

The MLWGS Jabberwock

Volume 5, Issue 16

www.gsgis.k12.va.us

Friday, June 6, 2008

The Hunt for New Administrators Begins

MLWGS Administration begins to prepare for the retirement of two of its members after the next school year

Charles Condro
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

When next school year comes to a close, two MLWGS administrators will punch out for the last time. Director Mr. Doug Hunt and Coordinator of Curriculum Ms. Patricia Taylor are planning to retire after the 2008-2009 school year.

Mr. Hunt has been at his current post for the past six years. Ms. Taylor has been at GSGIS since its inception seventeen years ago in 1991; although for the first five she was a math teacher.

Next year the objective of the administration is to prepare for the transition.

"We are working to develop a plan for a smooth transition," said Ms. Taylor. "That's what our [Regional School] Board is doing. They are taking the time to make a transition plan."

It is not just the Regional School Board that is working to make sure that the school continues to run smoothly, but Mr. Hunt and Ms. Taylor as well.

"I'm documenting projects so that the person who comes behind me won't have to recover everything," said Ms. Taylor. "We are working on the curriculum and a textbook adoption for the next five years. We are also working on updating the VCU partnership."

The new administrators are expected to start in July 2009, according to Mr. Hunt. With this deadline just a little over a year away, the Regional School Board has begun to search for the replacements.

While both Mr. Hunt and Ms. Taylor have been fixtures at MLWGS for all



Mr. Hunt talks to Ms. Michele Surat in his office. Picture by Charles Condro.

those who are enrolled here, when they entered MLWGS, they were stepping out into uncharted territory.

Ms. Taylor left her post at Meadowbrook High School in Chesterfield County to be the inaugural math teacher at the newly founded Governor's School. A few years previously, she had been awarded the American Teacher Award for Outstanding Achievement in Math by the Walt Disney Company.

As the head of the math department, Ms. Taylor laid the foundation at the Governor's School by creating the Math Advisory Council and setting the expectations and guidelines for the department.

When Ms. Taylor found that the level of math needed by the students was extremely diverse, she set to work with Virginia Commonwealth University. Three years later, the dual-enrollment program with VCU was in full swing.

Not every innovation that Ms. Taylor brought about was solely her brainchild. Such was the case with the Student Am-

bassadors.

"The Class of 1999 wanted to help," said Ms. Taylor. "They did not get any community service; they did it just to help the school."

Continued on page 3

In this Issue:

Vandalism Strikes Back
(page 5)

Senior Sports Scholars
(page 8)

Jabberwock Seniors
(page 9)

**Brother of MLWGS
Senior Returns from
Service in Iraq**
(page 11)

The Search Is On

Who Will Replace Mr. Hunt?

Last week, Mr. Doug Hunt celebrated his sixty-fifth birthday. Fellow administrators festively decorated his office door with colored paper, ribbons, and more. At this time next year, though, the office will not only be decorated with “Happy Birthday” balloons, but a “Happy Retirement” banner will likely hang as well.

As MLWGS students, teachers, and staff prepare for a relaxing summer after another successful year, thoughts of September 2009 are far from anyone’s mind. Nevertheless, we must face the reality that in just over twelve months Mr. Hunt will no longer be here to lead our school.

The obvious question that jumps to mind now is “who will be our new director?”

At the May board meeting, the twenty board members voted to nominate Hanover County School Board Member, Mr. John Axselle, as chairman for the new director’s search committee. Choosing Mr. Axselle was a wise decision. His experience as former Chairman of the Regional Board and his committed support of MLWGS will ensure that the search for the next top administrator is well-executed and fair.

On June 19, the Board meets again. A search group will be assembled, and hopefully, the committee will start its work soon.

Those who participate in the search will, primarily, select our next director. And, that is why the make-up of the committee is so critically important. Richmond School Board member and MLWGS parent Ms. Lisa Dawson, has already suggested that the director’s search group be modeled after the current “Diversity Consultant” selection committee.

Such a model would include two school board members, two superintendents, two steering committee members, two parents, two students, and Mr. Hunt. Ms. Dawson’s suggestion to include both students and parents in the search should be commended.

A student and parent presence on the committee will be invaluable. No one knows the intricacies and unique aspects of our school better than dedicated students and devoted parents.

Absent from this suggested list, however, are any faculty members. This will surprise the many teachers who already requested some sort of faculty representation on the new director’s search committee. In preliminary discussion, some board members acknowledged that while faculty input for the director’s search would be gladly accepted and considered, the presence of teachers the committee could pose a serious conflict of interest.

One way to appease MLWGS teachers and still avoid any discrepancies could be to include retiring teachers on the committee. The same consideration must also be made in selecting student representatives. Any student involved with the search would have to be a senior so that he or she would no longer attend MLWGS when the new director, whom they selected, arrives.

While such details may remain hazy, two things are clear. Students and parents must be involved in selecting our next director, and the search must begin soon.

But for now, be sure to wish Mr. Hunt a Happy Belated Birthday, and have a great summer!

- DY

Editor’s Note:

Unlike some high schools newspapers that enjoy the privileges of larger staffs, high-tech software, and a snazzier layout, the Jabberwock has always coped with much simpler resources.

This year, we compensated for such disadvantages by increasing the quality of our reporting, writing, and editing.

Every other Friday this year, in addition to providing coverage of those annual MLWGS events (Fall Festival, Dodgeball, Asian Assembly), we’ve brought you investigative reports, compelling opinions, and even some cartoons.

Next September, the Jabberwock and its new staff will return to MLWGS with a renewed vigor to continue with the strides we have made and make a few additions as well.

We plan on adding an electronic component to our newsroom with an interactive website for breaking news, along with video footage and photo slideshows from school events.

2008-2009 is already shaping up to be chock-full of newsworthy events both inside and outside of MLWGS. From the presidential election to the search for Mr. Hunt’s replacement, the Jabberwock will be on-the-scene to keep you informed.

But for now, we hope all our readers enjoy a fun, safe, and productive summer.

Feel free anytime during the break to review any of the 16 issues from this year, posted at (<http://www.gsgis.k12.va.us/whatsnew/Jabberwock/jabberwockpast.html>), and be sure to e-mail us with your suggestions, questions, or comments.

The MLWGS Jabberwock Staff

Editor-in-Chief: Danny Yates

Assistant Editor/Sports: Karthik Ilakkuvan

Assistant Editor/NIB: Elaine Hillgrove

News: Charles Condro

Features: Ginny Cross

Opinion: Logan Ferrell

Photography: Mallory

Layout/Website: Alan

Noe-Payne

Chang

Reviews: Brie Cifu

Reporting Staff:

Melanie Burks

Paul Eiker

Jessie Li

Caitlyn Patey

John Vaughen

Marissa Jackson

Faculty Advisor: Mr. Hal Waller

Editorial Policy:

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 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.



Ms. Taylor and Coordinator of Administration Mr. Phil Tharp have both been at the Governor's School since it began in 1991 as two of the original teachers. Picture by Charles Condro.

Continued from page 1

By 1997 the school needed Ms. Taylor to take on a different role and become an administrator. But just like

“They are always willing to listen,” said Student Ambassador Courtney Stewart ('09). “I don't think that anyone can fill their shoes, but whoever they pick will do a good job.”

when she was a teacher, Ms. Taylor did more than her title of Coordinator of Curriculum states.

“When you say Coordinator of Curriculum, you also have some of the jobs that would normally be done by a central office,” said Ms. Taylor.

Starting in 1999 the students began congregating outside her office to volunteer.

“The students had to gather around a table outside my office because it was so crowded,” said Ms. Taylor. Her office was crowded because it was a converted

science closet, which she shared with the Senior Seminar and Test Coordinators.

Mr. Hunt came to MLWGS at another time of need, helping to settle the school in the new building.

“I hope to have been able to give the school consistency,” said Mr. Hunt. “I have tried to shepherd us through the growth.”

Having worked for 34 years in the Henrico County School System, including as principal for both Highland Springs High School for six years and Hermitage High School for eleven, Mr. Hunt retired in 2000.

For two years he stayed outside of the workforce, spending time fishing with one of his friends, but when he received a call from Chesterfield Supervisor Dr. Billy Cannaday asking him to take the job as Director while they looked for a replacement, Mr. Hunt readily accepted.

“I took the job thinking it was a three to six month commitment,” said Mr. Hunt. “I ended up working here for six years.”

As director, Mr. Hunt mixes the jobs of both a superintendent and principal.

“I am really a troubleshooter,” said

Mr. Hunt. “I try to coordinate the effort of the whole school... I handle the public relations and the day to day running of the school.”

While the transition will have an effect on both the faculty and the administration, it will also affect the student body.

“They are always willing to listen,” said Student Ambassador Courtney Stewart ('09). “I don't think that anyone can fill their shoes, but whoever they pick will do a good job.”

Both Mr. Hunt and Ms. Taylor are retiring, but neither of them wants to take on retirement sitting down.

“This has been my life. How do you retire from a life?” said Ms. Taylor. “I hope to be able to still contribute in some way... There is a side of me that wants to teach again.”

In addition to working, Mr. Hunt and Ms. Taylor will also look to spend time enjoying themselves.

“I like sports, so I will go to some games and be a spectator,” said Mr. Hunt. “Especially at my alma mater University of Richmond. I will also go to some Virginia Tech football games.”

Even though their retirement is on the horizon, neither of them plans on slowing down in their final year at MLWGS.

“This is probably the best place an educator can work,” said Mr. Hunt. “It is a wonderful place to end my career.”

“Things I want to finish: making sure that Arabic is up and running and successful,” said Ms. Taylor. “I am also documenting my contacts throughout the nation.”

While looking back on their experience at MLWGS so far, Mr. Hunt and Ms. Taylor expressed their strong feelings for the school.

“This is probably the best place an educator can work,” said Mr. Hunt. “It is a wonderful place to end my career.”

Arabic Comes to MLWGS

Virginia Cross

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

With the hope that teaching Arabic will bring a new perspective to issues concerning the Middle East, MLWGS is offering Arabic for the first time next fall. The Global Studies curriculum has always included the Middle East, but Arabic will be the first international language to represent a Middle Eastern culture.

“We’d been interested in teaching Arabic for the past five or six years, but it was about a year ago the school decided to prioritize Arabic,” said Dr. Cliff Broeniman, International Languages Department Chair. “Our serious consideration of Arabic resulted from a high level of student interest on the course survey.”

The school board accepted the Arabic course proposal in November 2007, but finding a teacher able to teach the class presented difficulty for the school.

“Very few people grow up thinking they want to be an Arabic teacher in a public school,” said Dr. Broeniman. “It’s terribly hard to find someone qualified and willing to teach it.”

“[Arabic] will allow me to see the similarities between the Western and Middle Eastern societies and appreciate their point of view,” said David Wagner (‘10).

After a long search, MLWGS finally found Ms. Samar Abushkheidem, a Jordanian professor who has previously taught at VCU and J. Sargeant Reynolds. She graduated from the University of Petra in Jordan and came to the United States in 1997. Although she had high school students in her classes at J. Sargeant Reynolds, this will be Ms. Abushkheidem’s first time actually teaching in a high school.

“I found Maggie Walker through a forwarded email regarding an opportunity for an Arabic teacher,” Ms.

Abushkheidem said. “I’d read about the school and the special students it attracts, and I am so excited to get the chance to teach Arabic at Maggie Walker.”

According to the Arabic course proposal, students will learn the Arabic alphabet and the tonal system in the first year of the language. Ms. Abushkheidem will also introduce basic sentence structures and Arabic culture.

“We’re going to speak a lot about the culture, but I’m not really going to get into religion,” Ms. Abushkheidem said.

Instead of discussing controversial topics like Islam and Middle Eastern politics, Ms. Abushkheidem said she is going to share Jordanian music, food, and traditions with her students. She also plans to read Arabic stories to the class and bring in Arabic newspapers.

Although Ms. Abushkheidem wants to avoid bringing politics into the classroom, some students taking Arabic believe that just learning the language itself will give them a broader perspective on issues concerning the Middle East.

“Learning Arabic would allow me to become accustomed to important parts of Middle Eastern society,” said David Wagner (‘10). “It will allow me to see the similarities between the Western and Middle Eastern societies and appreciate their point of view.”

In 2006, President George W. Bush launched the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), a proposal that the U.S. Department of State calls “a plan to further strengthen national security and prosperity in the 21st century through education...in developing foreign language skills.”

The primary goal of the \$114 million initiative is to increase fluency in languages that the government has deemed “an essential component of U.S. national security” like Arabic, Hindi, and Chinese. The expanded funding demonstrates the government’s growing need in security fields and



Arabic alphabet. Photo by Virginia Cross

international languages for speakers in these languages.

In fact, on the application website for U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Specialists, applicants with a “working knowledge of a language that is identified as a ‘Super Critical Needs Language’” receive bonus points on their application. Arabic is classified as such a language.

“I want to do something with the Armed Forces, and Arabic translators are in such high demand, especially somewhere like Iraq,” said Will Robbins (‘09). “If more [Americans in Iraq] spoke Arabic, things might improve because they’d be more exposed to the culture.”

While some students taking Arabic plan to apply the language to future government and business careers, one MLWGS student hopes to use Arabic in a high school job.

“There’s a Middle Eastern market near my house called the Halal Market, and I’m applying there for a job,” said Hannah Gropper (‘10). “I’ll be learning the standard Arabic in school, but there I’ll get to hear Arabic in real life. I’m looking forward to get to practice it.”

Continued on page 5

Continued from front page 4

Arabic is considered one of the most difficult languages for native English speakers to learn, and can take almost four times as long to master as Spanish or French. Ms. Helen Small, the Virginia Department of Education Specialist for Foreign Languages, believes that Virginia schools would benefit from introducing Arabic as early as possible.

“Arabic could be taught in middle school, and even better would be elementary school,” Ms. Small said. “Any language takes considerable time to learn, and the more different the foreign language is from the native language, the

longer it may take.”

Only Arabic I and II were approved by the MLWGS school board under the Arabic course proposal, but the language department is open to the idea of a third-level Arabic course.

“If enough students continue with the Arabic program, Arabic III could be worked into the system,” said Dr. Broeniman. “Its definitely a possibility that this could become a three-year language, but it’s all dependent on student interest in the course.”

Regardless of whether Arabic becomes a three-year language, the course has the potential to benefit

classes in other subjects. History teacher Dr. Brenda Ericson believes that the introduction of Arabic is a way to supplement what her students are already learning about the Middle East.

“In Global Studies, our main objective is to teach the basics of a region: the history, politics, economy, and social trends. We look at the region from these four perspectives, but native speakers can offer different insight by introducing their own culture,” Dr. Ericson said. “This is something the Arabic teacher can bring that we can’t offer in Global Studies.”

Diversity Defaced

Danny Yates

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

An unusual hush of silence could be heard in many classrooms during the Tuesday June 18 morning announcements.

At this time, MLWGS Director Mr. Doug Hunt addressed students and faculty in a somber tone. He said that a vandal had defaced a mural on the first floor.

The vandalized mural, recently painted by the Social Prejudice Senior Seminar, is located on the wall of the sloped hallway connecting the athletic wing to the cafeteria.

“It was reported to us Monday, but it had to have happened last Friday or over the weekend,” said Coordinator of Administration Mr. Phil Tharp.

According to the administration, an unknown person splattered brown paint over the word “gay” which had previously been painted in a thought bubble by seminar students.

Some members of the school community were shocked by the act of vandalism.

“My thought is that I don’t know what type of mentality would make someone destroy this artwork since it represents in this case, a coalition working for peace and acceptance,” said MLWGS Head of Security Mr. Irvin Charles.

“I’m hoping that we’ve moved be-

yond that point when we discriminate by race, gender, or religion,” said Mr. Charles. “Besides, Ms. Thornton is such a nice lady, I don’t know why anyone would do this.”

One administrator agreed.

“It is sad, because this very issue points to the types of intolerance that they’re trying to address in the seminar,” said Mr. Tharp.

MLWGS Social Prejudice or “Ism’s” Senior Seminar’s six students, Sarah Bradshaw, Leah Brown, Katey Damian, Audrey Redford, and Zach Rubin, created the mural as their culminating class project for the year.

“Before painting it we had to approach the administration, present our design and get it approved,” said Redford.

“For a lot of the second semester and mostly this past month the class actively worked on it,” said Mr. Tharp.

During the announcements, any student with any knowledge of the vandal or the incident was asked to speak to an administrator. So far, the response has been non-existent.

“At this point no one has shared any information with me,” said Mr. Tharp.

Additionally, Mr. Tharp said that the vandal might not be a student.

Since the school remained open for most of the weekend, with the Talent Show last Friday and Elizabethan Rout on Saturday, others had access to the building.

One student from the seminar had her own suspicions as to the culprit.

“I personally believe that it was done by a student,” said Redford.

Another senior from the seminar said that the class regretted leaving a paint can and brush near the mural after they had finished.

“We were upset because it was our own paint that they used,” said Damian.

For now, the class has chosen to leave the vandalism on the wall as a symbol that some prejudice is present, even at MLWGS.

“Ism’s” seminar students cited the vandalism as the need for continued acceptance and tolerance of all individuals during their Wednesday June 5 showcase presentation.



Social Prejudice Seminar’s Mural was vandalized. Photo by Danny Yates.

Incoming Teachers

John Vaughn

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

Thirteen new teachers will join MLWGS as of now.

The biggest change is the arrival of two guidance counselors. Ms. Joy Davis earned a B.A. in psychology from the College of William and Mary, and her father and grandfather attended MLWGS. The second counselor, Mrs. Rachel Loving, graduated from Randolph Macon College with a B.A. in psychology.

“Hopefully we now have four [guidance counselors] who will be with us for a while,” said MLWGS Director Mr. Doug Hunt. “[We’ve been] interviewing the entire year it seems like.”

The English department will receive three new additions. Ms. Kerry Sheppard studied Shakespeare and Chaucer at Oxford. Mrs. Lisa Williams has 17 years of teaching experience and has published two novels. Lastly, Mrs. Celie Boswell is a UVA graduate with experience teaching at St. Catherine’s school and



A Patriot surface to air missile is launched. Photo Courtesy of http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Patriot_missile_launch.jpg

Randolph Macon College.

Two new teachers will join the global studies department. Mr. Ngagne Jafnar Gueye will teach AP Macro and Microeconomics and has a B.A. in Economics from the University of Orleans in France. Mr. Max Smith, while teaching modern world history and philosophy for Henrico County’s International Baccalaureate program, earned a Meritorious New Teacher award from the state.

A new class will be available to MLWGS students with the arrival of Mrs. Samar Abushkheidem. She will teach two sections of Arabic

“I am looking forward to starting Arabic at Maggie Walker and I can’t wait to start the new year,” said Mrs. Abushkheidem.

The second new language teacher, Mrs. Stephanie Welles, will teach Spanish fulltime and has a B.A. in Spanish Literature and language.

Dr. Amelia Compton will be the only new member of the Science Department. She will teach two classes of biopsychology, a much sought after class. She graduated from VCU with a PhD and Masters in Psychology.

The math department will also have one addition. Dr. Leonard Wibberly will teach three sections and earned a PhD in applied math at UVA. Before teaching he worked for Raytheon’s Missile System Division in software validation. This company designs and produces missiles for the United States; it was contracted by the government to manufacture the Patriot missiles.

Drama director Mr. Grant Mudge will be teaching one section next year instead of seven sections. He will work fulltime for Richmond Shakespeare, where he has already worked for twelve years.

The fine arts department will gain only one new teacher. Mrs. Kori L. Mosley attended VCU’s School of Arts and will teach two sections.

Lastly, Mrs. Dayna S. Paxton has

New Faces at MWGS

Global Studies:

Mr. Ngagne Jafnar Gueye
Mr. Max Smith

English:

Ms. Kerry Sheppard
Mrs. Lisa Williams
Mrs. Celie Boswell

Guidance:

Ms. Joy Davis
Mrs. Rachel Loving

Senior Seminar:

Mrs. Dayna S. Paxton

Fine Arts:

Mrs. Kori L. Mosley

Languages:

Mrs. Stephanie Welles
Mrs. Samar Abushkheidem

Math:

Dr. Leo Wibberly

Science:

Dr. Amelia Compton

practiced law for 19 years and is an attorney. She will teach law for one section of Senior Seminar.

Some familiar faces will not be present next year.

Mr. Dickson Benesh and Ms. Michele Surat will leave MLWGS for two years to teach internationally. Mrs. Connie Hill has resigned and Mrs. Sarah Dwelle is taking a leave of absence for medical reasons.

Mrs. Denise Yagel will become the department head of the English department and Mr. Karl Von Klein will become the department head of the fine arts department.

The number of new teachers has decreased compared to last year’s new arri-

To the Editor,

Adults' attempts at political correctness never cease to amuse me. The diversity "problem" has been a "problem" for more than a year, and the tendency towards naivete among decision-makers in this so-called gifted high school perplexes me now as it did then. Is race really a difference? If we are making the distinction between black and white, Asian and Latino, are we not upholding the idea that they are different? Yes, there is a physical difference in skin color. But is there a difference in the inherent qualities of human beings? Certainly no one would be so audacious (or, my God, politically incorrect) as to say that "Black people are underprivileged" or "Asians work harder than everyone else." These constitute stereotypes. Are we a school that supports these false generalizations made based upon skin color?

I thought the idea was to eliminate

discrimination here, no? Yes, there are things we could probably improve upon, namely in our application process. But what does forced diversity do but make us politically correct? Will it improve our test scores? Rest assured, our test scores will remain the same. By this I do not mean that increased diversity decreases academic success--I mean only that it has NO effect upon academia because it seems to me that race is not related to intelligence or test scores. If minority students are not applying to our school, our only duty is to make them entirely aware that this opportunity exists.

Perhaps actual intelligence, motivation or desire to learn should be considered more than the color of one's skin. Laziness, dishonesty, and lack of motivation to learn are not selective--they are apparent in every race. It is very much as Martin Luther King Jr. said--

that his "four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." Perhaps our lofty Administration ought to re-evaluate the reasons it maintains for pursuing diversity at this school. Perhaps these consultants will shed some light on this situation--or perhaps they will only confirm that attempting to artificially induce diversity is not only NOT beneficial, it is borderline racist.

Maggie Walker students, do not allow yourselves to be spoon-fed your beliefs. You want to "erase-ism" but your inaction and your silence on this issue are the pinnacle of hypocrisy. I challenge you not to become a student body of "all talk and no action--" get involved, make a change, and create for yourselves an environment of tolerance and character.

- Kaitlan Lawrence ('09)

To the Editor,

African Americans make up over one third of the metro area's student population, but over the last eight years African-American students have comprised fewer than 7% of Maggie Walker's student body.

A common misperception is that this is explained wholly by a lack of interest in the school from the region's African American community. While there is certainly room to increase interest by expanding outreach efforts, it is important to note that the percentage of African American students *applying* to Maggie Walker is proportional to the region's population. African-American applicants average around 30% of the total applicant pool. This has remained consistent since 2001. Among that applicant pool are many highly qualified students who, were they to be enrolled at the school, would thrive and excel.

Interestingly, the data suggest that another group may also be adversely affected by the current entrance criteria: girls. In nearly all participating school districts, female applicants outnumber males by a considerable margin. Actual enrollment numbers, however, reflect a near 50-50 split between males and females. For example, 60% of 2007 appli-

cants to Maggie Walker were female, but girls represented only 52% of the incoming class

What do these numbers suggest about Maggie Walker's admissions process? It's hard to know for sure without a closer look at the many different criteria the school examines when considering an applicant for admission. What *is* clear from the statistics is that some groups have been consistently advantaged by the present entrance criteria. The Board's upcoming appointment of an outside consultant to examine these issues is an important step in helping all of us invested in the success of Maggie Walker to understand how best to serve our community.

Three years ago, my research showed 83% of Maggie Walker's ninth and tenth graders believed their school experiences would either "help a lot" or "help somewhat" with their ability to understand members of other races and ethnic groups. Sixty-three percent of students thought that their experiences in high school "greatly increased" or "somewhat increased" their desire to work to improve relations between people of different backgrounds. These encouraging results were a tribute to the learning environment at Maggie

Walker, and suggest that in many ways the school is fulfilling its mission to create "citizens who understand and celebrate diversity."

Much work remains, however. Effectively addressing issues of equity will enable Maggie Walker to serve as a model of excellence in promoting diversity and educational access, as it does in so many other arenas. We must remember what this school has always been about – providing the region's students with a truly unique and magnificent education in order to cultivate leadership for an increasingly global and diverse society. Yet we must also remember that some groups have not been fully represented in this diversity. We cannot continue to carry out our mission without fairly including *all* members of our community.

-Genevieve Siegel-Hawley ('98)

***The Jabberwock reminds its readers that opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor do not represent the views of the paper's staff. Also, the factual accuracy of content within letters has not been verified.**

Natalie Davis Finds Perfection

Karthik Ilakkuvan
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

\$10: My allowance.

\$50: Cost of a new videogame.

\$20,000: The amount of money that Natalie Davis ('08) won for winning the Lexus Pursuit of Perfection Scholarship Award.

Yes, Davis, a cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track runner, beat out 29 other candidates to win the award. Each week for the past 30 weeks, Lexus of Richmond has recognized one outstanding high school senior scholar-athlete.

"All thirty of the candidates were extremely well qualified, and any of us could have won," said Davis. "I was really lucky."

"It was a great honor to be chosen, and my parents are certainly pleased!" she said. "The nicest thing about it was the support I received from other candidates— they all came up to me afterwards.

"Amarachi [Eseonu], Carley [Beckner], and [Sarah] Burcher all hugged me and congratulated me, which was really sweet."

"All thirty of the candidates were extremely well qualified, and any of us could have won," said Davis. "I was really lucky."

The criteria for this award included academics, specifically GPA, SAT scores, and APs, awards and activities, which are academic awards, honor societies, and extracurricular activities, and community service. Davis attends St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where she helps out with her youth group.

"The summer before sophomore year, I traveled to San Francisco to work in the Tenderloin, the poorest district in the city," said Davis. "My youth group washed dishes, served food, delivered meals to the shut-in, and waited in line

and ate with the homeless. It was amazing to see the intense poverty and the incredible number of homeless."

Davis has also helped out with hurricane relief after Katrina.

"For the past two spring breaks, I have traveled down to New Orleans," Davis said. "The first time, I mainly gutted houses that had not been touched in a year and a half. I was sifting through inches of dried mud and silt. It's very disturbing to go through and throw away everything a person owns.

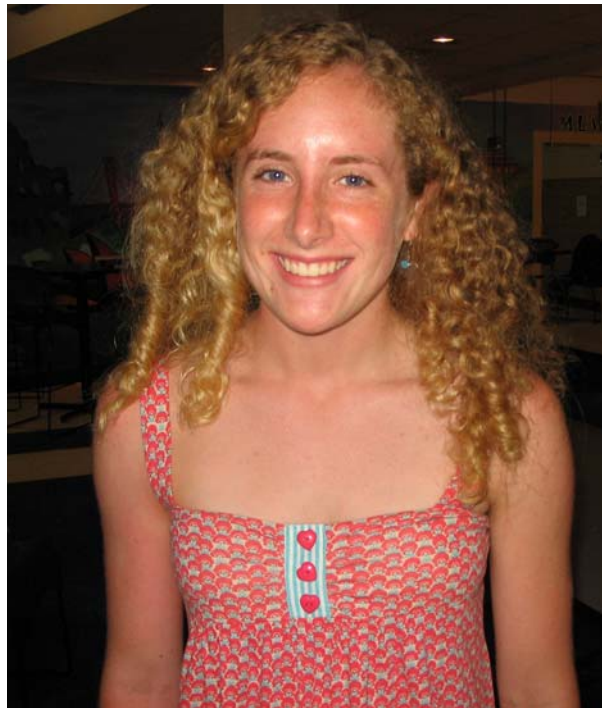
"This year, I did a lot of painting and general rebuilding, which was much more positive. It's still really hard to see all of the abandoned houses and businesses and the concrete slabs where houses were completely washed away.

"It makes me question why the country seems to have forgotten this huge problem and why the government has not done more to solve it. If the environmental issues are not resolved, the entire country will be affected."

Davis appeared on TV, in the *Richmond* magazine, and on the radio when she was first nominated in Week 13. In late May, Davis would finally find out who had won the award.

"The regional track meet was on the same night as the awards banquet, so I had to change in the car and was really disgusting from running 4X8," said Davis. "There was a cocktail hour and dinner where I had the chance to talk with some of the other candidates. Afterwards, they introduced all of the candidates and had a guest speaker.

"Finally, Mr. Whitlow, the owner of Lexus of Richmond, began describing the candidate, though he never specified the gender. He began with general



Natalie Davis. Photo by Virginia Cross.

information, such as 'this person's SATs were close to...' and moved into more specifics.

"Once he got through honor societies and APs, I was pretty sure it was me. I was positive once he moved on to track. My mom was poking me underneath the table the entire time. Once my name was called, I had to walk through the entire room and give a few remarks. I was completely shocked and shaking."

And with that, a \$20,000 check was sent straight to Williams College, where Davis is attending in the fall of this year.

Davis was not the only scholar-athlete to be rewarded for her success both on and off the playing field, though. Amarachi Eseonu ('08), one of the 30 recipients of the weekly winners of the Lexus of Richmond Pursuit of Perfection Scholarship Award, was named Scholar-Athlete of the Year by the Richmond Times-Dispatch. This award consisted of a \$7,500 scholarship.

Will Roberts ('08), a baseball player, was runner up for the Scholar-Athlete of the Year award. He received a scholarship of \$2,000.

Don't Mess with the Mohan

By Gabriella Cifu

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

The *Jabberwock's* own Rory Gilmore has left big shoes to fill. Anna Mohan ('08), editor-in-chief of the *Jabberwock* is graduating after three years of dedicated service to MLWGS's newspaper.

"I'm a big fan of Gilmore Girls, especially Rory Gilmore (Rory was a journalist on her high school and college newspaper). I always wanted to be like her," said Mohan.

Mohan enrolled in the journalism class during her sophomore year, and has since dedicated her time and talented writing ability to the *Jabberwock*.

"I took journalism in sophomore year as kind of a fluke. I had space in my schedule, and it was either band or journalism, so I tried it," said Mohan.

In her junior year, Mohan became the news editor. The following year, Mohan took the position of editor-in-chief. As editor, Mohan was responsible for writing biweekly editorials.

"I've liked writing the editorials. It was a chance to express my opinions on different issues, in an authoritative voice," said Mohan.

Through writing editorials about those issues that affect students at MLWGS every day, Mohan has been able to express her opinion to a wide audience of students and administrators. Also, the editorial has given Mohan a chance

to discuss some of those activities at MLWGS that she has particularly enjoyed.

"I especially enjoyed writing my 'We the People' editorial. It was one of my best high school experiences, and it was great to put [my experience] into words," said Mohan.

Through the dedication of Mohan and the *Jabberwock* staff, the readership has increased greatly over the course of the year.

"I think the most important thing was that we gained readership, through

things like the cartoons and Danny Yate's in-depth news articles. We also gained readership by people knowing who the editors were," said Mohan.

Being an editor, while very time consuming, has many benefits outside of working on the newspaper. Editors spend generous amounts of time looking over other journalist's articles, and naturally become better at such aspects of their writing as grammar, and punctuation.

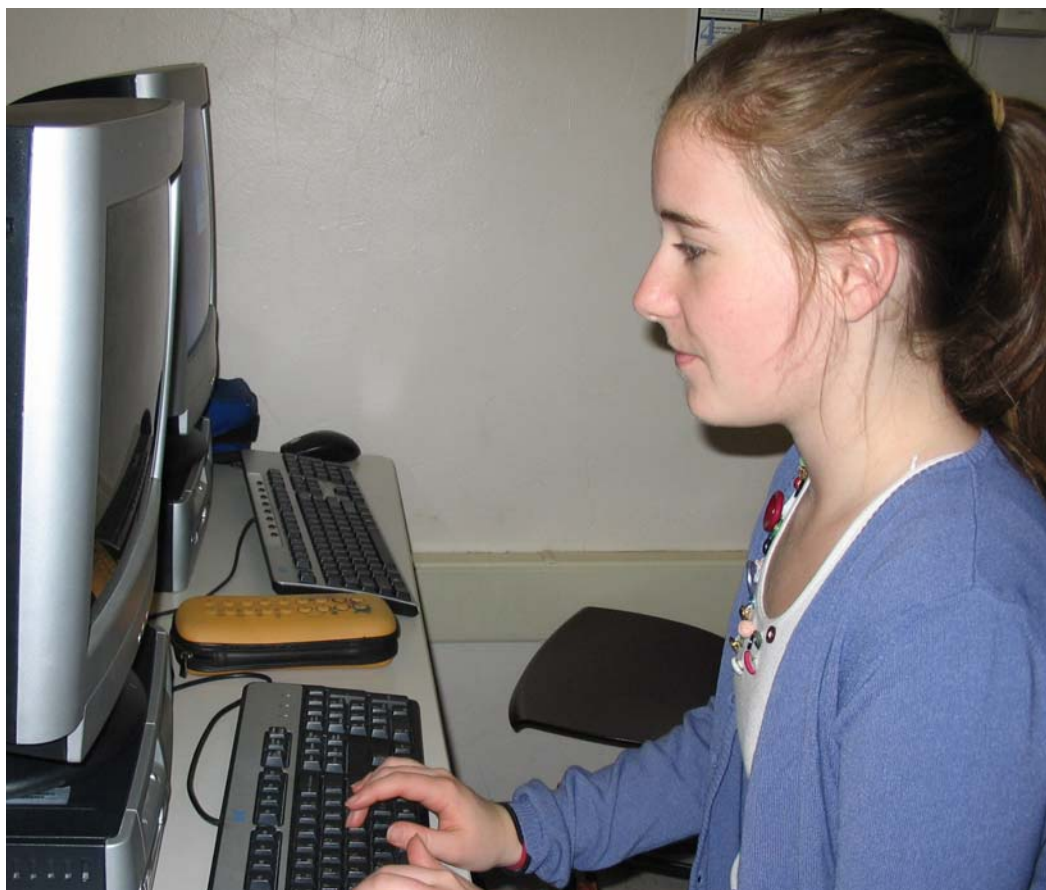
"It has definitely helped

my grammar, just having to write articles and edit other peoples' articles," said Mohan.

Mohan is attending the University of Virginia next year, where she is interested in pursuing studies in political science.

Before leaving, Mohan offered some last advice to future editors and journalists.

"Don't take [the experience] too seriously. The important things are having fun and learning as you do it," said Mohan.



Anna Mohan works on the latest issue of the *Jabberwock*. Photo by Gabriella Cifu..

Howe Will We Survive

By Gabriella Cifu
Jabbercock Staff Reporter

Even though he has only been involved with the Jabbercock for two years, opinion editor, Garrett Howe ('08) will be greatly missed.

After being enrolled in the journalism class for a year, Howe took on the challenging role of opinion editor, greatly impacting all of those around him with his thought-provoking opinion pieces.

"I am a very opinionated person," said Howe. "I wanted some way to express that opinion to a larger audience."

As a member of the *Jabbercock*, Howe was able to do just that. MLWGS students showed a keen interest in each issue of the Jabbercock, and controversial opinion pieces aroused discussion among all members of the school.

"I like to write about what life means to different people," said Howe. "Also, it's always nice to hear about the news

before other people do."

Howe has written articles on subjects from Barack Obama to drinking at prom. Fellow seniors of Howe even posted a copy of Howe's first article in the high-number senior commons.

Even though Howe's work for the *Jabbercock* was short-lived, he greatly improved his journalistic writing skills.

"When you do writing for any professional purpose, it makes you a better writer," said Howe.

Through working closely with other *Jabbercock* editors and writers, Howe has many fun memories from his time on the newspaper.

"It's always funny to hear Mr. Charles' quotes and...to hear Mr. Waller comment on our pieces," said Howe. "Also, we'll talk about whether something is too controversial [to put in the paper], and those conversations are pretty lively."

Next year, Howe will be attending

VCU, where he plans to major in mechanical engineering and physics. While Howe will be very occupied by his academics, he plans to write for his college newspaper "if [he has] time."

While Howe's experience was brief, it was beneficial and memorable. Howe learned journalistic skills that will surely help him as he pursues his college career.

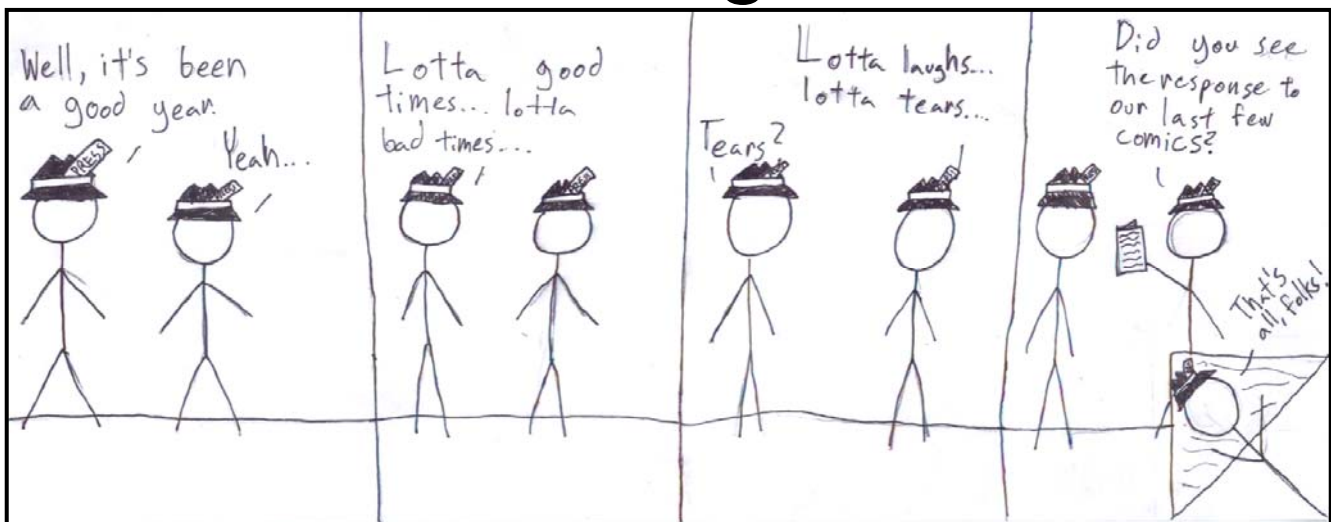
"It was very enjoyable," concluded Howe.



Garrett Howe editing an article. Photo courtesy of Gabriella Cifu.

Yorkshire Pudding

By Justin Geldzahler and Michael Berry



Justin Geldzahler ('08) and Michael Berry ('08) have been involved with the *Jabbercock* this past year. The contribution of their comic strip, *Yorkshire Pudding*, has been beneficial to the success of the paper. Also, Geldzahler has frequently written movie reviews. Geldzahler is attending Boston University, while Berry is attending VCU.

A Tale of Two Soldiers

Garrett Howe

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

Around seven months ago, my brother, William Howe, began his deployment at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. A member of the Virginia National Guard, he is a "96 Uniform," also known as an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) operator. However, despite the many months of training he has received from the Army, he has yet to put his skills to the test in the war on terror.

"I guarded a seaport," Will said. "I lifted a gate and checked an ID. It was very boring."

Despite the apparent serenity of the job, not everything was repetitive.

"We blew up a truck once," Will said. "We thought the guy had a bomb in the truck. Turns out that he didn't."

While his job may seem quite unrelated to the front line battles in Iraq, in reality, his job assists in the delivering of supplies to our soldiers on the front line.

Kuwait is a coastal country, one of the six that borders Iraq. Many supplies that

"The Virginia National Guard has still not let me do my job. I've been in the Guard for almost two years."

eventually reach our troops must first arrive at the port in Kuwait, then must travel by convoy from Kuwait into Iraq.

The most interesting thing I found in interviewing my brother was his description of the people he dealt with on a day to day basis.

"There were the Third Country Nationals (TCNs) who were from Pakistan, India, the Philippines, and other countries," he said. "They worked very hard and were nice."

Concerning the actual Kuwaitis, he only had one thing to say.

"They (the Kuwaitis) drive really nice cars."

However, after all that he has done in the region, there is still one thing that he would ask of the government.

"The Virginia National Guard has still not let me do my job. I've been in the Guard almost two years."

While my family is very grateful to have Will home again, he is not our only connection to the military.

A close family friend, John Johnson, has also recently returned from the Middle East. He has been serving now for two years and 11 months as a marine.

As a basic rifleman, or a "0311," John has spent the past seven months helping the Iraqi police and armed forces in Al Anbar province, Iraq.

"I stood post at forward operation bases to ensure the safety of Iraqi police transition teams and provided overwatch patrols with Iraqi police," John said.

This was not the only task that he was assigned.

"I was also a runner for our Battalion Command," he said. "I relayed messages from the drone tents to the Battalion commands."

John, who has had a great deal of first hand experience in dealing with Iraqis, has a more hopeful vision of our mission overseas than many often share.

"There are times that the Iraqis fail," he said, "but they pick up on their mistakes easily."

Home to Fallujah, Al Anbar province is considered by many to be the most violent in Iraq. This makes the job that

"The campaign in Iraq is not hopeless. With some of the things I've seen, there is still hope."

John's battalion has been doing over the past several months even more difficult and dangerous, especially considering their limited manpower.

"There are about 1000 people in my battalion. We were running two areas of operation, each a battalion in size," he said. "For the whole seven months, we did not take a single killed in action and only had one wounded in action."

Of everything that he said on the subject, one thing stands out in my mind and gives me hope that things will improve.

"The campaign in Iraq is not hopeless," he said. "With some of the things I've seen, there is still hope."



Soldier returns home for the first time. Photo courtesy of <http://www.mccoys.army.mil/>

Students Strut Their Stuff

By **Jessie Li and Caitlyn Patey**
Jabberwock Staff Reporters

When it comes to fashion, it is all about the evolution. On June 4, 2008, the fashion merchandising seminar students introduced MLWGS to the world of fashion design and its transformation through the 20th century.

Seniors Laura Kuthy and Kelsi Weissgold first suggested the seminar topic when contemplating the options for their senior year.

“[Fashion merchandising is] cut throat and there’s competition,” said Weissgold, “but you can still be creative. You can actually use your imagination.”

Perhaps that is why this year’s innovative seminar was such a success. Ms. Montijo, the fashion merchandising teacher, returned from retirement to teach the seminar. She is experienced in business and fashion, and she exposed students to various local businesses and the relevance of today’s fashion.

“People get confused [regarding fashion merchandising]...we learned how to analyze [fashion] in the business aspect,” said Suzie Oh (’08).

In addition to numerous trips to local businesses, students also heard a variety

of guest speakers on the business of fashion.

“I think [a career in fashion merchandising] is very hectic. It takes dedication. [Fashion merchandising staff] know it’s very time consuming. It’s a lot of work. It’s not your regular nine to five,” said Jasmine Turner (’08).

On May 25, 2008, the fashion merchandising seminar students visited the fashion central of the United States, New York City. Students got a glimpse of fashion at its zenith, touring the famous Fifth Avenue and Macy’s of Herald Square. They also attended an event at Rockefeller Center and visited Chinatown.

“Everyone is fashionable in New York...except the visitors,” said Weissgold.

All the work culminated in their final project, the senior showcase. Through their accomplishments, they realized the hard work and dedication that creates fashion.

“[People] think it’s all glamorous but behind the scenes it’s very hectic,” said Turner.

In the senior showcase, the students revealed design evolution throughout the 20th century with their very own



Louis Vuitton is one of the many designer stores students visited.

Photo courtesy of www.about.com

fashion show as well as videos displaying MLWGS students’ opinions regarding fashion through the ages.

“We had some really good guest speakers,” said Weissgold, “[but] the most fun part was planning the fashion show.”

Students presented the ways history and issues in society impacted fashion through their showcase. They proved that at a school for government and international studies, fashion can go global.

“Especially with the planning of the fashion show...I found out [fashion] could actually be art...just like an artist could put art on walls...it was just like that except with fashion,” said Weissgold.

Investigating Genocide

By **Logan Ferrell**
Jabberwock Staff Reporter

On May 30, students from Mr. Wilkes’ Genocide class visited the Rwandan Embassy and National Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.

In the class, students learned about the history and impact of genocides around the world.

“[We] try to bring in very pertinent first hand eyewitnesses” said Genocide teacher Mr. John Wilkes.

Earlier in the year, students had the

opportunity to hear survivors and other eyewitnesses from such genocide as the Holocaust, the Bosnian Wars of the 1990s, and the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia.

This visit was led by some of the Rwanda’s senior representatives to the U.S., including the first counselor of the embassy. The genocide students viewed a presentation on Rwanda’s reconciliation process and took part in a question and answer session with Rwandan representatives, offering new insight into the conflict and its resolution.

“(It was) interesting to compare what the ambassador said with what we had read,” said Emma Bland (’08). The discussion centered on the African nation’s attempt to rebuild after several decades of civil war.

While in Washington, students also visited the National Holocaust Museum, whose Richmond counterpart had been one of the seminars first field trips.

“(It was) a great experience to end the year,” said student Kimberly Thompson.

'Allo, Rambo!

By Justin Geldzahler
Jabberwock Reporter

We all know the story of a pair of scrappy friends banding together to make a movie. After all, *Be Kind Rewind* only came out last February. But wait, here comes a new film with a seemingly similar plot, the British-born *Son of Rambow*. This similarities are only skin deep, and this scrappier film has more heart and whimsy than its theatrical predecessor (*Rambow* was actually made first.)

The year is 1982. *First Blood* (also known as the first Rambo film) has just been released, and has very much influenced the minds of two young British boys, Will Proudfoot (Bill Milner), a member of the religious sect the Plymouth Brethren, and Lee Carter (Will Poulter), a disliked bully. They work together to win *Screen Test* competition with their

own film, *Son of Rambow*. Things get complicated with the addition of a hip French Exchange student, Didier (Jules Sitruk), who wants to join their endeavor.

After the big budget *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the small *Rambow* might seem a strange change of pace for director Garth Jennings. But this personal piece is much closer to his heart, and it shows on the screen. The young filmmaking is presented with care and warmth, something that was absent from both *Hitchhikers* and Michel Gondry's *Be Kind*.

The budding friendship between Will and Lee is made real from the sincerity of the actors. The naïve Will compliments the mean Lee (who is not without his own problems.) The film stumbles a bit by stretching out the subplot of Didier, whose one-note, one-joke character gets



Sitruk leads his posse – perhaps down the Champs-Élysées?

Photo courtesy of www.indiewire.com

more time than he deserves. Lee says it best, “I liked it better when it was just us.”

The film's effects reflect the can-do spirit of the kids. After first seeing *First Blood*, Will runs through the fields acting out his own version, with traditional animation filling in for

the baddies and the like. It's cute, but not too cute. It's just the right amount.

It has about as much focus as its stars do, and the film wastes time trying to wring drama out of Will's home life. The almost cult-like Brethren is fairly tame and really quite boring, and the film lags when spending time with them.

But don't knock the movie cause of that. It certainly knows its subject matter: namely movies and British children. It's disarmingly cute and funny, and it really is sweet without being too saccharine. It might wander at times, and the ending is fairly predictable, but who cares? It has more heart than anything else in the cinema these days.



Milner and Poulter try and get to the pathos of Rambo. Photo courtesy of www.ign.com

Son of Rambow



Stranger Danger

By Melanie Burks

Jabberwock Staff Reporter

This movie was inspired by a true story. That was the only frightening aspect of *The Strangers*.

That's not to say my heart never skipped a beat; it did. During certain scenes I had to remind myself to breathe. Throughout the movie, all I thought was that this really happened.

Every ten minutes I would feel a kick to the back of my chair, followed by a chorus of shrieks. The movie was predictable, yet some jumped at every sound.

The plot was centered on James Hoyt (Scott Speedman) and Kristen McKay (Liv Tyler). The couple had retreated to their summer cabin after attending a friend's wedding reception. Wait. Rewind. There was a flashback of Hoyt and McKay at the reception. Hoyt asks McKay's hand in marriage. She rejected the proposal. Fast forward. Why would they be on a vacation together if they had just broken up?

The plot made no sense. Not to mention, earlier in the movie there was an opening text that stated "The Hoyts". Hoyts being plural; Hoyts meaning married. Unless they're distant relatives or coincidentally have the same name, Kristen McKay and James Hoyt should not be referred to as the Hoyts. This was just one example of inconsistency found in the movie.

Another discrepancy involved the strangers. Throughout their strike, four

different murderers are seen. However, near the end of the movie, only three leave. Did I miss something?

Within the first twenty minutes, the "strangers" made their first appearance. I wondered how the producers intended to stretch a cat-and-mouse chase over two hours. I got my answer. They couldn't.

The audience watched strike after gory strike, wondering when Hoyt and McKay would finally die. That was one aspect I have never liked about horror movies: one can always anticipate the protagonist's death.

One of my pet peeves in movies is foreshadowing scenes that never happen. A scene in the beginning of the film pictured McKay on the radio signaling the police. This never happens. In reality, she reached the conveniently located spare radio, but did not get a chance to use it before it is smashed by a sledgehammer.

Another common annoyance for me was deliberate details that never seemed to tie in. Shortly after Hoyt and McKay arrived at the secluded cabin, a woman knocks on the door asking for Tamara.

They kindly told her that there is no one there by that name. The girl returned once again, requesting Tamara. And once again, she was turned away. The identity of Tamara was never discovered.

The actual film was an irritant in itself. Following a strange new trend, the camera work was unbearably



Stranger on the prowl. Photo courtesy of movies.yahoo.com

shaky. Or maybe it was just plain bad. My head was spinning until the screen finally went black.

One final aspect of the movie continues to perplex me. At one point in the movie, the murderers met two young Mormon schoolboys. The boys asked the strangers if they had sinned. They replied "Sometimes." The irrelevancy of this scene astonishes me.

The Strangers is one of those movies where I want to grab the actors by the neck and yell "Idiot!" You know the type. There should be a manual called *How to Deal with Sadistic Killers* because one would not fathom the mindless decisions made by

actors in horror films.

Rule #1: When strangers in fearsome masks are approaching the house, lock the doors and shut the windows. Do not go outside (and by doing so, leave the girl defenseless) to see what is going on.

Surprise, surprise. Hoyt went outside and left the door wide open with McKay alone and unarmed.

The movie is the paragon of what not to do when a stranger comes a-knockn'. Didn't their parents ever tell them not to talk to strangers?

Rating:



Sports Overview '07-'08

Paul Eiker

Jabberwock Staff Reporters

Beginning in early August, athletes planning to participate in fall sports attended practice ready to dominate the competition and lead their team to success. This continued for both the winter and spring sports, in November and February.

For some teams, it was just another season, another year of losses, defeats, and heartbreaks. However, others had

better fortune. No matter how the records came out, the commitment and effort of each student athlete played an integral role in the 07-08 MLWGS athletic year.

Every goal has been scored, every basket has been made, and every game has been played. We know how the seasons of each team turned out, and there is only one question left that is unanswered: which MLWGS athletic team is the best?

Some of you may remember that

last year, Nick Eilerson ('07) created an ingenious formula to calculate the answer to this question. He ranked teams in several categories that are vital to team success and created a point system to base the rankings on. The team that was ranked number one in the category received twenty points, and the team receiving the lowest ranking in the category was given one point. This year his ideas have been replicated (with a few alterations) and the rankings speak for themselves.

	fans	socks	MVP	most clutch	hottest	coach	uniform	spirit	x-factor	total points
field hockey	20	19	19	18	2	12	18	20	16	144
golf	8	7	10	17	16	14	14	1	20	97
boys' volleyball	15	12	7	11	10	3	13	2	4	77
girls' volleyball	14	10	2	1	12	2	12	3	7	63
boys' cross country	9	8	11	12	19	19	16	15	5	114
girls' cross country	5	9	12	13	11	20	17	16	6	109
swimming	7	1	15	16	9	6	19	6	17	96
wrestling	1	2	8	10	1	7	20	4	11	64
boys' basketball	19	18	9	7	18	13	15	12	18	129
girls' basketball	16	11	1	5	8	4	11	19	13	88
indoor boys' track	2	5	4	8	4	17	2	13	8	63
indoor girls' track	10	3	6	6	3	18	3	14	3	66
boys' tennis	6	14	13	15	15	10	9	5	19	106
girls' tennis	4	13	3	4	5	11	10	11	1	62
baseball	13	20	20	20	17	1	8	8	9	116
softball	11	15	5	9	7	8	1	7	2	65
boys' soccer	18	17	14	19	14	5	4	10	12	113
girls' soccer	17	16	18	2	20	9	7	9	10	108
outdoor boys' track	12	6	16	14	6	16	5	17	14	106
outdoor girls' track	3	4	17	3	13	15	6	18	15	94