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THE HILLTOP

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Monday, October 20, 2008

Monday's Notebook**CAMPUS****FIND OUT WHO WON THIS YEAR'S STEP SHOW AND HOW THE OTHER COMPETITORS TRIED TO STEP UP THEIR GAMES.****NATION & WORLD****DUE TO THE AMOUNT OF DISCRIMINATION GAY AND LESBIAN STUDENTS FACE A GAY HIGH SCHOOL IS IN THE WORKS.****SPORTS****HOMECOMING GAME BRINGS TOGETHER ALUMNI WHO REMINISCED ABOUT HOWARD LIFE AND ENJOYED THE GAME.**

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Obama Gets Approval From General Colin Powell

BY OMARI EVANS
Staff Writer

Gen. Colin Powell (Ret.) publicly endorsed Sen. Barack Obama for President during Meet the Press Sunday morning.

Gen. Powell was Secretary of State under President Bush from 2001 to 2005. He is also a former member of the Howard University Board of Trustees.

Powell stated that either candidate would make a good president but, "[Obama] displayed a steadiness, an intellectual curiosity, a depth of knowledge and an approach to looking at problems like [the economy]."

In regard to Powell's endorsement Undergraduate Trustee Victoria Kirby said, "I think it'll have a positive impact on Obama in regards to black conservatives and republicans that were kind of on the edge."

Kirby said that she was not sure how much of an impact Powell's endorsement will have on white Republicans. However, white Republicans that were in the military may be swayed to vote for Obama.

Gen. Powell felt the need to make an endorsement after what has been going on the past couple of weeks. He claims that the McCain campaign's recent focus on the Bill Ayers - Obama terrorism connection was trivial and has been "Over the top." He also felt that the recent robo-calls linking Obama to terrorism has made McCain look narrow.

"On the Republican side over the last seven weeks, the approach of the Republican party and Senator McCain has become narrower and narrower," Powell said. "Mr. Obama at the same time has given us some more inclusive broader reach into

the needs and aspirations of the people. He's crossing lines, ethnic lines, racial lines, generational lines. He's thinking about all villages have values, all towns have values, not just small towns have values."

Powell also felt concerned about two more conservative appointments to the Supreme Court, which he believes would likely happen if McCain became president.

And as a republican, Powell felt very aggravated about senior members of his own party being allowed to say that Obama shouldn't be president because he is a Muslim.

HU College Republicans President Cameron Lewis said, "The beauty of our American political process is that each citizen is granted the right to support whichever candidate they choose."



Gabriel B. Tait - (KRT)

General Colin Powell is a former member of the Howard Board of Trustees.

"Because General Powell has been a respected member of the Republican Party for so long I hope that his endorsement of Obama shows a strong message to the party about the need for a

politics that's more responsive to the present generation," Lewis said.

Before his endorsement, Powell proposed the questions, "We got two individuals, either

one of them could be a good president. But which is the president that we need now? Which is the individual that serves the needs of the nation for the next period of time?"

"I've come to the conclusion that because of [Obama's] ability to inspire, because of the inclusive nature of his campaign, because he is reaching out all across America, because of who he is and his rhetorical abilities, we have to take that into account, as well as his substance, he has met the standard of being an exceptional president," Powell said.

He continued, "I think [Obama] is a transformational figure, he is a new generation coming into the world stage, and for that reason I will be voting for Senator Obama."

There are 15 days left until the election.

Homecoming 2008



Oscar Merriid IV - Contributing Photographer

The Bison lost their second straight Homecoming game to the Morgan State Bears 31-30 in double overtime.

Bison Lose in OT Despite a Good Game

BY DEONTAY MORRIS
Sports Editor

More than 6,853 people piled into Greene Stadium on Saturday to watch the Bison take on the Morgan State Bears for the Homecoming football game. Even though the Bison played with emotion and intensity they still came up short in the end, losing by the score of 31-30. It took two overtimes to decide the winner of the game.

"You had a team that didn't want to lose on both sides. We were fortunate the ball bounced our way

This game is a hometown rivalry and the fans always get their moneys worth," Donald Hill-Eley, Morgan State head coach said.

The Bison started the game off slowly. They threw three straight incomplete passes to open up the game. Then Lamont Bryant of Morgan State blocked a Patrick Wolff punt.

Robert Surratt, a junior wide receiver caught a five-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Jeremy Glover in the first quarter. The Bears would also add three points on a 27-yard field goal by James Meade to add to their lead. The Bison were trailing by

a score of 10-0 at halftime. However, the Bison came out firing in the second half.

"We changed some things up in the second half, spread some things out," said Bison head coach Carey Bailey. "We tried to make Floyd comfortable and that gave us an opportunity to make some quick scores."

These changes allowed the Bison to score two touchdowns in less than two minutes. The first score came on a 20-yard touchdown pass from junior quarterback Floyd

> See **GAME**, Page 3

Homecoming Parade Leaves Spectators Wanting More Action

BY LINSEY ISAACS
Staff Writer

Saturday morning's parade was met with a crowd of students and local families with mixed emotions about the festivities.

"I liked the parade. It was really cool," said sophomore marketing major Vernon Bond. "The bands sounded nice."

While some students enjoyed the parade, the crowd was mildly enthusiastic and desired more energy from the parade participants.

"[The parade] was OK," said sophomore theater major Shire Ad-

kins. "It started off nice, then after awhile I kind of fell asleep a little bit. It got kind of random, too, with the people in the parade."

The parade kicked off after a half-hour delay at 10:30 with campus police strolling down the street. Homecoming ambassador Terrence Howard and alumni Lance Gross and David Oliver were in attendance. The Homecoming court followed.

Bands that participated were local and from across the East Coast.

The crowd seemed to lack the motivation to applaud during performances, though their reaction was one of the criteria for the judges' choice of best performance.

"I didn't like the parade because they didn't give the bands enough time to perform," sophomore musical theater major Teron Hillcrest said. Hillcrest stood by the judges table for the duration of the parade, expecting bands to execute their talents for the judges, but they did just the opposite.

"It was boring, it was just a lot of marching," sophomore biology major Jade Mims said.

Comedian Brandon T. Jackson, host of the parade, made efforts to raise the crowd excitement with jokes and commentary. The 54-degree weather and poor performances made for a tough crowd.



Oscar Merriid IV - Contributing Photographer

Actor Terrence Howard was the Grand Marshal of the Homecoming Parade and Homecoming Ambassador.

Yardfest Marked by Unstable Weather, Voting Pleas, Celebrities, Food, Fun

BY ANGELA P. SMITH
Staff Writer

Droves of Howard students, alumni, neighbors and visitors gathered on the Yard Friday to take part in Yardfest, an anticipated event of Howard Homecoming.

The free concert, held every year on the Friday before the Homecoming game, brings the Howard community together to fellowship, eat and enjoy performances of the latest

R&B and hip-hop artists.

In the past, performers such as Jay-Z, DMX and LL Cool J have graced the stage adjacent to Founder's Library. This year's line up included artists Keri Hilson, Ace Hood, Ryan Leslie and Wale among other artists.

Natalege Whatley, a sophomore print journalism major, thought Keri Hilson put on the best show. The singer performed her two chart-topping hits, "The Way I Are," and "Energy."

"Keri Hilson was the best, hands down," Whaley said. "She did a good job and showcased her talents well. She was a tough act to follow."

Senior public relations major Leonard Muhammad and senior advertising major Jabari Johnson hosted the first portion of the event, with radio personalities Antonio and Angie Ange of 93.9 WKYS hosting the remainder of Yardfest.

The hosts not only encouraged the crowd to get pumped for Yardfest,

but to register to vote as well.

"How many people are registered to vote?" Muhammad asked the throng of people. "If the person next to you is not registered to vote, tell them to do it as soon as possible."

For sophomore political science major Tommy Atkins, the acts for this year's Yardfest were disappointing and a notch down from the headliners of past concerts.

"It was fine, but nothing special," Atkins said. "I didn't find any-

thing particularly exciting. For it to be Howard Homecoming, I think [Yardfest] should have been much better. My expectations were not met."

The weather was another dissatisfaction for some Howard students.

The sun peeked through the clouds throughout the day, causing the temperature to flip-flop between warm and cold.

> See **YARDFEST**, Page 2

Alphas, Deltas Claim Victory at Step Show

Steppers represented their organizations at the highly anticipated show

BY JESSICA LEWIS
Staff Writer

The women of the Alpha Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the men of the Beta Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. won the coveted title of Howard Homecoming Step Show Champions 2008.

The "Duel of the Divine" was hosted by actress Keisha Knight Pulliam and comedian Brandon T. Jackson. Senior sports medicine major Kamaria Dowdy coordinated the show.

The Steppers for Christ of Omega Nu Alpha opened the show. With every step they took, they represented Jesus Christ. They left the crowd chanting, "For Christ I live; for Christ I die."

They were followed by the ladies of the Tubman Quadrangle, the reigning ResLife Fest step show champions.

The ladies of the Quad did their signature move — spelling "QUAD" with their bodies — and traded their orphan clothes for yellow sneakers and black attire in a "Charlie's Angels" theme.

The Alpha Chapter, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. was the first member of the National Pan-Hellenic Council to perform.

During their performance, the Zetas said they have the highest grade point average.

They also said they were Sorority of the Year in 2007 and that they were the only sorority to introduce a spring 2008 line.

They also claimed that 1908 was "a big mistake" and 1913 was "Oops, a bad dream."

Members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the Sorority of the Year 2008, could be heard around the stadium. However, they did not step.

Kamaria Dowdy, the Step Show coordinator said she could not comment on why the ladies were unable to perform.

Next on the stage was the Alpha Chapter of Omega Psi Phi, Fraternity, Inc.

Some steppers came out wearing purple attire and painted faces to resemble the Joker from "The Dark Knight."



This is the second victory in a row for Beta Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Actress Keisha Knight Pulliam and comedian Brandon T. Jackson hosted the Homecoming Step Show.

In one part of their show, they put on blindfolds, making the somersault one of the steppers did off the back of another even more impressive.

It was also during this segment that Batman came on the stage and did splits in the middle of the Jokers.

The third show Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. These steppers, who were from Coppin State University and Morgan State University, performed high jumps and gave dynamic facial expressions.

One of the men came out wearing a Sen. Barack Obama mask and another was holding an Obama banner.

Sen. John McCain also made a guest appearance, but he was tackled by the Burger King.

The Alpha Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. entered the spotlight, wearing fitted black clothing with red bullet shells draped around their chest.

At one point in their performance, a monitor displayed a picture of the members of the Alpha Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. built like a pyramid from last year's show, to which steppers chanted, "You know that that's my step right, right, right."

A few of the steppers, though exhausted from preparation, were in good spirits after their performances.

Tecoya Gordon, a Howard alum and member of the Alpha Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., said that winning was "definitely a challenge."

"We always want to make sure

that we stay humble," she added.

Gordon also said putting the show together took "a lot of long nights with no sleep."

Marcus Ware, a member of Beta Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., said he was "real proud of my line brothers. It is just a testament to show that hard work pays off."

"It just goes to show that the only people that can beat us is us. It was a good show," he continued.

These steppers came out in camouflage gear they later stripped off to reveal their navy blue uniforms. The men moved like a snake with precise, fluid motion. They spun rifles and also formed a human compass.

Later, the Alpha Chapter, Phi

Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., came onto the stage with stealthy ninja costumes and masks with animated faces.

Xi Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. came next, twirling their canes.

Their performance ended with a guest appearance of Pretty Willie, who sang "Lay Your Body Down" in the middle of three seated women.

"It was okay," said Charla Bove-man, a freshman broadcast journalism major. "It didn't live up to the standard of other shows I've seen."

Laqwanda Trice, a freshman accounting major, felt differently.

"It was really exciting," she said. "It was a good experience, especially since it is my first time."

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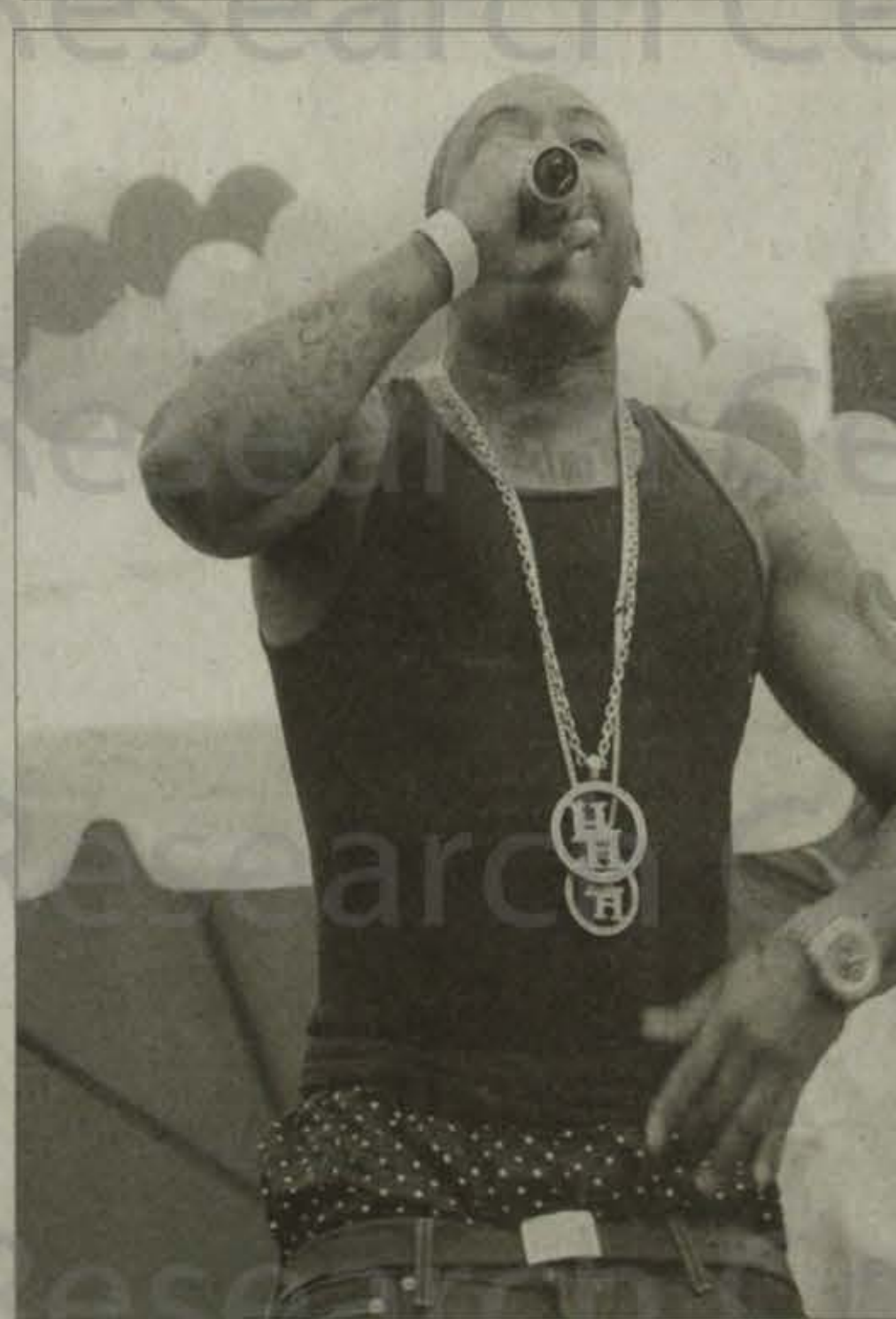
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A crowd gathered at Yardfest to listen to performers such as Maino (above) Wale, Tabi Boone and Ryan Leslie. Some students were not pleased with the unstable weather.

A Day at Yardfest

continued from FRONT, YARDFEST

Rianna Felder, a sophomore public relations major, called the displeasing weather the "Yardfest Curse."

"All week we've had beautiful weather, and now at Yardfest [the weather] wants to become irritable," Felder said.

Though students' high expectations for Yardfest were dashed with lackluster performances and frequently changing weather, Yardfest still proved to be a social retreat.

Dressed in their best, students snapped photos with friends and visitors, and alumni decked in Howard paraphernalia reunited with their col-

lege buddies.

People traveled from near and far to attend the annual party in the Yard. Haywood Watkins, a junior advertising major from George Mason University, makes a special trip from Virginia to Howard every year for Yardfest.

"Coming from a predominantly white institution, it feels good to be at Howard Homecoming," Watkins said.

"Yardfest is one of my favorite events during homecoming because it's a great time for me to socialize with my Howard friends," he added. "There's nothing like a homecoming at an HBCU, so I'll be back next year to do it all over again."



She Says Yes to Surprise Proposal at R&B Show Friday

BY LINSEY ISAACS
Staff Writer

Homecoming 2008's Eden's Crush turned into a night of passion, love and a surprising marriage proposal on Friday night.

The R&B concert embodied the characteristics of romance as it brought together a couple of five years, inspired by the show's headliner, Maryland-based singer Raheem DeVaughn.

"[Raheem DeVaughn] has always inspired me," said Aaron Martin. "I thought this was the perfect place to do it, because [me and my girlfriend] go back a long way and that's her favorite artist. I thought it was the right thing to do."

Martin proposed to his girlfriend, Penny Foster, on stage amidst the performance in front of an audience filled with Raheem DeVaughn fans. The two are neither students nor alumni, but were inspired to attend the event after learning of DeVaughn's performance. The unexpected proposal was one of the many highlights of the evening, brining to life the original vision of Eden's Crush.

"The marriage proposal was definitely a part of my vision, even though it was on the spot," junior music education major Quanice Floyd, the R&B coordinator of the event said. "This is what I wanted to capture. I wanted to capture love, intimacy, relationships."

Students were welcomed to the sold-out concert with an auditorium and candle-lit stage showered with red rose petals. Chaz Shepherd, an actor-turned-singer whose resume includes the movies Set it Off and The Temptations, opened the concert with his single "Chemical Reaction" and "By My Side," set to hit airwaves within the month. Shepherd was honored with the opportunity to per-



Friday's performance by P.G. native Raheem DeVaughn was interrupted by a proposal.
Alexthea L. Carter - Staff Photographer

form, since his first homecoming experience as a teenager was at Howard.

"It's very exciting, I'm honored to be here," Shepherd said.

The concert further showcased new talent by introducing Richgirl, a four-girl group recently signed to Jive Records.

Following their act, Raheem DeVaughn's anticipated introduction brought the crowd to its feet as he performed a catalog of hits from his two albums such as "Love Drug," "Marathon," "Woman," and ended the concert with "Customer."

"It was great from beginning to end, Raheem DeVaughn did his thing," said sophomore English major Halona Jackson. "He reeled the crowd in, let us touch him, he had the connection with the crowd. I loved it."

DeVaughn brought energy to the stage, often jumping into the crowd to serenade young women and connecting with his audience. He bounced between aisles, and invited the crowd out of their seats to view him closer to the stage. He enticed them with soulful and romantic ballads, engaging an audience that included both single individuals and the involved couples enjoying the love in the air.

Throughout the night, DeVaughn summed up the event and his success by saying "the dream is real." Some students say the concert was the best Homecoming event thus far.

"The concert was great; so far it's been the best homecoming event," sophomore political science major Ci'era Spencer-Mattox said.

Victory Slips From Bison In Double Overtime

continued from FRONT PAGE

Haigler to senior wide receiver Arlandus

Hood. The Bison defense picked up the intensity and forced a fumble to give the offense back the ball. The second touchdown came on a fade route catch by freshman wide receiver Willie Carter.

Despite the Bison's back-to-back touchdowns the Bears were not fazed. They kept feeding the ball to Morgan State running back Devean James. James finished the game with 219 yards rushing, with two touchdowns.

"I just had to keep fighting and pushing because the team was on the back," James said. "I was a little fatigued but I kept running hard."

A fourth quarter interception by Bison defensive back Lanny Kelly gave the Bison time to drive the field and go up on the scoreboard. The Bison were unable to gain any yards on the drive however. Wolff's 41-yard field goal attempt was blocked by Diamond Avery of Morgan State.

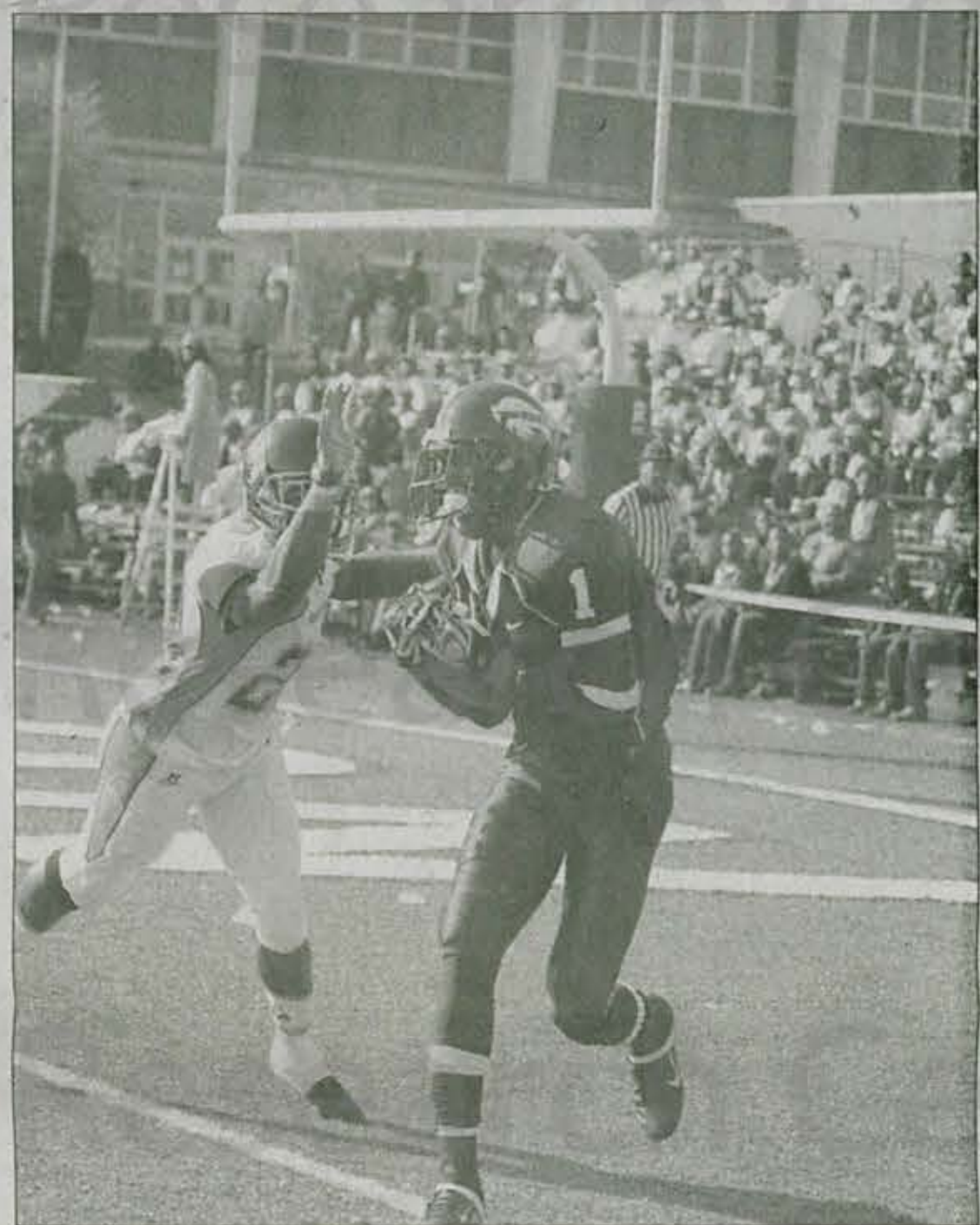
The Bison defense led by line-backer Endor Cooper who had 14 tackles held the Bears scoreless and gave the team another opportunity to win the game with 42 seconds left.

Haigler led the team down the field and set up a last second field goal attempt by Wolff. The attempt was good and sent the game into overtime.

The Bison couldn't pull out the victory in overtime however. The Bears went up 31-24 and the Bison had to score to send the game into a second overtime. Haigler completed an eight-yard touchdown pass to Ramon McElrathbey making the score 31-30. The game ended when Wolff missed the extra point wide right.

"There were several opportunities that were missed during the course of the ball game. There were many too many miscues, especially in the kicking game," Bailey said.

The Bison travel to North Carolina A&T to play the Aggies Saturday, Nov. 1. They are still looking for their first conference win.



The Bison will play the North Carolina A&T Aggies away on Nov. 1.
Oscar Merrida IV - Contributing Photographer

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A teacher and a student work on algebra problems together at Walt Whitman Community School for gay and lesbian students in Dallas. Gay and Lesbian schools are increasing in popularity due to the discrimination that students are facing.

New Gay Friendly High School Proposed For Students in Chicago Public Schools

BY ANASTACIA MEBANE
Contributing Writer

For many students, high school is filled with homework, school dances, football games and fun times with friends. However, some students endure severe bullying and harassment that hampers their academic career.

Students who identify themselves as LGBT are often bullied and harassed about their sexual orientation.

Recently, a gay-friendly high school has been proposed in Chicago which will allow all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, to have a healthy learning environment.

On July 28, a proposal was submitted to the Chicago Public Schools Office of New Schools by the Greater Lawndale Little Village School for Social Justice on Chicago's West side to open the Social Justice High School-Pride Campus for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender students.

According to a 2007 National School Climate Survey done by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, 86.2 percent of LGBT students said they have been harassed verbally, 44.1 percent have been harassed physically and 22.1 percent have been

assaulted because of their sexual orientation.

"LGBT students, and those perceived to be LGBT, report that they experience harassment, threats and intimidation on a daily basis," said Steve Ralls, Director of Communications for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

According to the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey done by CPS, 52 percent of LGBT students suffer from depression and 32 percent have attempted suicide.

These students have a tendency to miss days of school because of harassment. Students thus have lower grades and even drop out of high school more often.

"Given the realities of homophobic and transphobic violence, [there is] no problem with a given school system responding to the realities it faces by creating alternative options for students who don't feel safe in their schools due to harassment and violence, and whose school work is suffering as a result," Rick Rosendall, the Vice President for Political Affairs for the Gay and Lesbian Activist Alliance of Washington, D.C. said.

Curriculum at this school will be comparable to other CPS high schools, utilizing the College Board's Spring-

board program in English and the Integrated Mathematics Program for math. There will be an emphasis on the history of oppressed people because of race and sexual orientation.

If the proposal is carried out, the Social Justice High School will provide a safer and more conducive learning experience for all students particularly LGBT students.

The Social Justice High School, like Harvey Milk High School which opened in New York City in 2003, will cater to the social and emotional distresses of students and give them the skills necessary to succeed after graduating from high school.

Some disagree with the opening of this school, believing that the basis of a school should not be a student's sexual orientation.

"I don't agree with the idea of this high school because being gay is a personal matter," Airl Miller, a junior psychology major and Chicago-native said. "Children should not be focused on their sexuality, whether they are straight or gay, to the point that they choose a school based upon it."

Others see the importance of a high school that would be a safe haven for LGBT students.

"These students choose

to attend these high schools not to segregate themselves, but to be in an environment with people who share the same struggles," said Dashamelle Robinson, a sophomore psychology major.

"[There is] a want of understanding and who better understands you than people who face your everyday struggles."

Only 11 states, which include California, Maryland and Iowa, have specific laws in place to protect people from harassment based on sexual orientation.

This is an important factor in ending harassment, according to a study done by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

In October, the CPS will vote on the approval of the Social Justice High School.

"All public schools should be safe and supportive environments for all students, and steps should be taken to ensure that students are free from harassment in them," Rosendall said.

"Gay and transgender students and their parents or legal guardians should have a choice as to whether they want to remain in their current school of transfer to their so-called gay-friendly school."

Mexico Updates Small Drug Laws

BY OSCAR AVILA
Chicago Tribune (MCT)

MEXICO CITY — Mexico has absorbed shocking drug-related slayings in recent weeks, including a popular mayor gunned down and criminals throwing grenades into a packed Independence Day celebration.

But the casualties also come in less visible forms, as Mexico copes with a surge in the number of citizens who consume drugs and become addicted.

Facing this twin threat, Mexican officials have taken a new tack this month by saying they can better target the most dangerous criminal networks by going easier on small-time consumers and addicts.

The architect of Mexico's offensive against drug traffickers, President Felipe Calderon, has sent a proposal to Congress that would decriminalize small amounts of drugs by giving those consumers the choice of treatment instead of jail time. Authorities hope the change would free up resources to go after higher-level criminals.

The speaker of Mexico City's legislative assembly has gone even further, saying he wants to turn the capital into another Amsterdam by legalizing small sales of marijuana, which he calls a "soft drug" currently controlled by criminals.

The proposals have ignited a national debate over the effectiveness of Calderon's strategy, which has dispatched tens of thousands of soldiers and federal police into hot spots. With the offensive well into its second year, Reforma newspaper estimated about 3,600 deaths related to organized crime so far in 2008, on pace to shatter last year's total.

Despite the climb in violence, the director of U.S. anti-drug policy on Friday gave some of the strongest words of support by a U.S. official in backing Mexico's battle against those involved in the drug trade.

"There's only two ways this goes: they either surrender to law enforcement or they die," John Walters, the U.S. "drug czar," told foreign reporters in Mexico City.

Walters even said Calderon's proposal to decriminalize drugs was acceptable, likening it to U.S. courts that sentence small-time consumers to drug treatment.

That statement of support shows how much the U.S. is depending on Calderon to stem the northward flow of drugs while tamping down on a wave of killings and kidnappings that has spilled into U.S. border states. The U.S. plans to finalize a \$450 million package of aid and equipment this week.

By contrast, pressure from the U.S. caused former President Vicente Fox to withdraw a proposal in 2006 that would have decriminalized small levels of drug possession.

Calderon's proposal — part of a larger security blueprint — would eliminate punishment for those carrying up to about a tenth of an ounce of marijuana and even smaller amounts of cocaine and methamphetamine considered for "personal use." To qualify, they would have to complete treatment programs.

At the same time, Calderon proposed stricter penalties for those selling drugs to minors.

Experts say more drugs are staying in Mexico as the government uses force to interrupt smuggling routes.

The Mexican Health Ministry reports about 465,000 addicts in Mexico, up 52 percent from 2000. About 4.5 million Mexicans had tried illegal drugs, up 29 percent.

Walters said reducing consumption remains a key priority on both sides of the border. But several U.S. and Mexican analysts say the rising rate of consumption shows that the anti-drug collaboration between the two countries has been poorly focused.

In a recent newspaper column, influential commentator Sergio Sarmiento took issue with government claims that Mexico's war against drug rings has been a triumph.

"It depends how we define 'triumph,'" he wrote. "There is another indicator that suggests we are losing the war and that is that the number of users has increased."

California Residents Forced to Mail Ballots as Polling Centers Disappear

BY WILL OREMUS
Palo Alto Daily News (MCT)

PALO ALTO, Calif. — Every year since 1972, Evan Economos of Palo Alto, Calif., has been among the first people in line when his polling place opened on Election Day.

The financial analyst and father of two had to move up his morning routine half an hour or so to keep on schedule, but didn't mind. In fact, he looked forward to it.

"Often the people at the polling place know who I am, because they've seen me there before," Economos says. He signs his name, casts his ballot, and saves the "I voted!" sticker to affix to the wall of his office at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center.

Not this year.

Two weeks ago, Economos got a letter from the Santa Clara County Registrar in his home state informing him that there is no longer a polling place for his precinct. "For the November 4, 2008, election, you will be voting by mail," it said.

He and his neighbors in Palo Alto's well-populated Duveneck/St. Francis neighborhood are hardly alone. With more people than ever choosing to vote by mail, dozens of precincts around the county and the Peninsula now have fewer than 250 registered non-mail voters — the minimum required by state law to sustain a polling place. They've been converted to "mail-ballot precincts," in which voting in person is no longer an option.

Since 2000, the number of mail-ballot precincts in Santa Clara County

has soared from 178 to 357, or nearly one in three precincts countywide. San Mateo County now has 93 mail-ballot precincts, up from 37 in 2004. This is despite strong overall registration in both counties ahead of the presidential election.

Both counties actively encourage their residents to vote by mail.

"From our standpoint, it's a good thing," said Elma Rosas, spokeswoman for the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters. "We can plan for it, we know how many (ballots) to send out, we can do better estimates" of turnout and workload for elections volunteers.

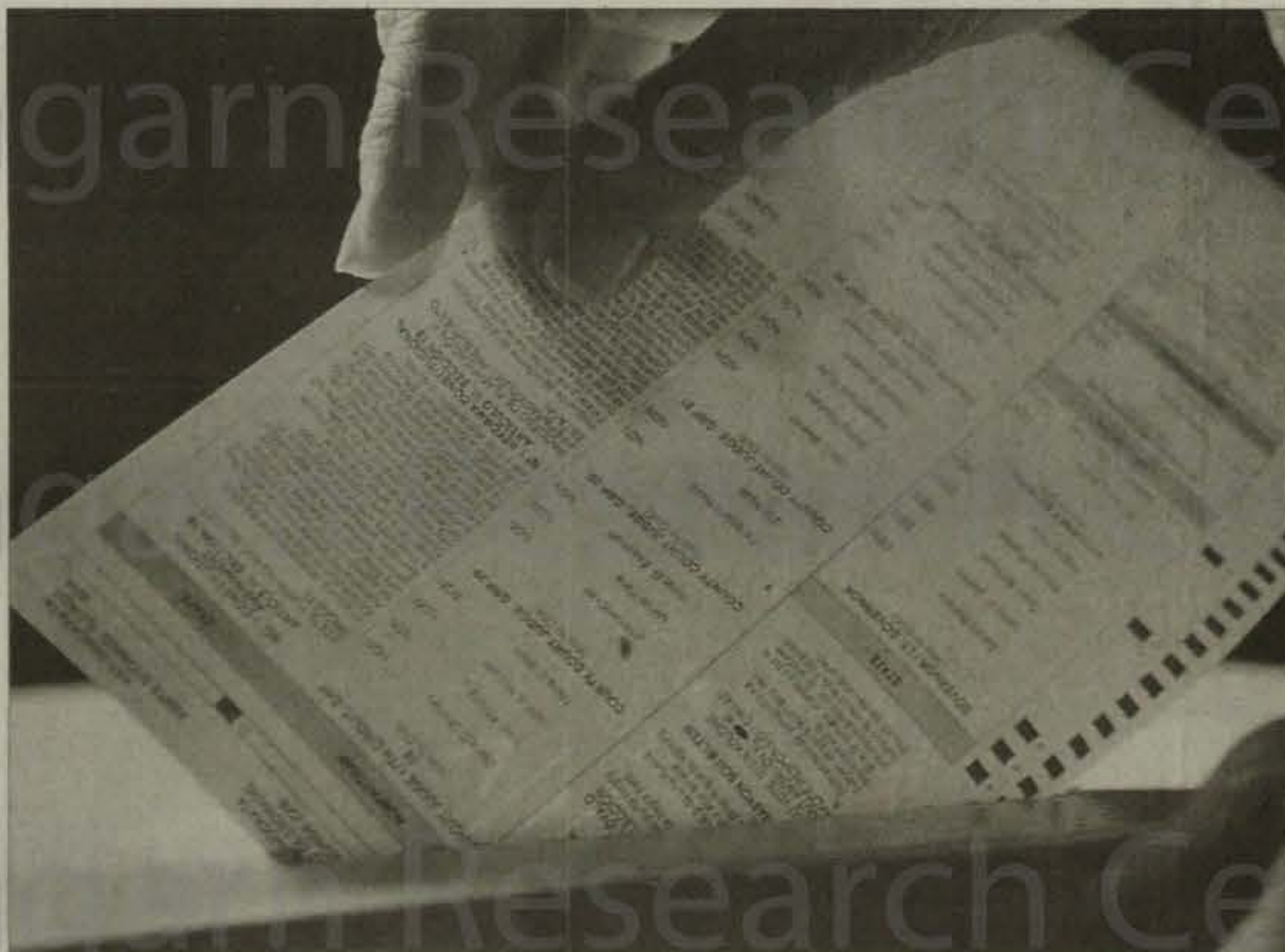
It also works out well for many voters, Rosas added. "I think they like the convenience, and they know they're going to get their ballot immediately."

Still, elections officials report they're getting some complaints from people who miss actually going to the polls. In addition, the proliferation of mail ballots has meant more votes being counted after election day, delaying official results.

In theory, counties could consolidate precincts to make sure more voters have a choice, but they cite several obstacles.

For one, neighboring precincts might be part of different school, utility or special districts, meaning that the voters there receive slightly different ballots. Or they might already have too many voters to expand their boundaries.

In San Mateo County, where machine voting is dominate, requirements for large rooms, reliable power sources and accessibility for the disabled have ruled out many former polling sites, said



Some local voters in California will have to mail in their ballots for the general election because there are less voting places than expected.

Elections Manager David Tom. And the county tries to make as few changes as possible to precinct boundaries.

Rosas points out that voters in mail-ballot precincts still have options if they don't want to use the postal service.

For one, they can drop their ballots off at any precinct in the county, though mail ballots received on Election Day won't be counted until days afterward. Alternately, they can cast a provisional ballot at any polling place, though again, it won't be counted on Election

Day. Finally, those absolutely set on casting a normal ballot can hoof it to their county elections office, where the polls are open every day from now through Election Day.

Economos concedes he may be in the minority in lamenting the erosion of Election Day traditions. His wife and daughter, for instance, are perfectly happy to vote by mail.

"I just don't trust the whole process," he says. "I don't trust the mail, and I don't trust that they're going to get

around to counting my ballot at the same time everybody else's is counted.

"Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I like being there in person and actually casting the ballot myself on Election Day," Economos added. "That's the exciting day. Then I go home and watch what's going to happen."

Voters have until Monday to register to vote in the Nov. 4 general election. Mail ballots must be received no later than 8 p.m. on election night.

Howard Pulled Out All Stops For Homecoming Football Game

BY TENI-OLA OGUNJOBI
Staff Writer

"This game and all of the events of Homecoming have been full of energy, excitement and fun. It represents all of the best in Howard University, years coming together to celebrate the legacy. It's a beautiful thing," said Howard University President Sidney Ribeau.

Capturing the essence of a Howard Homecoming comes full circle on game day. While many of the other Homecoming shows or events may just attract the current students or the alumni, the Homecoming game brings both together in celebration.

After the Howard Showtime Marching bands pre-game performance, the crowd rose for the presentation of the color. During the singing of the national anthems, fans put a fist in the air to lift every voice and Sing.

In honor of the 15th anniversary of the 1993 undefeated Bison football team, before kickoff, Howard brought to the field and congratulated some of the former players.

"As a university, we are taking pride in our own people. As we have showcased alumni throughout the entire Eden Homecoming, it shows that we are a family and we care about our people," Howard University Student Government President Nick Owen said.

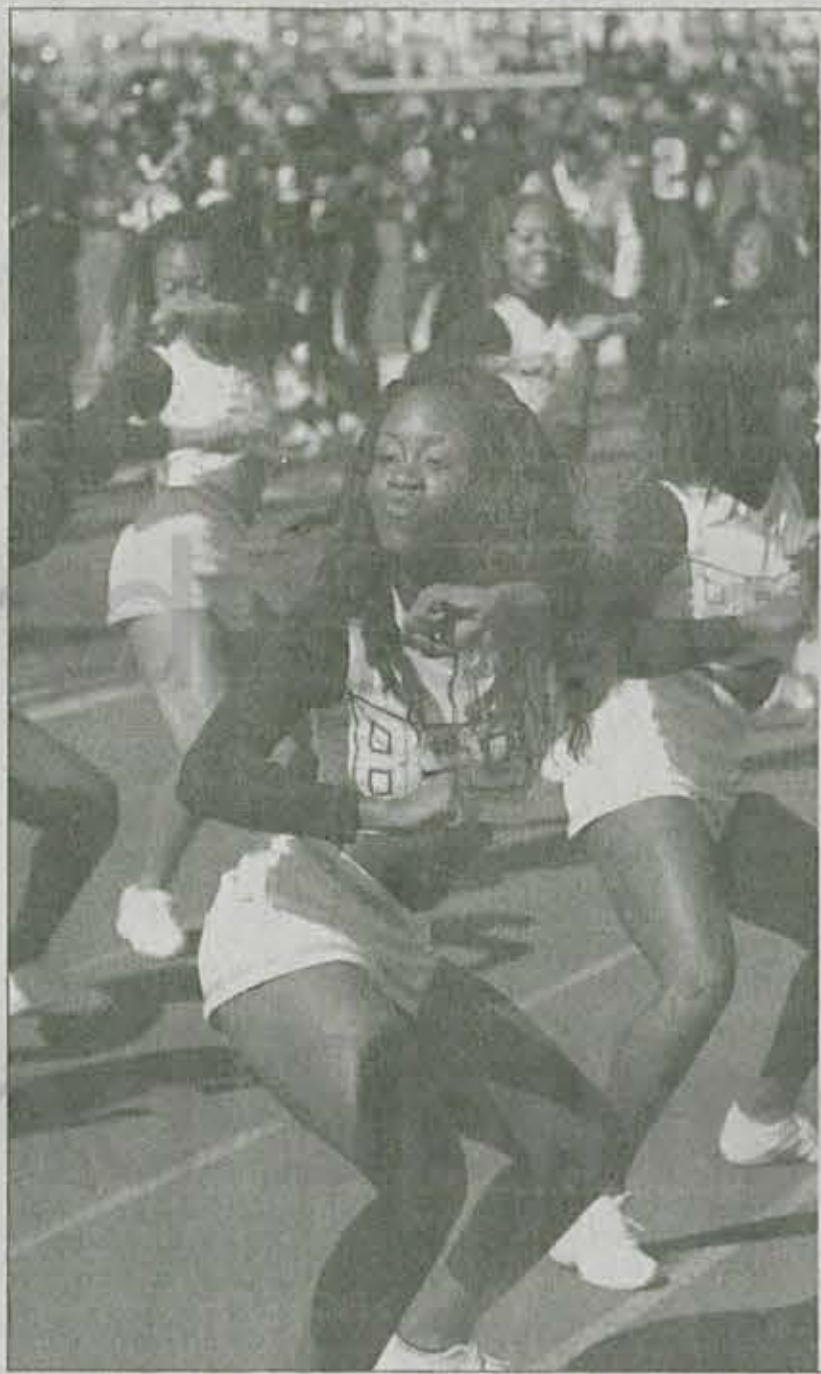
This reunion of past and present football players was not the only one of its kind throughout the game. The Bison alumni cheerleaders, from as far back as 1984, to 2007 stood alongside present Bison cheerleaders to cheer for the home team. They pumped the crowd with classic cheers like "Shake it, Shake it" and the crowd responded with "Do it, Do it, Do it."

"It fills my heart with pride to come back to HU. It's amazing seeing girls I used to cheer with and old football players that we cheered for," said Yolanda Stewart, class of 1994 former cheerleader.

The marching band reunion started the game with their pre-game show performance and continued onto the sidelines. "It's like a family reunion," said Alicia Robinson, class of 2002 and former tuba player.

Not to forget about the bands auxiliary teams, the ladies of the Flashy Flag squad and the Ooh La La Dancers were able to meet up and execute a few routines together.

"It's like coming home. I look forward to seeing friends



Cheerleader Brenda Bryant entertains and encourages the large crowd on homecoming. She was joined by alumni cheerleaders.

and coming back to celebrate why you fell in love with Howard," said Ravi Windom, class of 2006 and former Ooh La La dancer.

Seated in their perspective sections, the game also brought together members of various Greek organizations to celebrate amongst each other.

In true Homecoming fashion, the game had celebrity appeal with actor and Homecoming Grand Marshall Terrence Howard, Actor/comedian Brandon T. Jackson and actress Keshia Knight Pulliam coming out.

"This is a life, changing experience for me. Just to be around good people that are doing good things in school and being apart of something positive, I call it the Obama effect. It's a positive image that we as African Americans need to keep going," Brandon T. Jackson said.

Howard celebrity alumni also came back to the Mecca. These included Olympic gold medalist David Oliver, actor Lance Gross, 93.9 WKYS on-air personality Angie Ange, Miss Black District of Columbia Amanda Lewis and entertainment mogul Sean "Diddy" Combs.

"It's a great feeling being back at HU, they treated me well while I was here. It's that first class treatment that only HU knows how to give. All my friends came back and we get to reminisce on the old times. I wish I could come back and do it all over again," David Oliver said.

"I miss Howard; It's the Mecca. I haven't been back since I graduated, so it feels good to come kick it with my good friends David and Keshia at my alma mater. I always have a good time here," Lance Gross said.

"It's a honor for me to be here because I started my career here and it's a way for me to give back to HU Homecoming when you're an alum; I love the energy, the loving atmosphere and the people," Angie Ange said.

One of the most anticipated moments in the Homecoming game is the half-time show.

The presentations of the 2008-2009 Homecoming court commence the half-time show, with special honors given to the newly crowned Mr. and Miss Howard University: Melech Thomas and Kendall Isadore by President and first lady Ribeau.

The court locked arms along with

the entire stadium displaying the pride of the Bison while singing the Howard alma mater.

"I'm honored and humbled to represent the greatest institution and be in the position to not be served but to serve the Howard family," Thomas said.

"I'm blessed and hope that I can serve this community and HU family in the same capacity that they have taught me to serve. I love Howard: Go Bison," Isadore said.

For entertainment, the band's halftime performance also included special guest Terrence Howard singing in a Bison drum major uniform.

The games opposing team, Morgan State also performed during halftime, and in the end took the game victory in a double overtime 31-30 defeat.

"This game along with the entire Homecoming was spectacular. We appreciate the time and effort students put forth to put together this Homecoming celebration. This is what builds the community and keeps alumni coming back to Howard," Paula Ribeau said.

Watching Football On the Yard



BY MICHAEL BENJAMIN
Contributing Columnist

We've got to stop scheduling Morgan State for homecoming.

I saw it go up. Coach Carey Bailey had just called a great play-action pass for the Bison, leading to an awesome bootleg and toss from QB Floyd Haigler to his running back who scampered into the end zone for six. However, nothing is guaranteed in college football, and our kicker's extra point attempt sailed wide right.

Final Score: Morgan State 31, Howard 30. And I saw it all from WHUT's big screen TV on the Yard.

To me, watching the football game from the Yard is one of the most underrated experiences of Homecoming weekend at Howard. Every year a collection of folks from diverse backgrounds and different eras to trek across this country and return to HU. Though our American economy screams for reform and our wallets cry for attention, the students and alumni refuse to allow this sacred tradition to die. This multitude of globetrotters and world-changers take a collective break from their lives and muster the resources to gather annually at the Hilltop for their Howard University Homecoming.

For that collection of hours, Howard is more than a simple getaway weekend.

Howard is home.

Every year, the Yard eagerly awaits the return of this huddled mass. Shop owners fight to claim their space along the economic triangle in front of the Carnegie Building, knowing that legions of alumni will walk through to bargain for extravagant paintings and creative Obama T-shirts. During the football game these shop owners are even busier than they were during Yardfest. Further down towards Douglass Hall, the smell of food circulates the air and draw hour-long lines filled with people who clamor for the taste of home cooking. Though Howard's fashion show ends on the Thursday night before game day, a stream of new designs and unique threads continue to travel throughout the crowd, voicing the individuality of its wearers.

On the Yard, Homecoming IS football. To the appreciative Yard crowd, the unknown defensive linebacker before the game that later drilled a Morgan State running back during the game will forever be known by the nickname of "Coop." The reserve kicker that boots the football through the uprights on only his second career field goal attempt receives genuine cheers because of his resiliency. To these fans, Howard football brings back pleasant memories and toothy smiles. While the final score on this day may signal another Howard loss, these fans will always remember this team played with intensity and character, attributes that they also strive to exhibit in their daily lives.

Sure, Yard football fans know that overtime action may bring a huge amount of stadium fans that left the stands too quickly in order to beat the traffic or prepare for their future activities after the game. However, the additional fans that join the group add the right amount of nervous excitement and energy to the crowd, wincing and holding their breath along with the Yard fans after every extra snap in overtime.

However different, the constant thread that ties all Homecoming game fans together will still remain the same. We all take joy in watching our players don those blue and white uniforms on that Saturday afternoon. For those four hours, watching the Homecoming game on the projection screen with folks on the Yard is like piling into a family member's living room on Thanksgiving to watch football before scarfing down the pot roast and greens. On this Saturday, millions of people around the globe treasure this experience because Howard represents that family. Heck, Howard University is family.

I'm just happy to have a seat at the table. And a spot on the Yard, too.

Michael A. Benjamin II is an English major, creative writer, and avid sports fan from Queens Village, N.Y. You can read more of his ramblings on sports at his blog, *Point-Of-Turnovers.blogspot.com*

Orellana Swims to the Top for Howard

BY MORGAN WILLIAMS
Contributing Writer

Miguel Orellana, a junior biology major from Washington, D.C. was recognized as the men's swimmer of the week with a record breaking performance against Towson at the Oct. 4 meet.

As with most student-athletes, Orellana balances a heavy course load with the long hours of early morning and afternoon practices.

To the pressures of these tasks he simply says "sacrifice" and "time management" are the best ways to overcome the challenges.

Growing up within ten miles of Howard University's campus, Orellana always had a connection to the historic university.

There was no thought about where he was going to go on with his swim career.

Orellana's parents are the ones to

thank for him and his brothers' interest in swimming.

"My parents wanted to impose the skill in us because they didn't know how to swim," Orellana said.

His parents enrolled him in swim classes when he was little and that skill never left.

He contributes his success to his "great coaches" and his love for the sport. Orellana's ultimate goal is to compete in the Olympics and to keep teaching swimming to kids in his community.

He is a first generation American, and growing up in D.C. was a great experience for him and his family. With a melting pot of cultures in the area, he adapted fast. "My parents were good at making friends and I became friends with a lot of the kids," Orellana said.

The instances of a good family upbringing show his love for the D.C. area and his teammates on the Howard University swim team. The team is a big

My parents wanted to impose the skill in us because they didn't know how to swim.

-Miguel Orellana,
Howard University Swimmer

part of who he is as a swimmer and the accomplishments he keeps achieving. "The team is like a family," Orellana said.

Orellana has had some recent success in the prior meets for the 2008-2009 seasons.

He has not only set record times but also personal records, which are more important to him. Even if he

finished in 6th place, setting a personal record is what mattered the most.

He finished first in the 1,000-yard freestyle and 200-yard medley. He also finished as runner-up in the 200-yard butterfly. He was named the CCSA Men's Swimmer of the Week for his performance against Towson.

Looking ahead, Nov. 1 is the next meet for Orellana. With it being a home game, "I'm excited and nervous all at the same time," Orellana said.

The meet is a different one from the usual because of the coach's tactic to put them into different events that they have not been in but which they have been training in for some time.

This is the first meet after a long break and will be held Saturday, Nov. 1 at 10 a.m. at Howard University against Gardner Webb and North Carolina A&T.

Sports Trivia!
When did the St. Louis Cardinals move to Arizona?

Answer:
The Cardinals moved to Arizona in 1988.

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October 20, 1963

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Courtesy of www.todayinsports.com

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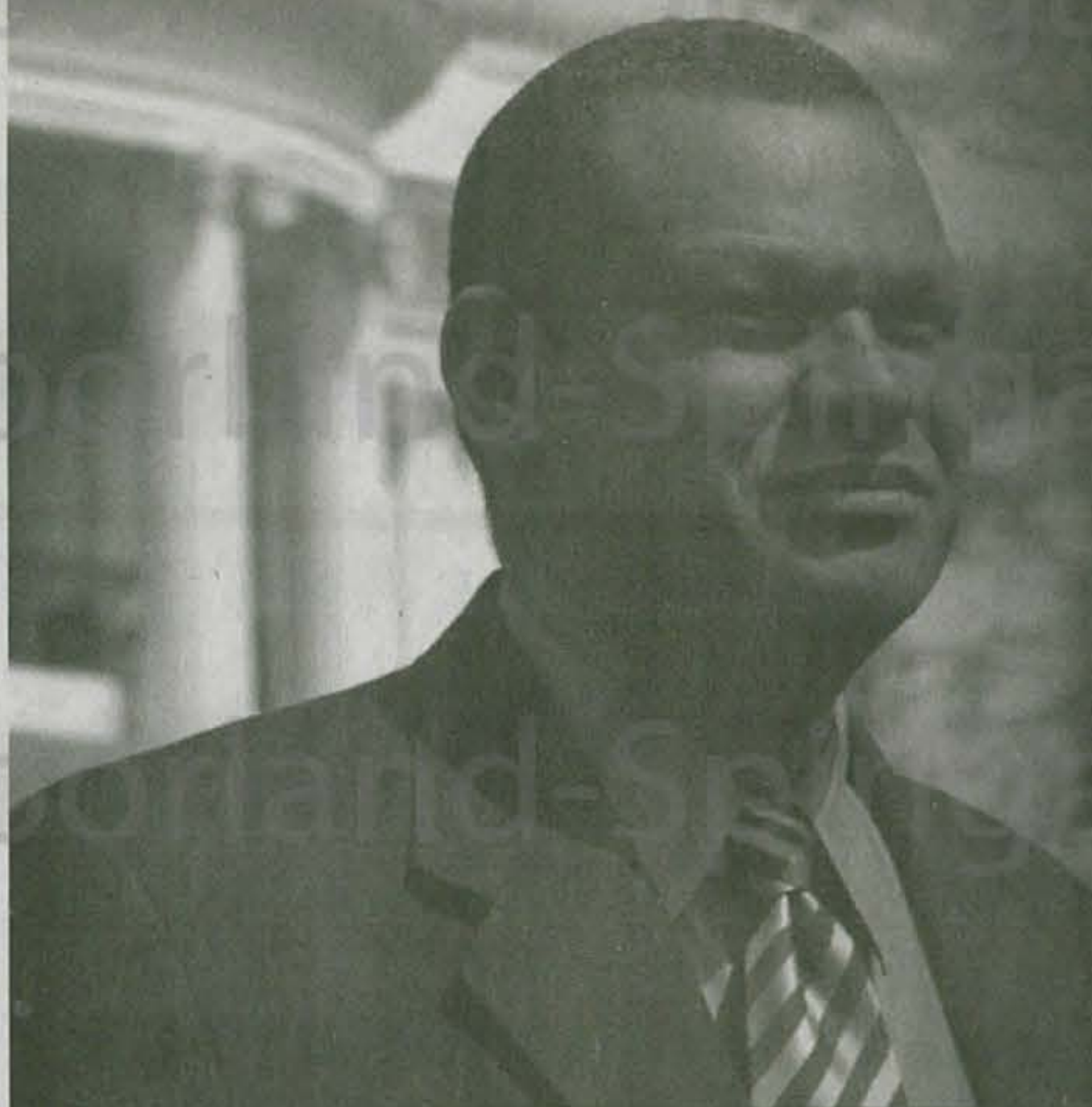
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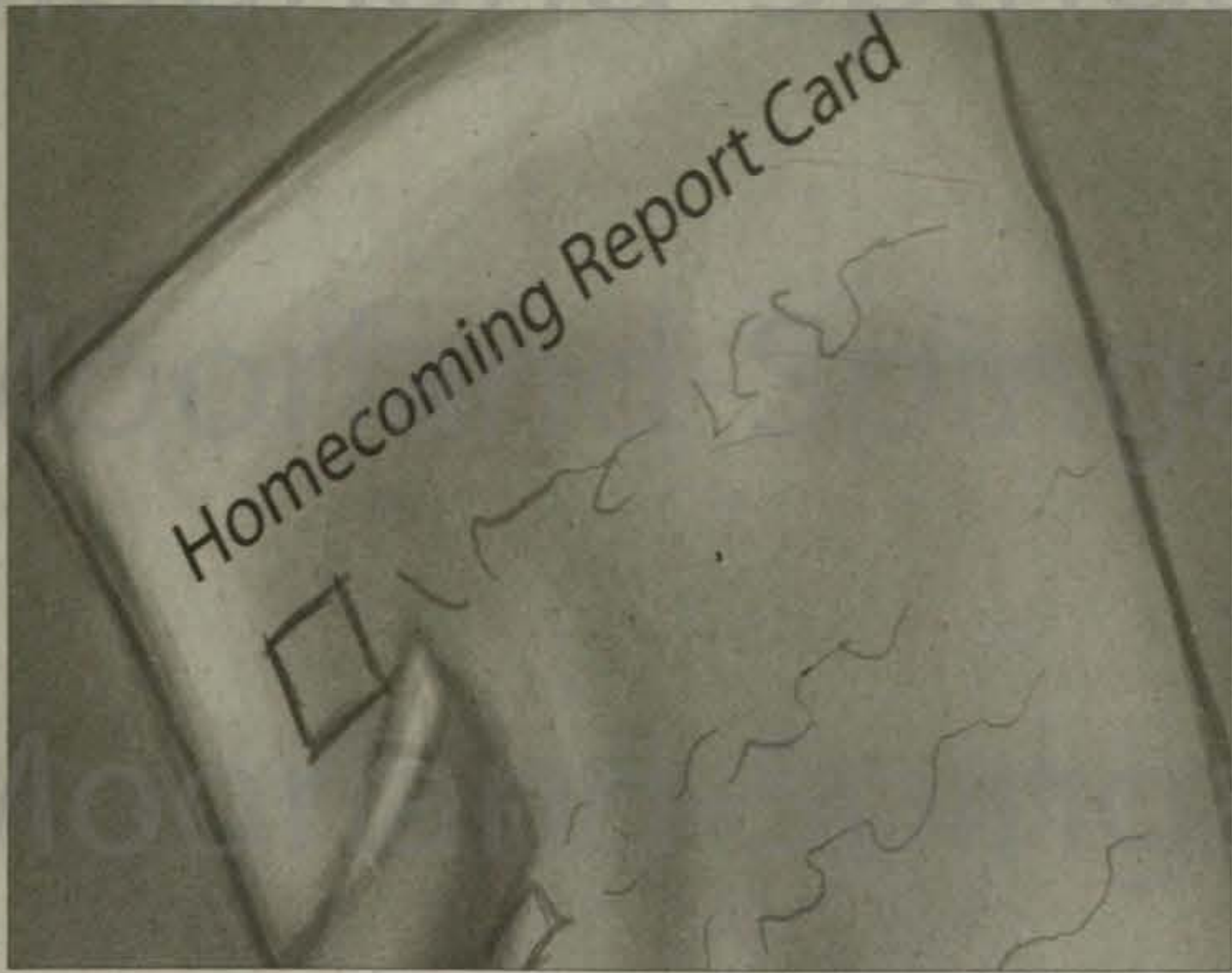
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Charles Metze III - Cartoonist

Did This Year's Homecoming Make the Grade? Let's See ...

Well, here it is. *The Hilltop's* annual Homecoming wrap-up.

First, let me offer a disclaimer: This is *The Hilltop's* view on this year's Homecoming events. It is a subjective, yet well-informed critique and appraisal of the Homecoming Steering Committee's performance this year.

It isn't a time for *The Hilltop* to get back at people they don't like — as has been suggested in past years after an event received a less than savory grade — or for people associated with that event who took personal offense. So, after much consideration and debate, here is *The Hilltop's* Homecoming Report Card.

For all who would like to know, we looked at originality, creativity, professionalism, purpose and audience response.

The Pageant

The pageant started, a little late, but because the contestants donned African attire and the set was visually appealing with a consistent theme, the tardiness was made up for. The audience was pleased and was given handbills to keep up with what was happening on stage.

Last Year's Grade: A-
Grade: A-

Gospel Concert

This year's host was funny and Tye Tribbet had a heaven-high energy level. Much better than last year, the gospel concert had three acts and the marriage proposal added to the positive and joyful atmosphere.

Last Year's Grade: B+
Grade: A+

Celebrity Basketball Game

One question comes to mind when we've reflected on the Celebrity Basketball Game — where were the celebrities? Ok, two questions — who was this show for? The game, which was attended by more D.C. high school students than Howard University students, featured the go-go group Mambo Sauce and some AND 1 players who knew how to work the court. And that's it.

Unless you count who we've dubbed "the unofficial Diddy" of Homecoming, Leonard Muhammad, and outgoing Vice Provost Franklin D. Chambers as celebrities, all the game was left with was sitcom star, Darius McGrae (Eddie Winslow from "Family Matters").

A creative move, taking Chambers off the bench, but not a slam-dunk. A lot of people left at halftime.

Last Year's Grade: N/A
Grade: C

Comedy Show

The comedy show definitely left us in stitches, but crickets could be heard every time each comedian took a swing at domestic violence — and the side they were fighting on was that of the abuser. And was it just us or was comedian Corey Holcomb inebriated?

While the live band was a nice, talented touch, the fickle Howard audience didn't give them much energy. That is until they reverted from their original pieces and played "Doin' the Butt."

Overall, the show was a success. It started on time, the featured HU talent was funny and guffawing was plentiful.

Last Year's Grade: D+
Grade: A-

Fashion Show

A decision was hard to come by as we reviewed the fashion show, but there was a meeting of the minds when we discussed the fact that the performer at Fashion Show I was a talent-challenged nobody. Well, no one we knew.

Other than that, the first show was good. The second one was a bit boring. This could be because of the lengthy clips shown on the overhead projectors between each act. Seeing the models do something spectacular on film while

Our View:

When alumni come home, they should be welcomed by the excitement and excellence that Howard is known for during the Homecoming season.

they practiced, took away from the excitement of seeing it in person. It's called predictability.

For the show to have a circus theme, there could have been more "oomph." The props, lighting effects and fashion were on point. Since the fashion was fashionable, we would've liked to have known who the designers were and which models were in each act. However, there were no programs. So we didn't know.

Perhaps if the coordinators made programs so the models would have something extra for their portfolios, instead of having long, self-serving and self-absorbed clips, we would've loved it a little more.

The audience at the first show was intrigued. The audience at the late show was unconscious.

Last Year's Grade: C+
Grade: C+

The Steve Harvey Morning Show: Live from Howard University

As usual, Steve Harvey did his daily morning show effectively and efficiently. There were more people his age in attendance than those of the typical undergraduate demographic, but nonetheless, it was good. It was a nice addition to the week of events, especially because you can't go wrong with the King of Comedy.

Last Year's Grade: N/A
Grade: A+

Yardfest

We don't expect much. The weather is usually unpleasant and the first few acts usually suck, but the last few performers had hot singles but no full albums — including headliner Ryan Leslie (and no, we don't count his European debut).

We wonder, what are the requirements to get on the stage at Yardfest? We too, like the Retro Kidz, who can don fly haircuts, distressed denim, high tops and enough spandex to support 100 pair of jeans at Lane Bryant.

Howardites have friends and family from all over fly in for Yardfest, and this year, guests were shirked by a shortage of giveaways and entertainment between the "main" acts. Thank God for Wale.

Last Year's Grade: C-
Grade: C-

R&B Concert

Featuring another wedding proposal that was aided by the crooning of singer Raheem Devaughn, the R&B Concert was well received by the audience who were standing on their feet.

The opening acts weren't on point, but the main act and proposal with a "yes, no, maybe" note made up for it. The "soul" entered the building late though, as the concert began more than an hour after its advertised start time. But, nice come up from last year.

Last Year's Grade: B
Grade: A

Step Show

Ok ... the Divine Seven? Members of the organizations who have graduated can step? The awkward "300" gladiator introduction?

Keeping these queries in mind, we also noted that we found the hosts to be out of sync with each other. Brandon T. Jackson kept cutting off Keisha Knight-Pulliam and she was a little bland in her banter.

The deejay didn't make up for their shortcomings, as he didn't get the audience riled up — and this was necessary since there were only seven acts plus the Harriet Tubman Quadrangle team.

Brandon or Keisha should have at least warned us to expect only seven acts, especially because the introductory "battle" had all nine.

We enjoyed the addition of video introductions before each act, especially when one organization aired their frat who couldn't be there because he was serving overseas.

On the upside, the show started on time and we were happy to leave the D.C. Armory before the usual midnight.

Last Year's Grade: A-
Grade: I/D

For better or worse, here it is:

Last Year's Overall Grade: C-
This Year's Overall Grade: C

Daily Sudoku

Directions:

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

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		7	5	2		3		
					6			7
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hilltopaic@gmail.com

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What To Do @ HU

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE

THAT OTHER PIECE OF PAPER
If you're graduating in 2009, most likely you'll need a job. If not, most likely you'll need an internship. Either way, each starts with a resume. Unfortunately, a poorly done one can ruin chances of success, no matter your talents. Learn how to do it right and have your current resume critiqued by a pro. **Mon, 1 p.m., John H. Johnson C.B. Powell Building, Rm. 208. Free**

YES, THERE WAS A BLACK GEORGETOWN
Author and Howard alumna Breana Clarke signs and discusses her second book, *Stand the Storm*, a historical fiction set in Washington's Georgetown just after slavery. It follows the lives of the Coates family and the obstacles they face as they fight to maintain their freedom. Her first book, *River, Cross My Heart*, was voted an Oprah Book Club reader's pick. **Wed, 4:30 p.m., Howard University Bookstore. Free**

DIAMOND IN OUR MIDST
Some of Great Britain's prominent and award-winning black writers, painters and photographers visit Howard as part of an artistic tour of America. The visit is a culmination of their 2007 work, a commemoration of the British Slave Trade Act in 1803, which abolished the slave trade, but not slavery. It also kicks off their second book, *Creative Freedom*, which explores such diverse subjects as oppression and restitution in 19th-century and contemporary South Africa to wry reflections on the thirst for freedom from a formerly imprisoned poet. A powerful reminder of a horrific legacy on both sides of the Atlantic. **Fri, 2 p.m., Ralph Bunche Center, Main Forum. Free**

FREEDOM WRITERS
He has played with legends of jazz and popular music - George Benson, Sonny Stitt, Sammy Davis Jr., Herbie Hancock, Sonny Rollins, Eartha Kitt, Gene Ammons, Hank Jones and others. This keyboardist has performed everywhere from storied jazz venues to the White House. Now, Howard's own musical treasure, Prof. Charles Covington, will perform for you, accompanied by students Karine Chapdelaine (bass) and Vaughn Dashiell (drums). **Wed, noon, Blackburn Center Art Gallery. Free**

LIFE OF A LEGEND
In 1933, Thurgood Marshall graduated from Howard University School of Law and went on to make history. He won his first case before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1940. In 1954, he and other civil rights titans won *Brown v. Board of Education*, which changed the nation. In 1967, he became the first African-American appointed to the Supreme Court, where he served as a legal bulwark for justice until retiring in 1991. Eight of his law clerks and distinguished legal scholars convene to discuss his remarkable life and legacy. **Fri, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Law School, Moot Court Rm. Free**

POETRY ON ANOTHER LEVEL
Nearly one in four female students will be a victim of sexual assault during her college years, statistics suggest. In the majority of these cases, the perpetrator will be her present or former boyfriend. Howard's finest poets focus their art on the subject of domestic violence in a slam poetry event. Special guest is Howard alumna Gayle Danley, the former international slam champion. The event kicks off the *B. The Revolution End Abuse* weekend. **Fri, 7 p.m., Fine Arts Childers Hall, Environmental Theatre. \$10**

Office of University Communications



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