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THE HILLTOP

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 90, NO. 30

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2006

WWW.THEHILLTOPONLINE.COM

TUESDAY notebook

BREAKING NEWS

GOOGLE TO PURCHASE YOUTUBE.COM

GOOGLE ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY THAT IT PLANS TO BUY YOUTUBE FOR \$1.65 BILLION, OUTBIDDING YAHOO, MICROSOFT AND VIACOM, ACCORDING TO THE NEW YORK TIMES.

METRO

WHAT'S COLLEGE LIFE LIKE ELSEWHERE

SEE HOW COLLEGE LIFE AT OTHER SCHOOLS IN THE AREA COMPARES TO THE HOWARD EXPERIENCE IN METRO. PAGE 4



TUES, 10/10:
MOSTLY SUNNY
HIGH: 78, LOW: 60

WED, 10/11:
ISOLATED
T-STORMS
HIGH: 70, LOW: 60

Gospel Concert a Success Despite Audio Glitch

BY ANYA L. ALEXANDER
Hilltop Staff Writer

Howard Homecoming 2006 continued this weekend with the Gospel Concert. The concert showcased the talents of five different ministries and featured gospel artist Kim Burrell.

For the first time ever, the concert was prefaced by a pre-show, featuring the stepping of Alpha Omega Steppers for Christ and the brothers of Alpha Nu Omega.

Director of the Howard Gospel Choir, Clifton Ross III, a senior music business major felt that this year's Gospel Concert was really different from previous years because of the diversity of performances which included: Deitrick Haddon, Jarmel and Worship Forever, Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel liturgical dancers, the Howard University Gospel Choir (HGC) and members of the Howard University Community Choir (HUCC).

Gospel concert coordinator Kristen Taylor, said that this was all a part of the plan to make sure that there was good representation and participation of Howard University

religious groups and organizations.

Hands raised, eyes closed, and voices lifted, the spirit of worship was moving performance after performance. For the most part, the audience members stayed standing throughout the show.

"It was more than what I expected but exactly what I needed," said second year School of Divinity graduate student Jeff Corry. Corry is a former member of HGC and HUCC, and presently serves as the Andrew Rankin Memorial Choir pianist for Chapel services. Corry said the concert was one of the most joyful experiences he has ever had.

Senior marketing major Teneasha Pierson was the host of the concert titled "Have Faith In Me... According to Your Faith, Let It Be Unto You."

Pierson said that the spirit of worship was present from the beginning and was confident that it would carry out through the rest of the show.

However, after the performances from various choirs and liturgical groups, the headliner of the night, Kim Burrell took the stage and appeared to be somewhat agitated by

the sound system in Cramton Auditorium which caused some students to leave before the performance was over.

Burrell kept mentioning the problem and calling attention to the sound people to adjust her microphone and the speakers so she could hear herself better. The sound crew tried to make adjustments throughout her performance but was unsuccessful at getting it to her liking.

Howard 2005 alumnae Courtney Jackson was one student who left before the end of the concert and felt that the Gospel concert was fantastic up until the part where Burrell took the stage. "It wasn't done tastefully," Jackson said. "I didn't feel the spirit. She was very arrogant and I didn't like her attitude."

Junior advertising major Dustin Gavin said that his favorite performance was Kim Burrell, though he felt that her actions were a bit inappropriate. Her message was really powerful to him because she reassured him that God is always there and he is going to take care of you.

"Singing is not a career for me, it's all about the ministry," Burrell said. Burrell said



Bryan Jones - Senior Photo Editor

Many students turned out for the annual Homecoming Gospel concert Sunday, which proved to be a success, despite malfunctions with audio equipment.

that she heard how Howard students enjoyed her music so she was excited about coming to The Mecca to execute what she does best. "Jesus Saves" was the message that Burrell

wanted to relay to the audience.

Taylor said she believed that ultimately the show was a success.

"I really thought it was

excellent despite the problem we had with sound," Taylor said. "The goal was to put a message of faith out there and at the end of the night we wanted people to be pleased."

Local Businesses Expect Homecoming Boom



Local businesses owners are looking forward to increased profits and exposure due to Howard Homecoming events this week.

BY CHARLOTTE YOUNG
Hilltop Staff Writer

Homecoming season is here and students aren't the only ones excited. Local businesses also welcome the week of festivities.

To business owners, the students and visitors equal more revenue. Howard students often do a lot of shopping in preparation for homecoming season.

"I gotta get my fashion right, I think that's first, [and] I gotta make sure my hair is right," said Don Johnson, senior legal communication major.

Senior radio production major Marcus Ellis also "gets fresh" for Homecoming.

"[I] get my hair braided, get new kicks," he said.

Of all the money spent, businesses on Georgia Avenue receive much of the revenue spent during Homecoming season.

Dee Dee Gary, the assistant manager at Up Against the Wall, says that this is the biggest week of the year.

"It's like a 100 percent increase, I'm not even going to lie," she said. "We have a lot of celebrities come

in during the whole week. Last year, Memphis Bleek, Three-6-Mafia, and Timbaland [came in]."

For hair needs, Homecoming attendees can go to Best Cuts Barbershop and Alexa's Gentle Touch off Georgia Avenue.

"From now until next weekend [I'll make] at least \$4,000," said Lynwood Smith, an apprentice at Best Cuts Barbershop.

The barbershop stays open almost 24 hours during Homecoming and Smith will raise prices for haircuts.

"The reason for that is you'll cut someone's head that you'll probably never see again in your life," he said. "You might as well get what you can from them."

Michelle Christie at Alexa's Gentle Touch, does not raise her prices, but still expects to see a 30 percent increase in appointments.

Ticketmaster also benefits from Homecoming. It can be a hassle buying tickets for Homecoming with long ticket lines at Cramton Auditorium. As a result, many turn to Ticketmaster, which receives the business of those unwilling to wait in the long lines. Tickets bought online however, are priced higher than those from Cramton.

Sophomore biology major Kendra Hargrove has family coming up for Homecoming to see the step show.

"My mom got [two tickets] from Ticketmaster," Hargrove said.

The cost of the two tickets was about \$70 compared to the \$50 price tag, had she bought them at Cramton without the student discount. Those who do choose to purchase the tickets from Cramton, usually pay in cash.

Niasia Rouse, a sophomore fashion merchandising major withdrew more than \$200 from her personal account to cover the Homecoming tickets she got for her and six family members.

Rouse is included in the 85 percent of Howard students that are Wachovia's customers according to Ashiya Tucker, the co-teller manager at Wachovia. Tucker reports that there is an increase in transactions made "during not just Homecoming, but any event at Howard."

"There's an influx in not just withdrawals but in everything: deposits, savings bond redemptions [and] cash advances," Tucker said.

Alumni also spend a lot of money when they come back for Homecoming. Komeka Freeman, who now works for Code Black Entertainment in California, has only missed two years since she graduated in 1993.

"Homecoming is so special to me and an event that I take very seriously," Freeman said. "I usually take a red-eye from L.A. and arrive on Thursday morning. Plane fare from L.A. [is] \$400. I [also] rent a car [and that's] \$100. I like to stay at a nice hotel with easy access to campus. Hotel Helix is my preference. It's \$215 per night [for] three nights."

Hotels in the District area receive business from visitors coming up for the Homecoming weekend.

The sales management department at the Central Holiday Inn reported that Howard Homecoming attendees encompass at least 40 percent of the business.

The step show, held at the DC Armory, is often difficult to travel to since it is one of the few Homecoming events that take place off campus.

"Some people drove, but a lot of people took the metro as well," said sophomore accounting major Courtney Davis. "It was more crowded and I remember the lines being long. I was waiting on my friends because the lines at the metro stations were very long just to get the fare cards."

Though the metro is packed that night, DC Area Transit Authority has not observed an increase in business because of homecoming season.

"Ridership goes up in October anyway. It'd be hard to pin that to anything. That's every year," said Cathy Asato, the information specialist for the Transit Authority.

Throughout all the Homecoming preparation and events, attendees have to eat. Subway on Georgia Avenue reports that business almost triples during Homecoming.

Across the street, McDonald's receives a large increase in business as well. On a regular busy Friday or Saturday, McDonald's makes about \$15,000-16,000. Last year, on the Saturday of the Homecoming game, McDonald's made about \$19,000.

"It was really busy. [We had] about 50 persons each shift. [All] five registers were open, five police were on duty," said Vashti Henderson, the second assistant manager. "This Homecoming, we're trying to beat last year's transactions. The goal is \$20,000. We want to do that amount or more."

Henderson said the owner of McDonald's, a Howard alum, makes it mandatory that all managers and employees work the day of the Homecoming game. He will also be in attendance for work during the busy Homecoming day.

Coronation Ball Hits the High Seas

BY BRITTANY HUTSON
Hilltop Staff Writer

The Coronation Ball, hosted by the Undergraduate Student Assembly, kicked off Saturday night aboard The Odyssey Cruise Yacht along the waterfront.

With the Washington, D.C. nightlife establishing its undeniable presence in the background, students and faculty came out to enjoy the evening in their best "grown and sexy" attire; the gentlemen were suave and sleek while the ladies were stunning and sparkling with radiance. The Odyssey was beautifully decorated with two separate rooms both hosting a food bar and DJs spinning beats directed to specific musical preferences.

Planning for this year's Coronation Ball proved to be a challenge for the members of UGSA due to the university's skepticism about holding an event aboard the boat. "Howard didn't want any student organizations to do boat rides due to past experiences," said senior pre-therapy major and program director Adrienne Francois. "For us to even do this is a blessing."

"It took a lot to convince Howard," said senior computer engineering major and UGSA president Arnita Hayden. "We had to guarantee that this [ball] would go on successfully without any problems."

UGSA's guarantee proved to be accurate as there were no reported problems with violence or drunken behavior throughout the night.

In comparison to last year's Coronation Ball, which was held in the Blackburn auditorium and did not catch the attention of many students, UGSA was determined to change the location in order to attract more students.

"Last year's Coronation ball was not well attended," explained Hayden. "We figured that more students would be interested if the event was held on the boat."

"There was also a lot more PR done this year as opposed to last year," Hayden added. "UGSA and the homecoming committee really pushed promotion, so I feel the location really made the difference."

Despite the overall success and enjoyment of the event, there were some problems that affected the structure of the night. According to Francois and Hayden, there were problems with the shuttles that

See BALL, CAMPUS A2

Pageant Becomes Garden of Dreams for Burton and Franklin



Jamel Franklin and Assata Burton were crowned the new Mr. and Miss Howard University.

BY MERCIA WILLIAMS-MURRAY
Hilltop Staff Writer

"The Secret Garden" was the theme of this year's Mr. and Mrs. Howard Pageant, which took place Friday in Cramton Auditorium.

The participants, representing their respective schools, eloquently presented the platforms which focused on different subjects from

preserving the arts to HIV/AIDS awareness.

The crowd was excited by the diverse abilities of the contestants presented in the talent portion. Some candidates sang, others performed amusing skits, another recited a poem by Nikki Giovanni in three languages.

During the question and answer portion, candidates answered designated ques-

tions on topics including the prospect of online voting, routine HIV/AIDS testing by physicians and HBCUs marketing to other minorities to increase enrollment.

Candidates that had to answer difficult questions received mixed responses from the audience. Echoing the sentiments of several onlookers, sophomore computer science major Darrilyn

Brown says, "Some of the people avoided answering the question."

The judges included former Mr. and Mrs. Howard University, Brandon Hines and Shayna Rudd. Pageant winners from Morgan State University were also judges.

When the results were announced, junior business marketing major Jamel Franklin and junior communications major Assata Burton became the new Mr. and Ms. Howard University. The runner-ups were sophomore engineering major Iverson C. Bell III and junior theatre arts major Alysha English.

In response to his victory, Franklin said, "Right now I am in awe. It is still very surreal for me. I am just extremely grateful to have this honor because everyone on that stage was worthy of this title. I am excited to make my passion my platform, ROC-Restoring Our Character, a reality. I want to thank God because without him, none of this would be possible. Also, I

want to thank everyone who has supported me through this process; you all are my blessings."

Burton said, "We all worked really hard and all the people in the pageant were great. We spent three weeks together so we got to know each other. I know that no matter who would have won, we all would have been happy for them. I'm so thankful. I was happy that I had so much support in the audience from friends and family."

Runner-up Bell says "The 'Mr.' and 'Ms.' from each school really bonded during the rehearsals. The most fulfilling moment for me was when Brandon Hines told me I did a good job."

English says "I was just proud to represent the College of Arts and Sciences in the Howard University Pageant. The pageant was a really positive experience and a blessing. I still plan on implementing my platform A.C.T., which will help preserve the arts in public schools." She also

said, "Assata is such a beautiful and humble person who just exudes positive energy and I know she will represent Howard University wonderfully."

Many people were surprised when undergraduate trustee Jabari Smith presented Mr. Howard with his crown instead of former Mr. Howard, Brandon Hines.

Smith, first runner up in last year's pageant commented, "Giving the crown away was basically an opportunity to provide service where ever necessary...as the former Mr. School of C and undergraduate trustee."

Smith continued, "[I was] fulfilling the duty that I was asked to fulfill. Vallyn Smith asked me to participate in the pageant and I accepted."

When asked to comment on the passing of the crown, pageant coordinator Vallyn Smith stated that all inquiries should be addressed to Dean Gillory, Dean of Student Life.

Coronation Ball Offers Elegance on Odyssey Cruise

BALL, from News A1

caused the delayed set off of the boat.

"We weren't expecting as many people as there were to show up," said Francois. "But I am glad we had the shuttles so that students who did not have transportation could get here."

The boat left the dock at approximately 1:20 a.m.; this puzzled students who were aware that the ball was scheduled to end at 2:00 a.m. Although the ball extended past 2:00 a.m. and ended at around 2:30 a.m, there were complaints that the boat ride seemed short.

Overall, the Coronation Ball was an enjoyable event praised by students and faculty, but students were left with some concern about the mis-

haps of the shuttles and boat ride.

"It should have been more organized," said junior English major Margaret Simon. "We should have gotten on the boat earlier; the waivers should have been more organized. All together it was fun but it could have been better."

UGSA was pleased with the result of the Coronation Ball; Hayden and Francois both affirmed that the night exceeded the expectations.

"I didn't even think the boat would look this nice," exclaimed Francois. "I envisioned this to be a fun event, and especially for the class of 2008 who hasn't experienced a boat ride."

For next year's committee planning the Coronation Ball, Hayden and Francois offer their advice about how

to make the event successful.

"Proper planning is the best thing," said Francois. "No one can do this by themselves and I had a great team to work with this year."

Hayden was firm about proper organization of transportation for next year.

"There needs to be improvements on the shuttles. They weren't here on time that's why the boat pulled off late," Hayden said.

As the second event for the Homecoming week, the ladies affirm that the Coronation Ball was a great follow up to the Mr. And Mrs. Howard Pageant, as well as students who expressed excitement over another memorable Homecoming event while leaving the Odyssey.



The Coronation Ball, which officially crowns Mr. and Miss Howard University, took place Saturday night on The Odyssey Cruise.



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"The people I work with are just great. Although they demand a lot from me, they are encouraging and helpful and — most important of all — good friends and fun to work with."

JESSICA TONG, ANALYST



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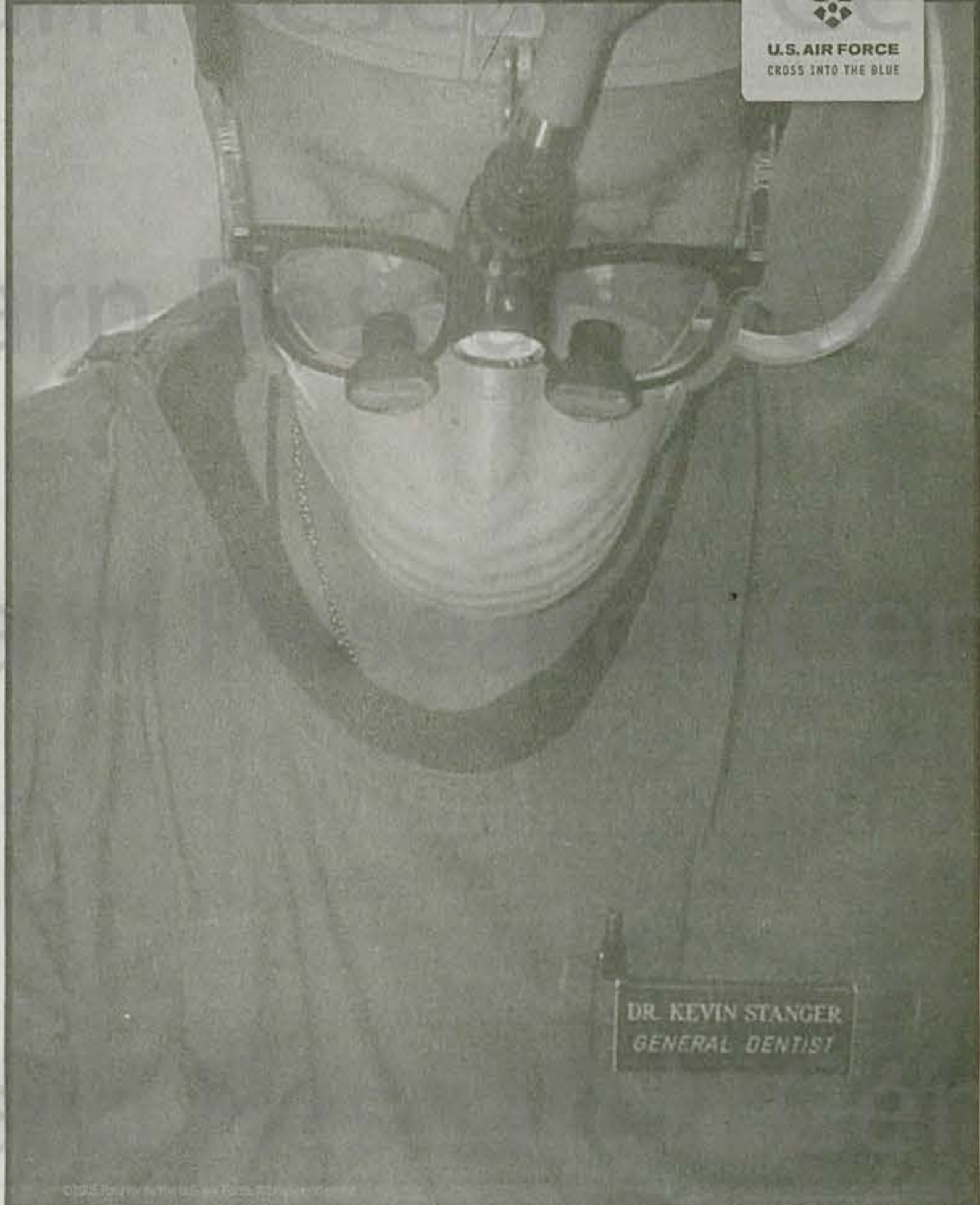
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'Grass Isn't Always Greener': Students Voice Concerns

BY JOSHUA MITCHELL
Contributing Writer

Cafeteria food. Crowded classrooms. Long waits for the shuttle buses. Greek life.

Everyday, thousands of students are engaged in what many have referred to as the "Howard experience." Though it is easy to believe that many of the everyday experiences faced on campus are unique to Howard University, students from other area schools might be quick to disagree.

"I believe there are some things that are just standard for any college you go to," said Marcus Boyer, a sophomore engineering major at the University of Maryland-College Park. "I have not been to one school that served good food in the cafeteria, not one school with great dormitories and one school where all the students were satisfied with the administration."

One aspect of the Howard experience that some students view negatively is the timeliness of the shuttle system on campus.

"I live in Meridian and I can't stand the weekend shuttle that goes from Meridian to Slowe/Carver," said sophomore engineering major Brodrick Baker.

However, Boyer insists that the shuttle service at UMD is also below par.

"It takes forever to catch a shuttle out here, especially from the metro stop closest to campus," Boyer said. "And because of the student population, many times you are waiting much longer than you should because there always more people waiting than any one shuttle can take."

Another complaint of Howard students is the quality of campus food, specifically in the Café.

"The Punch-out is cool, but the food in the Café leaves much to be desired," said Kea Watkins, a sophomore radio-TV-film major. "The food is edible, but it is definitely not my first choice."

However, Jamal Blake, a business administration major at Bowie State University, confirms this is an issue that extends beyond Howard. "The food in our cafeteria is tolerable, but nothing special by any means."

Blake also believes that HBCUs in general tend to have a number of housing problems.

"Housing here can be a lot better in terms of comfort and overall presentation of the dorms. [Ours]

could use a lot of work," Blake said. "And that is if you get housing at all."

Leo Sherman, a music major at George Washington University, believes that one's campus experience ultimately is up to the individual.

"I've been happy with everything since I've been here," Sherman said. "I have a few friends that attend Howard and Bowie and we talk about the differences between their schools and American, but I think ultimately you control your campus experience and your happiness."

Though Boyer admits that there are clear social differences that exist from HBCUs and predominantly white schools, he believes that there are also many similarities.

"We have a lot of the same organizations that you find at Howard and other HBCUs. We have a Black Student Union to give us a sense of unity, a Caribbean Student Association and Greek life."

When asked about the major problem facing black students at predominantly white schools like UMD, Boyer believes that he is confronted with subtle forms of

racism that may not be an issue at Howard.

"The police around here can be very annoying," Boyer said. "I have been approached by the police here three times when I am doing nothing but minding my own business."

However, Boyer insists he would not trade his experience for anything.

"My experience here as been more than invaluable and if I had to go through the process of deciding where to go again, I would still choose [The University of] Maryland."

Many Howard students share these sentiments too.

"I love it here," Baker said.



Students at Howard and other schools like UMD complain about slow shuttle service as well.

"There are many opportunities for one to grow academically and socially at Howard. I would not be anywhere else."



BACK ON THE BLOCK: Adams Morgan



BY CRYSTAL SCHANETTE
Contributing Writer

In the late 19th and early 20th century, the area now known as Adams Morgan was a suburb of row houses and elegant apartment buildings, a place that attracted upper-middle class residents.

During World War II, the neighborhood started to decline; quaint homes were turned into boarding houses. Unfortunately, the Great Depression caused a decrease in population because many residents could no longer afford to live in a high-priced neighborhood. Change came in 1958.

The Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia created The Plan for Urban Renewal in hopes of reconstructing Adams Morgan. During this time, many white residents fled the city and moved to suburbs.

It wasn't until younger people and immigrants moved in, that the conversion began. Community activists chose to name the area after two neighborhood schools. The name Adams came from a predominantly white school and the name Morgan came from a predominantly black school.

A small number of those immigrants that flocked to Adams Morgan were Spanish-speaking. The people came to run the newly established embassies and international organizations from Latin America. Latinos helped create the colorful street murals in the 1970's.

Today, the once-suburban neighborhood exemplifies urban life at its most vibrant stage. The fast growing businesses in Adams Morgan keep the area diverse.

Sandwiched between the Georgia Avenue corridor and Rock Creek Park at the intersection of 18th St. and Columbia road in Northwest D.C., today's Adams Morgan features numerous restaurants, nightclubs, bars, coffee shops and trendy stores. Narrow sidewalks, busy streets and diverse people make the area a great place to escape the ordinary.

Adams Morgan also hosts an array of world cuisine ranging from Ethiopia and Vietnam to Caribbean and American as well as cuisine from Spanish-speaking countries. Along with the array of food comes a host of ethnic stores, vintage bookstores and comedy clubs.

Recently, business owners have noticed a change in



18th St. in Adams Morgan has evolved into a hub for night life in the city.

the area.

"The atmosphere is more positive and cleaner," said Angel Huapalla, owner of Rumba Café. Rumba Café specializes in cuisine from Spanish speaking countries and is located at 2443 18th St. and has been open for nine years. Huapalla also said that the cafe can get "wild, but they're good people."

John Schumacher, executive chief at the Saki restaurant, agrees with Huapalla. He said that the city is doing a much better job at keeping

the area clean and safe.

"With the city trying to gentrify the area, it's become safer, cleaner and an all-around better environment."

Saki, a Japanese restaurant and club located at 2477 18th st., has been open for two years.

Places like Sports Cafe located at 2411 18th St., moved to Adams Morgan over a year ago in hopes of getting a fair share of the profit.

"Since we've opened,

business has picked up tremendously. We have two levels of dance floors and on the weekends both are now packed," said Sports Cafe employee Gary Vroenen.

This type of atmosphere is one that attracts many Howard students, as well as surrounding residents.

Junior architecture major Tamara Wilson loves going to Adams Morgan because of its convenient location to her apartment and the diverse environment.

"As an architecture major, I love to look at all the buildings. They are unique in their own [way]," Wilson said. She also believes that Adams Morgan is safe because of the visible police and security guards.

Freshman political science major and area resident, Amber Chase, believes the exact opposite. "I wouldn't eat there or party there because first, I'm not 21 and it's not safe at night. There are a lot of drunk people who start fights and I just wouldn't feel safe."

Chase does think that Adams Morgan may be a cool place for students 21 years old and over, however, she still prefers going out in her hometown in Prince George's County.

Still, one Washington, D.C. officer and a Secret Service agent, who both declined to give their names because of security purposes, said the area is pretty safe and a great place to come get a good cup of coffee, specifically at Caribou Coffee.

Both officers patrol the area once a week. They said residents and guests should come out and have a good time, but be mindful of the law.

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Students Scrounge for Homecoming Game Tickets

BY WINNIE CLARK-JENKINS
Hilltop Staff Writer

It has become a known tradition at Howard that official homecoming game tickets are scarce and in high demand.

This year, some students stood in line for their homecoming tickets for five and six hours, just to obtain the highly coveted tickets. The game ticket was of course one of the first of the weeks events to sell out.

Along with many of the other homecoming event tickets, some students wind up selling their football game ticket for big profit. Each Howard student gets one free game ticket on a first come first serve basis and some students decide the profits they can make are far greater than going to the game.

"I am selling my game ticket because I can make a lot off of it," said sophomore finance major, Marcus

Johnson. "Everyone wants one for their family or friends so I can pretty much sell it for as much as I want."

With a number of students bringing family and friends in town, the homecoming game is one of the highlights of the weekend. Alumni and students scramble for game tickets at a reasonable price because they are always the first tickets to sell out.

"My sister is coming for the weekend from her school in Rhode Island, but finding a game ticket for her that isn't ridiculously priced has been hard," said junior psychology major, Candace Bougknight.

However, with all the excitement surrounding the homecoming game, many football players and students feel that the people do not attend for the sporting event itself.

"I honestly feel like crowds come to see the band and chill with their friends and then they leave at half



Students wait for homecoming game tickets outside of Cramton Auditorium. Some students sell these tickets for profit as people search for extra tickets for family and friends.

time; they aren't really there for the game," said junior football player, Endor Cooper.

The homecoming football game is not only a big deal to Howard students, alumni and friends; it is also a big sporting event that brings a great deal of business to the area, specifically on the Saturday of the game. Signs and posters can be seen all over the community of businesses supporting the game.

"The whole community around Howard becomes so busy with an influx of people, but it really supports the community," said Howard alumni and local resident, Hillary Nash.

Nash remembers when she attended Howard in the late nineties and the scarcity of the football tickets almost a decade ago.

"The tickets for the game have

always been so hard to get, even when I was here," said Nash. "My parents went to Howard in the seventies and they even remember standing in line for hours and hours just to get their game tickets. It's just an ongoing tradition that always has been and always will be, no matter how many tickets become available."

This year, the homecoming football game against Morgan State University has proven thus far to be no different then years past. Students have waited in the long lines, signs have appeared all over campus with students selling game tickets, and the excitement for the game is present from all the signs on campus and in the Howard community.

Student tickets will be distributed this Wednesday between 10:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

"My parents went to Howard in the seventies and they remember standing in line for hours... it's just an ongoing tradition that always has been and always will be..."

- Nash, Alum

SCOREBOARD & SCHEDULE

SCORES

Football

Howard 0
Winston-Salem St. 12

Volleyball

Howard 3
Delaware State 1

Men's Soccer

Howard 0
Hartwick 6

TODAY'S GAMES

Volleyball v. UMES
7 p.m.
@ Burr Gymnasium

Men's Soccer v. Navy
7 p.m.
@ Greene Stadium

Athletes Torn In Debate Over Proper Equipment

BY WINNIE CLARK-JENKINS
Hilltop Staff Writer

Proper equipment is essential for a winning team's athletic performance. That equipment is expected to be provided for the players by the university.

Some Howard athletes feel that the athletic department does a good job at making sure the teams have everything they need, while other athletes feel that the school is not doing enough.

For some of the larger teams on campus, equipment is not an issue.

"We have plenty of equipment," said senior basketball player, Darryl Hudson. "There are a few things we would like [such as] extra basketball rims, maybe a practice facility, and some shooting equipment, but we have everything we need. I cannot complain."

While some teams are pleased with the equipment and facilities that are provided, other athletes feel they are left in the dark, literally.

Because the field did not have working light bulbs for two weeks, the women's lacrosse team, that practices in the evening, practiced on a

dark field.

Also other members of sports teams on campus felt that while Burr gymnasium got a new floor on the basketball court this year, the track in Greene stadium has needed to be replastered for the past 10 years.

"We can never have home track meets," said junior track runner, Chris George. "The regulation size is eight lanes and our track only has six."

George and other track runners don't often feel the support of a home crowd because all of their meets are away, which some feel is a disadvantage to the team.

Some of the smaller teams on campus such as swimming and women's lacrosse also feel that they are at a disadvantage because of the lack of equipment provided for their teams.

"Often times we have to buy our own cleats because we are wearing sneakers out on the field and slipping around," said senior women's lacrosse player, Shanon Morris.

"We have a team of only 12 so there is no reason why we should not have all the equipment we need," she said.

The lacrosse team also was

not able to conduct full and functional practice because they were missing the nets for their goals, an essential item of equipment for the sport, for three weeks.

"I feel like it is a downer that we do not always have what we need and we do not always match because we are already at a 'disadvantage' being the only all black women's lacrosse team," said Morris.

"I just feel that we are not at the level we should be for a Division I team," she said.

Although some athletes feel they are not given enough to properly play their sport, other athletes feel that the school provides the necessities, it just becomes a matter of wants.

"Beside the fact that we do not have a great facility [the track], we do have the cleats and equipment we need," said George. "It just comes down to stuff we want, [for example], I would not mind new warm-ups."

Around the



James Receives MEAC Volleyball Honorable Mention

Sophomore outside hitter Janel James was given honorable mention in the MEAC weekly volleyball honors for week 7.

She delivered her sixth double-double of the year with 17 kills and 13 digs in the Bison's win over Delaware State on Saturday.



Delaware State Dominates Weekly Football Honors

Delaware State Hornets quarterback Vashon Winton and linebacker Josh Pope were named MEAC offensive player and rookie of the week, respectively. Winton passed for two touchdowns in the final 4:38, including the game-winning touchdown over Bethune-Cookman.

Pope recovered a blocked punt in the endzone to give DSU a 21-17 lead early in the third quarter and sealed the win for DSU in the final seconds with his first career interception, to end the Wildcats' final attempt at a comeback.



The track at Greene Stadium is one thing that Howard athletes would like to see repaired. Other athletes, however, are pleased with the equipment they have been provided.

TODAY IN SPORTS HISTORY...

On October 10, 1920, outfielder Elmer Smith becomes the first player to hit a grand slam in World Series history as the Indians defeat the Dodgers and Burleigh Grimes, 8-1.



He Said

She Said



“Lemme’ Upgrade You”

First and foremost, let me clear up one misconception. From discussions in the office, it seems that women think that paying for a date, a meal or a random gift is somehow a threat to the male ego. **THIS IS FALSE!**

I can not speak for everyone because there are some who may take offense. But, in my opinion, that is in no way a threat to my manhood.

Maybe if I was a junior executive, pulling in six figures... that could be considered an insult, but face it, college students are broke.

When a woman opts to pay or even offers to pay, it is a showcase of appreciation. It's not an attack on a man's desire to provide for his girl because, honestly, that's not his job.

Until she's married, the only man that should be providing for a young lady is her father.

It seems that women are sending mixed messages in reference to money issues.

On one hand, if a woman

has the perspective that she is equal (which I am all for) she has to be equal in everything. Meaning that you can't have your cake and eat it too.

It is contradictory to state that you want to be treated as a complete equal but expect a man to pay for all, or the majority, of the collective expenses—that is not equal.

Why is it acceptable for it to be the norm for the man to always have to come out of pocket, but when a woman opens up her pocketbook it's the exception? Is that equality?

Why is that inherent contradiction not apparent to those who continue to perpetuate that in their everyday choices?

In reference to Beyoncé's song, "Upgrade U," the problem that some have with the lyrics is all in perception just as it is in the issue that the song mirrors.

Although some take the song as a jab at a man's masculinity, the object of the tune is really just a woman show-



Photo courtesy alpsdevelopment.com

ing appreciation for her man. There is no harm in that.

Point blank, I doubt that most guys who are struggling college students would be offended by his girl paying for him.

cents to the dollar in 1990 to 77 in 2005, according to statistics released by the U.S. Census Bureau. Upward shifts in feminine finance are reflected in male-female relationship dynamics.

Beyoncé's recent "B'Day" release featured the popular track "Upgrade U," whose lyrics are showing up everywhere from Myspace.com member names to everyday discussions.

While there are a lot of women (and men) who let money play a factor in relationships, it has to be said that this isn't all women.

Now, personally, I don't think there's anything wrong with the concept of upgrading a person, as long as these upgrades don't focus solely on money, seek to change the person, or aim at gaining the focus of control.

So, what's left? It's perfectly acceptable to attempt to elevate one's state of mind and the type of woman they're accustomed to. Like she says,

"You need a real woman in

your life. That's a good look."

I know plenty of good women who can't find someone to appreciate them. Clearly, some men are being misguided in their searches.

It's been brought to my attention that some men think women are looking for someone to upgrade them or for someone to upgrade. Often, neither is the case. And if you find it to be, you may want to consider upgrading yourself to a better class of woman.

Meanwhile, I've found men as hard to read as women can be, because some men resent spending their money, while others resent having money spent on them and find it to be an attack on their masculinity.

Maybe you're the only one with a problem there. I'm just looking to enjoy your company, not subjugate your manhood, alter your character or manipulate your life with my dominant wallet.

But if you let some "Suga Mama" upgrade you, don't think you're "Irreplaceable."

From the Minds of Joshua Thomas & Jana Homes

HOUSEBROKEN



Howardite Horoscopes

Aries: Procrastination never gets anything done. Be proactive in new endeavours and finish up new ones before it's too late. Remember, tomorrow is not promised. Now try to finish it off before it finishes you.

Taurus: Hands-on experiences are what really work for you. That's how you absorb information best. Get out and move around - that's what it takes for you to process information in the most efficient way.

Gemini: Build your life on the foundation of love. First with those close to you, in your home or perhaps your dorm. Then see how you can expand your definition of love and care to all the areas of your existence.

Cancer: You are always first in line to be Captain Savior but this is one time you should stay out of other people's business and unnecessary dramas. Sometimes people need to learn from their own bad experiences and mistakes. Let them be free, and yourself as well.

Leo: Your ability to get what you want is very high right now. Be careful about hurting others along the way. You may need those people later on and then they may have negative feelings toward you.

Virgo: You want to have fun but still have discipline, so now is the time to indulge. Go to the after party, chill out on the Yard, but know when you need to hit the books.

Libra: Take advantage of the free time that you have today to make plans for tomorrow so that you can have more fun when the time comes.

Scorpio: Because of what you have achieved recently, you have the room to chill out for a while... so take advantage!

Sagittarius: Questions abound without apparent solutions, so begin finding the answers as soon as possible.

Capricorn: If your intuition is telling you that something big could happen today, then trust it and go all out.

Aquarius: Opportunity knocks only once; however, today your door may attract several visitors. Answer as many times as you can handle.

Pisces: Is there a particular issue that you're so tired of worrying about that you're ready to butt heads over it? A little healthy confrontation is good every once in a while. Just make sure that if stuff gets real that you can just laugh it off.

Adapted from horoscopes courtesy of yahoo.com

Overheard @ The Mecca

"Freaky Friday" Overheard in the School of C

Professor: (standing at classroom door) You're late every day. This has to stop.

50-plus-year-old student: Oh naw. I've been meaning to talk to you anyway. (Storms out of class anticipating professor to follow)

Professor: (acts like going out and closes door in 50-year old student's face) Ok. Back to where we were.

Girl in class: You are being rude. I'm telling you this woman to woman. You need to change that.

Professor: Ok. I'm sorry. What should I do now?

Class: Go talk to her.

Professor: Thank you so much (goes to talk to 50-year old)

"What's Love Got To Do With It" Overheard in Pentagon City

Friend 1: I mean we're not together but I still got love for my ex.

Friend 2: You don't love him.

Friend 1: I do, I mean we just can't talk to each other anymore but I still love him.

Friend 2: You don't love him.

Friend 1: Aight, well I care. Like if he got hit by a car, I wouldn't go home and see him but I'd still feel bad for him.

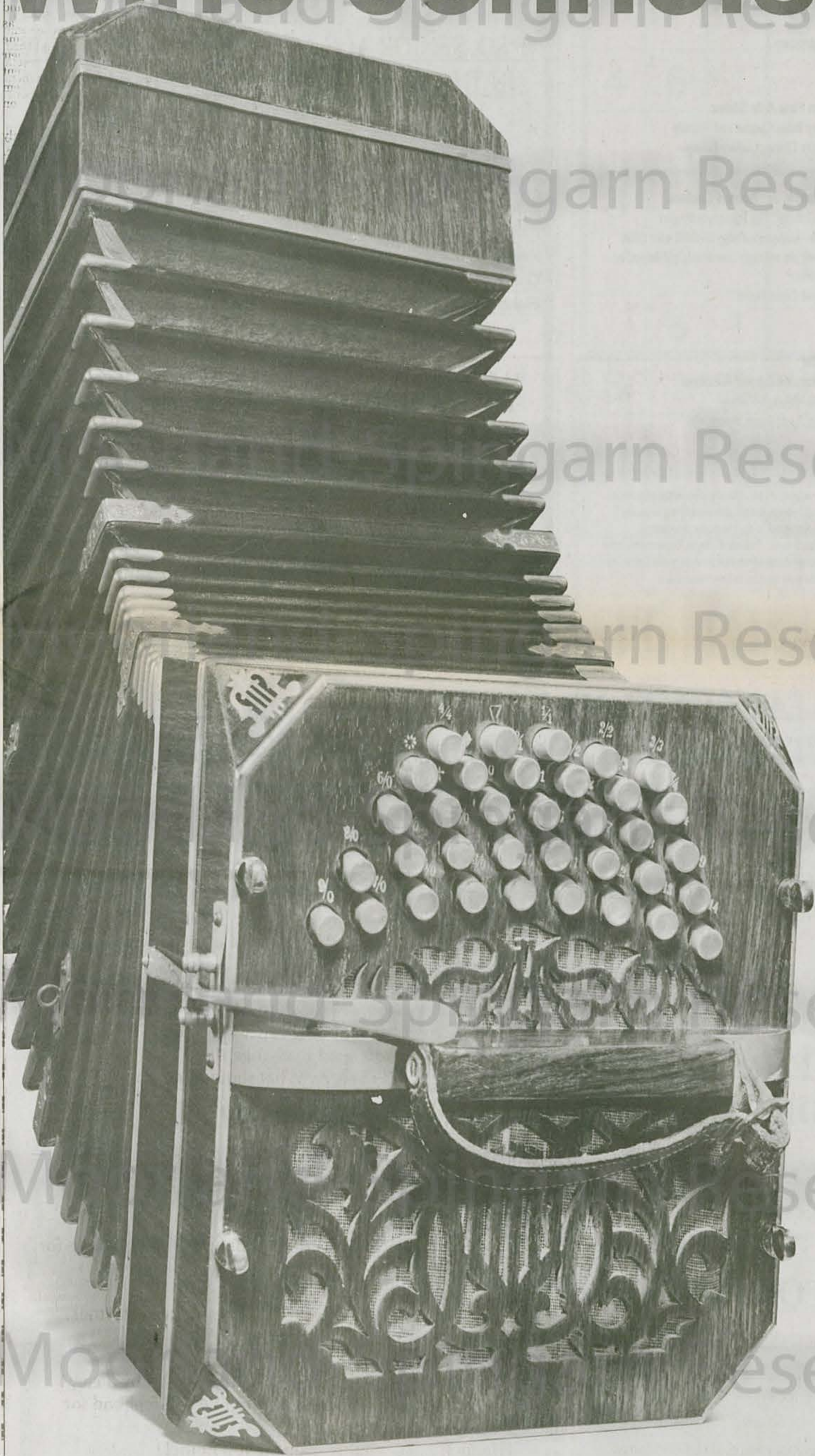
Friend 3: Love woulda brought you home!

Check out more at Overheardatthemecca.blogspot.com and submit to Overheardatthemecca@gmail.com


Please send any responses to Meccanisms; 'He Said . . . She Said' topics, Howardite Horoscopes or any other contributions to meccanisms@gmail.com

Gastronomist Tango dancer* Wine connoisseur

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This Week in Academics at Howard

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

www.provost.howard.edu

Tuesday, October 10 – Friday, October 13, 2006

Tuesday October 10 12:40 pm
5TH ANNUAL GM SULLIVAN DAY
LECTURE: Global Sullivan Principles of Social Responsibility
SPEAKER: Dr. L. Troy Niskey
 Sponsored by the College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Sciences
LOCATION: L.K. Downing Auditorium

Wednesday October 11 12:00 noon
CONCERT: Music At Noon Fine Arts Series
MUSICIANS: Howard University Brass Quintet and Friends
LOCATION: Blackburn University Center, Gallery Lounge

4:00 pm
LECTURE: C. Clyde Ferguson, Jr., Annual Lecture
SPEAKER: Barry Scheck, Co-Director, The Innocence Project
**As of July 2006, the Innocence Project, which uses DNA evidence to exonerate the wrongly convicted, had helped to free over 180 people.*
LOCATION: School of Law, Moot Court Room

Friday October 13 12:00 noon
CHEMISTRY COLLOQUIUM
LECTURE: Molecular Pharmacology of Nicotine
SPEAKER: Dr. Mark Levandoski, Grinnell College
LOCATION: Chemistry Building, Auditorium, Room 108

This Week in Academics at Howard is a listing of various special academic events. The objective of this project is to increase awareness of the rich array of intellectual and cultural special events that are sponsored by the academic units at Howard University. This Week in Academics at Howard is distributed to the University community via email and posted at www.provost.howard.edu at the beginning of each week. Schools, Colleges, Departments, other academic units and faculty members may submit announcements about academic events that are open to the University community for listing in This Week in Academics at Howard. Submissions must be received via email at provost@howard.edu by Wednesday of the week preceding the event.

Seniors, do you want to be personally featured in a publication at Howard University that lasts forever?



IF SO, SENIOR ADS ARE ON SALE RIGHT NOW IN THE BISON YEARBOOK OFFICE UNTIL TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2006

Advertisement Rates

Advertisement Size	Content Size	Cost
Full Page (8x10)	10 Photos Max.-12 lines of text*	\$450.00
Half Page (8x5)	6 Photos Max.-7 lines of text*	\$300.00
Quarter Page (4x5)	2 Photos Max.-5 lines of text**	\$150.00
Eighth Page (4x2)	1 Photo Max. -2 lines of text**	\$100.00

*One Line= Approx. 60 Spaces
 **One Line= Approx. 30 Spaces

THERE IS ONLY A LIMITED AMOUNT OF SPACE AVAILABLE FOR ALL ADS, SO DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!!!!!!

The Bison Yearbook office is located on the Ground Level of the Blackburn University Center in Room G-06.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOWARD UNIVERSITY

ATTENTION STUDENTS:
STUDENT TICKETS FOR THE OCTOBER 14TH HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME WILL BE DISTRIBUTED:
WHEN: WEDNESDAY, OCT. 11 FROM 10:30AM – 4:30PM
WHERE: LOWER LEVEL OF CRAMTON AUDITORIUM

TICKETS DISTRIBUTED:
-BASED UPON AVAILABILITY
-FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE
-STUDENTS MUST HAVE STUDENT ID

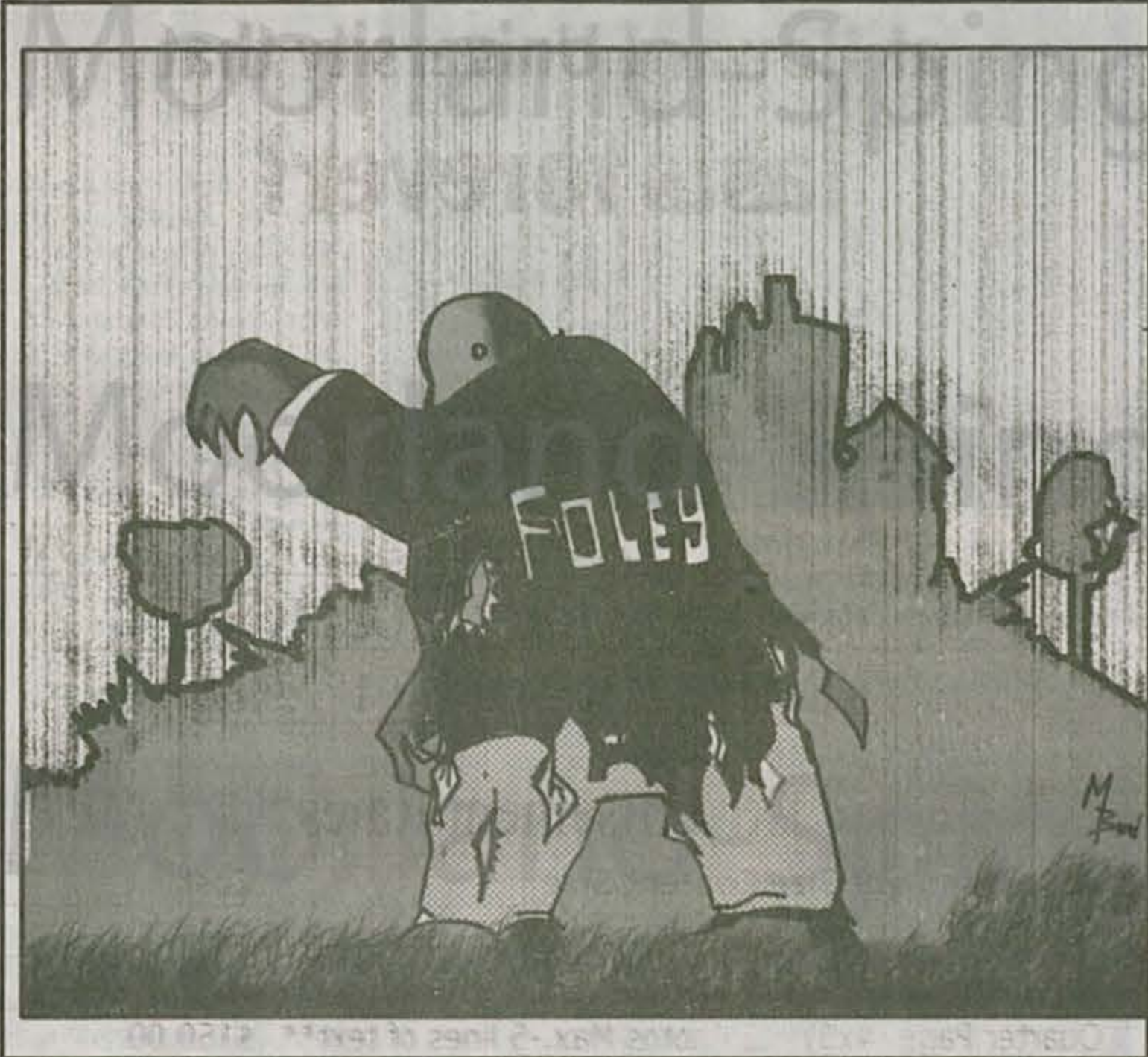
***IF TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE, TICKETS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED THURSDAY, OCT. 12 IN CRAMTON AUDITORIUM FROM 10:30AM – 4:30PM.**

The Hilltop Survey Says...

Unless, of course, said class in Advanced Reporting & Writing, and you totally forgot to pick up a Washington Post from Starbucks because you woke up for your 8:10 class at 8:00, and you didn't make it into your seat until 8:35.

Reading The Hilltop in class is not a good thing.*

EDITORIALS *and* Perspectives



Child Molesters On Capitol Hill

It is shocking to learn that Congressman Mark Foley, a Republican from Florida, sexually harassed male high school pages right from his Congressional office through emails and IMs.

What's even more disturbing to learn is that many Republicans knew of his actions for years, while the sexual predator continued to hold his seat in the lawmaking body of our country.

One of the selling points of this University is its location and the opportunity to work on Capitol Hill, which many students take full advantage of, including some of our staff members. That's why to betray the faith of young constituents is so unethical and to seek to cover it up is just as criminal.

House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) said that the chairman of the House Page Board and another congressman found out about Foley's sexually harassing emails last fall, but yesterday Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.) confirmed that in 2000, a congressional page for Foley came to him disturbed by Foley's inappropriate emails.

This announcement adds five years to the time members of Congress knew about the sexual harassment of teenagers and sought to hide it.

Our lawmakers and politicians must redefine what is

Our View:
It's unacceptable that not only are there child molesters in Congress, but that politicians tried so hard to cover it up. It's time to clean house!

important. The safety and well-being of those constituents that politicians are charged to serve should be more important than maintaining a good image for the party.

The Republican Party's stance as a "faith-based" group and its conservative views makes it harder for its members to be open about their sexuality and creates a situation much like the Catholic Church and the molestation scandal when it comes to sex crimes.

Currently Kolbe is the only openly gay Republican congressman, and he confronted Foley back in 2000 when he learned of the harassing emails.

Instead of doing the right

thing by addressing Foley's wrongdoings when they occurred, the Republican Party has been outed for being more concerned with mid-term elections and party popularity than justice.

The media continues to be the fourth branch of government as ABC News broke the story of Foley's foul e-mails which prompted his Sept. 29 resignation. However, Fox News' convenient "mistake" of labeling Foley a Democrat once the story broke left citizens wondering who to trust when the news and the government both have motives other than to serve them.

The rampant wrongdoing in this case reminds us all of the power of politics and the importance of voting.

Also, the lesson of the Republican Party elevating itself to moral superiority only makes the fall from grace that much further.

This is a time for Congress and all officials to clean house. Politicians should remember who their allegiance lies with - the people they serve, not a party or a political agenda.

Daily Sudoku

Directions: Each row, each column, and each 3x3 box must contain each and every digit 1-9 exactly once.

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

Attention:

Due to the Columbus Day holiday this week's Hilltop budget meeting will be **Tuesday Oct. 10**

THE HILLTOP

The Nation's Only Black Daily Collegiate Newspaper

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Now in its 83rd year, The Hilltop is published Monday through Friday by Howard University students. With a readership of more than 7,000, The Hilltop is the largest black collegiate newspaper in the nation.

The opinions expressed on the Editorial & Perspectives page are the views of The Hilltop Editorial Board and those of the authors and do not necessarily represent Howard University or its administration.

The Hilltop reserves the right to edit letters for space and grammatical errors and any inappropriate, libelous or defamatory content. All letters must be submitted a week prior to publication.

The Way I See It ...

My house is better than the school's...



BY CIARA FAMBLE
Life & Style Editor

Having a house is a very adult thing to have. Of course, it isn't my house because I haven't decided where I'm going to live after graduation, let alone decided to make a major purchase like a house.

But besides that, I must admit that I have grown to love the off-campus lifestyle. No showing I.D. at the door, waking up your S.A. at 2 a.m. just because you left it in your room when you went outside to pay for your takeout. And of course, the visitation rules don't exist.

It's a lot of fun picking out as-sophisticated-as-you-can-find-on-your-budget decor for your room and place settings for the kitchen. It really makes you feel grown up. I admit, before I moved, I wasn't much of a decorator. You know how some girls have full-blown palaces from freshman year on? I wasn't one of those girls.

I guess it was because I was sleeping on what was basically rented furniture that I didn't feel that motivated to be B. Smith with Style. But now I take pleasure in creating a real space for myself.

Now I love making trips to Target, Bed, Bath, and Beyond, and other home accessory stores. I love putting together bookcases and TV stands for my room (learning how to use power tools will do that to you).

There are some drawbacks, though. Namely, bills. Before I moved, I never really had any, but since I've been off campus, I've realized that they're no joke. Rent is serious and it comes every single month. And the bill companies don't care if it's homecoming. They just want their money.

So you spend way more time working than you want to, going in when you don't have to, just so you can make some extra money to cover the bills, and maybe have a little left over for yourself.

A study published by the Danter Company gathered statistics for the real estate industry, homeownership rates were at 69 percent in 2004. The rate went down to 68.9 percent in 2005. That decrease isn't enough to prevent me from being a homeowner.

So rent - which will eventually become a mortgage - isn't going anywhere.

Another problem is getting to know the patterns and habits of the people you live with. Arguments can come about over the craziest things—artwork for the common areas, cleaning schedules, pets, you name it.

But you realize it's all a part of the adult life. And learning to live and work with someone else with different viewpoints than you never really ends either, especially if you marry or shack up.

Until then, or at least I until I can afford to pay the \$1,200 a month it costs to get a half-way decent place in this ever expanding city, I'll just have to make due living with someone else.

Want to discuss china patterns and possible future trips to Home Depot? Send an email to Ciara at Lifeandstyle2006@yahoo.com.

Study Proves Steroid Use Damages Brain

BY DANIELLE HANKS
Contributing Writer

Athletes all over the world feel pressured to be perfect and turn to steroids that will kill brain cells as the solution. Researchers believe that athletes enjoy the rush of the game and want to keep that feeling by turning to drugs or anything else that will make the 'high' last.

The most common drugs for athletes and weight trainers are called androgen steroids. These particular steroids, when used in large doses, are known to cause hyper excitability, a highly aggressive nature and suicide tendencies.

Although it is true that brain cells do die naturally a little at a time, using steroids causes the cells to die from a process called apoptosis, simply meaning the steroids will cause cell suicides or programmed cell death.

At Howard, the use of steroids is not a common topic, but in the Athletic Department it cannot be overlooked. There is a list of banned substances that each athlete is given in the beginning of the year.

Throughout the year, the department performs ran-



Photo courtesy of www.steroidsmart.com

A new study conducted by Yale University School of Medicine shows elevated levels of testosterone result in a loss of brain cells after as little as six to 12 hours.

dom drug testing. The next is scheduled for late October or early November.

The Hilltop sat down with athletic director Dwight Datcher to discover how he felt about steroids.

Datcher said, "Most young athletes start taking steroids to perform better." College athletes don't think about how it will effect the body or brain further down the road, but rather if ste-

roid use will improve performance.

Professional athletes are not setting the best example for the growing number of athletes choosing to use steroids. In the last few years, there have been popular athletes in the news related to the abuse of steroids.

Major league baseball took a hard hit when both San Francisco Giant Barry Bonds and St. Louis Cardinal

Mark McGuire were involved in a steroid scandal. Although both of these men hit many home-runs aided by steroids, those runs might be taken away.

Athletes that choose to use steroids over an extended period of time may soon have symptoms similar to that of Alzheimer's disease. Yet older men who are naturally losing testosterone also use steroids to boost their horo-

mone level. For these men, steroid use can actually help protect brain function and memory.

Testosterone is the leading ingredient in steroids and although both male and female bodies are born with some testosterone in the system, excessive amounts can be harmful.

The male body has naturally 20 times more of the hormone than a woman's. It is imperative that the level of testosterone float at a steady medium for each individual. When athletes take steroids there is a great risk of brain damage. Too much will cause brain cells to self-destruct, researchers say.

Tests performed by a team lead by Dr. Barbara Ehrlich, a professor of pharmacology and physiology at Yale University's School of Medicine, clearly show cells dying after being treated with elevated levels of testosterone for even six to 12 hours.

If there are students who feel pressured to perform better, Datcher tells them to consider one thing, "Your body is a temple, treat [it as] holy. Take time building up strength and any person can accomplish greatness."

In Those Jeans?: The 'Skinny' on Skinny Jean Trends



Photo courtesy of www.aordstrom.com

Many mall staples such as Express and Bebe are bringing back the old 1980's classic "skinny jeans." The style actually date back as early as to the 1950's.

BY MERCIA WILLIAMS-MURRAY
Hilltop Staff Writer

Boot cut jeans have been the most popular style for years, but fashion is taking it back to the 80's 'rocker' look with slim, straight-leg jeans. Not too visible this time last year, slimmer jeans have taken the fashion world by storm and are quickly taking over. At Girlshop.com, an online retailer of designer clothing, sales of these jeans have increased 80 percent since last summer.

USA Today reports that mall mainstays such as Express, Bebe and Banana Republic are showcasing slim jeans for the spring season. While slim jeans are making a comeback from the 80's 'hard/punk rock' era, the reoccurring style made its debut years before.

Even before the 80's, skinny jeans had made appearances on the scene about 30 years before. As Tonya Khakazi, a sophomore music business major said, "It was a 50's thing." Photos from the 1950's show stars such as Dorothy Dandridge and Marilyn Monroe sporting slim jeans. "They are very feminine and cute and can dress up any tee shirt," Khakazi said.

Another reason that many women love them can be explained by sophomore political science major Carmen Jones.

"Anybody who knows me, knows I love to wear boots," Jones said. "[Slim] jeans fit perfectly on the inside of all of my boots, so I don't have to stuff the bottom of my jeans into my shoes."

Avoiding the bulging and buckling caused by tucking boot-cut jeans into boots is definitely a plus. It doesn't hurt that the rich and famous also approve.

You can find skinny jeans not only in the most popular department stores and boutiques, but also on the bodies of some of Hollywood's hottest young actresses like Mischa Barton, Lindsay Lohan and Kate Moss.

While some, like Allure Magazine's fashion director Michael Carl, said in a USA Today article that "Women don't need to be rail-thin to pull off the look."

Carl believes there are benefits of wearing slim-cut jeans over looser-fitting styles.

"Paired with a stiletto or wedge heel, skinny jeans can add visual height, and a tunic can camouflage the hips and accentuate below the knee," Carl said.

Others, such as Luck Magazine fashion director Hope Greenberg, said in USA Today, "Everyone can wear a boot-cut jean. There's one for every body shape. I don't think that's necessarily true of a skinny jean. Very, very curvy just doesn't look great."

Some of the most popular brand of skinny jeans includes those by Levi's and True Religion. The average costs for these brands are \$35 and \$172, respectively.

Curvier women and therefore, most black women, have shown some concern about having other options to find the best jean fit. Some designers do not take into account that most women have hips, thighs and backsides that resemble something other than a straight line.

"[Fashion designers] never did take us into consideration so why start now? If you happen to be slim then you're lucky because you can fit into those skinny, skinny jeans," Khakazi said.

Jones said, "I love [slim jeans] and I am not what people would necessarily consider to be 'skinny'. I think women of all colors can wear skinny jeans, it just depends on your shape and the brand you choose," she said.

Women of other ethnicities are seeing the need for women of color to be taken into account when designers make skinny jeans.

"I have seen skinny jeans on women that [are not skinny] and they look fine, but of course not all clothes are meant for all people," says Laura Wolf, a sophomore marketing major at West Chester University. "I work in a high-end jean store and 50 percent more of our clientele are women of color. If designers don't take them into account, then they're just down right stupid."

Album Review LUDACRIS:

BY ERIC WINGO
Contributing Writer

In the age of egotism and materialism, there comes a time when every successful artist must produce an album based solely on reality as they see it. Jay-Z did it back in 2002 with *The Black Album 2: The Gift and the Curse*. Nas did it back in 2001 with his fifth album *Stillmatic*. And, of course, Tupac devoted his entire career to it. Ludacris can now be counted among this distinct class.

On Sept. 26, Ludacris released his fifth solo album, *Release Therapy*, under his label Disturbing the Peace, an affiliate of Def Jam Recordings. He begins his album in regular Ludacris fashion with the dynamic "Warning (Intro)" and "Grew Up a Screw Up," which features Boyz n the Hood member Young Jeezy. Both are filled with enough tongue twisting punch lines to dethrone all challenging hip-hop heavyweights.

He then breaks into the all too familiar club songs "Money Maker" featuring Pharrell Williams, "Girls Gone Wild" and "Ultimate Satisfaction" featuring Field Mob.

Aside from a few tracks dedicated to his promiscuity, Ludacris sinks deep into reality, highlighting his true feelings about the rap industry. "Tell It Like It Is" is possibly a career changing track as Ludacris raps three tremendous verses providing a heads up for rappers interested in entering the game. It also explains feelings toward his relationship with Chingy, an artist that was once signed

to his label. His chorus alone raises ears with the words: "I can't hold my tongue (I'mma tell it like it is)/This biz ain't all fun (I'mma tell it like it is)/I'mma Give it to you straight no chase (I'mma tell it like it is)/Look you straight in your face and I'mma tell it like it is."

It's not until listeners fast-forward to "War With God," do they hear Ludacris going into intricate details about his career and supposedly speaking the truth about a certain feud he has with another hip hop artist residing in the South with the line: "I'm universal/ Luda never limits himself to the South." Of course, Luda never says directly who his rival is.

Fans of Ludacris know him all too well through his comedic rhyme style that often evokes laughter instead of garbishing respect. But fans of *Release Therapy* will be greatly pleased because for the first time in his career, Ludacris devotes a heavy portion of his album to bringing life's hard situations to the forefront. A classic example of this is the song, "Do Your Time" featuring Beanie Siegel, Pimp C and C-Murder, in which Ludacris provides the gift of hope for everyone that is incarcerated. His guests, who have all been incarcerated at one point in time, describe their experiences while in prison.

"Runaway Love" is possibly the furthest from the Ludacris prototype as he paints a perfect picture of girls battling issues all too common in society such as depression, rape and drug abuse. All the while, Mary J. Blige gracefully sings the chorus and throughout the song. Ludacris ends his album with the soulful church ballad, "Freedom of Preach." It is one of the more creative songs on the album featuring a sermon from Bishop Eddie Lee Long.

Overall, *Release Therapy* is heavy with tremendous beats and lyrical content. Hip-hop fans will have no problem rating it among the best of the year.



Photo courtesy of www.atlanta.creativecoaching.com

Grade: A-