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# THE HILLTOP

The Daily Student Voice of Howard University

VOLUME 90, NO. 78

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2007

WWW.THEHILLTOPONLINE.COM

FRIDAY  
notebook

## BREAKING NEWS

### TIM HARDAWAY BANISHED

ACCORDING TO SI.COM, FORMER NBA STAR TIM HARDAWAY IS BANISHED FROM ATTENDING THIS YEAR'S NBA ALL-STAR WEEKEND IN LAS VEGAS FOR HIS HATEFUL COMMENTS ABOUT HOMOSEXUALS.

## SPORTS

### VIVA LAS VEGAS!

FROM SUPER BOWL TO NBA ALL-STAR WEEKEND, HOWARD STUDENTS HAVE BEEN TRAVELING THE COUNTRY TO ATTEND MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS. FIND OUT MORE INSIDE.

PAGE 7

ALL-STAR  
2007

FRI, 2/16:  
SUNNY  
HIGH: 33, LOW: 18

SAT, 2/17:  
MOSTLY  
CLOUDY  
HIGH: 40, LOW: 29

## English Department Hosts 13th Annual Hearts Day



The 13th Annual Heart's Day celebration today in the Blackburn Center will feature multiple literary analysis sessions, as well as a gala dinner.

BY MERCIA WILLIAMS-MURRAY  
Hilltop Staff Writer

The Department of English will be hosting its 13th Annual Heart's Day tribute today with its "Three Faces of Poetry" Conference and Gala.

Heart's Day is an event when the English Department commemorates its intellectual traditions with a one-day national conference.

This year's Heart's Day will focus on the works of poets Lucille Clifton, Mari Evans and Nikki Giovanni. The conference will run from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Blackburn Center.

The conference is a free event that will feature national scholars from colleges, such as the University of Pennsylvania and Norfolk State University, presenting abstracts of papers on the works of the three honorees.

During the course of the day, there will be six sessions that focus on different subjects. Session one will focus on the works of Lucille Clifton and feature speakers from NSU, West Chester University and New England College.

Session two will be about "Speaking Truth To Power," and will focus on Giovanni. Session three is about "Mediating Gender and Subjectivity." It will include evaluations and discussions on poems from all three honorees by speakers from Towson University and Spelman College, as well as other colleges.

"Memory, Meaning and Identity: Art As/Is Truth" is the title of Session

four which will feature the poetry of Clifton and readings by Evans. Scholars from Dillard University, Jane College and the Metropolitan College of New York will present papers during this session.

A luncheon at noon is sponsored by the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center and will be accompanied by book signing courtesy of the honorees.

Session five will focus on the achievements of Giovanni, Evans and Clifton. Presenters will include Howard University's own Jon Woodson, Douglas Taylor and Rochelle Odon, all professors in the English Department.

The final session will be begin at 2 p.m. in the Ira Aldridge Theatre. This final session is titled "Sounds from the Mecca: The Poets Speak." Eleanor Traylor Ph.D., chair for the English department, will moderate this portion of the conference.

"There is a gala tribute to be held in the Blackburn ballroom beginning at seven o'clock," Traylor said.

Traylor added the proceeds of the gala is to fully establish the Sterling Brown endowed chair.

Brown, who was born in 1901 in a house where Cook Hall now stands, grew up on Howard's campus. His father was a professor in the School of Religion, which is now Divinity. Brown is known as the "Dean of American Poet" and was a poet laureate for Washington, D.C. Traylor says Brown was not only a poet but also a scholar, activist and professor.

Of the honorees, Traylor said, "We honor every year writers who have acknowledged the influence of Sterling Brown or were his direct students."

"[Brown] pioneered the study of African-American literature," Traylor said. "He is the contemporary of Robert Frost, William Caulfield and the like."

In its 13-year history, Heart's Day, has honored a slew of literary greats including Toni Morrison, Leroi Jones, Amiri Baraka and Steven Henderson.

Other honorees include Chinua Achebe, Gwendolyn Brooks, Paul Marshall, James Baldwin posthumously, Maya Angelou, Ishmael Reed, Sonya Sanchez and a few others.

"Heart's Day really honors generations of African-American scholars," Traylor said.

At the gala, an appetizing dinner is not all that guests will have to look forward to. Coming to honor the three honorees will be Sonia Sanchez, Haki Madhubuti, Howard's own Ethel Burt-Miller, poet laureate Dolores Hendricks and Dr. Joanne Gabbin, founder of the Furious Flower Poet Series. Traylor says that Baraka may attend the gala as well.

There will be a choral tribute by Singers Under Praise the Lord and music by the Howard University Jazz Ensemble. Traylor also said drummers and dancers will entertain the guests.

Tony Medina, a creative writing professor in the English department will be directing readings by various poets here on campus.

## Fire Alarms Remain Nuisance at Meridian Hill

BY CHRISTINA COLEMAN  
Contributing Writer

After a long day of classes, work and other activities, many Meridian Hill residents come back to the dormitory in hopes of relaxing, studying or sleeping. Many find it hard to do so when the fire alarm is constantly blaring warnings of a fire.

Sophomore biology major Aarika Ancelard said, "I can't even get a full night's sleep sometimes because the fire alarm will cut on in the dead of the night."

According to many students residing in Meridian Hill, the fire alarm system is constantly going off at all hours of the day, sometimes multiple times a night, desensitizing students to the fact that there might indeed be a real emergency.

"It's like the little boy who cried wolf. We never even get up anymore to see if there is really a fire because it goes off so much," Ancelard said.

Concerned with the dangers that they might be in, many Meridian Hill residents voice concerns about the alarm and alternate plans just in case there is indeed a fire.

"We hear a lot of dissents to the fire alarm going off, but there is really nothing we can do about it," Kenyatta Hobson, community director of Meridian Hill Hall said. "We are aware of the fact that it is quite annoying."

The alarm system, which costs thousands of dollars, is one of the most advanced and sensitive. Hobson explains how the system checks the



As fire alarms sound off in Meridian Hill, students are often unphased by the loud ringing. Community Director Kenyatta Hobson says the alarms should be taken seriously.

air qualities in rooms, and any slight change in air may trigger the alarm.

"Anything from dust particles in the air to students spraying air fresheners may set off the alarm. Mostly it's girls doing their hair in the rooms," Hobson said.

Along with the more than 700 residents, the staff has to worry about students bringing in items that are not allowed to be in the dorms such as microwaves, toaster ovens and George Foreman grills.

"It's going to go off when there are so many students in one building. Plus Meridian is an old building that needs a lot of tweaking, just like the embassies across the street. The alarm never goes off for a random reason," Hobson said.

Benjamin Lewis, a sophomore art major, is aware of the fact that the fire alarms are sensitive and will go off. He is concerned with the seriousness of the situation rather than the inconvenience of the alarm.

"It is loud and ear piercing but I just want to

know how are we supposed to know when it's a real fire," he said.

The alarm, which is an external alarm, signals campus police who then signal EMS services.

"You can tell the seriousness of the alarm by the sound. If the prompt is longer than usual, that is usually a more pressing issue. In cases like those, campus police and I will go to the scene to suppress the situation. It's never not taken care of," Hobson said.

So far, the situations have not exceeded more than one cooking in a kitchen or blow drying hair. EMS services are rarely contacted according to Lieutenant Murphy of the District Fire Department here in Northwest Washington, D.C.

Hobson and his staff make sure that the premises are safe and sound.

"I'm always calling our fire safety officer to double check that everything is in place even if the situation is minor," Hobson said. "We have even had two fire drills this academic year."

Hobson assures that if the situation is serious, the staff is educated about what precautions to take. The intercom services will also be used to inform students.

"Dean Gibbs is aware of the problems and issues that surround the alarm, but he supports us 100 percent," Hobson said.

He continued, "The students may continue to gripe, but hopefully students can come to appreciate the sensitivity of the alarm and how safe it does really keep us."

## JetBlue Apologizes to Consumers for Prolonged Delays

BY AMBER ENGLISH  
Nation and World Editor

After holding passengers on a plane for eight hours Wednesday at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, JetBlue airlines has apologized and begun an investigation into whether or not it could have handled the stormy conditions differently, according to NBC news.

"Of the 505 daily flights operated by JetBlue, more than 250 flights were cancelled, and approximately 10 flights were significantly delayed at JFK with passengers on board," a statement released by JetBlue on Wednesday evening reported.

"These flights were a combination of scheduled departures from JFK that were not able to take off due to the ever-changing weather conditions, and arrivals that we were unable to move to a gate within a reasonable amount of time, due to all gates being occupied."

Most notably, a flight bound for Cancun, Mexico was held on the tarmac for eight hours with on power, one passenger told CNN News.

One passenger called the plane a "sound-proof coffin," as the windows were iced over as time progressed.

Initially, the flight was supposed to take-off at 8:15 a.m., according to

JetBlue airlines. The expected break in the winter weather never came.

This resulted in unacceptable delays for our customers," the JetBlue press statement said. The airline reported that no gates were available to return the plane to the terminal. By 4 p.m., some of the planes wheels were frozen to the ground.

Other passengers reported that flight attendants told them they could not have food until the plane had been on the ground for at least four hours, citing a Federal Aviation Administration policy. Two of the planes' passengers were diabetic.

The airline admitted passengers

should have been taken to the terminal earlier. Buses from the Port Authority in New York and New Jersey finally took passengers back to the gates.

Although the airline had located a crew and pilots to operate the flight by around 9:30 p.m., the airline said it was unable to contact most of the passengers.

Weather problems continued to trouble the airline Thursday morning. Approximately 59 of the airlines' 565 nationwide flights were cancelled because of continued icy conditions in the Northeast. JetBlue has offered all passengers delayed more than three

hours a full refund and a free round-trip ticket. In addition, the airline is rebooking New York passengers whose flights were cancelled Wednesday and Thursday.

"We are resetting our operations from yesterday, but the added traffic for the upcoming holiday weekend is going to make things more difficult," JetBlue spokeswoman Jenny Dervin told CNN.

To appease customers, JetBlue is allowing all passengers scheduled for travel between now and Feb. 19 the opportunity to re-book for travel anytime through May 22.



# ASB Popular Trip for Students

BY EBONI FARMER  
Hilltop Staff Writer

Alternative Spring Break 2007 has officially launched and the student body response has been tremendous. More than 350 students packed the Rankin Memorial Chapel on Feb. 11 to get prepared for the journey planned to New Orleans this Spring Break.

Co-coordinator of ASB, Ty Axson, gave students an overview of his experience down in New Orleans during Spring Break 2006.

"There was a lot of tears and a lot of memories that those who went last year shared," Axson said.

He continued, "If you make the journey down to New Orleans with us you are bound to experi-

ence things that will change your perspective on life."

An emotional DVD titled "A Look Into the Past: Alternative Spring Break 2007" played at the meeting and revealed some of the experiences students faced on the trip last year.

Dean of the Chapel, Rev. Bernard Richardson, was astonished and truly excited about the amount of students who poured into Rankin Chapel.

Freshman pre-law major Christina James said, "There were so many people in the chapel. I felt like I was truly apart of history. Chances to make a change like this don't come often in life, so I'm glad my peers are taking a stand."

Richardson told students that they were indeed apart of the history of Howard University and America for coming out to support

the rebuilding efforts. Sophomore political science major Andrew McCloud cannot wait to make the journey to New Orleans because he said it will be a life changing experience.

"Giving up my Spring Break this year is a sacrifice that I have chosen to make because the people down there having nothing left and nothing to look forward but help from students like myself," McCloud said.

He added, "I could go and party, but I know I'll take more precious memories with me from New Orleans than I can take from Miami Beach."

Lashondra Booker, another co-coordinator of the ASB committee, answered the frequently asked questions that students need to know before taking the bus to go down to New Orleans.

These questions included where they will stay, what kind of work they will do, what types of clothes to bring and if there will be free time to visit the French Quarter.

Junior history major Maya Wilkins said, "The general body meeting was very informative. I am nervous about going to New Orleans, seeing it on TV is hard enough for me, but I can only imagine what those people went through and are still going through."

She added that she was surprised by the big turnout. "It shows that we're passionate and willing to make sacrifices to help the plight of our people."

Coordinator of ASB Debbie Origo was very happy to see the mass student turnout.

"This year ASB is not only one week, but two weeks. Howard Law School will also be heading down to the Bayou as well," she said.

# Black History Profile: Benjamin Banneker

BY CHARLOTTE YOUNG  
Hilltop Staff Writer

From the northeast of D.C. where the Capitol stands, to the southeast and to the northwest, many walk through the streets of the District not realizing that the capital city was designed from the memory of a black man.

Benjamin Banneker was an author, an astronomer, scientist, mathematician, surveyor and clock-maker.

Born in Ellicott City, Md. on Nov. 9 1731, Banneker was a self-taught man. His grandmother, a white Englishwoman, came to America as an indentured servant and married a slave.

Banneker attended a boy's school and excelled even above his teacher.

When Banneker turned 21, he met a man named Josef Levi who showed him a pocket watch.

In 1753, after two years of studying the watch, Banneker made a clock. It was made entirely out of wood, and its gears were hand carved by Banneker. For more than 40 years, the clock functioned and accurately told time.

Banneker also had an interest in astronomy. After a friend died leaving him all of his books on astronomy and a telescope, Banneker was able to pre-



Photo courtesy of www.purdue.edu  
Scientist Benjamin Banneker is credited with the structural layout of the District of Columbia.

dict a solar eclipse on April 14, 1989.

Banneker was such a strong astronomer that in 1796, he published his own almanac, which lasted for 10 years.

In it, he also criticized slavery and challenged the widely held belief that blacks were inferior to whites. He even sent a copy of his first almanac to Thomas Jefferson, the secretary of state at the time. Included with the almanac was a letter condemning Jefferson's hypocrisy of claiming equality for all men, while at the same time owning slaves.

Jefferson responded and the two stayed in contact over the issue.

When President George Washington commissioned Pierre Charles L'Enfant to move the capital to Washington, D.C., Banneker was also brought in on the design team at Jefferson's request.

L'Enfant soon abandoned the project and went to France, taking with him the plans and maps for the city. Banneker was able to recall all the details and plans for the city in two days from memory.

On Oct. 9 1806, Banneker died, respected and well-known to all. Banneker stood for what he believed in and showed the nation that black was not synonymous for inferior.



File Photo

More than 350 undergraduate students will journey to New Orleans in March to spend their break rebuilding.

# So Much to Do, So Little Time...

## DMV Social Club

BY CHRISTINA COLEMAN  
Contributing Writer

At Howard, it is common to find many students socializing and relating to those who come from the same area, hence the many clubs that cater to people from the same states such as Georgia, California and Texas.

However, at a university placed in the heart of Washington D.C., one would assume that the native Washingtonians would feel comfortable in their own environment.

"That is definitely not the case," said sophomore finance major Carri Cowan. "People assume because we are from the area we do not

need to assimilate to the university."

Cowan, who serves as the president of D.C., Maryland, Virginia (DMV) club is aware of the fact that Howard students who are native to the metro area also need a sense of being and support.

"It was assumed for such a long time that because we are from the area we feel at home but essentially, we need a support system too," Cowan says. "All the other states had clubs, so it was only right that we have one too," she said.

DMV, which was officially approved as a club on Sept. 1, 2000, has been a safe haven to freshmen, as well as upperclassmen who feel isolated from the Howard com-

munity because of the bad connotation that goes along with being from the metro District area.

"Our motto this year is 'Promoting the D.C., Maryland, Virginia area in a positive light,' Cowan said.

Because of Howard's very diverse population, the environment encountered is very different from the surrounding area.

"It feels like Howard is a different world," said sophomore fashion merchandising major Tonisha Roberts.

"We don't even get to experience our own D.C. culture because so many people from all around infiltrate their influences. DMV gives us back that sense of 'us,'" she said.

"We have monthly social outings in order to maintain the bond between the members," said club secretary Nicole Manuel who joined the organization to help make an impact on the District.

"I wanted to help make this club a more active and influential organization on our campus," she said.

While it is important to feel at home in college, DMV is also dedicated to include the Washington, D.C. community in which Howard is located.

The club strives to dismiss the myths that come along with the controversial word "local," while trying to convey a positive view on the community outside of Howard's walls.

"We are very aware of the stereotypes that come along with the word local. Apparently we love Nike boots, violence and go-go, and we are also unintelligent, dirty and ignorant," Cowan said. "Clearly, not all of those things are true. I like to use the term 'native to the area or Washingtonian.'"

In fact, DMV has implemented a new program this year that is dedicated "to providing opportunities for educational and professional advancement to members of the club," according to Manuel.

Cowan said, "We are alerting members of scholarship and internship opportunities that can assist them in their careers."

She added, "It's important to be supportive socially, but also academically."

DMV social club also performs community service within the Washington, D.C. community. Clean up efforts are in the works.

"Clearly it's important to care about the area where we live. If we don't respect the area, no one else will," Roberts said.

This month, the club will start a petition regarding the status of public schools in hopes of raising awareness about the conditions the students learn in.

"We would like to think we're honoring Black History Month and giving back to the community that way," Cowan said.

# The Hilltop Survey Says...

...Unless, of course, said class is 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.\*

...The Hilltop is not a good thing.\*

...The Hilltop is not a good thing.\*

...The Hilltop is not a good thing.\*

...The Hilltop is not a good thing.\*



FEBRUARY 16, 2007

# The Hilltop

## Writing Workshop

Wednesday @ 6:00

The Hilltop Office,  
P-Level, West Tower

### Why Come?

If you want to be a better writer, for *The Hilltop* or anyone else.

If you're interested in becoming a staff writer, you must attend.

## The Hilltop

Survey Says...

A copy of  
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on the Metro.\*

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WHBC-AM CHANNEL 51 & UGSA

PRESENTS...

## VERBAL ARMAGEDDON VII

24 MC's, 3 Rounds, 1 Winner

Round 2

Monday, February 19, 2007

Blackburn Ballroom @ 7pm

For MC ranking information

log on to:

[www.myspace.com/verbalarmageddon1](http://www.myspace.com/verbalarmageddon1)

WHBC celebrates Black History Month



Check us out online:

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&

[www.myspace.com/whbc830amchannel51](http://www.myspace.com/whbc830amchannel51)





## New Standards for Models

BY VANESSA ROZIER  
Hilltop Staff Writer

Tall, long-haired and rail-thin are all characteristics frequently associated with models, but in some corners of the world things are about to change.

In September 2006, marked the first runway show in the world to turn away models because of their weight, or lack thereof.

During Pasarela Cibeles, the international fashion week in Madrid, Spain, officials decided that models with a body mass index lower than 18 would not be permitted on the catwalk.

While aspiring models as well as average young people, are striving to be thin, diagnosis of eating disorders are becoming more and more prevalent.

According to the Academy for Eating Disorders, almost one percent of late adolescent or adult women are diagnosed with anorexia nervosa and two percent of late adolescent and adult women are diagnosed with bulimia nervosa.

Brazilian model Ana Carolina Reston's death from complications with anorexia, prompted this movement towards the redefinition of beauty in the fashion industry.

Reston died at 21 years-old in November last year. She was five feet eight inches tall, weighing 88 pounds, yielding a BMI of only 13.4.

Ever since the 1990s

with super model Kate Moss, the classification of skinny is becoming more and more exclusive, and almost unattainable.

Suzanne M. Bringham Ph.D., a counselor in the District specializing in treating eating disorders, believes that the restrictions will be very beneficial.

"Sounds like a good idea," Bringham said. "If the standards are there, models won't be able to advance their career without complying."

The Eating Disorders Association estimates that about 165,000 people in the United Kingdom have eating disorders, with at least ten percent of which cause death.

The most common eating disorders are bulimia, which can be identified by a cycle of starving and bingeing and anorexia, where one deprives the body of food altogether.

It is reported that most sufferers are women, but now, one in 10 are men.

"The culture of skinny should be changed," said Lynn Grefe, CEO of The National Eating Disorders Association.

The NEDA envisions the elimination of eating disorders by developing prevention programs and publishing educational materials. Addressing the stigma of being ultra thin which goes along with the modeling industry, Grefe said, "It's disappointing and shortsighted. It should be changed."



Photo Courtesy of www.google.com

Mounting concern regarding eating disorders pressures the fashion industry to set standards for models.

A person's BMI is a calculation of a person's weight in relation to their height. Once calculated, it can be concluded that one is considered healthy if one's BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9, in alignment with the World Health Organization's standards.

Therefore, the standard for a model to have a BMI of at least 18 is below the standard healthy mark.

However, Grefe said that a simple BMI calculation is not enough to determine how healthy a model is.

"The most important

thing is for comprehensive physical exams to check to make sure you're healthy," Grefe said.

While Madrid's standards take effect in November and Italian designers in December of 2006, the U.S. has yet to follow suit.

Earlier this month New York City Council member Gail Brewer proposed similar standards here in America. Brewer would like to see fashion houses attempt to ban any and all models with a BMI of less than 18.5.

## Nation & World Briefs

### Hijacked Plane Lands Safely

Spain's foreign ministry reported Thursday that a passenger jet was hijacked when it took off from Mauritania. The plane reportedly carried 71 passengers and eight crew members. The plane was flown to the Canary Islands, where security officials raided the plane. Nobody was injured, and officials believe there was only one hijacker.

### Dollar Coin Begins Circulation

The new dollar coin was introduced Thursday morning at New York City's Grand Central Station. The coin features George Washington and another view of the Statue of Liberty. Subsequent coins will be released featuring John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.

Four new coins will be released each year, featuring a different president in the order in which they served.

However, experts feel that the coins may not catch on. Only five to ten percent of vending machines in the



Photo Courtesy of www.fed.com

country accept dollar coins. If it were to replace the paper dollar, officials say it would save \$500 billion yearly.

### Salmonella Outbreak Source Found



Photo Courtesy of www.peterpan.com

A salmonella outbreak that has affected nearly 300 people across 39 states has been traced to peanut butter. The Food and Drug Administration is asking people not to eat Peter Pan or Great Value brands of

peanut butter with a product code beginning with '2111.'

The outbreak has been traced specifically to jars produced from a factory in Georgia. The company is destroying all affected jars.

### Battle Over Smith's Body Continues

A judge in the Broward County Circuit Court heard arguments over the burial place of Anna Nicole Smith's body. Although attorneys for Smith's husband Howard K. Stern claim Smith wanted to be buried in the Bahamas,

alongside her son. Smith's estranged mother, Vergie Arthur, wants to take Smith's body back home to Texas. Another hearing is scheduled for Tuesday.

### Couple Sentenced for Caging Kids



Photo Courtesy of www.ckaz.com

An Ohio couple charged with locking up their adopted, special needs children has been sentenced to two years in prison. This is a fraction of the 20-year sentence they initially faced.

However, the judge is allowing the couple to remain free on bond while appealing the convictions. The couple blames social service officials for not helping them control the kids' behavior.

### The Skinny: Calculate BMI with the Formula

To calculate Body Mass Index, (BMI) a person's weight in pounds, and that person's height in feet or inches is put into a formula. Multiply the weight by 703, then divide that by the height. The formula is below.

$$BMI = \frac{\text{Weight in pounds} \times 703}{\text{Height in Inches (squared)}}$$

Once that figure is reached, compare it to the World Health Organization's Standards:

- Below 18.5 - Underweight
- 18.5-24.9 - Normal
- 25-29.9 - Overweight
- 30 & Above - Obese

-Courtesy of U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

## Terror Leader Reported Wounded



Photo Courtesy of www.cnn.com

The Iraqi Ministry reported Thursday afternoon that Abu Ayyub al-Masri, the Al Qaeda leader in Iraq, was wounded in a fire fight. The spokesman for the ministry reported that Iraqi police encountered the insurgents between Fallujah and Samarra. The spokesman also reported that al-Masri's top aide, Abu Abdullah al-Majamiai was killed in the same fire fight. Iraqi police reported having the body of al-Majamiai, but did not report on the status of al-Masri. Al-Masri first took over Iraqi leadership of Al Qaeda in June of 2006 after Abu Musab al-Zarqawi died. As of Thursday evening, the United States Military had no comment on the incident.



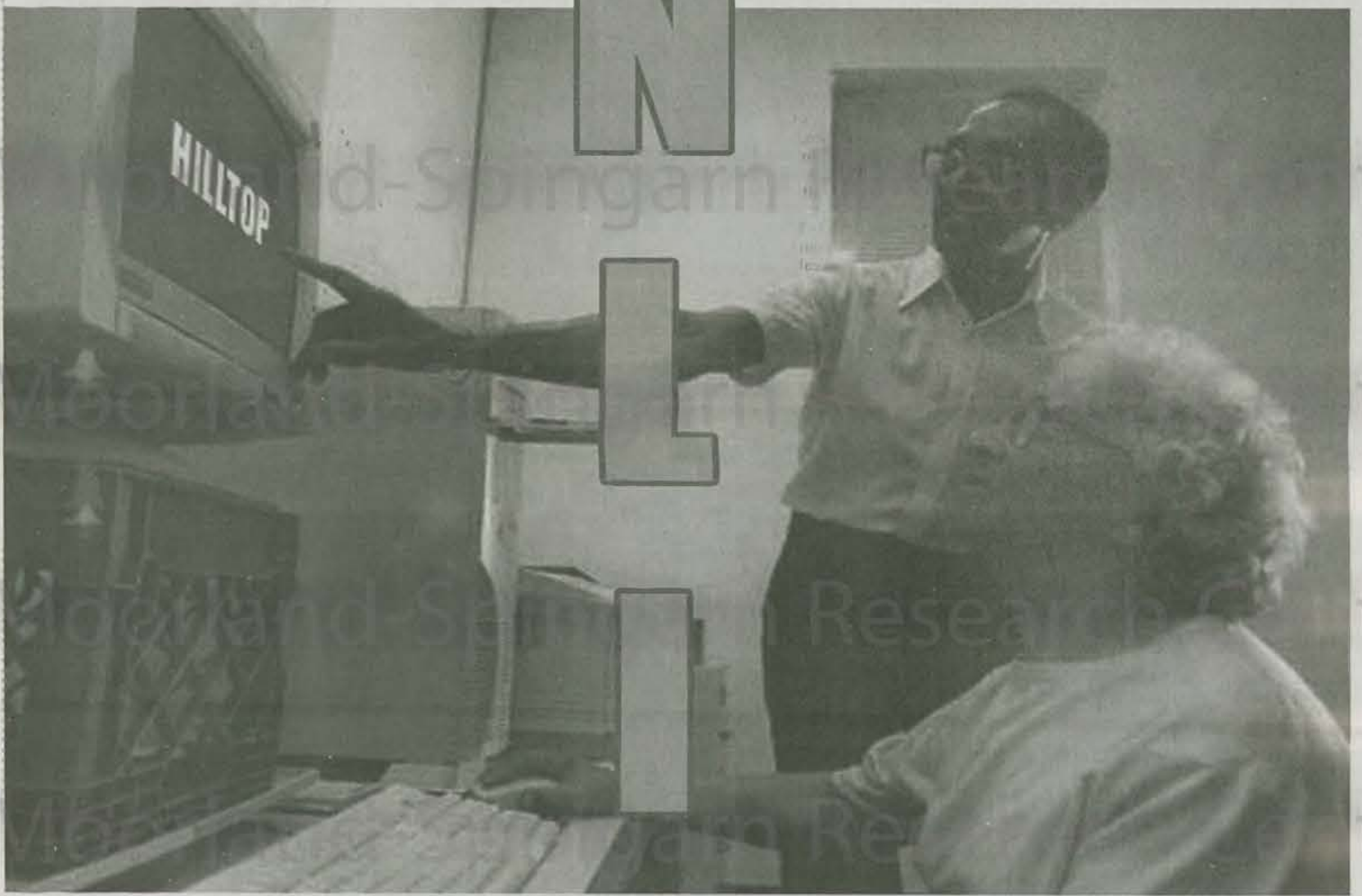
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# Students Miss Class for Sporting Events

BY WINNIE CLARK-JENKINS  
Hilltop Staff Writer

In the midst of a myriad of big sporting events going on this season, a number of Howard students have been "vacationing" away from campus to be a part of the excitement.

With the Super Bowl happening less than two weeks ago and the All-Star game taking place this weekend, some students have been fortunate enough to venture to these events that most Howard students only get to watch from their television screens.

"It makes it that much more special being able to get to go to an event that you know so many people want to go to," said junior international business major Averi Thomas-Moore.

Thomas-Moore was one of very few Howard students who were able to get their hands on the highly coveted Super Bowl tickets. Tickets for the game sell out months ahead of time and ticket prices start at \$600 per person.

"My dad was able to get us tickets," Thomas-Moore said. "I am from Chicago, so it was really great to see the Bears play in the Super

Bowl." Many of these trips to these sporting events prove to be costly for those on a students budget.

Junior finance major Brian Johnson will be headed to the Las Vegas for the All Star game this weekend with a friend from Howard. He will also meet up with some of his friends from his hometown of Los Angeles, since it is a short drive for them. All-Star weekend being close to home is a big deal and a selling point for Johnson.

"I spent a lot of money to go out there, so I hope it is going to be worth it," Johnson said.

Aside from the monetary costs of travel to the games, most students leave during the week, causing them to miss classes. Many Howard professors do not see these events as acceptable excuses to miss.

"I am leaving Wednesday night so I will miss class," Johnson said. "I had to tell some of my professors I was going for a 'family event.'"

However, some students did not have much trouble with taking the time off of school.

"I only missed Monday when I went to the Super Bowl, so my professors did not make a big deal of it," Thomas-Moore said.

Larger sporting events such as these have attracted large crowds and Howard students have proven to be among the masses despite having to travel to attend.

These events are luring for young adults not only for the purposes of the athletic event alone, but also the pre and post events, such as parties and night life that surround the events. Larger games like the Super Bowl and the All-Star games are taking place in prime cities known for their tourist attractions.

The Super Bowl was held in Miami this year and the All Star game will be played in Las Vegas this weekend.

"I am really looking forward to the parties, celebrities and flashy cars everywhere when I get to Vegas this weekend," Johnson said.

"When I was 19, the All-Star game was in L.A., but I was not really able to enjoy everything that was going on surrounding the game at that time, so now I am old enough to be able to enjoy the night life as well as the game as well as be close to home," Johnson said, now 22.

With March Madness also approaching quickly, many Howard students are likely to visit top schools around the area for games, as well as travel to see their favorite teams in the play-offs.



Photo Courtesy of Averi Thomas-Moore

Some students, like Averi Thomas-Moore, choose to miss class to attend major sporting events. Thomas-Moore traveled to Miami to watch the Chicago Bears play the Indianapolis Colts in Super Bowl XLI.

## SCOREBOARD & SCHEDULE

### SCORES

None

### WEEKEND GAMES

Friday

Swimming @ NEC Championships in Landover, Md. (Thurs.-Sat.)

Tennis @ Old Dominion 8 p.m.

Track & Field @ MEAC Championships in Landover, Md. (Fri.-Sat.)

Saturday

Lacrosse v. Maryland Baltimore-County @ Greene Stadium 1 p.m.

Women's Basketball @ Bethune-Cookman 2 p.m.

Men's Basketball @ Bethune-Cookman 4 p.m.

Monday

Women's Basketball @ Florida A&M 5:30 p.m.

Men's Basketball @ Florida A&M 7:30 p.m.

# Basketball Fans Gear Up for Slam Dunk Contest

BY ELLIOTT JONES & PHILLIP LUCAS  
Sports Editor & Copy Editor

For years, the Sprite Rising Stars Slam Dunk Contest has been a signature event of NBA All-Star weekend. In recent years, the competition has failed to draw big names to participate, leading some to believe that the dunk contest is no longer a marquee event.

This year's competition will feature five-foot nine-inch Nate Robinson of the New York Knicks, who won last year's contest, as well as Gerald Green of the Boston Celtics, Dwight Howard of the Orlando Magic and Tyrus Thomas of the Chicago Bulls. With the exception of Howard, who is making his first All-Star Game appearance after entering the NBA straight from high school, the dunk contest field is not filled with the type of superstar players that appeared in the compe-

dition in the past.

NBA legends such as Michael Jordan and Dominique Wilkins regularly appeared in the dunk contest in the prime of their careers, and Julius Erving popularized the event while playing in the American Basketball Association. This year, they will serve as judges for the event along with Kobe Bryant and Vince Carter.

Although Bryant and Carter each won the event early in their careers, the lack of participation of the NBA's present-day stars in the event has decreased its once high-profile. Steve Knox is a host of "Real Talk Sports Talk," which airs on WHBC Thursdays at 6 p.m. Knox said rookies competing in the dunk contest doesn't bother him as much as the fact that the level of competition in the contest has taken a severe decline in recent years.

"It's starting to turn into

just a worthless exhibition now, it doesn't have much meaning anymore," Knox said.

Freshman political science major and basketball fan, Shyidah Salahuddin has a positive outlook on this year's All-Star Slam Dunk contest.

"I think it's a good way to give [rookies] exposure considering that most players who have already been in the NBA become franchise players. People know their faces, know who they are," Salahuddin said. "If they win, it gives them endorsement deals and exposure so people know who they are."

Thomas added additional proof that the contest is no longer a priority for some players, telling the Chicago Tribune last week that he was "just into the free money. That's it. I'll just do whatever when I get out there." Thomas was fined \$10,000 for his comments.

Knox compared the past All-Star games to the upcoming contest, "Back in the day, guys like Michael [Jordan] and Magic [Johnson] took the game seriously and when they used to play, they would have 140 to 150 point show-downs to the last second." He continued, "It was a challenge who was going to get the MVP award and who was better between the East and the West."

Salahuddin's interest in the All-Star game hasn't changed despite the condition of the dunk contest.

"I'm still watching it and I still want the West Coast to win," Salahuddin said, as an East Coast supporter nearby booed her statement. "I think it's the same thing, the adrenaline of all the famous players of this time coming together and playing a game and the dunk contest. I'm still excited about that."



Photo courtesy of www.anslemmedia.com

New York Knicks guard Nate Robinson beat Sixers' Andre Iguodala to win the Sprite Rising Stars Slam Dunk Competition at last year's All-Star Weekend in Houston.

### EAST



### WEST

Dwayne Wade  
Miami Heat  
Guard



Kobe Bryant  
Los Angeles Lakers  
Guard

Gilbert Arenas  
Washington Wizards  
Guard



Tracy McGrady  
Houston Rockets  
Guard

LeBron James  
Cleveland Cavaliers  
Forward



Kevin Garnett  
Minnesota Timberwolves  
Forward

Chris Bosh  
Toronto Raptors  
Forward



Tim Duncan  
San Antonio Spurs  
Forward

Shaquille O'Neal  
Miami Heat  
Center



Yao Ming  
Houston Rockets  
Center

#### Reserves:

Chauncey Billups (DET)  
Caron Butler (WAS)  
Vince Carter (NJJ)  
Richard Hamilton (DET)  
Dwight Howard (ORL)  
Jason Kidd (NJJ)  
Jermaine O'Neal (IND)

#### Reserves:

Ray Allen (SEA)  
Carmelo Anthony (DEN)  
Carlos Boozer (UTH) !  
Josh Howard (DAL)  
Allen Iverson (DEN) !  
Shawn Marion (PHX)  
Steve Nash (PHX) !  
Dirk Nowitzki (DAL)  
Mehmet Okur (UTH)  
Tony Parker (SAN)  
Amare Stoudemire (PHX)

Head Coach:  
Eddie Jordan (WAS)

Head Coach:  
Mike D'Antoni (PHX)

! = injured, will not participate



# Facebook Fame Gets Even More Personal With Diaries

BY SAKITA HOLLEY  
Contributing Writer

Facebook fanatics will soon get the chance to claim their 15 minutes of fame.

According to an announcement made last Tuesday, the social networking Web site is collaborating with cable giant Comcast's online video site Ziddio to produce a new television series called "Facebook Diaries."

The program, which officially kicks off in March, will give Facebook users the chance to compete in contests by submitting their personal adventures in the form of short video segments. Once the program begins, "Facebook Diary" hopefuls can upload their masterpieces through the Ziddio-sponsored group on Facebook, or directly through Ziddio at its Web site [www.ziddio.com](http://www.ziddio.com).

These segments will be viewed, shared and judged by other users. The best submissions will eventually fall into the hands of Oscar-nominated Hollywood television producer R.J. Cutler, who will have the

task of creating 10 half-hour episodes that will be prominently placed on Ziddio's main page and shown on Comcast's On-Demand service.

Facebook, the seventh most visited site in the U.S. according to ComScore's Media Metrix report, has amassed more than 16 million users in more than 47,000 geographic, work-related, collegiate and high school networks.

For collegians, Facebook has evolved into a mandatory part of their daily routine providing efficient ways to connect and communicate with peers and a variety of ways to disseminate information.

Sophomore political science major Ashton Fizer said, "Through notes, the news feed, personal messages, wall posts, event listings, common-interest and organizational groups, pictures, etcetera, Facebook helps me stay abreast of things happening on Howard's campus and elsewhere."

This contest and partnership is the Palo Alto, Calif. company's first major attempt to promote user-

friendly video, coming only a few months after the "sharing" platform was introduced. With the "sharing" tool users can share content from other Web sites by simply using the sites' URL address.

"Videos are by far the most popular 'shared' material on 'The Book.' My friends upload everything from Barack Obama speeches to the Kidz Bop version of the Chicken Noodle Soup dance," said sophomore print journalism major Christina Burton, reflecting on the popularity of user-controlled content.

Streaming online video is undoubtedly a fast growing segment on the Internet, as proven by Google Inc.'s recent multi-billion dollar purchase of YouTube.com.

"Facebook's collaboration with Comcast must be their way of getting in on all the online video action," said junior psychology major Candace Bouknight.

"I mean it's a real win-win situation. Comcast gets an audience with Facebook's prized youth demographic and

Facebook gets introduced to the world through Comcast's many networks. You can count me in."

Facebook executives said this exposure will be the main attraction.

"We think the opportunity for our users to have their content shown on television is a real draw," said Owen Van Natta, Facebook's chief operating officer.

Judging from the increasing amount of reality-TV stars turned overnight celebrities he may be right.

Someone logged on to Facebook right now could be America's next Jennifer Hudson, an American Idol castoff or Flavor Flav from the popular TV show Flavor of Love.

However, there are the skeptics like student Raymond Ward who refuse to buy into the hype, who cite fun and not fame as a reason to participate. "Everyone's entitled to their 15 minutes, but truly famous? Who knows? Even Kato Kaelin got a half-hour," Ward said.



Photo Courtesy of [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)  
Facebook.com is working with Ziddio, an online video site to bring site users the television show "Facebook Diaries."

# Misuse of Prescription Drugs Sparks Debates

BY MONICA HARRIS  
Hilltop Staff Writer

The investigation and speculation of the death of Anna Nicole Smith and Gerald Levert highlight a current debate over the surge in prescription drug use.

In recent years, the U.S. has seen a significant increase of the abuse of prescription drugs. These seemingly safe drugs can be just as toxic as cocaine and heroine if used improperly.

Wrongful deaths happen accidentally as a result of doctors recommending treatment with the medicine.

WebMD reports in a study administered by the Office of National Drug Policy (ONDP) that abuse of painkillers has reached astronomical numbers, increasing 163 percent since 1995.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse, a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sponsored a survey in December 2006 that showed decreased numbers of illicit drugs or "street drugs" and increased numbers in over the counter drugs and non-prescription medicines like cough syrup.

The survey was administered to about 48,000 private and public school students in the eighth, 10th and 12th grades. It was found that 10 percent of these students over-use Vicodin and that the use of OxyContin among eighth graders has "increased significantly," although an actual number was not given, since 2001.

The ONDP also noted on WebMD that there are three kinds of prescription drugs that have proven to be the most addictive, opioid narcotics, stimulants and depressants.

Opioids are painkillers like Vicodin, codeine and OxyContin. Depressants are often used to treat anxiety issues and the sleeping disorder narcolepsy, examples being Xanax and Valium. The third kinds are stimulants which are used to treat ADHD and obesity like Ritalin and Dexadrine.

"When I pulled a muscle in my lower back I couldn't walk or bend. I was prescribed Vicodin and it eased the pain and made me feel really, really relaxed," said Martinique Guillory, a junior public relations major.

When stimulants are taken, brain activity is enhanced and the body experiences an increase in vigilance, attention and energy. This can cause elevated blood pressure and heart rate.

Drug-addiction.com states that possible consequences of taking these in high doses include paranoia, hostility, dangerously high blood temperature, irregular heart beat, cardiovascular failure and lethal seizures.

The Web site also reports that depressants, at the outset, have a calming effect that causes drowsiness but after a period of time the body will build a tolerance to the pills and will require an increased amount to have the initial effects. That way the body becomes physi-

cally addicted and withdrawal side effects can be fatal.

Withdrawal and long-term effects of opioids are similar to that of depressants. A single high dose of any of these can result in death.

Dr. Joseph Robinson, alumni of Howard University Medical School and practicing pharmacist at the Washington Medical Center sees this as a big problem.

"I see patients become addicted to these kinds of drugs all the time. At least three to four times a month," he said.

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Consumer magazine reported in the September 2001 issue about a Germantown, Md. woman who became addicted to tranquilizers after the death of her son brought on feelings of depression. In 1995 Ray Lynn crashed her car three times in one month while under the influence of those drugs, seriously injuring others in each incident.

Lynn had been prescribed tranquilizers to aide her feelings of hopelessness but then craved higher doses. She began "doctor shopping," faking panic attacks and migraines in various doctor's offices to get the drugs that she wanted.

The FDA's Consumer Magazine also says that if used properly these drugs will, in most cases, not cause such severe problems and those who do are in people who have a history of substance abuse in their family.

Senior chemistry major Curtisha Travis recently had all four of her wisdom teeth taken out, but chooses to take ibuprofen instead of perocet, the stronger drug prescribed by her dentist.

Travis thinks many people are not educated about the risks associated with prescription drugs and that is why they fall to addiction.

"They think it's harmless because the doctor prescribes it and they think it must be good for them," she said.

Travis has also witnessed first hand just how easy it is for someone to get hooked.

"I had a relative start taking sleeping pills when they lost a family member, and they got addicted because that was the only way they could sleep," she said.

# Entertainment Briefs: Breaking TV and Music News



Photo Courtesy of [www.fox7.com](http://www.fox7.com)

FOX's hit show "The O.C." is saying farewell to television this month. After a four-season-long run of 92 episodes, the program that detailed the lives of wealthy California teens will run its final episode on Thursday Feb. 22 at 9 p.m. EST. The O.C. not only brought to the light up-and-coming stars like Mischa Barton and Rachel Bilson, but also promoted rising pop artists like the band Death Cab for Cutie. The show set the stage for others like MTV's "Laguna Beach" and Bravo's "The Real Housewives of Orange County."



Photo Courtesy of [www.buckipost.com](http://www.buckipost.com)

Forty-two-year-old comedian Mark Curry has confessed he was in danger of committing suicide. Known for his work on the 1990s sitcom, "Hangin' With Mr. Cooper," the comedian says he was at his California home when a can of spray starch fell. The can ruptured and sparked a fire, causing Curry to suffer second-degree burns which covered over 18 percent of his body. He endured a three-day coma, and after he awoke, had plans to commit suicide by overdosing. Curry changed his mind, however, after speaking with some of his comedic friends such as Bill Cosby and Sinbad.



Photo Courtesy of [www.foxteletop.com](http://www.foxteletop.com)

"Dreamgirls" star Beyoncé Knowles is gracing the infamous cover of this year's Sports Illustrated music issue. Posed on a Florida beach, the 25-year-old singer and actress is sporting a yellow and pink bikini. The swimsuit is a piece from the House of Dereon, a clothing label Knowles started with her mother Tina Knowles. Inside the magazine, Beyoncé has her own photo spread. The musical theme continues with models posed against stars such as Kanye West and Gnarls Barkley. The issue also features Russian supermodel Anne Vyalitsyna in a five-page spread shot at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland.



Photo Courtesy of [www.worth1000.com](http://www.worth1000.com)

Grammy award-winning artist Toni Braxton settled a multimillion-dollar lawsuit against Barry Hankerson, her former manager. She accused Hankerson of putting himself before Braxton and causing her to leave a long-standing relationship with Arista Records for Hankerson's record label, Blackground Records. Hankerson said Braxton was released from Arista because of poor record sales. According to the settlement, the 39-year-old R&B singer is to pay royalties from her next album to Hankerson. She can begin work on new projects only after she pays him a \$375,000 advance.



Photo: [www.foxteletop.com](http://www.foxteletop.com)  
According to the Office of National Drug policy, the reports of painkiller abuse has been steadily increasing since 1995.



# EDITORIALS & Perspectives



## Daily SuDoku

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

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

### Third Time's A Charm: U.S. Mint Releases New Dollar Coin Design

The U.S. Mint unveiled a new \$1 coin yesterday in Grand Central Terminal in New York City, the latest attempt at introducing a \$1 coin since 1794. The coin will feature the face of a different American president every three months, starting with George Washington and will end with Gerald R. Ford in 2016. The Mint plans to keep the paper \$1 bill.

This proposal to introduce a new \$1 will most likely fail and it shows a great disconnect with American society.

Douglas Mudd, author of "All the Money in the World," pointed out that no coin has ever been introduced in any civilization without the elimination of the corresponding

paper bill. The introduction of the coin would provide a more durable alternative to the dollar bill and would be cheaper for the Mint to produce. However, the rest of

**Our View:**  
*The U.S. Mint should find a better way to introduce the \$1 coin into the society.*

American society is not ready for the coin. Loose change is going to be a more expensive loss for users of the coin and only a marginal amount of vending machines have been switched to accept the coin. Seventy-five percent of

Americans surveyed said they opposed replacing the bill with the coin.

Issues of race and sex have also been addressed recently.

Although, the Susan B. Anthony and Sacagawea coins failed after being introduced in 2000, why haven't more famous cultural icons such as Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. or Harriet Tubman been suggested for the coin?

The coin is a good suggestion in theory, but more preparation needs to go into its introduction. To be successfully introduced to the country, the paper \$1 bill needs to be eliminated.

If that happens, it's only a matter of the American society adjusting to the change.

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Monday @ 7 p.m.

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