Law Students' Reaction to Removal of Wren Cross Muted

by William Y. Durbin
Editor in Chief

For once, law students are not the ones leading the outcry on a controversial issue.

While reaction to the removal of the cross from the Wren Chapel has been strong among many undergraduates and alumni of the College of William & Mary, most of its law students have not seemed to notice much. Those who have noticed, however, generally support the decision.

The Wren Chapel is part of the Sir Christopher Wren Building. Built between 1695 and 1699, the Wren Building is the oldest academic building in continuous use in the United States and the signature building of the College. Today, the Wren Chapel primarily serves religious purposes but may be used by other groups. In addition, William & Mary students, alumni, current faculty and staff, and the children of anyone in those groups may reserve the chapel for their weddings.

No cross adorned the Wren Chapel until the 1930s, when Bruton Parish Church, Colonial Williamsburg’s Episcopal house of worship, offered the chapel a cross it no longer needed. Until this past October, that cross marked the altar of the Wren Chapel, but it could be removed by request.

Then, in late October 2006, College of William & Mary President Gene Nichol sent an e-mail to all students informing them that the cross in the Wren Chapel had not been “banished” but was merely no longer on permanent display. In discussing “the cross that is sometimes displayed there,” Nichol said that the default rule would be for no cross to adorn the altar but that it would be replaced upon request. Nichol cited the several secular uses of the chapel and the need to make members of all faiths welcome there as reasons for his decision. Nichol further explained his decision to remove the cross from its previously permanent place in a meeting with the Board of Visitors on Nov. 16, 2006.

Even before that meeting, though, disgruntled alumni and students had sent letters and e-mails, signed petitions, and even launched a website in protest of the president’s decision. Nichol rejected the measure by a vote of 4-14-2, the College’s Student Assembly considered a bill that would have returned the cross permanently to the Wren Chapel altar. A controversy was born.

Meanwhile, down Henry Street, little was made of the decisions affecting the historic building near Confusion Corner.

“I read President Nichol’s first e-mail,” said Alex Blumenthal (3L), referring to the October message informing students of the change in policy. “I didn’t go to William & Mary as an undergrad, and I’ve never been in the chapel, but it seemed to be the right decision.

Continued on page 2.
Tips on Finding and Funding Summer Public Service Internships, Including the PSF Application Process

by Sarah Abshear
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, Jan. 23, the Office of Career Services conducted a workshop on public service internships. Dean Robert Kaplan presented helpful tips to students on how to find and fund internships for the summer.

Dean Kaplan explained that the search for public service internships differs from other internships in several important ways. Public service organizations often have smaller staffs and fewer resources than the private sector. Lawyers are consequently very busy, so it is especially important to follow up on interviews. Telephone and video conference interviews are more common with public service organizations, especially if they are distant. For tips on how to effectively conduct these types of interviews, students should consult their OCS Manuals.

Public service organizations look for different qualities in applicants than large firms and similar employers. Grades and academics are given much less emphasis. Far more important are prior public service and the student’s commitment to the organization’s issue area. Both should be stressed in the student’s cover letter. However, Dean Kaplan advised against giving a “laundry list” of public service activities in the cover letter. It is better to focus on a few things and give more information about them. Students should also beware of portraying an overly idealistic “knight in shining armor” aspiration to save the world. Students may want to acknowledge the challenges the organization faces and their willingness to tackle them.

Interviews can also be different with government and public service organizations. Hypotheticals are very common. They want to hear how students sort through issues. For example, a prosecutor might ask a student what he or she would do if asked to prosecute a case when it seemed likely the defendant was innocent. Public service organizations may also test students’ commitment. They don’t want to think students are working for them only because they couldn’t get a job with a big firm. Students should be prepared with concrete reasons why they want to work for the organization. Any resume inconsistent with the organization’s mission is likely to be met with questions. For example, if a student has worked for a large business organization, a legal aid society might wonder if the student is truly interested in its mission. Students should be prepared with answers and explanations of any such inconsistencies.

There are many sources for finding government and public service internships. Several can be found in the Office of Career Services, like “Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide,” which contains listings of public service opportunities across the nation. Students can also find other useful information, like the list of non-William & Mary summer funding sources, on the OCS Resources for Students page.

Continued on page 4.

Wren Chapel Cross Controversy, continued from cover.

to me, especially considering that we’re a state school.”

Other law students shared Blumenthal’s general awareness and support of the move.

“I have not paid much attention to the situation at all—I think I read one email from President Nichol, and that is it,” said Kevin Kennedy (3L), president of the Christian Legal Society. “Christianity is meaningless without the death of Jesus on the cross, so if a church was removing the symbol of a cross, I would take that as a bad sign for that church. But William & Mary isn’t a church, and I don’t expect it to act like one. Only displaying the cross for distinctly Christian services in the chapel is probably a good decision.”

Members of other faiths echoed Kennedy’s sentiments.

“I was vaguely aware of the controversy, but it was certainly not looming in my mind,” said Shana Hofstetter (2L), president of the Jewish Law Students Association.

“A cross is a religious symbol, and, if by nothing else, that’s proven by the fact that there were no activities by Jewish or Muslim groups until the cross was taken down. But I can understand the controversy considering that some see the cross as a piece of history.”

Even law students who attended the College as undergraduates were on board with the president.

“The solution seems perfectly reasonable,” said Mike Spies (3L), who graduated from the College in 2003. “If you want [the cross], you can get it.”

Even after the events of the fall, the issue continued to unfold. In an e-mail to students on December 20, 2006, Nichol announced two changes to the placement of the cross in Wren Chapel. First, the cross will now be displayed all day Sunday. Second, a permanent plaque will “commemorate the Chapel’s origins as an Anglican place of worship and symbol of the Christian beginnings of the College.”

Although this arrangement may have helped damp the flames, it may simply have come too late to placate some interests.

“I think that if President Nichol had taken the temperature of more groups before the removal of the cross, a compromise could have been worked out in private instead of having the debate take place on the editorial pages of Virginia’s newspapers,” said Les Boswell (3L), another 2003 graduate of the College.

Indeed, Nichol and the College continue to sort out the issue in public. The president used the occasion of his first State of the College address Thursday to announce that he had formed a committee to examine the place for religion in public universities. He stated that Marshall-Wythe’s Prof. Alan Meese and the College’s emeritus chair of the Religion Department would co-chair the committee.

“I feel bad for President Nichol because I think he’s doing a tremendous job as President of the College,” Boswell said. “I hope the firestorm surrounding the cross will soon blow over and we can return our focus to the more pressing issues confronting William & Mary.”
by Kelly Pereira
News Editor

After five and a half years, Dean Brian Lewis is moving on. As of March 2, Dean Lewis will be departing W&M to take the position of Assistant Dean for Career Services at UNC-Chapel Hill Law. There will be a reception in his honor on the afternoon of Friday, March 2. Dean Lewis explained that he had nothing but positive experiences at W&M, but it was simply time to move on.

Opportunity is knocking for both Dean Lewis and his wife at Chapel Hill. Dean Lewis will be the head of an office of five staff members. He had to be encouraged to apply for the job several times by a former employee of UNC. Better career opportunities for his wife finally convinced him to leave W&M. His wife currently commutes to VCU in Richmond to work as a public health researcher. Chapel Hill and its environs have several opportunities: UNC itself has the second ranked public health program in the country, and there are additional opportunities at the EPA, the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, and Duke University. Dean Lewis said that he leaves with “mixed feelings.” He is excited to return to running an office, but he is also sad to leave the W&M students and faculty behind.

Having worked in career services all his adult life, Dean Lewis cannot imagine another career. Amazingly, he knew that he wanted to work in job placement since his junior year of college. The work is “everything I thought it would be and more,” said Dean Lewis. He was mainly attracted to the work because of the people component, but he was surprised to find that there was a large administrative component as well. Fortunately, he also enjoys that aspect of his job. Dean Lewis loves the work that he does, and his goal is to pass that on. “My job is to help students maximize the chances they will find the same,” he said.

Dean Revely said of Dean Lewis, “It’s been wonderful having Dean Lewis at Marshall-Wythe, and not just for his superb work in career services. He and his wife Mary have also contributed richly on the singing front. Most of us have heard them making great music together. We will miss the Lewises very much and send them to Chapel Hill with our best wishes.”

Dean Kaplan said, “Dean Lewis is expert at his work and a great guy, to boot. One of his most important qualities is his genuine concern for the well-being of students and graduates. They appreciate his accessibility, sensitivity, sound advice, sense of humor, and support of activities such as singer-songwriter, date auction, and the bone marrow drive. Dean Lewis’s reputation and longevity in the legal career services profession have been instrumental in developing recruiting relationships with employers throughout the country.”

Dean Lewis will be leaving his rock and roll band behind, but the band will play on as a four-piece band with possible guest appearances when Dean Lewis returns for visits. The final performance of Beats Walkin’ will likely be at the Corner Pocket on Feb. 10 from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. (no cover). There may be an additional gig by Beats Walkin’ at J.M. Randall’s in February. Dean Lewis and his wife released a self-produced CD in May. They plan to continue performing in Chapel Hill and to recruit a bass player. The close-harmony acoustic country duo of Dean Lewis and his wife will perform at Sacred Grounds on Feb. 24 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. (no cover).

Dean Lewis leaves behind a great legacy at W&M. He is proud of having started the Public Service Partners Program with employers who come to campus. He has been on the National Association of Law Placement for twenty years and has served on its board. He will be hard to replace, but W&M students will be included in the interview process of selecting a new Assistant Dean of OCS.

W&M thanks Dean Lewis for a job well done and wishes him all the best.

Guidance for Future Trial Lawyers

by Bereket Tesfu
Contributor

The Executive Committee of the American Association for Justice (AAJ), formerly the Association of Trial Lawyers of American (ATLA), chapter at William & Mary Law would like to thank those of you who attended our program last November. For those of you who were not able to attend, take heart. The chapter will have such programs in the future, as well as:

- trial advocacy training/education sessions,
- networking events with established trial lawyers, and
- panel discussions and/or debates on protecting the civil justice system.

Also, the Executive Committee would like to encourage you aspiring trial lawyers, regardless of what area(s) of law you intend on practicing, to consider AAJ student membership. With more than 55,000 members worldwide, AAJ is the largest trial bar in the world. Our chapter is dedicated to the mission of helping our law students develop the courtroom skills, legal knowledge, and professional contacts needed to build successful careers as trial lawyers. We work to accomplish this mission by providing training, education, and professional networking opportunities for our law students. The benefits of membership are far too many to list here, but annual membership dues are only $15, paid to the national organization. The chapter requires no other dues for membership.

If you would like to be informed of chapter programs in the future and/or are interested in membership, please send an e-mail to Bereket Tesfu at btesfu@gmail.com containing your name, class year, and whether you want to be added to the chapter mailing list, are interested in membership, or both. If you would like to learn more about AAJ, including membership benefits, please visit the organization’s website at www.justice.org .
Inside the D.C. Circuit

by Daron Janis
Contributor

In an event sponsored by the J. Reuben Clark Law Society on Jan. 22, Judge Thomas B. Griffith of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit delivered a fascinating and entertaining presentation on “The Curious Role of the D.C. Circuit” to students and faculty of the William & Mary School of Law. True to his good-natured humor, Judge Griffith managed to work the term “frisky” into his presentation on several occasions as a tribute to Dean Reveley’s lively introduction in which the Dean used the term to describe Judge Griffith’s warmth and personal likability.

Judge Griffith first cited the D.C. Circuit’s high percentage of administrative law cases involving the federal government as one of the unique aspects of the court. He estimated that about two-thirds of the D.C. Circuit’s docket is filled with cases involving the FDA, EPA, and other federal agencies as a party. In contrast, the D.C. Circuit sees a relatively small percentage of criminal cases because it only has jurisdiction over crimes from the District of Columbia.

Another unique aspect, according to the Judge, is the historical tradition of Supreme Court justices coming from the D.C. Circuit. Judge Griffith pointed out that, of the nine current justices on the Supreme Court, four of them—Chief Justice Roberts and Justices Scalia, Thomas, and Ginsburg—came from the D.C. Circuit.

Judge Griffith explained that judges for the D.C. Circuit, unlike other circuit courts, come from all over the country and, therefore, are often identified by their home states. In an amusing story, Judge Griffith explained that officially he is known on the court as “Judge Griffith of Utah” even though he is a native Virginian. This case of misidentification came about because at the time of his nomination, he was working as General Counsel for Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. When asked which state he wanted to be identified with, Judge Griffith said he had only to think about who was then the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee—Senator Orrin Hatch (Utah)—and he knew what the answer needed to be.

Judge Griffith also described how the close proximity of the judges’ chambers affects life on the D.C. Circuit. In most circuit courts, judges have chambers in the various states which the circuit covers. The D.C. Circuit Court, however, resides completely in one courthouse, so all the judges’ chambers are in the same building. Even more intriguing is the fact that the D.C. District Court judges share the same courthouse with the D.C. Circuit Court judges. Judge Griffith mentioned that this often makes for interesting (and sometimes awkward) lunches, especially when he has ruled just minutes before lunch that a lower court judge with whom Judge Griffith is eating lunch abused his discretion or misinterpreted the law.

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of the D.C. Circuit, according to Judge Griffith, is the judges’ pursuit of consensus. Judge Griffith contrasted this spirit of consensus with what many view as the adherence to a personal jurisprudence among the Supreme Court Justices. Judge Griffith opined that dissent often tears down credibility whereas consensus breeds power and clearness in law. Judge Griffith acknowledged, though, that there is a place for dissent when a judge feels strongly that a case has been wrongly decided, but that dissents should be respectful and solidly grounded in the rule of law.

On a personal note, Judge Griffith said that of all he has done in his career, his time spent as Senate Legal Counsel was the most fascinating, particularly because he held this position during the impeachment trial of President Clinton. Judge Griffith noted that his impartial aid of both Republicans and Democrats during his service in the Senate was the most influential factor in his securing confirmation during one of the most difficult periods in recent history for federal judicial nominees. Judge Griffith related, however, that as far as a day-to-day job goes, he much preferred working at BYU because he enjoyed the university setting, especially working with students, and he believed in the mission of the university—that of higher education in a religious setting.

Judge Griffith also mentioned how awestruck he was to have his name on his locker along with those of Justice Scalia and Chief Justice Roberts, who had occupied the same locker when they were on the D.C. Circuit. He joked that when he was nominated to the D.C. Circuit, his ABA rating was the lowest possible while still being acceptable, but then he named several other current prominent Circuit Court judges and Supreme Court Justices who also share that ignominious distinction and concluded, in characteristic optimism, that he must be in good company.

Funding Tips

Continued from page 2.

Students on Blackboard.

The most well-known source of funding for W&M students is the Public Service Fund. Every year, PSF and the law school collaborate to give fellowships to students working for the government or public service organizations during the summer. The fellowships provide $3,600 for ten weeks. Applicants can be given pro rata fellowships for part-time positions or part summers. Applicants must submit their applications for funding this summer by March 29. The application may be downloaded from the OCS Resources for Students on Blackboard.

Maryann Nolan (3L) and Jennie Cordis (2L) of the Public Service Fund were present at the workshop to help students understand the PSF funding process. Students submit multiple copies of their applications, which are anonymous. The applications are reviewed by the PSF Board and Dean Kaplan, who work together to decide how to distribute the funds. The applications include four essay questions, which include a description of the job and why it deserves funding, the student’s public service activities and commitment, the student’s participation in PSF, and any other factors the student feels should be considered.

Maryann and Jennie had many tips for students. The most common reasons for students not receiving funding, or less funding than others, were bad essays and poor proofreading. Applications begun at the last minute were glaringly obvious. The most important things students can do to ensure their funding are to make sure their applications are professional, concise, well thought-out, and to make sure they include plenty of volunteering for PSF.

Students who plan to apply for funding and have not yet become involved with PSF should start volunteering as soon as possible. To join the PSF listserv, students can e-mail publicservicefund@gmail.com. For specific questions about PSF funding, PSF, or public service internships in general, students can email mnpcola@wm.edu or jgeord@wm.edu. For more information about finding or funding public service internships, students should visit the Office of Career Services.
State of the College: Good, but Room for Improvement

by Meghan Horn
Staff Writer

The first annual State of the College address was held Jan. 25 in the University Center Commonwealth Auditorium. Ryan Scofield, Student Assembly President, introduced President Gene Nichol. President Nichol spoke before an audience of students, faculty, and interested parties about the recent achievements and future goals of the College.

President Nichol began with the good news, focusing mainly on news relevant to undergraduate listeners: According to Kiplinger, William & Mary rose to the third best value in a public school, taking cost and quality of education into consideration. The College ranks sixth among comparable institutions for alumni currently serving in the Peace Corps. William & Mary athletes have the fifth highest academic performance rating in the country. The undergraduate class of 2010 is the College’s most diverse yet, with 25% students of color. In the last quarter of 2006, over 26 million dollars were raised for the College.

President Nichol also presented some goals: The Gateway Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships to students from low-income families, allowed 88 scholars to enroll in the College this academic year, eleven more than last year and more than in any past year. President Nichol stated that the College hopes to double this number in the next six years.

The faculty compensation rate is now at the thirty-eighth percentile nationally; President Nichol stated that the College’s goal is to raise this to the seventy-fifth percentile, emphasizing the importance of attracting strong instructors. President Nichol discussed the importance of increasing compensation for staff members as well.

Most concretely, President Nichol also announced the creation of a presidential committee formed to address the controversy surrounding the cross in Wren Chapel. The committee, comprised of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, will examine questions surrounding the appropriateness and legality of religion in a public university, while keeping in mind the historic nature of William & Mary. The committee will be co-chaired by law Professor Alan Meese. President Nichol stated that he has asked that the committee report back to him “by the end of the semester.”

Marshall-Wythe Chapter of the VBA Helps Students Serve Community

by Lavonda Rowe
Contributor

The Virginia Bar Association is a voluntary organization that endeavors to promote the highest professional standards for lawyers, to improve the law and the administration of justice, and to advance collegiality among lawyers. The VBA—Marshall-Wythe Chapter aims to accomplish the same goals for law students.

An important challenge of the VBA is to facilitate law students’ participation in community service for the purpose of identifying more meaningful ways to serve those in need. The VBA aims to overcome this challenge in two ways. First, the VBA encourages law students to sign up to become a community servant by pledging to perform 35 hours of community service over the course of a year. Students can make the pledge online at www.vba.org. Second, VBA promotes volunteering for charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations. In particular, the Marshall-Wythe Chapter sponsors community service projects like drives for food, clothing, and most recently, blood.

On Jan. 24, over two dozen students, faculty, and staff participated in the American Red Cross blood drive. Another blood drive may be planned for later this semester. The Docket reported that the VBA’s January clothing drive “netted about 18 dozen items including 22 winter coats which were given to two Williamsburg Organizations (Avalon and FISH). The state-wide drive was sponsored by the Virginia Bar Association’s Community Service Council.”

Community service involvement provides personal fulfillment and an opportunity to develop friendships with others. If you are interested in becoming a member of the VBA-Marshall-Wythe Chapter with no obligatory dues, please contact Carrie Harris at cmharr@wm.edu.
We Know What You Did Last Summer…

Every year the Public Service Fund, in cooperation with the Law School, provides financial support to a large number of William & Mary students during the summer so that they can pursue opportunities with government and public interest organizations. Each issue of The Advocate will feature stories authored by the sponsored students.

Working for the Taxman - and the Taxpayers

by Christina Revels
Contributor

Thanks to support from the Public Service Fund, I was fortunate enough to be able to spend a portion of this past summer working at the Internal Revenue Service’s Office of the Chief Counsel in Richmond, Virginia.

Although it is not a typical “public interest” organization, the Internal Revenue Service serves a vital role for the public interest. It is part of the federal government and is in charge of collecting tax revenue. This is the primary funding source for the federal government. The United States government as we know it truly could not function without the funds collected by the Internal Revenue Service.

The money collected by the Internal Revenue Service is used to fund a huge array of programs benefiting virtually every citizen of this country and many foreign citizens. Among the programs receiving funding from the federal government are welfare programs providing housing, food, and medical care to indigent individuals; legal aid programs providing legal assistance to indigent clients; law enforcement and prosecutors who help to keep the country safe; foreign assistance to needy countries; and a wide variety of other programs that directly and indirectly provide for the safety, welfare, and prosperity of the citizens of this country and others.

Funds collected by the Internal Revenue Service are at the heart of a huge array of programs working to benefit individuals of all income levels. As an organization, the Internal Revenue Service strives to provide a high level of service to taxpayers and to enforce the tax laws equitably to ensure that all individuals comply with their responsibility to pay taxes.

The Chief Counsel’s Office serves an important role in the functioning of the Internal Revenue Service, and its attorneys perform a variety of functions. Its principal client is the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service. The main office in Washington, D.C. houses attorneys who specialize in various provisions of the tax code who provide guidance on its proper interpretation. In addition, attorneys working for the Chief Counsel’s Office represent the Internal Revenue Service in court proceedings, draft regulations, and provide legal advice to Internal Revenue Service employees and taxpayers.

I worked primarily with attorneys in the Richmond Office’s Small Business and Self-Employed Group. They represent the Internal Revenue Service in various proceedings including bankruptcy litigation and various other collection proceedings. Because they have so much specialized knowledge of tax law, they often work in conjunction with Department of Justice attorneys, who also handle tax cases. In addition, they advise field agents (such as those performing audits) and appeals officers on the proper interpretation of the tax laws.

During my time at the Chief Counsel’s Office, the factor that surprised and impressed me the most was the way the focus of Chief Counsel’s Office attorneys is different from attorneys in private practice. Although the Chief Counsel’s Office has a client, the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, there is a tremendous amount of focus on taxpayers’ rights and doing the “right” thing for the taxpayers and citizens of this country. As an initial starting point, the Internal Revenue Service employs taxpayer advocates. Also, contrary to attorneys working at law firms for private clients, there was an overriding goal of doing the “right” thing.

For example, an attorney at the Chief Counsel’s office may have a collection case for which he knows he can make a successful legal argument. However, because the Chief Counsel’s office has determined it was not the legislative intent for the law to be applied in this type of circumstance, the attorney will not pursue the matter so as not to act or set a precedent contrary to that legislative intent. Before making a legal argument, Chief Counsel’s Office attorneys even consider aspects of a legal argument such as, if accepted by the court, whether it would set a precedent that would have a negative impact on a particular industry that was unintended by the legislature when the laws in question were adopted.

In contrast, attorneys working for private clients are typically called on to make the best arguments possible to obtain a successful outcome in that client’s case, regardless of what the legislature may have intended for a particular law. At the Chief Counsel’s Office it is much more important to do what is right than simply to win a case.

I am very grateful to the Public Service Fund for helping me to experience this up close and personal view of the functioning of the Internal Revenue Service’s Chief Counsel Office. I gained a new view of the professionalism and true public service mindedness of the attorneys working there. It is a great place for attorneys to work who would like to participate in obtaining funding to be used to fund many different public service projects and who are more interested in doing the right thing than simply winning cases.
We Know What You Did Last Summer...

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Legal Aid Bridges Gap between Government and the Needy

by Megan Erb
Contributor

I’ve always had mixed feelings about the government offering assistance for low-income families. Public benefits, especially health care, can clearly have a positive impact on society and, if properly administered, improve a lot of families’ lives. However, when not properly administered, it seems to be a waste of government money and tax dollars. After this summer, I finally made up my mind—public benefits can do great things. And it is because of organizations like the Legal Aid Society that it happens. Legal Aid serves as the much needed liaison between government programs and recipients.

My job this summer was to work with families needing public assistance and find ways to improve the application process. I was placed in the health/income/housing practice area. The focus of my projects was on problems regarding Medicaid, Medicare, food stamps, and welfare programs.

I was given the opportunity to organize my own outreach program throughout the summer. I traveled around Cincinnati to advise families, help them fill out their applications, and lead them through the process. The application process to receive public health benefits is complicated, and it amazes me that some families succeed in completing it without any guidance. The requirements are extensive and families must produce an unending list of documents before being considered. Meeting with these families was the most rewarding part of my job. People were so grateful for any help I could give—I even received thank you letters! Not many lawyers can say that.

My favorite story to tell about my summer experience involves a Korean family. The father and mother both worked two jobs and had to care for their handicapped son. They were legal immigrants but the social services systems incorrectly processed their paperwork back in 1988. The Department of Job and Family Services had denied them all forms of public aid. While the family was overly qualified to receive assistance, they only worried about getting help for their son. Most social workers ignored the glaring error in their systems and ignored the family’s requests for help. The father came to Legal Aid for help and, after many visits, phone calls, and meetings, my supervising attorney and I succeeded in getting help for their family. In addition, our stubbornness caused quite the ruckus in the administration, and the Department has recently changed their entire policy regarding legal immigrants’ eligibility for public benefits. It was fun to play the role of the outspoken and persistent law clerk who was determined to force some changes on the Department, while the Legal Aid lawyers preserved their relationship with the Department.

Along with helping the Korean family, the other highlight of my summer job was seeing the impact of the research I did on the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. I worked closely with the Department and many social workers over the course of the summer and discovered several issues in the general application process for families across the board. The problems were preventing eligible families from receiving public benefits and giving benefits to those individuals who should not be receiving them. At the end of the summer, I compiled all of my data and research about these problems and presented them to the Legal Aid Society, the organizations we worked with, and eventually the executive board of the Department of Job and Family Services. My supervisors still send me emails about new changes in policies that stemmed from my research.

That is the best part of working in the public interest sector. Interns have the ability to actually make a difference in the course of four months. We have the time to address problems and issues the lawyers have simply not been able to while balancing all of their clients. Cincinnati is fortunate to have a huge Legal Aid Society, taking on 6,000 new cases each year and providing other forms of help to 15,000 other families. And they are still forced to turn down thousands of other families. This means that interns have an unlimited number of opportunities to get involved and have interesting, hands on experiences.

All in all, I had a great experience at Legal Aid. The work schedule was flexible, and the environment was not as formal as most large firms. I was exposed to several different legal topics in my department, and, most importantly, I worked with the most wonderful people. Attorneys at Legal Aid are the nicest, most sincere people in the law field. They will freely admit to the difficulties of working in the public interest sector. But they unanimously agreed that it was worth it. When you love your job, you take the good (rewarding experience of helping people) with the bad (lower pay, long hours). I’ve never seen so many happy lawyers dedicated to helping every one of their clients.
Look to this space for news about speakers and other major events at the law school. If your organization has an event in the next month you would like advertised, please e-mail TheAdvocateWM@gmail.com.

**Upcoming Events**

**Thursday, February 1**
Admiral James M. Loy to speak on Law and the Post-9/11 Security Environment
Admiral (Ret.) James M. Loy will discuss the array of law that has framed the dimensions of the post-9/11 security environment, focusing on the role of lawyers in interpreting and adjusting legal norms to face these new challenges. The event will be held in Room 119 at 3:30 p.m.

Lunch with Lawyers: Careers in Criminal Law. Panel at 12:50 p.m. in Room 133.

**Friday, February 2**
100 Nights Celebration: The Class of 2007 begins counting down the days until graduation.

Bill of Rights Journal Symposium: Panels of distinguished scholars speak on the topic of presidential signing statements. The event will be held in Room 124, the Faculty Room, and the lobby at 3:00 p.m.

**Saturday, February 3**
Bill of Rights Journal Symposium (continued): The event continues at 9:00 a.m.

**Tuesday, February 6**
JAG Day
Lunch with Lawyers: In-House Counsel. Panel at 12:50 in Room 141.

SBA: Election Information Meeting. Informational meeting for those interested in running for a position on the next SBA at 1:00 p.m. in Room 135. Members of SBA will be there to talk about their positions and duties, and members of Honor Council will be there to talk about the election rules.

**Saturday, February 10**
Charter Day: U.S. Sen. Chuck Hagel to be keynote speaker at event marking the 314th anniversary of the Royal Charter. Tickets are required (call 221-1001). For more information, see the press release at http://www.wm.edu/news/index.php?id=7191. The event will be held in Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall at 10:00 a.m.

Environmental Law & Policy Review Symposium: Panels of distinguished scholars speak about issues related to the symposium’s theme, “Mission Impossible?: The Compatibility of Military and Environmental Goals.” The event will be held in the McGlothlin Courtroom. Breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m., and the first lecture begins at 9:15 a.m.

Barrister’s Ball: Time to get ready to dance like no one’s watching! The event will be held at the Woodlands from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Round-trip shuttle service provided from the law school.

**Monday, February 12**
George Wythe Lecture to Highlight Paradoxes of the Child Welfare System Northwestern University School of Law Professor Dorothy Roberts will present the 2006-07 George Wythe Lecture, entitled “Child Welfare’s Paradox.” The lecture will be given in Room 127 at 3:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 14**
Lunch with Lawyers: Family and Child Advocacy Law. Panel at 12:50 p.m. in Faculty Room.

**Corrections:**
The Nov. 22 edition of The Advocate erroneously credited the Trial Team for co-sponsoring “Career Avenues as a Trial Lawyer” along with OCS. The panel was co-sponsored by the W&M chapter of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA), which has since affiliated itself with American Association for Justice (AAJ).

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Mardi Gras at The Corner Pocket with
STEVE RILEY AND THE MANOU PLAYBOYS
February 8 • 8 p.m. • tickets $10 for students
A la carte Cajun dinner from 6 to 8 p.m.

THE CORNER POCKET
4805 Courthouse Street in New Town
220-0808
by Asim Modi
Features Editor

Does the world really need another article about the Super Bowl? With two weeks between the conference championship games and the Super Bowl, it would be safe to say that the mainstream media has the game pretty well covered. Moreover, we at The Advocate are on the outside looking in due to the NFL press office’s bizarre refusal to grant a biweekly law school student newspaper all the access and credentials to cover a sporting event that these days only marginally involves sports.

Still, putting the bitterness aside, this preview surely could not be worse than what ESPN, Fox, CBS, or NBC have to offer. What is the point of hiring ex-players and coaches if all they are going to say is that the team with more heart and the team who makes more plays will win the game? In all the years Sean Salisbury spent watching the sport as a career backup or that Michael Irvin played while in a drug-induced haze, they apparently could not exceed the level of insight brought by Mike Valenti, the distraught Michigan State sports radio guy whose unbelievable meltdown after Sparty’s “choke job” (or “pucker”) against Notre Dame has become a cult hit at the law school.

Is there any point to this stream of consciousness criticism? Not really, other than to recommend that people seeking legitimate football analysis should listen only to Ron Jaworski and read the following discussion of the matchups that will decide the game.

Colts Offense v. Bears Defense: Much of the attention here will fall on Colts QB Peyton Manning and Bears MLB Brian Urlacher. As it is pretty well acknowledged that both are dominant players in their respective positions, the natural place to look to see which will carry the day is the advertising world. Manning is on TV relentlessly, pitching Sprint, MasterCard, Gatorade, Sports Center, etc. While the Gatorade ads are just stupid and the Sprint ads are memorable only for his 70s porn star ‘stache, the MasterCard ads are pure gold. How could you not laugh at “Cut That Meat, Cut That Meat?” Urlacher was recently in those commercials where he, Michael Vick, and LaDainian Tomlinson are on a high school football team. The ads were mildly amusing, but Urlacher played no role in that. Though this does not relate to commercials, Urlacher did date Paris Hilton, so that’s definitely a mark against him (though it was in her “Simple Life” sex tape making heyday rather than her current reputation as a drunk driving, In and Out Burger craving muppet). In Urlacher’s defense, not having a neck does make you less commercially appealing. While the Colts appear to have a clear edge in this category, good news for the Bears is that Tank Johnson will be allowed to leave the state of Illinois for the game in Miami. Johnson, perhaps sensing that war with Iran is in the offing, was using his home as an arms depot and was arrested last month and put on house arrest. Still, can the Bears force Manning out of the pocket, cover the perpetually open Dallas Clark, and stop the increasingly effective Joseph Addai/Dominic Rhodes tandem? Probably not. Edge: Colts.

Bears Offense v. Colts Defense: All the attention here will fall on Bears QB Rex Grossman—one, from reading articles about the Bears, with the footballing ability of a Muppet. All this criticism overlooks the fact that in the first half of the season, Grossman’s name was mentioned in MVP discussions and sportscasters dared to put his name in the same sentence as Brett Favre. That is all just a memory now, and Grossman does not even have the best drunken photographs among Bears QB’s. (Kyle Orton with Jack Daniel’s dribbling down his front wins that one. In the same category, do check out Ben Roethlisberger’s “Drink Like a Champion Today,” as well as Eli Manning’s karaoke shots, which can be found at http://drunkathletes.synergyofsports.com.) The Bears would love for Grossman to replicate his form in the second half of the Saints game in the Super Bowl, but realistically they will have to rely upon their own rushing duo of Thomas Jones and Cedric Benson. With those two, the strategy appears to be that they start Benson and he performs in his usual uninspiring way, thus lulling the opposition into a false sense of security, and then Jones comes in and actually runs forward. Whether that will work against a Colts defense led by Dwight Freeney and those talismanic former Michigan Wolverines Cato June and Marlin Jackson (there are no rules against calling a reserve cornerback a talisman) obviously remains to be seen. The Colts defense has improved a lot in the last month and probably should stop a Bears offense that is the worst of all the offenses they have faced in the playoffs. Edge: Colts.

Special Teams: The Colts’ last kicker was Mike Vanderjagt, a guy Manning once called an “idiot” and “liquored-up.” Vanderjagt went to West Virginia University. The current kicker, Adam Vinatieri, won Super Bowls for the Patriots with his leg, but, more importantly, Vinatieri ran a kicking clinic at my high school in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Does Devin Hester have any West Virginia ties? Edge: Colts.

Before just handing the title to the Colts, it should be noted that if somehow the Bears can channel the spirit of the Super Bowl Shuffle (“We are the Bears Shufflin’ Crew/Shufflin’ on down, doin’ it for you/We’re so bad we know we’re good/ Blowin’ your mind like we knew we would”) and Ditka, then just maybe they could pull off a Superfans heart attack-inducing upset. But now, it seems that Rex Grossman will have to live with the title of being the 964th best player never to win a Super Bowl for at least one more year.

Colts 27, Bears 13.
The Coming Year in ("Indie") Music

by Michael Kourabas
Features Editor

Two thousand seven has the opportunity to be the best year indie-rock has seen this millennium. The years 2004 and 2005 ushered in a new era of quality and output—the latter showcasing some of my all-time favorites, including Animal Collective’s Feels, My Morning Jacket’s Z, Wolf Parade’s Apologies to the Queen Mary, Sigur Ros’s Takk, and Sufjan Stevens’s Illinois—the likes of which the genre hadn’t seen since the days of Pavement and the Pixies. And while this past year wasn’t a letdown (see stellar releases by TV On the Radio, Band of Horses, Destroyer, The Knife and Liars), it was consistently overshadowed by what was to come once the ball dropped in January.

Thanks to technology (and greedy fans), many of the albums set to come out later this winter have trickled out (illegally) over the past few weeks. Being the complete nerd that I am, many precious hours were wasted these last weeks searching for the latest illegal downloading opportunities. What follows is my premature evaluation of the best of what I found.

**Panda Bear, Person Pitch**

Brooklyn-based Animal Collective are one of the most unique and inventive groups in music today. Most of Animal Collective’s vocals come from Panda Bear (a.k.a. Noah Lennox), but nothing that band has done comes close to showcasing the range of those vocals as *Person Pitch*. *Person Pitch* combines the avant-garde nature of Animal Collective—strange noises, pop songs that come in movements—with *Pet Sounds* era Beach Boys harmonies. This album would make Brian Wilson and David Byrne proud. It is both creative and deftly produced, coupling short pop gems with winding twelve minute jams, unlike anything you’re likely to hear this year.

Yet, the album isn’t just creative for creativity’s sake. *Pitch* pushes the limits of the pop envelope without breaking it, something even Animal Collective still struggles with.

**Explosions in the Sky, All of a Sudden I Miss Everyone**

Since we’ve been left without a new Sigur Ros album for a couple of years, Explosions in the Sky are the next best thing. These guys have been around for a while now, although I just discovered them on *All of a Sudden*, set for a Feb. 20 release. Explosions are another of Austin, TX’s talented underground bands (see Spoon), though they shed the “indie” label by making their records entirely instrumental. Songs on *All of a Sudden* range from three minutes—on the album’s chilling closer, “So Long, Lonesome”—to over thirteen on “It’s Natural to Be Afraid,” yet all are equally accessible. Explosions’ past albums have all been themed-driven and the latest is no exception. Words just aren’t necessary when you can say more with a bunch of electric guitars.

**Deerhoof, Friend Opportunity**

Listening to any post-Apple *Owd Deerhoof can erase any “Lost in Translation”-like stereotypes one might harbor of a cold, lonely Japan, and Friend Opportunity is no exception. Simply listening to Satomi Matsuzaki sing on tracks like the nonsensical “Kidz Are So Small” makes one want to hop a flight to Tokyo immediately. Matsuzaki, the band’s de facto lead vocalist, has the voice of a five year old, and the album’s brilliance lies in the contrast between the playful Matsuzaki and the straight rock the band delivers vis-à-vis pounding drums and heady guitar riffs. Deerhoof are a strange and delightfully unique band, and their more pop-rock-oriented records of late are sure to both divide fans and open the door for new admirers as well.

**Arcade Fire, Neon Bible**

I wrote in “these pages” last year about how incredible Arcade Fire’s debut, *Funeral*, is. I considered it the best album since *Pet Sounds* when I first heard it, and the fact that I’m even considering that *Bible* could top it is a testament to the Arcade Fire’s uncanny ability to write moving, complex, and just really awesome songs.

*Neon Bible*, the follow-up to their lauded debut, proves one thing concretely: *Funeral* wasn’t an aberration. On nine-elevenths (that’s all that has come out thus far) of *Neon Bible*, Arcade Fire do what most bands could only dream of accomplishing in a career.

Thematically, the song-writing of Win Butler and Regine Chassagne shifts gears entirely here. Whereas *Funeral* was about the reality of death, *Bible* focuses on insecurity and working class struggle. At the same time, the band maintains an interplay between hope and despair that was so gripping on *Funeral*. *Neon Bible*’s best moments range from contained chaos to gloom. At times, the band’s energy builds to a breaking point, never quite spiraling out of control. On others, Richard Perry’s distorted guitars create a brooding storm of sound, distinctly linking the album’s darker tracks.

Only nostalgia could keep one from acknowledging what the Arcade Fire have accomplished here. *Funeral* was shocking and unexpected in its passion and complexity—something that can never be reproduced. Nor is it necessarily fair to compare the two records. Nevertheless, what the Arcade Fire prove on *Neon Bible* is that they’re a band that has matured, and one that will be around for a very long time.

*Note: Also check out the latest from The Shins, Of Montreal, Air, !!!, LCD Soundsystem, Apostle of Hustle, Menomena, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah!, and Andrew Bird, all of which are tremendous in their own ways. Additionally, watch for new releases from Spoon, Interpol, Radiohead (we hope), Wilco, Animal Collective, Sigur Ros, Wolf Parade, and Modest Mouse later this winter.*
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What did you do over your winter break? If you followed the trend, you went to Israel. Three law students (that I know of) visited the Holy Land this break.

Tal Kadem, a 3L, went to Israel to visit friends and family. He was born in Haifa, Israel. Tal got to reconnect with his roots by sky diving and driving an ATV around the Israeli Army’s tank training land. “[It] involve[ed] ridiculously steep hills and getting mud into nearly every crevice of my face.”

Tal also got to connect with the people of Israel, noting that most of the country’s citizens lack the concept of “personal space.” Another cultural difference that Tal noticed is that the rule of “waiting in line” does not exist to the Israeli people.

Although he was far, far away from Williamsburg, the “tendrils” of William & Mary had a firm grasp on the country. “In a completely random coincidence, I was in the Galilee region in the north of Israel, visiting a natural hot spring that is a somewhat popular (though small) tourist attraction with my family. I was walking around the pools built on the springs (which are sulfur springs, and so very good for your skin, but very stinky) when, suddenly, no less than ten feet ahead of me, I spot none other than Isaac Rosenberg.”

Julianna Frisch and Isaac Rosenberg, both 2Ls, went to Israel FOR FREE. Apparently you get trips and such just for being Jewish. When asked why he went on the trip, Isaac said, “I went to Israel for the same reason most Jews do things: it was free.”

Besides the incredibly good price of the trip, Julianna went to take in some culture, while Isaac’s other motivation was the ladies. “(J-Date just did not have the caliber of girl he was looking for.)” Isaac said, “I figured with three semesters of law school under my belt, I was halfway to being the perfect Jewish husband and could get a little.”

Julianna and Isaac went on the trip with about 40 other Jewish college and grad students. Although Julianna did enjoy many of the important historical sites in Israel, like the Dead Sea and the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum, her favorite part was observing the “sex-starved” college student accompanying her and Isaac on the trip run wild. Isaac took a break from trolling for chicks and enjoyed Akko, the old Crusader stronghold on the Mediterranean. Julianna and Isaac also got to visit a kibbutz (and drink), sleep in a Bedouin tent in the desert (and drink), and talk with Hasidic rabbis (and drink, but this time in the hotel lobby). Julianna said, “Isaac and I made certain to get a good amount of sleep, not be hungover, and wear comfortable shoes so we could soak up every ounce of education!!”

Their trip was not all fun and games though. They had to wake up really early every day, and Julianna had to spend 24 hours a day with Isaac, while most of us probably got to sleep until noon and spend the day Isaac-free. Isaac also said that riding the bus with the other students was synonymous with “enduring impromptu a capella singing” on the bus. “Imagine 40+ hours of off-key harmonies of hits from the ’60s, ’70s, ’80s, ’90s, and today!!!” In addition, everyone on the trip had seen Borat and felt the need to ceaselessly quote the movie . . . NICE!

In addition, all the feral cats roaming the major cities made Isaac miss his own cat Toby (see below for a synopsis of Toby’s break). Isaac was not thrilled with the Bedouin tent because of all the “hidden dangers,” such as the lack of electricity. Isaac said the worst part was that he had “nowhere to plug in my hair straightener or my cell phone so I could call DADDY!!”

But what about those that suffered at home alone while “Dad” went and gallivanted around the holy land? I am talking about Toby Rosenberg. Isaac’s little cat, and according to his Facebook profile, a 1988 graduate of Princeton. Isaac’s negligent absence left Toby with the run of the house, free to do things like stick forks in sockets, surf the internet free of parental controls, and play with matches. Toby was also able to catch up on some of his favorite activities, such as lounging, knocking things off larger things, and shredding paper goods. These are listed as a few of Toby’s interests on Facebook. Toby is an industrious little kitty and used his time alone to do a photo spread for www.stuffonmycat.com. Luckily no burglars broke into the house while Isaac was away, but Toby did set up some booby traps complete with tar and feathers and a blow torch. (Think Home Alone).
The Advocate is back with its first issue of the spring semester, and I know what you are thinking … I can’t wait for Alan Kennedy-Schaffer to tell me what I should think about politics. Well, since my article is probably on the second to last page, you want to turn back towards the front of the paper where his article somehow keeps getting placed. I hope everyone had a restful break, and since I didn’t hear of anyone’s heads exploding. I am guessing the 1Ls were able to get through the rough month where we didn’t have anything to do. Since most people make a list of resolutions for themselves, I thought I would start this article with a list of resolutions I want other people at our school to follow. First, no more roller bags. This has gotten ridiculous and I know the 1Ls are behind me on this one. It is ridiculous and I know the 1L guys are tired of resolutions for themselves, I thought I would bring up something that I might not bring up to make them feel better. Despite these drawbacks, PW is a solid spot to play because it has a large asphalt surface—optimal for street hockey, with no cars and very few pedestrians around. It does have the occasional school bell, but we make do. Its only drawback is that we have to drive there—a problem only because we have to bring hockey nets with us. This results in the uniquely Canadian game of pick-up hoops going. For those of you questioning the link between Canada and basketball, I think it’s important here to note that (a) basketball is Canadian; (b) Steve Nash, the reigning MVP of the NBA, is Canadian; and (c) as I write this, the Toronto Raptors are first in their division. But I digress. Anyway, it was shortly after playing this game that I realized that basketball in Canada is probably slightly different than that in the states. One, you probably don’t play in eight-degree weather,1 and two, if you do play in eight-degree weather, unlike Gomes and I, you probably don’t go out for ice cream afterwards.

It was delicious ice cream, perhaps one of the five best ice cream experiences I’ve ever had. But as sweet as that ice cream was, it wasn’t half as sweet as watching Jonathon Toews knock off the Americans in the World Juniors.2

1 This is only partly true. In actual fact I come up with hundreds of ideas, except most of them revolve around hockey and the Toronto Maple Leafs. Since for some ungodly reason most of you don’t follow hockey or cheer for the Leafs (have fun roasting in hell, heathens), I’m forced to come up with something else to write about.

2 This appears to be a good place to mention one of my new year’s resolutions—stop making fun of my friends in print. Ordinarily, I’d make a joke here about someone being incredibly lame. But I’m not going to today, and I think I’m a better man for it.
to wherever the dance takes place. Even if I had heard that some of the things that happened at Barrister’s last year had taken place at a frat formal, I would have been laughing … but disgusted. I was there last year—not that I remember much of it (because I was so excited about the music and dancing)—but some of the things I do remember are people swinging from chandeliers, someone throwing up their dinner from Aberdeen Barn all over the kitchen, and a few people relieving themselves on the floor of the bathrooms. Now I am not going to mention any names—but Alex Cha-sick owes me money … so …

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I’ve decided to go off topic for the first time in order to tell you all about one of the most amazing events of last semester. It is the story of an underdog flag football team, and the hero playing among us.

So, what happens when you put together a group of the most talented 1L athletes, three 2Ls who are just along for the ride, and a 3L boss with more fire than most NFL players? Perfection. Well, almost.

“Browning’s 1Ls,” our co-ed flag football team, put together a dream season this year. Ryan Browning’s ingenious idea of putting together a young, co-ed flag football team came about sometime after intramural softball season was over—even before he heard that Tom Jackson Project would not field a co-ed team this year, thus ending their reign of holding the co-ed championship in nearly every sport. Browning started compiling a group of 1Ls to be the core of the team, which would set up his 1Ls for success in years to come. While it might not work right away, it would come together at some point.

He began by locking down a quarterback, the 6’3” lumberjack, Mike Hinchcliff. After that he was off to the races. Next, he added speedster Dan Redding, who makes the Bears’ Devin Hester look like Ki-Jana Carter. After locking down some big guns, Browning added some ladies who, while having virtually no collective football experience, ended up being the real deal.

Enter a defensive line of 1Ls Sarah Simmons, Leigh Wilson, and Mary Hutton, and now you’ve almost got a football team. But, there’s more.

You can’t have a football team without the skill players. On the offensive side of the ball, Jeff P Domore and Ryan Browning rounded out the wide receiver and running back positions, and Gabby Culp added a receiving threat on offense as well. On the defensive side, add 1L Matt Latrick at corner, 1Ls Trenton Brown and Dan Redding at safeties, and myself at linebacker. There’s a team that could compete with the best of them.

Now that you know the team, I’ll skip to the end of the season and kill the suspense. Browning’s 1Ls finished the season undefeated and headed into the playoffs with momentum after handling all four opponents relatively easily. Up until the game against the Public Policy team, Browning’s 1Ls had avoided physical injury for the most part. The injuries in the previous four games only amounted to a broken finger, a pulled hamstring, and some blood here and there.

We’ll skip the score, because it was bad. Browning’s 1Ls had a hard time refocusing after one of our key defenders went down with an injury. On a third down play, the girls lined up to blitz as they normally did, but the Public Policy offensive line had a plan of their own up their sleeves. Two girls on the offensive line planned to face each other and smash anyone who tried to get to the quarterback through the hole between them. And that’s exactly what they did.

Sarah Simmons, who led the team in sacks and celebratory dances after sacks, came through this tiny hole in the offense. The mean Public Policy girls did what amounted to a chest bump, and, unfortunately, Sarah was in the middle. Pop! That’s the sound that ended Sarah’s season and dashed our hopes and dreams.

As Sarah lay in obvious pain, we knew something was wrong. The officials called time-out and did a preliminary “investigation” before calling 911. Within minutes two police officers drove onto the field. Later the ambulance showed up. When the first police officer asked Sarah what happened, I’ll never forget what she said. “Well, I was trying to get the quarterback, but I was too late. I guess I missed my One Shining Moment.” Now, obviously he meant what happened to her knee, but he must not know Sarah Simmons. Sarah wasn’t worried about her knee. Sarah was worried about the game, about her teammates, and about our championship.

The paramedics soon arrived and, after a quick examination, carted her off on a stretcher. The week before our game, Texas quarterback Colt McCoy was carted off the field after suffering an injury against Texas A&M. Sarah may or may not have been watching that game, but both Sarah and Colt knew what to do when their teammates were carted off to the ambulance: Hold up one finger. That’s right, just one, as if to say, “I’m OK, and we’re still number one.” We’ve all seen it before on TV, but it’s surreal to see it in person. You get chills.

To think that our teammate had enough strength and enough fire to hold that one finger up in pain, and that she believed in us, gave us new hope. Sarah inspired us all. We led a roaring cheer as we headed back onto the field. We then promptly got stomped and shut out, never regaining our composure. We like to think it’s because our minds were on Sarah’s health.

One hospital trip and a few orthopedic surgeon appointments later, news of the injury became public. We all watched the sports ticker and saw this roll across the bottom of our screens: NPSMW is reporting Sarah Simmons, defensive end for the Browning’s 1Ls, is out for the season, dashing her hopes for a million dollar contract extension. Doctors confirmed Tuesday morning that Simmons completely tore both the ACL and the MCL in her left knee, following a collision in a Nov. 30 playoff game.

“I would like to thank my momma, the fans, and, of course, God and Jesus for giving me the opportunity to go out there every week and play,” Simmons told the press following the bad news. “And I want to thank my team for all of the help and support they have given me. They are the best. Playing for them was the highlight of every week for me.” When reporting on her treatment, the NPSMW also noted that the orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Lambert, also crushed Simmons’s dreams of skiing in January with her school, as well as her idea of replacing the torn ligaments with ones made of pure gold.¹

¹ We learned a lot that cold November evening. We learned that hope is no match for a team with a quarterback who can throw 60 yards. We learned we cannot win if we don’t score. We learned our defense could stay on the field 35 of the 40 minutes in the game. But most of all, we learned we were playing with a hero among us. We hope that Sarah gets her One Shining Moment before Browning’s 1Ls hang up their cleats for good. Godspeed, Sarah.

¹ “One Shining Moment” is CBS’s theme for the NCAA Basketball Tournament (March Madness) every year. So while Sarah said this, my printing it is giving credit to CBS’s creative genius.

² Entire NPSMW press release written by Sarah Simmons on Dec. 12, 2006. Reprinted with the express permission of Sarah Simmons, Inc. NPSMW (Marshall-Wythe) is a fictional sports network, having no relation to ESPN.

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The Real State of the Union
Alan Kennedy-Shaffer Evaluates the President’s Speech

by Alan Kennedy-Shaffer
Features Editor

When President George W. Bush stepped to the podium to address the nation on Jan. 23, he was quite literally overshadowed by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

To his credit, Bush began by congratulating “Madam Speaker.” Pelosi is the first female to raise the gavel in our country’s history. While Vice President Dick Cheney sneered, the entire chamber erupted with deafening applause for the woman standing next to him on the dais.

Paralyzed by the resounding repudiation of the Republican agenda in November’s midterm elections, Bush sounded almost like a Democrat as he described how our government must “spend the people’s money wisely,” “balance the federal budget,” and “uphold the great tradition of the melting pot that welcomes and assimilates new arrivals.”

Stealing from former Vice President Al Gore’s playbook, Bush acknowledged for the first time that we must “confront the serious challenge of global climate change.” He also mentioned the need to “awaken the conscience of the world to save the people of Darfur.”

Behind Bush’s revamped rhetoric, however, lie a whole lot of inconvenient truths. Maybe Bush figured that the American people have forgiven him for squandering billions of dollars on tax cuts for millionaires. Maybe Bush figured that no one has noticed the national debt skyrocket past eight trillion dollars. Maybe Bush figured that if he mentioned global climate change, he would never have to explain why the White House recently rejected a request from ten major CEO’s for binding caps on greenhouse gas emissions.

More likely, however, Bush probably figured that by talking about domestic issues, he could avoid any serious discussion of a failing war in Iraq. Faced with an increasingly unpopular war, the increasingly unpopular president did not even mention Iraq until near the end of his speech. When Bush finally got around to talking about the war, he sounded like ousted Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, saying that “this is not the fight we entered in Iraq, but it is the fight we’re in.”

Bush contradicted himself on the Iraq War, stating unequivocally that “America must not fail in Iraq” while claiming that “our commitment [in Iraq] is not open-ended.” He said that the White House is implementing a “new strategy” in Iraq, but failed to articulate any strategy other than piecemeal escalation.

Woefully ignorant of reality, Bush warned that failure in Iraq would result in a “contagion of violence” and a “nightmare scenario,” but ignored the fact that more bodies are uncovered in Baghdad every day. He ignored the contagion of violence that has engulfed Iraq in sectarian civil war and bolstered Iranian influence in the region. He ignored the nightmare scenario that already exists in Iraq, a nightmare that has ravaged our military and left more than three thousand American soldiers dead.

As the Washington Post editorialized about the State of the Union address, “President Bush offered the usual assurances … but the state of his presidency has never been worse.”

Having bet his presidency on swift victory in Iraq and an obsequious Congress, Bush wagered it all and lost. He painted himself into a corner on Iraq and is now wondering why he cannot seem to find a way out.

A Washington Post-ABC News poll conducted the week before the State of the Union address found that a stunning sixty-four percent of Americans believe that the Administration’s unilateral decision to invade Iraq was a mistake, while three out of four Americans disapprove of Bush’s handling of the war.

Only forty-five percent of Americans still think of Bush as a strong leader, only forty-two percent of the public say that the president can be trusted in a crisis, and only three in ten Americans feel that Bush understands the problems of people like you and me.

Senator Jim Webb (D-Va.) summed up the general feeling in America toward the Iraq War during his response speech when he quoted President Dwight Eisenhower’s question about the Korean War: “When comes the end?”

Speaking on behalf of the Democratic Party, Webb emphasized that “this country has patiently endured a mismanaged war for nearly four years.” He astutely noted that “many, including myself, warned even before the war began that it was unnecessary.”

Webb drove home the point that the Iraq War has cost our nation dearly, destroyed our country’s reputation, and set us back in our fight against Al Qaeda.

“When comes the end?”

“MBO,FOOFEZ4IBGGF

With Democratic majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, there is reason for Americans to be hopeful that Congress will lead Bush in a new direction. The day after the State of the Union address, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed a bipartisan resolution expressing opposition to Bush’s plan to put twenty thousand more American lives on the line in Iraq.

Bush’s paltry thirty-three percent approval rating seemed to actually work against him during the debate on the resolution, sending Republicans scurrying away from the President’s State of the Union comments. According to the Post, Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), the senior Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, blasted Bush’s Iraq War strategy, calling the decision to escalate “dubious.”

Sen. George Voinovich (R-Ohio) told Bush personally, “You are not listening.”

Alan Kennedy-Shaffer is the author of Denial and Deception: A Study of the Bush Administration’s Rhetorical Case for Invading Iraq.
Guess The Whiteboard

by Joelle Laszlo
Staff Photographer

What happens when the newspaper hosts a contest and no one enters? The paper comes up with a brand new contest (and prizes!) and hopes for the best.

The idea here is simple: we provide a photo of a classroom whiteboard. In two (humorous) sentences or less, you tell us the legal principle or lesson being depicted.

Take the photo below, for example (please!). An acceptable entry would be: “It is important that a law school provide its students with superior resources. In fact, having effective teachers and administrators may compensate for having a roof that is too small for the school building.”

We know you can do better than that with the photo above, and to encourage you we’re offering prizes. Win this go-round and receive a box of 100 life-sized plastic spiders and flies (20 of which glow in the dark)! Prizes could get better – or worse – you’ll never know unless you enter.

Send entries to jelasz@wm.edu. Winner and honorable mentions will be printed in the next issue.