney-Liggans said that Uzel is probably smart to move her car and that they are trying to get the police to patrol the area more. The neighborhood organization is concerned with bettering the community from within.

Pinkney-Liggans said the students are "respectful," but "standoffish because they don't know what's going on."

She noted that she didn't really know what was going on with the school either.

"Sometimes I wish [the school administration would] tell us when they were having events," she said. Until recently, Pinkney-Liggans didn't even know the school has an online calendar where events are posted.

Despite the lack of communication between the school and neighborhood, Pinkney-Liggans agreed that the school is helping the neighborhood, especially through its Newtowne Tutoring Program.

The Newtowne Tutoring Program started this past fall and has involved matching MLWGS students with neighborhood kids.

Rashard Byrd is one such neighborhood kid. He comes to the school on

Thursdays to get help with English.

Byrd, who is in the 8th grade at Albert Hill Middle School, has lived in the neighborhood for the four years, and "since y'all [the school] got here, it's been a little quieter."

He likes the program because "we have something to do now."

After leaving MLWGS, Byrd goes straight home.

"I try not to go outside at night 'cause a lot of shootings been going on. I just don't want to be part of it."

Byrd appreciates the program because he knows some of the real dangers of the neighborhood. He said that without the program, he might be a part of it.

"I like the school. I feel like everyone else here because I just want to make it," and the Newtowne Tutoring Program has done just that, albeit one day a week.

Byrd cut the interview short and darted upstairs to play basketball with

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**"We're missing out because of stereotypes of the neighborhood," Rivera said. "Every now and then you want to say hello to the kids, but it's a fine line to cross."**

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his friends from the school, juniors Trevor Helderman and Joey Accordino.

The Newtowne Tutoring Program is working to plug the school back in to the community.

Though not necessarily because of the school, crime rates have been going down in Newtowne.

"[The problems] we're still dealing with are overflow from back then," said school security guard, Irvin Charles. He attended Maggie Walker as a student.

"I think real soon this is gonna be a real nice area again."

Some students, like senior Leslie Robertson, aren't afraid of "what's on the other side of the street."

"At first, I had second thoughts on being on the street, but I think I'm a pretty nice person. And if I'm nice to other people, I'd like to think they'd be nice too."

# MLWGS Hosts GSMUN Conference

**Shana Arias**

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

On March 24, delegates from 18 different Virginia schools waited anxiously in the MLWGS auditorium for the conference they had been preparing for to finally begin.

This is the ninth year the Governor's School Model United Nations Conference has been held, and the MLWGS students worked hard getting ready for it in the last few months. Many students attended meetings after school and during lunch while also spending time at home preparing for the conference. Using research compiled for the conference, a hefty 113 page Sponsor Handbook was made for participating schools.

"It was all the students," said Ms. Sarah Dwelle, Model UN sponsor. "They were great."

The committees were all chaired and organized by MLWGS students. As well as committee chairs and vice chairs, students acted as delegates, pages, members of the Crisis staff, tech crew, models, and performed various other jobs as needed.

Many students sacrificed most of

their weekend for the conference, which lasted on Friday from 4 PM to 10 PM and on Saturday from 8 AM to 7 PM.

"It was hard work," said Sarah Benzenbaugh ('07), a member of the crisis committee, "but getting to dress up as Colombian rebels and guerilla fighters was a lot of fun."

All the hard work did get noticed.

"The whole conference has been really professional," said Patrick Flynn, a delegate from Blessed Sacrament Huguenot representing Cuba. "I'm really glad [MLWGS] does GSMUN. Kids from smaller schools wouldn't be able to participate in something like this any other way."

The students from the other schools seemed just as excited and dedicated to GSMUN as MLWGS students.

"All the delegates were well prepared," said James McCulla, co-chair of the Economic Commission on Africa. McCulla noted that because of the small size of his committee, they were able to be a little more informal and get a lot done.

However, there is a serious undertone to the GSMUN conference. Students are learning about conflict, peace,



**Students from visiting schools participate in the International Atomic Energy Agency. Picture by Shana Arias.**

and world affairs in hopes that in the future, they will be able to use the knowledge gained from these conferences to help change the world.

"We can not afford to stand on the sidelines and be spectators," said Model UN Secretary General Bailey Thompson ('06) in her opening speech.

Dr. Caleb Oluremi Oladipo, the Duke K. McCall Professor of Christian Mission and World Christianity at Baptist Theological Seminary, and the speaker for that evening, agreed, calling for the delegates to start working towards an end of genocide in the future.

Of course, Model UN is also a great social experience.

"I think my favorite part is meeting and interacting with all the different delegates," said Molly Farrar ('07), co-chair of the United Nations Development Programme.

The conference was made up of 8 different committees: Special Political and Decolonization, International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations Development Programme, UN High Commission on Refugees, Economic Commission on Africa, UN Security Council, North Korean Cabinet, and Geneva Conference.

GSMUN is not only a lot of fun, but also helps students prepare for the challenges facing the world today, in hopes that they can forge a better tomorrow.



**The Governor's School Model United Nations crisis committee raids a meeting in session. Picture by Shana Arias.**

# Original Supergal Turns 50!

Over the hill and across the track to Coach Snagg's surprise party we'll go...

**Danny Yates**  
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

Shh! Can you keep a secret? Well about 150 runners, friends, co-workers, and family of Coach Deborah Snagg's sure did!

On Friday, March 17, 2006, Snagg was astounded when she entered the MLWGS cafeteria and was pelted with streamers and deafened by shouts of "Surprise!"

"I was so surprised; there were people who came who I've known ever since we started at T.J. (Thomas Jefferson High School)," said Snagg.

The evening was filled with speeches, cake, gifts, and great fun. Honored guests included current and former runners who have been coached by Snagg, MLWGS administrators and even fellow 1974 original Supergal (T.J) runners.

Also in attendance were friends and coaches from the University of Richmond, where Snagg attended college and ran a outstanding cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track career.

Months ago, Coach Jim Holdren and many of Snagg's friends first started planning the party.

"Way back in the cross country season we first conceived the idea," said Coach Holdren.

Ever since that time hundreds of invitations, RSVPs, and gift donations were mailed back and forth without Snagg having the faintest idea.

Instead of bringing gifts, party guests were asked to contribute to a fund which will provide an all expense paid trip to Eugene, Oregon for the summer 2008 USA Track and Field Olympic trials.

"We had a fabulous response and more than ninety people contributed to the gift, which is a real tribute to how

much she (Snagg) does for everyone," said Holdren.

Many fond memories were shared over the course of the evening. 2005 cross-country captains Sam DeAlto ('06), Tracy Jennings ('06), and Rachel Leary ('06) honored Snagg with a poem highlighting their experiences with her.

"It is really hard to believe that Snagg is 50. She is so energetic and she can always push us to go even further our long runs," said Jennings

Andy Hagemann ('06) also spoke on Snagg's behalf.

"The party was a real success and it was a great time for everyone to come together and show their support for Coach Snagg," said Hagemann.

After the party, many MLWGS runners shared funny anecdotes about their experiences with Snagg.

"My most memorable time with Coach Snagg was when we were at Pole Green Park for a cross-country meet and she (Snagg) was a mile away, but I could still hear her here yelling and cheering me on! Also it's really funny when she starts dancing during our workouts," said Gregg Cothran ('06)

In more than 35 years of running,

**"It is really hard to believe that Snagg is 50. She is so energetic"**

which started when she and some friends became the first Girl's Track Team at T.J., Snagg set numerous records both at T.J. and at the University of Richmond which included becoming an All-American cross country runner in 1979.

She also won the 1987 Richmond Marathon and can still run a 5K race in under 21 minutes, proven by her first place win at the 2005 Footlocker Southern Region Women's Championship.

Along with coaching cross country and track and field, Snagg is a MLWGS technology assistant and works closely with Mrs. Patti Chappell.

"It is a joy to work with her (Snagg), she is always happy and upbeat: she sings, hums, and dances ... she will always do any task, even the hardest or dirtiest of jobs," said Chappell.

"I don't feel any different being 50, and I'm still running, but I guess I'll be able to feel it when I hit 60," said Snagg.



Coach Jim Holdren hugs Coach Deborah Snagg at her surprise 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party. Picture by Mr. John Herzog.

# Flipping Frisbees for Fun

## MLWGS boys organize a non-school affiliated MLWGS Frisbee Team

**Anna Mohan**  
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

The outdoor track, boy's tennis, and baseball teams have all suffered the loss of players this spring season. Where have all these team members gone? Just ask the MLWGS students flipping Frisbees at Byrd Park.

Instead of playing casually at lunch like previous years, this season, MLWGS boys have organized an Ultimate Frisbee team. Several members from other spring sports have defected to the Frisbee team this year. The team is not affiliated with the school and is completely student organized with no sponsor.

"It started with three or four kids throwing a Frisbee around in the parking

lot freshmen year, and now I'm leading 12 guys in actual practices after school," said senior Sami Aboulhosn, the boys coach. "We can compete on a pretty high level with some of the best teams in the state."

The dedicated team practices every Monday through Thursday from 3:30 to 5:00 at Byrd Park. The typical practice includes a 20 to 30 minute run around Byrd Park and then instruction from

**"It started with three or four kids throwing a Frisbee around in the parking lot freshmen year, and now I'm leading 12 guys in actual practices after school."**

Aboulhosn. They practice drills such as zone defense, and occasionally scrimmage.



MLWGS boys line up after the game. Photo by Aaron Mullins.



Senior Chris Parker prepares to throw the Frisbee in a game against St. Christopher's. Photo by Aaron Mullins.

In Frisbee, teams work towards scoring touchdowns in the end zone. A touchdown scores a point and the team with the most points wins the game.

"Frisbee is a great sport. A lot of people kind of look down on us, since we're not school sponsored and everyone thinks, 'What's so great about throwing a Frisbee around?' But it's not like that. It's so much more," said sophomore Paul Ream, a member of the Frisbee team.

Aboulhosn also works to keep in touch with the coaches of other school teams and tries to schedule games whenever possible. MLWGS won their first game of the season, against St. Christopher's, 15 to 7.

Although the team is not officially associated with the school, they still exhibit traditional dragon pride.

"It's a real bonding experience, after a long grueling day on the pitch; you have a good feeling inside, and feel so much closer to your teammates," said Ream.

# Singing for the Glory

MLWGS students sing their hearts out for the musical "Fame"

**Chris Stack**

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

A total of 720 people attended the spring musical, "Fame" which ran March 30<sup>th</sup> through April 1<sup>st</sup>. It has been 2 years since the last MLWGS musical, "Little Shop of Horrors."

Lead parts included Drew McFayden ('06) as Schlomo, Sarah Alderson ('06) as Carmen, Ben Houghton ('06) as Nick, Flora Vassar ('06) as Serena, Kiran Moghe ('08) as Tyrone, and Meredith Spencer ('09) as Iris.

Student response to the musical was positive.

"Musicals are generally

more interesting and easier to catch up on than Shakespeare plays," said Laura Kuthy ('08).

Problems were noted, however, with the sound reinforcement system.

"I generally like musicals better, but it was hard to hear this one," said Hillary Hurd ('09).

Out of the 50-60 students to audition, 32 were cast. Including the stage and sounds crews, about 60 students worked on the production.

Rehearsals for this production lasted only 3 weeks, but students fit over 95 hours of work into that time period.

"It consumed my life, during the week right before the production," said Moghe ('08).

For those who did not see the show, "Fame" is a some-



**Nick (Ben Houghton) and Serena (Flora Vassar) having difficulties with their teen emotions. Photo by Chris Stack.**

what depressing teen romance musical. It starts with a group of students who have just gotten into a very prestigious fine arts high school.

The student's personalities range from that of a book worm to druggie and from

born star to rising star from the ghetto.

Over the course of their four years the students realize that despite their diverse backgrounds they are not so different.



**New students singing at La Guardia School of Performing Arts just after their first roll call. Photo by Chris Stack.**