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WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

THE RING-TUM PHI.

MONDAY, JAN. 16, 2006

BY THE STUDENTS AND FOR THE STUDENTS SINCE 1897

VOLUME CIX, NUMBER 12

WHAT'S INSIDE

A ballsy approach to IM activities

Rosemary Boyle examines the wild world of the W&L dodgeball circuit on page 2.

Fighting the good fight

Ann Tomlinson battles Stage 3 ovarian cancer. Her story on page 2.

New year, new mission

The Ring-Tum Phi staff outlines its goals for the new year and beyond.

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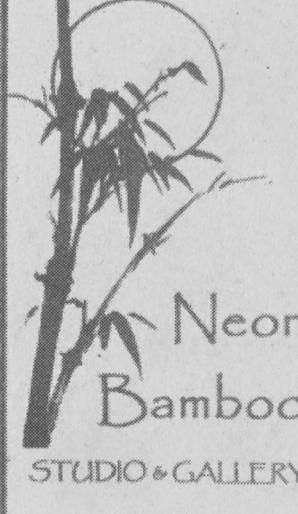


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Feeling the rush



Socializing with members of the Kappa Alpha Order last Tuesday, freshman Hobson Bryan may have found his new brothers.

Despite increasing costs, a huge time commitment and that email scandal, the rush goes on

Photos and text
by Katherine Greene
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Freshmen women invited on dates are also subject to the costs of rush. According to the 2006 Panhellenic recruitment book, "A member of a sorority may not buy anything for a potential member."

Going on rush dates can add up, "especially for the women who are invited out once or twice a week," Powell said, "but not all of the women know that many upperclassmen."

Does the cost of rush leave some women out? No, according to Powell.

"The W&L demographics show that usually that's not a problem," she said. "78% of women [at W&L] continue to be Greek."

Powell said that the skits put on by the women last Tuesday may also be cut from the program.

"If you have to have a skit to have somebody join your sorority, you're in a pretty bad state," she said, suggesting the skits be performed after recruitment for philanthropic activity.

The added cost of lunch puts more stress on the sorority woman's purse.

"I think it can be expensive," Powell said of the rush dates, which are not covered by sorority dues which can range from \$3028 to \$9115 yearly.

desks.

Though the IFC determined they would not cancel Christmas weekend, they placed the fraternities on social probation for the last weekend of recruitment.

According to the report, "Recruitment of members into the Greek system should not be focused around the consumption of alcohol."

Rodocker said, "In my opinion, [alcohol-related activities are] not the best way to make life-long brotherhood."

He suggested "meaningful conversations" as an alternative, saying that "each house should have some idea of the values they want," and try to find that

in freshmen.

"Doing the dinners is perfect," he said. "You can take the guys out without getting them drunk on the bus."

Some fraternity men blame the social obligation to include alcohol.

Andrew Rothe, sophomore, said, "The reality of the situation is that right now, if any of the houses are giving away alcohol, they are going to have an advantage [during rush]."

Rodocker said, "I think they [the fraternities] have the perception that there's no other way. I just want to make sure they look at their possibilities."

Rothe said, "I think it would be difficult, in the current

climate, to have a successful rush without alcohol," but added, "It's not necessary," pointing out the rush dinners as a successful alternative. "We have lots of rush events that are dry."

Rodocker said that other schools nationwide use such activities as "outing club trips, road trips, and sporting events" as rush tools, outside of parties.

For the men, whose rush-date costs are covered by the fraternity, time management is also a problem.

Rodocker said, "The role that Greek life should play is to be a complement to the university."

Rodocker said that the organizations try to "provide...skills in networking, communication, teamwork, and time management. They can achieve [these goals], and sometimes they do. Our goal is to make 'sometimes' more frequent."

But often, Greek activities take precedent over other commitments, such as homework, athletics, or other extracurricular activities.

Kyle Simon, freshman, said, "It takes time to go to all the houses and meet all the guys."

Alex Skotnicki, sophomore, said the sacrifice is worthwhile. "It's all worth it in the end," he said. "It's all about the endgame."



"I feel like I'm just hanging out with friends," said Kyle Simon (left, with buddy Chris Sherwin) at a rush dinner.

Student restarts defunct rowing program

High school rower teams up with Shinofield to revive program

By Jessica Shaw
STAFF WRITER

When W&L joined Division III, the school could no longer support a rowing program. After the sport fizzled, there have been a few unsuccessful attempts to revive it. Recently, sophomore Parker Sheppard, a highly sought-after rower in high school, decided to bring it back to this campus.

I have put in a budget proposal to the EC, and we

should have our hearing in the next few weeks," he said. "We've even gotten a few boats lined up to purchase from other clubs."

Service Learning Coordinator Aubrey Shinofield is helping Sheppard as he tries to build up the program. If he is successful, she said she is considering a coaching position, time permitting. Shinofield, herself, was a national rowing champion her senior year at Princeton. After college, she

interned as a coach at Princeton and then coached the crew teams at University of New Hampshire, Harvard, and the University of Minnesota.

Rowing is a very intense sport, and it can be a big commitment, especially for a club team," Shinofield said. "It is a time commitment, an individual commitment to work hard and be as fit and as strong as possible, and it is also a commitment to your teammates."

According to Sheppard, the team plans to start training in Lake Robertson, then transition to the Maury River after the athletes have some experience. There are currently thirty people on the e-mail list that are interested in joining the team.

"Since most people don't have any rowing experience prior to college, a start-up program such as this one could, with some work, develop into a strong one in a few years," Sheppard said.

Crew depends solely upon the unification of the team.

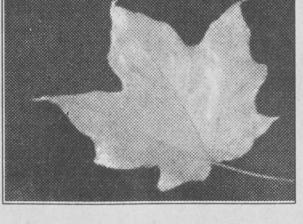
If a team is not working well

together, the boat will go nowhere, and it will be a pretty miserable row," Shinofield said.

If the sport gets backed financially and the interest remains high, it will likely get approved as a club sport on campus.

"There are so many lessons to be learned from rowing, on and off the water," Shinofield said. "The only way to row well and to go fast is if everyone in the boat is completely in sync, mentally and physically. Figuring out how to do this is challenging but extremely fulfilling."

arts & life



Athletes dominate dodgeball

Rugby and track combine for victory

By Rosemary Boyle
STAFF WRITER

Although the 2nd Annual Dodgeball Tournament did not draw as large of a crowd as it did last year, no one would have guessed that the players were not in front of a packed stadium from how intensely they dodged, ducked, dipped, dove and dodged.

At one point, freshman Addison Sanford was left to fend off five hulking players from team, "The Lodge," and was able to eliminate two before his final downfall. His end, however, did not come easily to his opponents. According to Sanford, he has been practicing for quite some time now. "I lift in the morning and have been focusing on improving my ninja-like dodging skills," he said. This particularly challenging moment of the night "was tough," said Sanford.

The Lodge, champions

"Let out some of that aggression."

of the first round, also dominated in the second and semifinal round. Fighting to win the championship, they faced a team which consisted of both track and rugby players; a combination which turned out to be winning too strong for them.

After one win for The Lodge, the track and rugby stars came back strong by winning two in a row and taking the match. The victory celebration included "going to Dominos!" said the team.

According to Will Patterson, Campus Recreation Coordinator, the Dodgeball tournament started last year as a result of a need for "freshmen to have something fun to do the first week of winter term." The tradition continues, providing a great opportunity for what the Intramural Catalog describes as a chance to "throw something at that annoying kid in class... to let out some of that aggression."

topgirls

Fighting for her life

Well-loved Director of Student Affairs Ann Tomlinson struggles against cancer

She thought it was her gallbladder. During a summer camping trip, she began to feel discomfort under her ribcage, and diagnosed herself, vowing to go to the doctor when she and her husband got home. The doctors told her differently. Her gallbladder was fine, but the CT scan showed a mass on her ovary. In July of this year, they diagnosed her with Stage III ovarian cancer.

By Steph Wiechmann
STAFF WRITER

Ann Tomlinson, Administrative Assistant to Student Affairs, didn't believe it at first. Her father had survived colon cancer, but there was no history of ovarian cancer on either side of her family. But, the following Wednesday, she was wheeled off to surgery, where surgeons "debulked" the mass and performed a total hysterectomy. Then, they put on a chemotherapy schedule.

"My mom cried," said Tomlinson when she informed her family. "My husband cried." Her two sons, Andrew and Christopher, both juniors at Bridgewater College, have not comprehended it yet, she feels.

Her bosses, Dean Dave Leonard and Dean Tammy Futrell, took it hard. And, it was their job to tell the student Residence Life Staff when they returned in August.

"The students have been wonderful," Tomlinson said. In fact, when they learned of her diagnosis, 35 of them showed up in

her living room with a sheet cake and balloons.

Tomlinson has had to cut back her hours at work to accommodate her chemotherapy schedule and side effects of the treatment, but so counts herself as pretty lucky.

"I've lost most of my hair," she says, reminding me of the gray head-wrap she wears, "and I recently have had a few intestinal problems." But, so far, she said, that's it.

She is thankful that the treatments don't leave her as tired as they do most patients. "They

usually give me a rush," she adds.

Her appetite, too, has not been affected. "I could eat that paper," she jokes, pointing to my notebook. "If you seasoned it up." Going into December, this is a good thing, since Christmas is one of her favorite holidays.

One experience at the beginning of her treatment stands, to her, as an inspiration of how to deal with this diagnosis.

Tomlinson, during her pre-surgery prep, was waiting for a chest x-ray in a Roanoke hospital this summer. An elderly woman, in a matching hospital gown, came in and sat down in the waiting room. She asked Tomlinson a question, then began to explain what she was having done that day.

Tomlinson thought, "Oh no, I don't know her from Adam, and now she's going to sit here and tell me everything that is wrong."

The woman explained her current situation, mentioned that she was 80-years-old, and then said, "I had ovarian cancer." Tomlinson was shocked, but didn't say a word. The woman,

who had been diagnosed with the disease 25 years ago, began to talk about her diagnosis, her surgery, her chemotherapy, and her recovery.

After finishing, the woman looked at Tomlinson and asked, "What are you here for?"

Tomlinson answered, "I was just diagnosed with ovarian cancer."

"You'll be fine," the woman said immediately. "Don't listen to a word they have to say. You'll be just fine."

The nurse then called the woman's name, and she got up and left the room. Tomlinson never saw her again.

"That woman was put there for a reason," Tomlinson tells me with a look of absolute faith on her face.

Speaking with her, her upbeat attitude may surprise some. Stage III cancer is one stage away from being considered "terminal," and yet, Tomlinson is determined to beat this.

"If you let it, it will consume you completely. You may not have but two or three years left, but you make the most of it."



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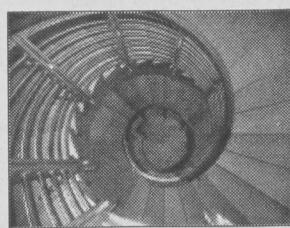


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opinions



staff editorial

Mission: not impossible

The Phi staff makes a new version of a 109-year-old paper

The Phi has not always been something to be proud of.

Don't get us wrong: a century of tradition makes for automatic prestige and a certain amount of recognition in the liberal arts college circles.

But we plan to rest on our laurels no more.

A reputation for fouled-up stories led to a near-lockdown between the Phi and anyone worth speaking to on campus. A long history of extreme stress and severe disorganization led to a high turnover rate for staff

members. A lack of commitment led to a series of burnt-out editors and worthless clips for would-be journalists.

Observing this, the Phi, with our new editor-in-chief, has made a new year's resolution to improve.

Our first step is to give the paper an identity. We created a new mission statement. We considered our audience and how we want to reach you. We thought about what we want to achieve during our time here on staff. We thought about continuity and

tradition. We thought about real journalism.

This is what we came up with:

The mission of the Ring-Tum Phi is to accurately, truthfully, and thoroughly report news affecting the Washington and Lee community for students, faculty, parents and alumni. Our goal is to look deeper into news affecting campus life and hold leaders accountable. Through our reporting, we aspire to spark discussions that lead to discovering information that prompts change.

We are growing as an organization, and looking forward to new developments, including a website.

We are students--help us learn.

Stick with us while we turn this paper into something we can all be proud of.

We invite you to join us on our journey this year. Track our development through the issues, and tell us what you think. We'd love to see more letters to the editor, good and bad.

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The above editorial represents the majority opinion of The Ring-Tum Phi editorial board.

Independent state of mind

Will Townes tells about being an independent

To the Editor:

I am an independent I didn't join a fraternity because I didn't find pledging to be a requisite to leading a meaningful and full life while here. Now, as I walk past the fraternities everyday, I glimpse a very different life than my own. With this in mind, I decided to share some of my experiences as a non-Greek.

During freshman year, it is easy to have fun. However, if you do not pledge, it all changes during Winter Term. You start to wonder if you made the right decision. Why don't people care about you? You feel very much alone, and sometimes lonely.

I experienced these negative emotions. However, I eventually realized that the reason I wasn't having fun was because I had been spoiled. When you are a freshman, other people organize all the fun events for you to participate in. But, then, if you don't pledge, suddenly you are not invited to any more fun events. One of the benefits of being an independent is that you learn to take control of your own

life; you are compelled to become self-sufficient.

Without a parent organization to watch over you, you will find yourself growing into an adult.

You can still have a lot of random fun, and experience personal growth as a Greek. I have several friends who have found ways to balance their involvement with a fraternity or sorority with their personal and intellectual growth.

In fact, I think the use of the term "independent" might better describe a state of mind, rather than one's Greek status. You can find "independents" in the fraternities, and the fraternities are very inclusive in the sense that anyone can go to their parties (including non Greeks). This is one of the best aspects of the Greek system here.

Despite this, there are several advantageous features of living outside the Greek system. The Greek system will never force you to question your beliefs. Most

"As an Independent, you will find yourself thrown together with people who see the world very differently than you do."

likely, your fraternity brothers will all be very similar to you, and conflicts of fundamentally dissimilar worldviews will rarely occur.

As a Greek, you will need to take the initiative yourself to seek out people who will engage you in stimulating conversations that stretch your assumptions about the world (which is almost impossible to do at a party).

As an Independent, you will be thrown together with people who see the world very differently than you do, and it will become a matter of psychological survival to find ways to get along with them. Additionally, it is easier to get to know members of the opposite sex as friends, rather than hook-up partners, because there is more interaction in a non-party setting.

You will be forced to defend your beliefs and live them out among people who often disagree. You don't have to live up to a disingenuous standard imposed on

you by people who are themselves deeply frightened and insecure about their social status. Being honest with people about who you are on the inside might cause many false friends to betray you. But, if you treat people with honesty, you will soon find people who will respect you genuinely. These people are true friends and one of them is worth more than a thousand sycophants.

Finally, you realize very quickly that the world does not revolve around you. As a freshman, it is easy to be deceived into thinking that one's popularity affects how much fun life at W&L can be, but in the end what really matters are your friends.

Whether you join a fraternity or sorority or not, don't ever sacrifice your meaningful friendships for social status. Be willing to hang out with people regardless of how "cool" they are. You can have fun with anyone and everyone, and you can derive enjoyment from something as simple as a walk through campus with some newfound freshmen friends.

Will Townes
Class of 2007

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The Ring-Tum Phi welcomes all responsible submissions and letters.

All submissions must be e-mailed to phi@wlu.edu or in the University Center mailbox by 5 p.m. Friday to appear in the following week's edition. The Ring-Tum Phi reserves the right to edit submissions for content and length. Letters and columns do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Ring-Tum Phi Editorial Board. Advertising does not reflect the opinions of The Ring-Tum Phi or its staff. This newspaper observes current court definitions of libel and obscenity.

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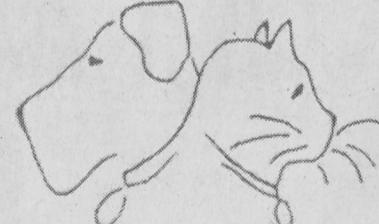
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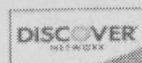
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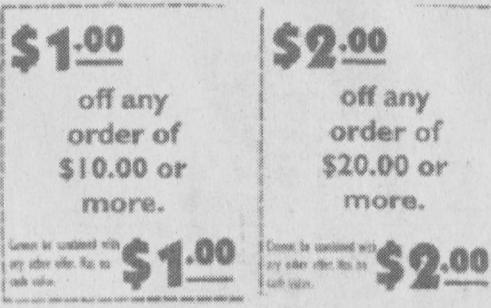
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