

the Forum

Piedmont Virginia Community College

Volume 6, No. 2 - February 28, 2008

Volunteer Club Making a Difference in the Community

By Emily Traylor
The Forum staff writer

There are many great clubs and organizations at PVCC that serve some wonderful purposes. They allow like-minded students to meet together in support of a common cause.

The Volunteer Club is no exception. Its mission is to make a difference in the community by helping others in need.

This club was founded last fall, by students who were looking to have a positive impact in the Charlottesville area. Sociology Professor Kim Hoosier was asked to be the club's advisor, and

she happily agreed. She told her sociology students about the new club and thus acquired some willing recruits.

Less than a year later, the Volunteer Club has become an active group that is working locally with Habitat for Humanity and is heading up charity efforts. The club sponsored a food drive over the recent winter holidays and has just completed a very successful coat drive.

The idea of a coat drive originated when a member of the Volunteer Club was waiting with his grandkids for the school bus. Looking around him, he noticed that a number of the

children in his neighborhood were out in the freezing cold without any coats on.

Thinking this was unusual, he approached several of the kids. "Where are your coats?" he asked. "We don't have any," was the distressing reply.

This grandfather determined to bring the concern before the Volunteer Club. A coat drive was decided upon, and collection boxes were placed in Little John's Cafeteria, the Dickinson Commons, and close to Mermaid Express.

According to Hoosier, the coat donations exceeded all expectations, and she wishes to sincerely thank each person who contributed to the effort. After the coats are cleaned, the club will distribute them locally to families in need.

Looking to the future, Hoosier is not sure what project her club will undertake next. "We do one at a time," she said, surrounded by mounds of coat-filled plastic bags in her office. "The coat drive is the current project." Club members will decide on a new venture at their next meeting.

The Volunteer Club is essentially a student-run organization, and Hoosier just provides basic leadership and answers questions. "My role is to support them," she said. "Mostly it's the students."

One of those students is Ashley Franklin, President of the Volunteer Club. Volunteering is nothing new to Franklin, who has been helping with



Volunteer Club members Michelle Linnekin (left), Molly Lapekas (center), and Kevin Willcox (right) work on a house in Louisa County.

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Hell has *No Exit*

By Aimee Dumaresq
The Forum staff writer

No Exit was written by Jean-Paul Sartre. The play was recently presented in the Black Box Theatre at PVCC by Kimberly Morris, Hope Herndon, Brad Foster, and Jimmy Green. It was directed by Cindy Leal and assisted by Jackie Wright.

No Exit focuses on existentialist philosophical views. The reoccurring theme is the difficulty in knowing oneself and how choices shape a person. It also shows how individuals possess the freedom to change who they have become.

No Exit is about three people in hell, the different choices that put them there, and why they are in a room together. Sartre's play is fascinating and forces the audience to think about past decisions and how those decisions shaped who they are today.

Scrutinized by each other as well as the audience, the trio faces who they are and what they have done to deserve hell. Although some regret is expressed, they all have their own ways of justifying their actions. This one-act play was entertaining and gave the audience quite a bone to chew on.

Kimberly Morris's performance was utterly convincing. She enveloped herself in the role of Estelle and played the part without fault. Morris' mannerisms

and actions further conveyed the self-centered character of Estelle. Morris completely wrapped herself in the role of Estelle and played her part passionately.

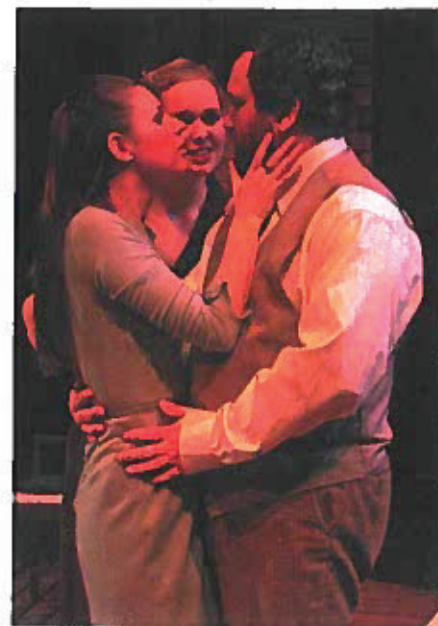
Hope Herndon, who was conniving and scheming and the more honest character, played a very believable role as Inez. Herndon embraced her role as Garcin's tormenter and husband stealer. She baffled the audience with her sharp wit and critical sarcasm that she dealt out to each character.

Brad Foster played his role as Garcin quite well. Although a bit stiff at times, he was able to convey the effects of cowardice on his life and death. As Estelle's tormenter, Garcin inflicts obvious conflict within the trio.

Jimmy Green's theatre debut as the valet was a wonderful start. His character added wit and some mystery to *No Exit*. Hopefully, he will be seen in future PVCC performances.

The small, intimate setting in the Black Box theatre forced the audience to become involved with *No Exit*. Both the set and lights encouraged a doom and gloom mood.

True to Sartre's work, the set is accurate when compared to the original. The costumes further developed each character by displaying his or her character through outward appearance.



PVCC's performance of *No Exit* was a big success!

Thought-provoking, mind-boggling, and enraging, *No Exit* is an emotional play that starts out simple and escalates to high intensity. Starting with little to no emotion and ending at the height of conflict, emotion, and revelation, it becomes more and more interesting to the audience as it progresses.

As *No Exit* nears the end, it becomes harder and harder to breathe because the scenes grow more and more tense. A breathtaking and thought provoking piece of art, *No Exit* is a classic.

Forced to change plays because of various factors, the cast memorized an entirely different script, got into character, and went on with the show... in less than a month! In spite of drastic change in plans, Cindy Leal and the dedicated cast of *No Exit* did justice to a great existentialist play.



Hope Herndon (left), Jimmy Green (back), Kimberly Morris (middle), and Brad Foster (right) perform *No Exit* in PVCC's Black Box Theatre.

Cast:

Brad Foster (Garcin)
Jimmy Green (Valet)
Hope Herndon (Inez)
Kimberly Morris (Estelle)
Cindy Leal (Director)
Jackie Wright (Stage Manager)

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community service projects for years.

"I was inspired to join the Volunteer Club because volunteering has always been a major aspect of my life," she related. "I figured this club would be a great outlet to continue being able to do community service."

As president, Franklin has been active in the various projects the club has undertaken, including working on a house in Louisa County through Habitat for Humanity.

Speaking of how the Volunteer Club has positively impacted her life, Franklin observed, "I have been able to meet some fantastic people who all have the same desire as me, which is to help out our community." Students are encouraged to check out this service-minded organization and find out how they can also become volunteers in the Charlottesville area. There are no specified time commitments, and the club attempts to accommodate people's schedules. "We try to decide the best time for everyone to help out ... and we try to work around everyone's schedules in the best possible way," assured Franklin.

According to Hoosier, that is only one of the numerous reasons to join the Volunteer Club. "You meet fun, new people," she said. "You do great projects to help those in need. Extra-curricular activities always look great on your resume. And there are always snacks!"

Of course, the most fulfilling motivation comes from the satisfaction that is gained from helping those in need. "It makes us all feel good when we can help someone less fortunate than we are," Hoosier concluded.

The Volunteer Club meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month in room 259 in the main building at 12:15 pm. Anyone with questions can contact Ashley Franklin at afranklin7901@email.vccs.edu.

Meet and Greet With President Friedman

PVCC President Answers Questions about Issues that Concern Students

By Jackie Wright
Special to *The Forum*

On Monday, February 18th, the Student Government Association held its first "Meet and Greet" with Dr. Frank Friedman during college hour. The purpose of this event was to let the students know that the President is ready and willing to help the students.

The President heard directly from the students on various issues ranging from smoking on campus to uncomfortable seating. Students openly expressed their concerns, comments, and questions.

The Student Government Association also prepared some questions based on recent polling done in the SGA "Suggestion Box." The SGA Suggestion Box serves as yet another way for the Student Government

Association to be in touch with the students' needs.

The polls revealed that recycling, smoking on campus, and a bigger fitness room are the main concerns of students. These issues were presented to Dr. Friedman, and although he could not make any promises, he did assure the students that he would try his best to help.

During the event, the President's Office provided free refreshments to both student participants and those passing by. Also, the Student Government Association set up its table with free lollipops and information regarding upcoming events.

Overall, the event turned out well, and Dr. Friedman now knows what the students are most concerned about. Just as important, the students have a greater awareness that he is here to help.

Your Opinion Matters!

By the Student Government Association (SGA)
Special to *The Forum*

Hello fellow students! In an effort to find out your feelings on hot topics around the PVCC campus, we would like to open an opportunity for your input. Located in the Bolick Student Center will be a poll box. Simply cut out this section, place your vote, and drop it off in the box. Results will be tallied and showcased in the next issue of *The Forum*.

To start the debate: There has been talk of Piedmont becoming a smoke-free campus. Are you:

- ☒ In favor of a smoke-free campus
- ☐ Opposed to a smoke-free campus
- ☐ Open to the idea of a smoking area located farther away from the school building itself

Remember, we want to hear your voice and your thoughts on this and forthcoming issues! We can only know what school policy you'd like to see if you vote!

The Ultimate Way to Spend Friday Afternoons at PVCC

By Kelby Lightburn
The Forum staff writer

The creation of PVCC's Ultimate Frisbee team was fate. The day it all started, I was sitting on a bench outside the main building's south wing on a regular fall day, watching people pass by. A guy with a Frisbee walked briskly by, and as he approached the parking lot, another kid walked over to him, also clutching a Frisbee.

They shook hands as if they were meeting for the first time. I jumped up and ran over, just as a professor stopped to talk to the two guys. I was deciding whether or not to just walk on, when someone gave me eye contact. I asked, "Is this a Frisbee team?" and a guy said, "Yes, it is!"

English Professor Andy Smith, the Ultimate Frisbee Club's faculty advisor, was at that moment pulling out a con-

tact sheet so everyone could exchange emails.

Out of the moment grew a team of people who shared a common interest in a team-based game. They decided to meet every Friday at 12:30 to play on the softball fields at PVCC. In its second semester of life, the team includes a solid fifteen people who show up each week and several others who visit.

The president of the club is Ben Nissley, and the vice president is Drew M. The beautiful thing about Frisbee is that anyone can play it. One doesn't have to be ultra-athletic to be a good player. He or she must simply know how to cooperate with other people.

The better the teammates know each other, the better they can play. Sometimes it's just about outsmarting the other team. Although there are

many guys on the team, girls are encouraged to show up.

The object of the game is to score points by passing the disc to a player in the opposing end zone, similar to an end zone in American football or rugby. The outcome of a match is usually determined by one team achieving a pre-determined number of points first. This ensures that a team can only win by scoring, rather than by running the clock down. Ultimate can be outlined in ten simple rules:

- 1. The Field** -- A rectangular shape with end zones at each end. A regulation field is 64m by 37m, with end zones 18m deep.
- 2. Initiate Play** -- Each point begins with both teams lining up on the front of their respective end zone line. The defense throws ("pulls") the disc to the offense. Pulls are the first throws in a game. The pull is often started by a member of the defending team raising one arm with the disc and shouting "ultimate!" to show that they are ready to pull the disc and begin play. A regulation game has seven players per team. In informal "pick-up" games, the number of players varies.
- 3. Scoring** -- Each time the offense completes a pass in the defense's end zone, the offense scores a point. Play is initiated after each score.
- 4. Movement of the Disc** -- The disc may be advanced in any direction by completing a pass to a teammate. Players may not run with the disc. The person with the disc ("thrower") has ten seconds to throw the disc. The defender guarding the thrower ("marker") counts out the stall count.
- 5. Change of possession** -- When a pass is not completed (e.g. out of bounds, drop, block, interception), the defense immediately takes possession of



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Students Entertain the Idea of Smoke-Free Campus

By Jamie Bullus
Oklahoma Daily (U. Oklahoma)

(U-WIRE) NORMAN, Okla. - Although smoking within 25 feet of a building is prohibited, some think that's not enough.

Imagine extending that ban to completely prohibiting smoking anywhere on campus. Oklahoma State University is doing it. OU Health Sciences Center already did it.

"People have to understand that it's going to happen sooner or later," said Candida Manion, Norman Regional Health System community coordinator. "If OSU can do it, what's stopping OU?"

Manion recently contacted OU Student Congress after learning any smoke-free policy would have to come from the students at OU.

Student Congress will meet with members from Norman Regional Friday, but Student Congress Chair Jordan

McGee said they are there to listen, not to plan.

"Someone approached us, and of course, we are willing to listen," said McGee, English writing senior. "Student Congress would never just impose something on students."

OSU approached the smoke-free decision differently -- not from a resolution by student government, but by forming a tobacco-free task force, according to the task force's report.

Members from different departments composed the task force and decided in 2006 that OSU would phase out smoking on campus. Beginning July 1, 2007, smoking was only allowed in designated areas. Starting this July, smoking is prohibited completely from campus, according to the report.

Michelle Plasters, University College freshman, said she does not smoke but thinks it would be ridiculous to ban smoking on campus.

"They have taken away alcohol on campus, even for those who are of age," Plasters said. "I'm sure they could do the same for tobacco if they wanted to, but there would be an uproar."

"Unlike the alcohol policy which was imposed by the administration, this is a refreshing new approach toward students," McGee said.

Manion said OU should follow in OSU's footsteps, however, and instead

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No Smoking at PVCC?

PVCC has recently been considering options to deal with the issue of smoking on campus. Some have suggested the construction of smoking gazebos that are well away from buildings, and others have advocated a smoke-free policy.

Whatever is decided, it is clear that some change needs to be made. The current situation is just too unhealthy. Every time I walk outside of PVCC's doors, I have to pass through the smoking areas and breathe plumes of second-hand smoke. Not only is there smoke outside, but it also blows inside every time the doors are opened. Sometimes, when I am sitting in the student lounge, it becomes quite difficult to breathe due to the heavy smoke fumes in the air. This is so unhealthy for the students and faculty.

What do you think? Should PVCC go smoke-free? Should they build gazebos? Let us know your opinion! Letters to the editor can be sent to theforum@pvcc.edu.

-Emily Traylor

The Forum is a voice for all students. If you have a voice, speak it. Accordingly, materials published in The Forum, including any opinions expressed, should not be interpreted as the position of the VCCS, Piedmont Virginia Community College, or any stakeholder thereof. We welcome letters to the Editor, guest columns, short stories, or poems, questions for our Perplexed at Piedmont column, or any idea you may have for the upcoming publications. If you have any questions or comments please contact theforum@pvcc.edu.

Spring Break Alternatives Gain Clout

By Tara Pistoese
OSU Daily Barometer
(Oregon State U.)

(U-WIRE) CORVALLIS, Ore. - Indiana University and organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Cross-Cultural Solutions and United Way are teaming up to offer affordable spring break options to students interested in making a difference on a national level or possibly worldwide.

Travel destinations include (but are not limited to) the Bahamas, Asia, Europe and Africa, as well as a number of more local opportunities.

Through these experiences students get a chance to help others by building homes for those who are less fortunate, helping to rebuild areas that were devastated by Hurricane Katrina or preserving endangered species while taking part in an experience that will stick with them forever.

"It is the real hands-on experience that cannot be taught in a classroom," said Staci Lichterman, a spring break specialist at STA travel.

Last year MTV partnered with United Way to help repair the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina. Nearly 100 young adults spent their spring break helping rebuild homes for Katrina victims.

"I had a friend who went last year to help re-build homes for Katrina victims," said Elizabeth Hastings, a junior in American studies. "She came back from break and was excited because she got to help people in need, although her living conditions were a little dirty."

According to habitat.org, Habitat for Humanity will be working to assist those living in poverty-stricken homes through "Collegiate Challenge," the largest alternative spring break program.

"Collegiate Challenge offers the opportunity to introduce students to the problem of poverty and a practical way to help eliminate substandard housing," said Millard Fuller, founder and president of Habitat for Humanity International. "These dynamic, young people contribute enormously to the building of hundreds of houses."

Habitat for Humanity has helped more than 3,000 communities in 89 nations and is inclusive of more than 770 campus chapters worldwide.

While some programs offer a valuable experience and personal satisfaction that accompanies making a difference, others combine community service with course credit.

Indiana University Community Outreach and Partnerships is currently

offering courses through which students can earn credit hours. This year, participants will be traveling to Jamaica for eight weeks during spring break and part of spring term.

According to an informational brief composed by Indiana University, the cultural dimensions of the course focus on the historical roots of the oral, musical and spiritual traditions practiced in Jamaican communities.

The biological components will focus on fundamental ecological principles characteristic of mountainous regions in the Caribbean and how indigenous agricultural and environmental initiatives reshape the local environment.

The Timmy Foundation, started in 1997, is a rapidly growing organization from Indiana University that is striving to provide education and proper health care to underprivileged people around the world.

This year The Timmy Foundation is taking its cause to Honduras and the Dominican Republic to dispense hygiene products, parasite medication and other health care and medical products. Most spring break opportunities are open to interested men and women over the age of 18.

Prices range anywhere from the sole cost of travel to \$2,300, which includes room, board, travel and course fees/credit hours. Applicants are urged to submit all pertinent information as soon as possible and research the country they will be visiting before departure.

Organizations such as these are urging young people to get involved with making a difference in someone's life.

"Any kind of diverse travel experience is always a challenge," Lichterman said, "but it is always an extremely valuable experience."

For a smaller, more local experience in volunteering, students are urged to participate in a Red Cross blood drive or get involved in student organizations in Corvallis.

For more information, log on to www.unitedway.org and www.habitat.org.



Kim Hoosier, Advisor of PVCC's Volunteer Club, helps construct a deck railing for a home in Louisa County.

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the disc and becomes the offense. This is called a turnover.

6. Substitutions -- Players not in the game may replace players in the game after a score and during an injury timeout.

7. Non-contact -- No physical contact is allowed between players. Picks and screens are also prohibited. A foul occurs when contact is made.

8. Fouls -- When a player initiates contact on another player a foul occurs. When a foul disrupts possession, the play resumes as if the possession was retained. If the player committing the foul disagrees with the foul call, the play is redone.

9. Self-Refereeing -- Players are responsible for their own foul and line calls. Players resolve their own disputes.

10. Spirit of the Game -- This rule is the most important. Ultimate is distinguished by its spirit of the game—the principles of fair play, sportsmanship, and the joy of play.

Ultimate's self-officiated nature de-

mands a strong spirit of sportsmanship and respect. The following description is from the official Ultimate Frisbee rules established by the Ultimate Players Association:

"Ultimate has traditionally relied upon a spirit of sportsmanship which places the responsibility for fair play on the player. Highly competitive play is encouraged, but never at the expense of the bond of mutual respect between players, adherence to the agreed upon rules of the game, or the basic joy of play.

"Protection of these vital elements serves to eliminate adverse conduct from the Ultimate field. Such actions as taunting of opposing players, dangerous aggression, intentional fouling, or other 'win-at-all-costs' behavior are contrary to the spirit of the game and must be avoided by all players."

At some levels of competition, it is still customary for teams to cheer their opponent at the end of the game. This tradition is an example of how the spirit of ultimate differs from most other games, as these cheers are meant



Chris Franke prepares to throw the Frisbee to the offense.

to be ridiculous, fun, and amusing. Cheers are often creative, and can take the form of a short game, involving both teams (very often involving a disc), or possibly a song.

Feel free to check out the Ultimate Frisbee game each Friday at 12:30 pm in PVCC's softball fields. Everyone is welcome!

For more information on the sport, please check out the following website: http://www.whatisultimate.com/what/what_rules_en.html.



Players battle for the Frisbee.



The Ultimate Frisbee Club will be making special Frisbees that feature the above logo. Custom Frisbees will soon be available for purchase in the PVCC community.

Many Reasons to be a Volunteer

By Sarah Wyland
The Forum staff writer

According to statistics collected by the US Department of Labor, 60.8 million people volunteered in the United States last year. This is roughly a quarter of America's population.

Why did these people volunteer? What compelled them to take time out of their own busy lives to better the lives of others? The answers are numerous and range from meeting requirements to having fun for free.

One of the most popular reasons people volunteer is to boost their resumes. High school students applying to selective colleges volunteer to increase their chances at being accepted. College students, particularly those looking to enter a field where competition for jobs is stiff, volunteer in hopes of impressing future employers. Whether volunteering is something they actually want to do or not, they go ahead and give their time to a cause to make themselves look even better on paper.

Another reason people volunteer is because they want to. They get a sort-of high from helping those less fortunate than them. Whether it's bringing blankets to the homeless or delivering food to hungry families, at the end of the day, they feel good about themselves and the work they have done.



Blake Souder, a PVCC volunteer, does some work on a house.

Guilt also motivates people to get out and serve their community. People with more advantages than others may feel the need to balance out their good fortunes with a dose of reality. Spending a day at a children's hospital is generally what the doctor ordered.

People volunteer for various reasons, not just those mentioned above. Overall, they come away from the experience with "something," be it a boosted resume, a feel-good feeling, or a less-guilty conscience. Anyone inter-

ested in volunteering in and around the Charlottesville area can check out the following resources.

To volunteer at the University of Virginia Medical Center, visit <http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/volunteer>. To find a food bank near you participating in America's Second Harvest, type <http://www.secondharvest.com> into your web browser's address bar. To work with your local Salvation Army, visit <http://www.salvationarmy.org>.

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set up a task force to phase out smoking on campus over the period of a year.

McGee said it is encouraging that OU is allowing its students to regulate their own actions, allowing more of a bottom-up approach to a smoke-free policy.

As an institution of higher education, OU cannot ignore science, Manion said.

"Science is telling us that smoking is bad, as well as secondhand smoke," she said. "What are we waiting for?"

The most recent report released by the Surgeon General on secondhand smoke was in 2006, stating millions of Americans are still exposed to secondhand smoke, despite progress in tobacco control.

Secondhand smoke has been designated as a known human carcinogen -- or cancer-causing agent -- and non-smokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25 to 30 percent, according to the report.

Manion said it is safe to say everyone knows someone who is sick because of, died from or addicted to tobacco.

"When you have a tobacco-free campus, not only for students but also staff, people make a decision to quit," Manion said. "It makes it harder to smoke. You help them relieve that habit and also promote a healthy envi-

ronment."

Oklahoma holds one of the highest percentages of smoking-related deaths in the nation, and Oklahoma smokers also purchase on average 87 packs a year, 16 packs above the nation's average, according to the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Web site.

Laura Mobley, University College freshman, said she has been smoking for more than a year.

"The most OU should do is create designated smoking areas," she said. "That way, smokers walking to class don't blow smoke into people's faces. I try to be courteous. I know it is a disgusting habit."

While Mobley eventually plans on quitting, she said she would rather quit on her own terms, not because university officials said so.

Manion said she understands there would be opposition to banning smoking on campus.

"Yes, you have the right to smoke," Manion said. "But when it infringes on our right to breathe easy, then you have to take the collective good into consideration."

Plasters said she does not support smoking, but that does not mean she would condemn someone else's life directions.

"I don't think it will work because too many people smoke on campus," Plasters said. "And others, like me, don't really care to see it happen. I will not support something that I feel will take away any of other people's rights, even if that right will eventually kill them."

College Campuses Going Green

By Rebecca Faris
The Forum staff writer

What began as a whisper has now become a roar. It is a movement so powerful that it is changing the world for the better. It is the greening of American universities and college campuses.

Students, faculty, and staff around the country are well aware of the suffering, environmental devastation and economic hardships that are caused by America's addiction to fossil fuels. They are putting their awareness towards creating practical solutions, which has resulted in tremendously positive outcomes.

Focusing on everything from recycling programs to green building, from retrofitting to research in renewable technology, today's campuses are the ray of hope for the planet, the economy, and the masses of people in this century and beyond.

"Sustainability" is the buzzword in this movement. According to a benefits paper from Harvard University, the student-staff sustainability programs not only reduce an institution's ecological contribution to global climate change, but they also have many other advantages:

- Money in the bank
- Health and productivity
- Better community relations
- Educational value
- A good fit with campus values
- Alumni and donor interest

Says the Harvard Green Campus Initiative website (<http://www.greencampus.harvard.edu>), "Leading in environmental sustainability is cost-effective and makes business sense... when operations and security are assessed, the payback on many environmental profits beats profits from investing endowments in the stock markets."

Students at PVCC don't have to look far to find examples of effective, easy and fun green programs for campuses. The students at the University of Virginia have worked with their administra-

tion to implement a green approach that is a model in green initiatives for campuses everywhere.

Using natural lighting, recycling everything (even florescent light bulbs and #5 and #6 plastics), and adhering to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System standards (which encourage and accelerate global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices for all major building projects), UVA saves money and creates a healthier campus life.

Lyle Solla-Yates, a member of GreenGrounds at UVA, says, "It's not about sacrifice – it is about a better life."

Solla-Yates encourages people to take a look at graduationpledge.org and to consider what impact they will have as they move into the work force.

The Graduation Pledge of Social and Environmental Responsibility is listed on the front page of this website and states the following: "I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these aspects of any organizations for which I work."

Later, the website continues, "Students at over a hundred colleges and universities are using the pledge at some level. Graduates who voluntarily signed the pledge have turned down jobs with which they did not feel comfortable and have worked to make changes once on the job. For example, they have promoted recycling at their organization, removed racist language from a training manual, worked for gender parity in high school athletics, and helped to convince an employer to refuse a chemical weapons-related contract."

Beth Kahley, an architecture major at UVA, is the president of GreenGrounds, one of many student groups committed to sustainability through ecologically sound choices. She is passionate about green building and is "conscious of my own impact and how everything I do – what I eat (I'm a

vegetarian), what I wear, how I get to work – affects the world." Kahley is also involved in the ecomod building projects in Charlottesville.

In Richmond, Jessica Lee, President of the Virginia Commonwealth University Student Government, is another example of a forward-thinking campus leader with vision. She is making a green campaign a priority in her administration. Students are signing a petition that will accompany Lee's letter to the VCU president, which reads in part:

"The threat of global warming and environmental degradation is the greatest peril of my generation. Considering the damage and the lifestyle that we as a society have already established, it will take a tremendous effort at every level to overcome these hurdles... We are proud to say that VCU is already beginning to move forward in becoming environmentally friendly; however more change is needed. Given the students' commitment to make a difference, and the unique position of VCU to lead, I ask your administration to make a firm commitment to go 'green.' We ask that you commit to:

- **Ensure responsible building and growth.** All new VCU constructions should meet the U.S. Green Building Council's L.E.E.D. standards at the silver level or above.
- **Fast track retrofitting.** Make retrofitting VCU buildings with environmentally friendly outfits a priority.
- **Encourage responsible transportation.** New vehicles ... should have an above average emissions rating, as evaluated the EPA's Green Vehicle Rating Program.
- **Double the amount of recycling done across the university.** This should be coupled with a commitment to buy products, especially paper, with a high recycled content."

The greening of college campuses is definitely becoming a priority for many of America's colleges and universities. If you have ideas or questions about the greening of PVCC, please write to theforum@pvcc.edu.

The Music Beat

Wu-Tang Clan Visits Richmond

By Philip Obenschain
The Forum staff writer

In the 15 years since they exploded onto the hip-hop scene with their genre-pioneering debut *36 Chambers*, The Wu-Tang Clan has certainly never been one to disappoint. Despite their commercial success in everything from clothing lines to movies, the energy and attitude that has driven them since the beginning is still prevalent, and for that reason they retain a vast and loyal fan base.

In typical laid-back Wu-Tang style, the Clan arrived two hours late for their own performance at Toad's Place, Richmond's high-profile new venue which featured Wu-Tang as their inaugural hip-hop show on January 19.

Their less than timely arrival didn't discourage fans, however, as opening

bands and in-house DJs provided plenty of entertainment to ease the anticipation. The Clan finally took the stage close to midnight, bringing with them a posse of friends and affiliates, backed by DJ Mathematics, to deafening applause.

Noticeably two members short (three counting the late O.D.B.), RZA allegedly dropped off of the tour due to conflict over the direction of their newest release *8 Diagrams* and fan-favorite Method Man was absent for personal reasons, the Clan was still at high energy and more than made up for their absence.

Ghostface Killah, Raekwon, and long-time affiliate Cappadonna especially stole the show, interacting with the crowd in a manner rarely seen in mainstream hip-hop.

It is no secret that several members

the Wu-Tang Clan themselves aren't happy with their new album, last month's *8 Diagrams*, the high-point of which is "The Heart Gently Weeps," a collaboration with George Harrison's son Dhani featuring samples of the Beatles' classic "While My Guitar Gently Weeps."

Acknowledging their disappointment with the final product, the Clan chose not to perform any songs from *8 Diagrams*, instead drawing heavily from their earlier records, much to the crowd's delight.

With their ability to wow an audience, especially almost two decades since their inception, the Wu-Tang Clan proves that they are still a major force in hip-hop and Richmond was fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of a musical movement that is certain to stay strong for years to come.

Remembering Brad Renfro

By Kyla Crowley
The Forum staff writer

In the last issue of *The Forum*, a tribute was included to the late Heath Ledger. This time around, a tribute is being included in memory of Bradley (Brad) Barron Renfro, who died on January 15th, exactly a week before Heath Ledger's passing. Renfro was born in Knoxville, Tennessee on July 25, 1982.



Brad Renfro passed away on January 15, 2008.

At ten, he was "discovered" by director Joel Schumacher and shortly thereafter cast in *The Client* in 1994. This was his first role. One year later he starred in Walt Disney's *Tom and Huck* alongside 90's teen heartthrob Jonathan Taylor Thomas.

Renfro is also known for his roles in the cult classic *Ghost World*, *The Cure* and *Apt Pupil*. Mostly, however, Renfro spent his life as the charming and talented underdog, taking on roles in lesser known movies such as *Deuces Wild*, *Telling Lies in America*, *Bully* and *Skipped Parts*. He often played his guitar while on the set of *Tom and Huck*, and found an idol in Jimmy Page, guitarist for Led Zeppelin.

Renfro won "The Hollywood Reporter's Young Star Award" in 1995 and appeared in *People* magazine's "Top 30 Under 30." Given that they died within a week of each other, it is interesting to note that Renfro tried out for the part of Gabriel Martin in *The Pa-*

triot, a role which eventually went to Ledger.

At the time of his death Renfro had just finished a film with Winona Ryder and Billy Bob Thornton entitled *The Informers* (based on the Bret Easton Ellis novel), which is currently set for an October 30th release date.

Despite performing in a school production sponsored by D.A.R.E. - a program in which kids learn about the dangers of drugs - when he was a kid, Renfro struggled through a lifelong battle with addiction.

Renfro once said, "Everybody thinks I'm, like, a bad boy. I've had my day, but I just sit at home and play the blues mostly."

He eventually made this plea to his fans: "If you've never tried drugs, DON'T. And if you have, pray." On February 8, The Los Angeles County Coroner confirmed that he died of an accidental acute heroin and morphine overdose. He was 25 years old.

Family Attending PVCC Together

A Mother and Daughter Share Their Experiences

A First-Person Perspective

By Liz and Kelly McDowell
Special to *The Forum*

Liz: It started with me making arrangements for my daughter's enrollment at PVCC. She was tired of high school and was not looking forward to returning there for her senior year.

I suggested that she complete the rest of her high school coursework by attending classes at PVCC in the dual enrollment program. It only took her a moment to decide it was the right decision.

Around midsummer, I started to think about going back to school my-

self. In 1976, I started college with the intention of becoming a nurse, but changed majors. Finally, I felt ready to finish what I originally started more than 30 years ago.

I was concerned that attending the same school as my daughter would cramp her style. What teenager wants his or her mom around while at school? But, being the self-assured person that she is, she really didn't mind and kept encouraging me that this was the right decision.

Her confidence gave me confidence. If I wasn't doing this now, at 49, I would never have done it. I feel that we both made the right decision.

In April, I'll find out if I've been

admitted to PVCC's nursing program. Around the same time, my daughter will find out if she's been accepted to her first choice of colleges. In late summer, our paths will diverge as they should, and she'll go on to a new adventure.

When I return to school in the fall, I will miss seeing her in the hallway and the comfort of knowing that she is there. I'll miss our lunches at Bodo's, funny text messages and even mother-daughter arguments (often performed discretely in the hallway). But overall, I'll be grateful for this year we have shared together, before we both start down our own new paths.

Kelly: In August of 2007, I decided that I didn't want to go back to high school. I wanted to start college a year early. My mom then proposed the idea of her going back to school as well. I was so excited for her. She had always dreamed of becoming a nurse but never had the opportunity to do so. This was a chance for both of us to start something new together.

My mom was really worried that going to the same school would somehow embarrass me, but I didn't even think twice about that. When I say she's my best friend, I am serious about that. We can finish each other's sentences. We go on trips together all the time. Bonnaroo Music Festival is a tradition for the two of us.

She even got a tattoo after I got mine. Don't get me wrong, she is not one of those helicopter moms who tries to be cool. She honestly digs the music at Bonnaroo. She loves the Picasso tattoo on her foot, and she loves learning all about nursing.

Once in a while, I'll pass her at Little John's sitting with a crowded table full of friends, and I'll smile and wave. I think it's great that she went back to school, and I couldn't be more proud of her.



Kelly McDowell (left) and her mom, Liz, stand on the Brooklyn Bridge.

The Forum Classifieds

Attention Graduating Students:

Students planning on graduating in May 2008 are reminded that the deadline for submitting Application for Graduation forms to the Welcome Center is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 14th. Forms are available from the Welcome Center and online.

ART ATTACK!

The event will be Thursday, Feb. 28. Everyone is invited to compete in a gonzo art olympics featuring spam sculpture contest, ugliest ashtray, project grundge-way and so much more. There will be prizes, food, and flamingoes! Come to the Dickinson Commons from 12:45-4:45. Drop-ins are welcome. Art Attack is sponsored by the Student Art Club.

Tired of Exorbitant Textbook Prices?

Check out PVCC's used book site. The URL is: <http://bookexchange.pvcc.edu/webwiz/forum/>. Or, go to PVCC's home page (www.pvcc.edu), select "Quick Links" in the bottom menu bar, then click "Used Book Site."

Scholarship Application Deadline is Fast Approaching!

Scholarships are available for the 2008-2009 academic year. The application deadline for current students and adults returning to school is March 10, 2008. Information and application forms can be obtained from the receptionist's desk in the main building.

Looking for a wonderful home for two adorable FERRETS.

The owners are moving and can't take them along. They are so cute, smart, and are very little trouble. They have the run of the house, and get along great with the dogs, the cats and the kid. If you need some love in your life, email vabubbles777@aol.com or call 970-2026.

S. Faris, 3378 Cotswold Lane, Keswick, VA 22947

For Rent:

Lakefront summer cottage on Newfound Lake, NH. Available for families up to 8 people. \$2000/wk. See www.homeaway.com for more information. Look for property #181159.

PVCC Hosts New York Singers

By Philip Obenschain
The Forum staff writer

On February 20, Piedmont got the special treat of welcoming New York singers Liz Farmer and Steve Wallace. Hailing from Harlem, Liz Farmer was both traditionally soulful and elegant in her style of gospel and R&B. Taking the stage in the Bolick Student Center, she had the crowd of enthusiastic PVCC students clapping along as she delivered an engaging and emotional set.

Wallace, a native of Brooklyn, describes himself as "the ambassador of urban soul," and he certainly had the talent to back up his claim. Blending elements of hip-hop, soul, R&B, and topping it off with his unique melodic sensibilities and energy, Wallace delivered a performance that PVCC rarely has the opportunity to house and certainly won't soon forget.



Liz Farmer sang at PVCC on Feb. 20 in celebration of Black History Month.

Source: <http://www.lizfarmersings.com>

The Forum Welcomes Your Classifieds!

Looking for a ride?
Need a Roommate?
Need to sell a book, computer, or school supplies?
Trying to get the word out about your intramural social or sports club?

If so, look no farther than *The Forum*. *The Forum* will be offering ad space to the PVCC community free of charge. Please send ads and announcements, along with your full name, mailing address, email, and phone number to theforum@pvcc.edu.