

THE CT

NEWS

Dominion oays for  
Paylor trip • 2

SPORTS

Women’s Basketball • 5

SPECTRUM

STEM in Sports • 6

OPINION

Black American  
Muslims • 8



VCU slips out of NCAA tournament in second round. The Rams could not find an answer to senior Oklahoma guard Buddy Hield, who scored 36 points.

**BRYANT DRAYTON**  
Sports Editor

Defeated, but not without a fight, VCU’s Cinderella run was halted at the hands of Buddy Hield and the Oklahoma Sooners on Sunday in the second round of the NCAA tournament at the Chesapeake Bay Arena in Oklahoma City.

The 85-81 loss in front of a 14,000-deep OU crowd was a tale of two halves for VCU, as the Rams had a nightmarish start that led to a halftime deficit of 44-31. But VCU held Oklahoma’s Buddy Hield to just seven first half points.

“I think he just missed shots,” said senior Melvin Johnson. “In the beginning of the game, Korey and Jordan did a good job arriving on the catch, forcing him to take some tough shots.”

The Sooners capitalized on a smaller VCU frontcourt to start the contest, out-rebounding VCU 25-13 in the first half.

The turning point of the contest came when head coach Will Wade decided to give reserves in sophomore Mike Gilmore and junior Doug Brooks a chance to make their presence known. The two brought scrappy play, silencing the OU crowd with 3-point shots and pesky defense.

“I just wanted to give us a spark,” Gilmore said. “I just wanted to keep this thing going for as long as I could.

Gilmore attributed his early play, then long run on the bench, this season to being passive and not ready to shoot the ball. He said he wanted to go in and fire at will, knowing he could knock down the

—continued on page 5

**SGA Judicial Committee withholds election results**

**FADEL ALLASSAN**  
Print News Editor

The Student Government Association has voted against verifying the results of the 2016 Presidential election until March 23 at 2:30 p.m. according to an email from SGA Chief Justice Vincent Ryan to members of the student organization.

Despite holding elections from March 15-17, the Student Government Association has not yet announced the president-elect and vice President-Elect.

According to the SGA Constitution, unofficial election results are posted to the organization’s website no later than two business days after the close of the election. The official results of the election are posted as soon as they have been confirmed by the Judiciary Committee. If there is contention of the election, results are withheld until the grievances have been resolved.

In a three-way contest, incumbent Pres. Suraj “Sunshine” Telhaj and his running mate junior Tristan Ledbetter faced competition from Presidential hopeful junior Katie Clark and her running mate sophomore Kedji Abazi and junior MaryBeth DeMarco and her running mate sophomore Sarah Kilmon.

The candidates participated in a debate on Jan. 14, where they discussed a slew of topics that are of concern to students, including changes they planned to implement, and personal hurdles they would have to overcome if elected into their respective offices and diversity in the faculty.

—continued on page 3

## The Peppas take the road

**SAMUEL GOODRICH**  
Contributing Writer

Horns, drums, screams and hoops: The Peppas have a unique and energizing sound that booms from the Siegel Center and throughout VCU – so it’s no surprise that they brought down the house in New York and Oklahoma City.

The band recently started accompanying the Rams go to the A-10 tournament in Brooklyn, where they travel alongside them and champion the team’s arrival and representing the River City national television through NBC’s “Today Show.”

Ryan Kopacsi, the Peppas’ director, said he started this tradition simply because they can.

“It’s very accessible for the bus we have in (New York City),” Kopacsi said. “We keep doing it because, frankly, it works.”

Kopacsi said he was amazed by how the band has adopted the trip with open arms.

“I love that the students get so excited for it,” Kopacsi said. “Who would be excited for a 4:30 a.m. report time? But they are.”

Riding into Rockefeller Plaza on a double decker “Havoc lives here” bus, Kopacsi said he was happy with the publicity it brings for the band

—continued on page 6



The Peppas brought their sound to New York City and “The Today Show” for the A10.

### OPINION

## “Beef Bans” in India promote religious intolerance



**JUSTIN JOSEPH**  
Contributing Columnist

Based on a single tip, dozens of police officers rush into a building on property owned by another branch of government. Although they lack proper authorization or a search warrant, they shut down and ransack the cafeteria kitchen in search of their suspect. They continue to search the premises in spite of protests by dignitaries and the established rule of law.

What exactly were these officers looking for? Was it a criminal? A foreign spy? A terrorist? The answer, surprisingly enough, was beef.

Such was the scene in New Delhi, India on October 26, as almost twenty members of the Delhi Police raided the official residence of the government of Kerala, a state in the southern part of the country. They acted on a tip by a leader of the Hindu Sena, alleging that the cafeteria was serving cow meat. Slaughtering and consuming beef is considered a criminal offense in Delhi and many other parts of northern India because of the cow’s sacred status in Hinduism.

Though the food served in question was actually buffalo meat, which is not banned in Delhi, the incident has caused enormous controversy throughout the country. In India, the residences of the

state governments in the capital city receive a status equivalent to foreign embassies. To raid such a location without the permission of its resident commissioner is trespassing, and to trust a complainant without question is irresponsible.

However, this incident raises concerns that go well beyond state rights. The law being enforced belongs to a class of state statute popularly known as ‘beef bans’ that impose the dietary restrictions of Hinduism on all citizens regardless of their religious belief. Although Muslims, Christians, Parsis and even some Hindus do not personally object to beef consumption, their dietary habits are regulated by the law. In the words of freedom fighter Mahatma Gandhi, this amounts to “coercion against those Indians who are not Hindus.”

Although members of minority religious communities are still able to use buffalo meat as a suitable substitution, these laws legitimize radical Hindu nationalists who use terror and intimidation techniques to suppress minority communities. Groups like the Hindu Sena have become more brazen and violent in the time since the election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Incidents of communal violence are at an all-time high throughout the country. This raid, in fact, occurred just a few weeks after a Muslim man was killed by a lynch

mob in the state of Uttar Pradesh due to rumors that he and his family had eaten beef.

Although the man who made the false allegations is currently facing police charges, he has been celebrated as a hero by right-wing organizations. Some have even described him positively as the modern-day equivalent of Nathuram Godse, the Hindu nationalist who assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. The police’s decision to investigate these claims so urgently shows that government agencies and political leaders are becoming instruments of intimidation. Their readiness to be used at the disposal of religious fanatics spells the end of India’s secularism.

Although these incidents have been contained to a smaller scale so far, there is an enormous likelihood that such organizations will exacerbate communal tensions and cause widespread violence. In 1984, tens of thousands of Sikhs were killed or displaced in pogroms, and the most sacred site in Sikhism was attacked by the Indian government. In 2002, thousands of Muslims and Hindus were massacred throughout the state of Gujarat. Christians have been attacked in Orissa, Karnataka, and urban areas in the northern part of the country. In each of these instances, the Indian government

—continued on page 8





In this section:  
Dominion. DEQ. India Ambassador. Planned Parenthood. Marijuana oil. Cabell library.

AP briefs

NATIONAL

Heavy winds as FlyDubai plane crashes in Russia, killing 62

Winds were gusting before dawn Saturday over the airport in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don when a plane carrying 62 people from a favorite Russian holiday destination decided to abort its landing. The timing was tricky. Two planes had landed just a few minutes before the Fly-Dubai plane aimed to touch down. On the other hand, a Russian Aeroflot plane scheduled to land around the same time tried to come down three times then diverted to another airport, according to Flightradar24, an aviation website.

The FlyDubai pilots chose to put their Boeing 737-800 into a holding pattern, circling for two hours over the city located 60 kilometers (37 miles) from the Ukraine border. But when they did finally try to land, something went catastrophically wrong. Their plane plummeted to Earth and exploded in a huge fireball, killing everyone aboard.

3 foreigners among 5 killed in Istanbul suicide bomb attack

A suicide attack on Istanbul's main pedestrian shopping street Saturday killed five people, including two Israelis and one Iranian citizen, in the sixth suicide bombing in Turkey in the past year.

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu issued a statement saying there were several foreigners among the victims.

"Turkey has always said that terrorism has no religion, no language and no race and that terrorism has to be condemned no matter who the perpetrators are," he said. "This sad event has shown once again how right our position is."

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but suspicion fell on the Islamic State group and on Kurdish militants who have claimed two recent attacks in Ankara.

Next in Hulk Hogan sex tape suit: punitive damages, appeals

he eye-popping \$115 million award for former pro-wrestler Hulk Hogan isn't the final round in his sex tape lawsuit against Gawker Media.

Next up, the jury will return to court Monday to award punitive damages in the case that's been closely watched by First Amendment experts, media lawyers and privacy advocates.

And even when the jury's done, there will be appeals.

"Given the key evidence and the most important witness in this case were withheld from the jury, we all knew the appeals court would need to resolve this case," said Gawker founder Nick Denton.

The jurors reached their decision Friday evening. Hogan, whose given name is Terry Bollea, sued Gawker for \$100 million for posting a video of him having sex with his former best friend's wife.

LOCAL

Woman shot by Virginia police was holding fake gun

A 25-year-old black woman was shot and killed by police officers in Virginia on Saturday after threatening them with what turned out to be a fake handgun, police said.

Investigators with the Norfolk Police Department's Vice and Narcotics Division were conducting a surveillance operation when they came across a fight in a parking lot, police said.

The officers saw a woman involved in the altercation brandish what they believed was a handgun and threaten an unarmed man. The officers approached India M. Beaty, who refused to comply with their demands and made a threatening motion with the handgun before the officers fatally shot her, the department said.

Power cables near DC subway fire lacked insulation

Power cables next to the one that caught fire at a downtown Washington subway station on Monday were not equipped with insulating materials designed to prevent moisture and debris from causing corrosion that can lead to fires, a federal official said Friday.

Monday's fire led to an unprecedented daylong shutdown of the Metro system on Wednesday for safety inspections and repairs. Metro's general manager said the inspection revealed three locations where power cables were so badly damaged that it wasn't safe to run trains until they were fixed.

Virginia Democrats use book bill to make fundraising pitch

Virginia Senate Democrats are blasting Republicans for pushing a bill that would force schools to notify parents if their children are to be assigned to read books with sexually explicit content.

The Senate Democratic caucus used the bill in a fundraising pitch this week, urging their supporters to chip in to send a message to Republicans that "censorship is not a Virginia value."

The bill would require teachers to provide a student with an alternative if his or her parent objects to the sexually explicit book.

Briefs by Associated Press



Nearly a dozen Chesterfield residents voiced concerns regarding permits which were issued to Dominion Virginia Power.

DEQ host reconvened meeting about coal ash permits in Chesterfield

ANDREW CRIDER  
Online News Editor

Officials from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) held a public hearing to discuss permits to allow Dominion Virginia Power to build a coal ash dump at the Chesterfield County library Wednesday night.

The meeting, which was originally planned for Feb. 24 and rescheduled after violent storms caused confusion with the public, was a chance for the public to voice concerns about the permits prior to their official issuance by the state agency. The permit in question for the night was Permit 609, which would authorize the construction of a coal ash dump to be built on the grounds of the Chesterfield County Power station.

The Permits said the dumps would be constructed in 2016, with usage beginning in 2017. The dumps would be lined with a plastic composite liner to prevent coal

ash from entering the groundwater supply, and the James River.

Coal ash is the byproduct of burning coal for energy purposes and can contain chemicals such as lead and arsenic which are harmful to Humans as well as the environment.

The permits detail that the life expectancy of the plastic liners in the dumps would be about 20 years. Dominion would have responsibility of the site for 50 years.

11 people, teachers, mothers and residents of Chesterfield spoke to offer comment on the permits. Comments were based around the issues related to the plastic lining of the dumps that could fail after their life expectancy.

"The fatal flaw of solid waste landfills is that they are subject to natural forces," said Emeline Phipps, a Chesterfield County resident and teacher, as well as a member of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defence League.

In her comments to the DEQ,

she said that the liners would not be a permanent solution to contain coal ash pollutants.

"Impartial experts agree that liner failure is inevitable," Phipps said. "Even the EPA admits that all liners ll feel."

Tomas Pakurar, vice president of technology for Hands Across the Lake, a local area environmental group, said that the liners would not work.

"This technology that we use that's legal, just doesn't work, it leaks," Pakurar said. "We still are left with an unsatisfactory design, we don't know what to do."

Marie stella, a local grandmother who has offered public comment to other DEQ permits said that the 20 year life expectancy would cause harm to her grandchildren.

"I'm kind of sad to be here again but my sadness is becoming anger," Stella said. "You are saying this landfill will last about 20 years, some of our grandchildren will be just about 20 years when that time."

The coal ash dumps will be surrounded by a system of ground water wells. The system will allow the detection of ash leakage into the groundwater around the plant, with the water being tested bi annually.

Cathy Taylor, director of the electric environmental services at Dominion Power told the public hearing that the construction of the dumps would be environmentally responsible.

The project under consideration is just one intended environmental improvement at the facility.

The landfill applies to the rules, groundwater monitoring network.

Bob Olson, a concerned member of the public recommended that the groundwater should be tested more frequently than biannually.

"Sampling should be done on a monthly basis," Olsen said. "By the time it's gone into the monitoring every 6 months it's too late."

U.S. Ambassador to India speaks at VCU

JOE JOHNSON  
Contributing Writer

With lighthearted humor and personal family anecdotes, U.S. ambassador to India Richard Verma illustrated aspects of India's rich history and ongoing partnership with the U.S. to the students, staff and public in attendance at the meeting.

Verma began by discussing his family's journey during mass immigration during the partition of India and Pakistan.

"In the partition of India that year, my grandmother and mother would undergo a difficult journey to resettle and rebuild their lives," Verma said. "This theme of starting over is one my mother would experience again when she came to the U.S. many years later."

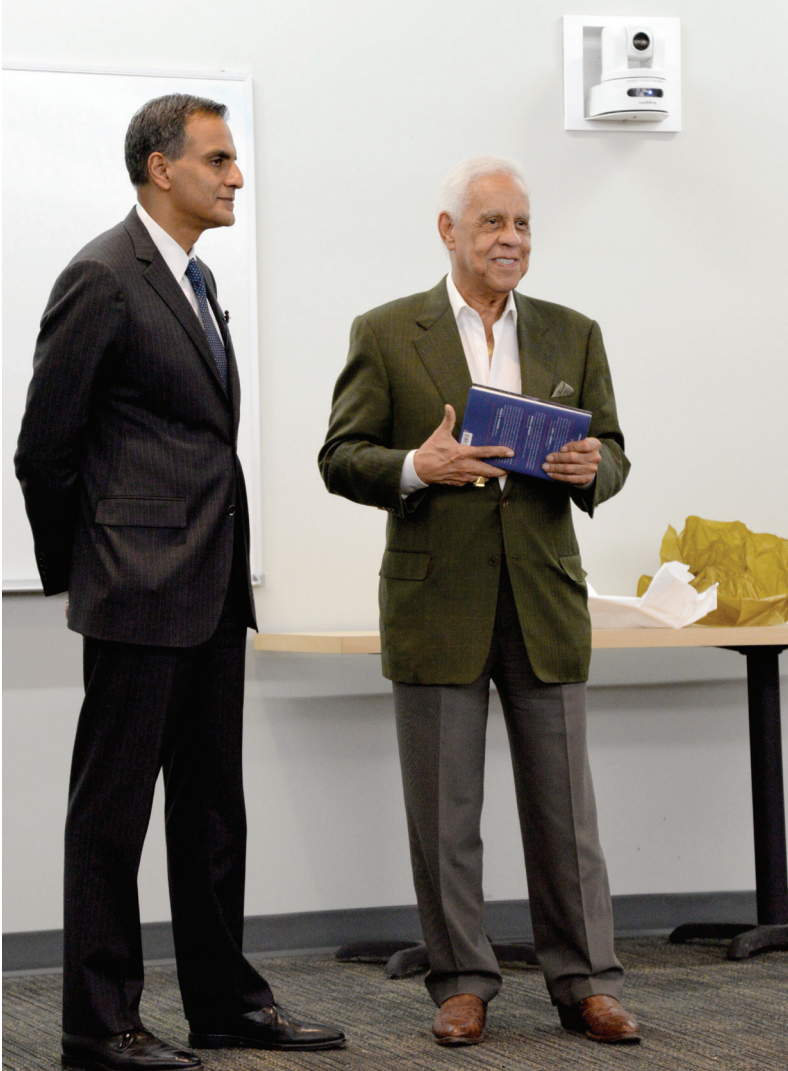
Verma mentioned topics such as joint military operations, space exploration and cooperative medical advances and described the U.S. and indian defence partnerships as "one of the most comprehensive and exciting security partnerships of our time."

Verma made it clear that the

successful U.S.-India relationship is due to people rather than political events.

"I want to talk about the people that make up this relationship and why we are having such a good kind of experience in US-India relations," Verma said. "One of the theories in this case has a lot to do with many of you sitting in this room who have worked pretty hard to make this relationship work."

Before becoming the 25th U.S. ambassador to India in 2014, Verma graduated from American University followed by Georgetown University with a JD and LLM, respectively. The ambassador has been lawyer in the areas of non-proliferation, national security and international law, in addition to receiving the State Department's Distinguished Service Award and has been ranked by India Abroad as one of the 50 most influential Indian Americans. Verma is the fourth speaker to address the Wilder School's India Chair in Democracy and Civil Society, initiated in 2011.



Verma was appointed to be the ambassador to India by Barack Obama in Dec. 2014, he has served in the position since 2015.

Dominion paid for DEQ president's trip to U.S. Masters tournament in 2013

ANDREW CRIDER  
Online News Editor

Dominion Virginia Power paid to send DEQ Director David Paylor to the U.S. Masters Golf Tournament in 2013, according to WAMU in Washington, D.C. The D.C. based news organization said that financial disclosure records indicate Dominion gave Paylor \$2,300 to attend the golf tournament and went on to float a \$1,200 bill at a pub called O'Toole's in Augusta Georgia.

The revelations regarding the relationship between Dominion and Paylor came days after 17 students were arrested during a sit in protest at the DEQ headquarters downtown. The protesters were advocating that Paylor step down after the DEQ issued controversial permits that allow Dominion Power to dump wastewater from coal ash ponds in the James and Potomac Rivers.

The controversial permits also resulted in protest on the grounds of the capitol in February.

DEQ spokesman Bill Hayden indicated that the financial disclosure was the DEQ simply following the letter of the law.

"Mr. Paylor fully disclosed, as required by law, that Dominion paid for his ticket to the Masters golf tournament in 2013," Hayden said, adding that Paylor had no conflict of interest for issuing the permits.

"There is no conflict of interest here, and there is no problem with DEQ issuing the permits," Hayden said.

According to Hayden, Paylor is just one individual who could have an effect on the permit process.

"Permits are written and enforced by a staff of professionals who focus on protecting the environment," Hayden said. "Mr. Paylor joins the 800 other DEQ employees who take their environmental protection responsibilities very seriously."

According to Dominion spokesperson Rob Richardson, Dominion has supported the transparency system known as VPAP that helped disclose this information.

"Dominion is a founding member of VPAP and supports and advocates for disclosure laws."

Richardson says that the entire reason for the series of controversial permits is compliance with an EPA ruling that mandates coal ash ponds be drained.

"Dominion, like the DEQ, Potomac River Keeper, James River Association and many others, believe in protecting the environment," Richardson said.

Dominion did not offer a response as to why they paid for the trip.

Environmental activists have expressed anger with the news from the disclosure.

Michael James-Deramo, president of the VCU chapter of the Virginia Student Environmental Coalition, said that this gift was symbolic of a widespread issue.

"Paylor, like nearly every politician in our state has received money or gifts from Dominion," James-Deramo said.

James-Deramo believes that the gift shows a conflict of Interest.

"As the DEQ's role is to directly regulate Dominion, this is a serious conflict of interest," James-Deramo said. "As the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality, Dave Paylor must commit to taking no further money or gifts from Dominion."

James-Deramo said the permits issued by the DEQ earlier this year have been negligent and that the DEQ had failed its responsibility.

"In the view of the Virginia Student Environmental Coalition, anything less is not doing his job. If Paylor cannot adhere to these demands he must resign," James Deramo said.



# Bill to defund Planned Parenthood fails after senate battle

SOPHIA BELLETTI  
staff writer

Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe said he will attempts by the GOP-led General Assembly to block state funding for Planned Parenthood.

The Virginia Senate and House of Delegates voted along party lines to eliminate funding that allows Planned Parenthood to provide thousands of Virginians with reproductive health care services like STI testing, sex education, and family planning.

“Governor McAuliffe has been a wonderful leader,” said Cianti Stewart-Reid, executive director of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia. “He said he would be a brick wall to ensure women’s health centers stay open and that women in the commonwealth have the access to the care they need and deserve. He has been wonderful

on this issue and we know he will continue his commitment to the women of Virginia.”

The bill, 1090 passed out of a state Senate committee in narrow 8-7 vote on March 3.

I am just one of millions who depends on Planned Parenthood health centers across Virginia and around the country. Our state legislators should stand up for this incredible healthcare provider rather than attempting to defund it and leaving me and thousands of individuals across Virginia without the care we need.

— MORGAN

In February, the House passed a bill to prohibit the Virginia Department of Health from funding clinics that provide abortions ex-

cept in the case of rape or incest or if the mother’s life is endangered.

“At a time when women in Virginia need greater access to care, republicans in the General Assembly are using their time and resources

to target health care programs at a trusted community health care provider,” Stewart-Reid said. “We want to assure the women, men

and young people of the Commonwealth that we will be here to provide them care, no matter what.”

If the bill were to become law, 1,300 people in Richmond could lose access to STI testing. The bill would restrict access to basic health care services statewide for the 22,000 Virginia residents who utilize on Planned Parenthood health centers every year.

“Long term consequences are people who come to Planned Parenthood because they know they’re going to get high quality care that’s nonjudgmental with compati-

ent providers,” Stewart-Reid said.

Generation Action at VCU’s provides students with medically-accurate information to encourage them to make healthy decisions regarding their sexual health and wellness, as well as advocating for access to affordable basic healthcare and essential reproductive health care.

The VCU Generation Action chapter worked to organize students to sign a petition against the bill.

“We believe that the bill is not in the best interest of Virginians and supports a deeply insidious political attack,” said Niyah White, president of Generation Action at VCU.

President of the Virginia Family Foundation, Victoria Cobb, told NBC 29 she is a proponent of Bill 1090.

“What this bill does is it takes good funds and puts them towards other great organizations that do full, comprehensive healthcare for women,” Cobb said. “There’s 140 federally-qualified health centers that provide much more comprehensive care and is a better use of our tax dollars.”

According Planned Parenthood advocates of VA, Planned Parenthood provides birth control, can-

cer screenings, annual exams, and other high-quality health care services to 2.5 million people a year at nearly 650 nonprofit health centers nationwide. At some point in their lives, one in five women in America will turn to Planned Parenthood for care.

Morgan, who asked for her last name to be retained, is a Planned Parenthood patient in Richmond who said she can’t imagine what she would do without the organization’s service.

“I am just one of millions who depends on Planned Parenthood health centers across Virginia and around the country,” Morgan said. “Our state legislators should stand up for this incredible healthcare provider rather than attempting to defund it and leaving me and thousands of individuals across Virginia without the care we need.”

## Medical marijuana oil legalized by state gov.

BRANDON CELENTANO  
Contributing Writer

Last month, the Virginia state legislature passed House Bill 1445, which will allow people to consume and produce cannabis oil for medical purposes. HB 1445 passed both houses before being signed into law, with only Senator Bryce Reeves (R-Spotsylvania) and Delegate Mark Berg (R-Winchester) voting against.

The bill was actually in danger of dying in a Senate committee, where it remained for around a week. However, one day away from the deadline for legislation to clear one chamber and cross to the other, the bill actually received a critical vote in a speedily ended meeting in the Senate Courts of Justice Committee.

WTVR reports that demo-

cratic Gov. Terry McAuliffe said, in the bill signing ceremony on Feb. 26, that the bill was a victory for science.

“If the science shows that we can better individuals’ lives by the use of marijuana and the oils, then I am always open to that,” McAuliffe said.

The oil can be beneficial to treating epilepsy, according to Lawrence Morton, M.D, professor and chair of child neurology, and director of Neurophysiology Laboratories.

“There are cannabinoid receptors throughout the central nervous system,” Morton said, adding that cannabis oil and other chemicals found in marijuana may exert anticonvulsant properties which help treat epilepsy.

According to the American Epilepsy Society website, three million of people with epilepsy

are at risk for seizures.

Morton is skeptical however, she said that there needs to be more research and testing on the cannabinoid dial CBD in Cannabis oil.

“Closer production does not necessarily benefit patients without assurance of quality,” Morton said. “More fundamental however is that despite encouraging reports, we still need to acquire high-quality scientific data to ascertain how effective CBD may be in the treatment of epilepsy and other medical conditions.”

Morton said that these studies would help doctors better understand the oil’s use in treatment. Morton also indicated that while Cannabis oil remains illegal federally, it is difficult to study for medical purposes.

See Gareth Benthall’s comic on page 9



The library was increased by 93,000 square feet and includes an expanded 3,400-square-foot Starbucks, double the amount of student seating and an innovative workshop in it’s basement.

## VCU celebrates \$50.8 million completion of renovated Cabell Library

SARAH KING  
Executive Editor

When Virginia Commonwealth University opened Cabell Library in 1970, enrollment was about 17,000 students. Forty-five years later, enrollment had doubled at the university – but the library was still the same size. As a result, VCU had less library space per student than any other university in the state.

That changed March 15, when VCU President Michael Rao, Virginia Secretary of Education Anne Holton, University Librarian John Ulmschneider and others formally presented the newly completed, \$50.8 million Cabell renovation.

“Every decision about this new building has been made with students first,” said Sue Robinson, public affairs specialist for VCU Libraries. “We’ve held student forums. They voted on furniture, were polled on types of workspaces they liked. We knew they were desperate for more study rooms for collaborative work.”

Robinson said the changes include an innovative media new workshop in the library basement, with 3-D printers and other cool tools. The workshop is free and open to all students and faculty.

The Cabell renovation-construct-

tion project, which started in December 2013, added 93,000 square feet to the facility and improved 63,000 square feet of previously existing space. The library features an expanded 3,400-square-foot Starbucks, 3,000 student seats (double the previous number) and 175 more silent study seats.

“What we really are celebrating is the future,” Rao said during the opening ceremony of the library. “I still think of libraries as medicine for the soul.”

To make the project happen, the university used \$50.8 million in state funds and \$6 million in private funds from the library’s endowment. No student tuition money was used.

To help fund furnishings and other items not covered by the state, the Cabell Foundation, a philanthropic organization in Richmond, awarded a \$1 million challenge grant to VCU Libraries. The library system will get the money if it raises \$1 million in new gifts and pledges by June 30, 2017.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, Ulmschneider indicated that more funds would be divided up. Half would go into the library’s endowment, and half would go to building stations for nursing mothers, providing accommodations for

deaf people and creating an interfaith meditation area.

“VCU has created one of the country’s most outstanding academic libraries,” Ulmschneider said.

Robinson said the library’s busiest study months are October and April. Last October, more than 63,000 people visited Cabell in one week.

Cabell Library is located in the physical center of VCU’s Monroe Park Campus. Over the past decade, use of the library has doubled to more than 2 million visitors a year. That is 500,000 more visits than the Library of Congress gets.

Cabell was already the busiest academic library in Virginia, but according to Ulmschneider, use of the facility has increased by 30 percent since the new addition opened to students at the start of the academic year.

Robinson said that according to preliminary projections, the expanded and improved Cabell Library may receive as many as 2.5 million visitors in 2016.

“Most important thing of all is the students love it. It’s not me, it’s the students that matter,” Ulmschneider said. “And they are filling this place like you uncorked a bottle in the water.”

## SGA Judicial Committee withholds election results

The candidates:



Presidential candidate Suraj “Sunshine” Telhaj (right) and vice presidential candidate Tristan Ledbetter (left)

—continued from page 1

“One of the things that Dr. Rao has done is put in training online to help staff understand of those issues. Right now it’s the only solution that’s been presented,” Clark said. “I think that as student government our job is to put that through checks and balances to make sure that these steps he suggested are being implemented.”

DeMarco said the student



Presidential candidate MaryBeth DeMarco (left) and vice presidential candidate Sarah Kilmon (right)

government’s relationship with organizations around campus played a critical role in how successful it would be at solving various student concerns on campus.

“We should continue working with the partnerships that we already have and ICF, the intercultural festival,” DeMarco said.

Telhan said if he were to be re-elected, he would look to strengthen the influence of vari-



Presidential candidate Katie Clark (left) and vice presidential candidate Kedji Abazi (right)

ous student leaders on campus.

“We want to run SGA next year by empowering the student body. There’s a ton of student leaders on campus but I feel like we only interact with such a few amount of people, if elected we really want to empower leaders.”

Members of the SGA with access to the unverified election results are prohibited from disclosing information to the public.

### THE EDITOR'S DESK

## The pertinence of political literacy

FADEL ALLASSAN  
Print News Editor



When the United States’ founding fathers convened to create the document that would serve as the crux of our republic for more than 200 years, many spoke in favor of fundamentals which would best ensure a well-informed electorate.

“Educate and inform the whole mass of the people,” said Thomas Jefferson. “They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.”

It was opinions like Jefferson’s

which would contribute to the formation of the United States’ public education system — the idea that a smart electorate would be better equipped to choose its leaders.

If our governmental institutions are truly for and by the people, then the political literacy of their respective electorates is a necessary element in keeping our representatives accountable.

This is why the news staff of The Commonwealth Times prioritizes providing its readership with the quality political coverage that we believe gives voters a boost in confidence in knowledgeably casting their vote.

This is the notion behind the CT’s coverage of the presidential and vice-presidential elections of the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association — we believe in the merit of the idea that all politics is local. The SGA makes decisions that affect all students on the MPC, and we feel it is our responsibility as a news organization to inform its constituency on matters regarding its personnel.

VCU students and faculty

have the unique benefit of living in the city which houses our state government. Because of our geographic proximity to the state’s political leadership, we felt it was important to shine a spotlight on the controversy between the Department of Environmental Quality, a state agency, and the Virginia Student Environmental Coalition, which in part consists of VCU students.

The Virginia General Assembly is responsible for creating many of the state’s policies. In this issue of the CT, we highlight two pieces of legislation passed by the House of Delegates and Virginia Senate -- one of which Gov. Terry McAuliffe has approved and another which he said he will veto.

Our staff is dedicated to informing the VCU community. While we cannot ensure that all important political developments receive coverage, we selected seven articles which we find will increase the knowledge and ultimately the efficacy of our readers.

## what’s happening RECSports

program details, rates, and locations at recsports.vcu.edu



**U.S. Master’s Swimming**  
[registration ongoing]

**Adult Swim Lessons**  
[April 4–29, register 3/21–4/1]

**Adult Private & Buddy Swim Lessons**  
[registration ongoing]

**AHA BLS for Healthcare Providers & FA AED**  
[Mar 27, register by 3/25]

**ARC FA/CPR/AED Certification Course**  
[April 2, register by 3/30]  
**Recertification Course**  
[April 13, register by 4/8]

**Day Climb**  
[Mar 26, register by 3/22]

**Day Hike**  
[April 2, register by 3/29]

**Sea Kayaking**  
[April 2–3, register by 3/29]

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# sports

**BRYANT DRAYTON**  
Sports Editor

VCU men’s hoops took home a **75-67** win against Oregon State University in the first round of the NCAA tournament in Oklahoma City, denying the OSU Beavers a tournament win in their first appearance since 1990.

This is VCU’s sixth consecutive year playing in the tournament, but the first time the team has walked away victorious in the first round since 2013.

“Our guys played tough; our guys were pretty good from the jump,” said head coach Will Wade, who is making his NCAA tournament debut his first year coaching the Rams. “They deserve the credit for the win.”

VCU got it going early offensively after a poor shooting show-out in the Atlantic 10 Championship loss to St. Joseph’s. The Rams shot 48.2 percent from the floor including 46 points coming from scoring in the paint.

Junior Point guard JeQuan Lewis was a magician on the court in his third-straight NCAA tournament. The Dickson Tennessee native put on a show, leading all scorers with 21 points.

It wasn’t just scoring that highlighted Lewis’ performance, but his floor leadership that led VCU to victory. His speed and agility brought in eight rebounds and dished out seven assists, while only turning over the ball four times to claim a VCU victory.

“He is a heck of a player, lightning quick,” said OSU guard Gary Payton II. “He pushes the ball in transition, finds open players and he just made big shots late in the game.”

Payton II led his team with 19 points on 9-17 shooting. It wasn’t until the 10-minute mark in the second half that he made his presence known on the court.

The Beavers rattled off 10-straight points and gained the lead after Payton II executed a thunderous alley-oop and brought the score to 51-49 with 9:48 remaining. It was the last lead OSU would have in the contest.

Payton II’s father, Gary Payton Sr., was known for his scrappy defense and trash talking ability during his 19 year career in the NBA. Nicknamed “The Glove” Payton Sr. also attended Oregon State; unlike

his father, Payton II can score the ball with the best of them.

“(Payton)’s a great player, but we’re all players at the end of the day,” Lewis said. “We just stuck to what we do. We weren’t really thinking about anything else.”

Initiated by Lewis pushing the pace in transition, senior Melvin Johnson cashed in on his only three of the afternoon — the biggest shot of the game.

That three gave VCU a 52-51 advantage with 8:27 to play. The Rams, much due to the credit of junior Mo Alie-Cox’s play downlow, catalyzed another late game surge to take a commanding lead.

“It was huge. It was a confidence booster,” Johnson said. “When JeQuan pitched it, he yelled, shoot, so I had no choice but to.”

The Rams have yet to find their stroke from 3-point territory, shooting an abysmal 4-20 on the contest. Wade accredited the inside play as a means of making up for not shooting the ball well at this point.

“It was huge. It was a confidence booster. When JeQuan pitched it, he yelled, shoot, so I had no choice but to.

— Melvin Johnson

“We’re one of those teams that may shoot 4 of 20 today and shoot 14 of 20 on Sunday, that’s just the way we are out there,” Wade said. “So that’s a point of emphasis for us is being able to get that thing inside, whether it be off post feeds, the bounce, whatever.”

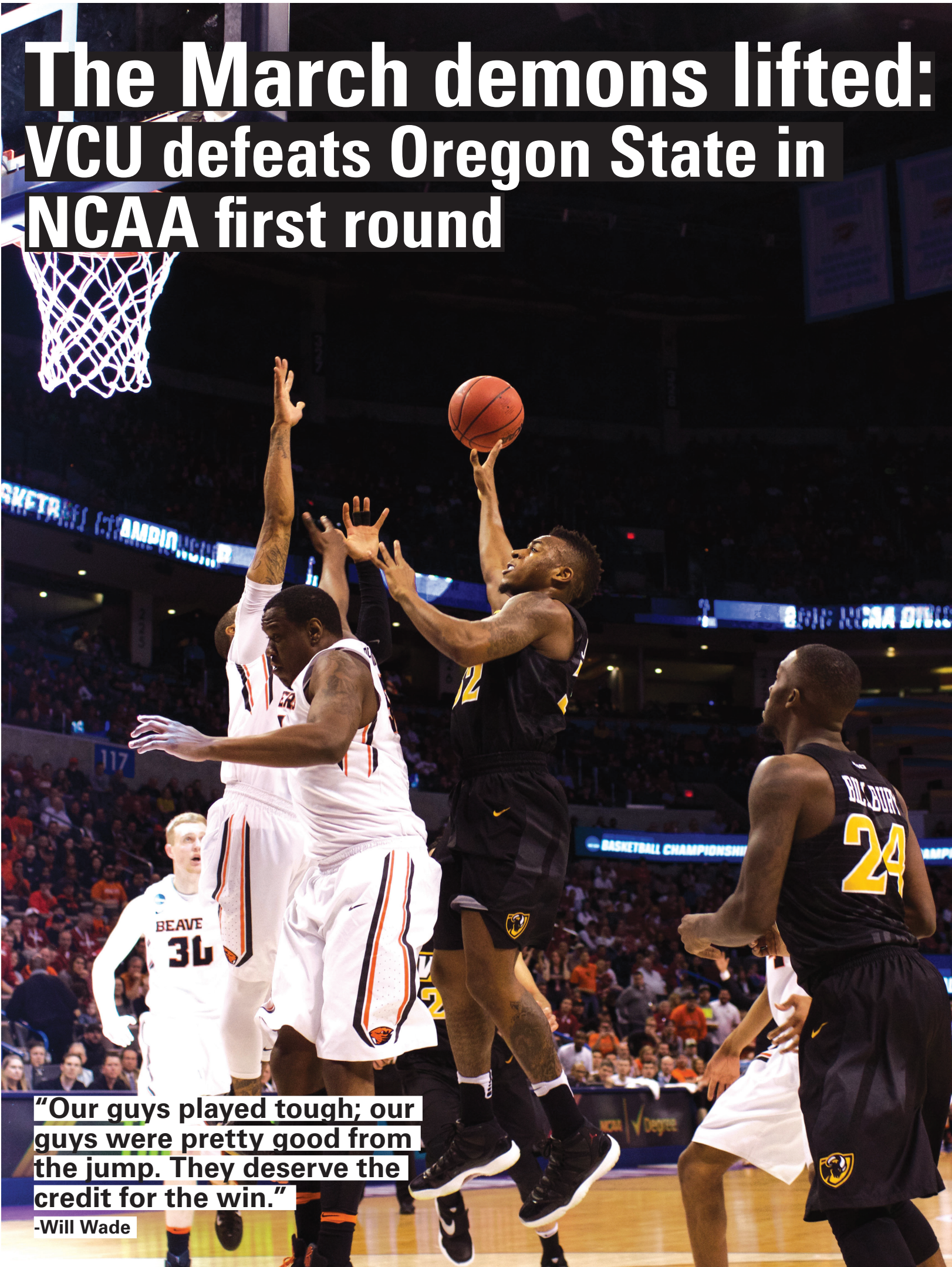
Wade said he trusted his guys not to call a timeout after the OSU run.

“We’ve got a good level of trust, good level of connectivity between our team and the coaching staff,” Wade said. “That helps you win in March.”

Alie-Cox feasted on a less-aggressive OSU frontcourt. His physical presence was the key for the Rams in out-rebounding the Beavers 40-28.

It wasn’t the best of outings for senior Korey Billbury in his return home to Oklahoma. The Tulsa native finished the game with six points and two rebounds, but that didn’t stop his family from showing their excitement throughout the game.

“Hopefully now he can settle in a little bit and be ready to go and put his best foot forward on Sunday,” Wade said.



## The March demons lifted: VCU defeats Oregon State in NCAA first round

“Our guys played tough; our guys were pretty good from the jump. They deserve the credit for the win.”

-Will Wade

Senior guard Melvin Johnson scored 12 points and registered one assist in his final game for the Rams.

## VCU baseball pitches forward



The Rams improved to a 12-7 record in their defense of the Atlantic-10 conference title.

**ZACH JOACHIM**  
Contributing Writer

Baseball continued their hot start last week with wins at the Virginia Military Institute and the College of Charleston, but came up short in a home matchup with Monmouth University.

The Rams started off the week with a win in Lexington against VMI on Tuesday, March 17 by a final score of 11-7.

The Keydet’s Peyton Maddox blasted a grand-slam off of VCU starting pitcher Benjamin Dum in the bottom of the third, making an early hole for the Rams to climb out of.

Dum finished with a no decision after four innings of solid work, aside from the runs he awarded to Maddox.

Tanner Winters made his sea-

son debut for the Rams out of the bullpen, and was able to notch his first win of the year behind a late offensive explosion.

VCU got to the Keydets bullpen in the sixth inning and managed to pull away as a result.

In the top of the seventh inning, Rams outfielder Jimmy Kerrigan rocketed a double into the gap to score fellow outfielder Logan Farrar. Cody Acker stepped to the plate with runners on second and third with two men down.

Acker delivered with a single up the middle to score both runners and give VCU it’s first lead of the ballgame.

The Keydet’s Matt Pitta tied the game in the bottom of the eighth with a home run over the left center field fence.

The Rams responded with authority, as they pushed across five runs in the top of the ninth to put VMI away for good. Walker

Haymaker delivered the knock-out punch of the late rally, with a two-out, bases-loaded, two-RBI double.

VCU returned to the Diamond on Wednesday, March 16 to face the Blue Hawks of Monmouth. The Rams fell by a final of 12-4.

Ram’s starter Matt Oxner was knocked out of the game during a 6-run fourth inning by the Blue Hawks. He finished with six earned runs on five allowed in three and two-thirds innings pitched.

Michael Dailey relieved Oxner on the mound was able to stop the bleeding. The freshman provided three and one third innings of scoreless work out of the pen while fanning two batters.

Kerrigan continued to stand out at the plate for VCU. The senior outfielder racked up his eighth multi-hit game of the year. Middle infielders Matt Davis and

Cooper Mickelson had two base knocks apiece.

The Rams traveled to South Carolina to face the College of Charleston for a three-game series on the weekend of March 18 to 20.

VCU defeated Charleston in the series opener by a final of 2-1.

This one was a pitchers duel from start to finish. Sophomore Sean Thompson picked up his fourth win on the year with six innings of one-hit work. He leads both the Rams and Atlantic 10 conference in wins.

Junior Sam Donko relieved Thompson and provided three innings of shutout ball while striking out four Cougars to earn his sixth save of the season.

Kerrigan again led the Rams offense. He came up with the big hit of the day, a single in the top of the sixth that drove in teammate Darian Carpenter to give the Rams a 2-1 advantage.

VCU came out with another hotly contested win the following Saturday by a score of 4-3.

The Rams were down most of the way after Charleston put up two runs in the bottom of the second off VCU starter Brooks Vial. Vial finished with a no decision and three runs allowed, but only gave up one earned run in five innings of solid work.

Dailey was solid out of the pen again, and was able to pick up the first of his collegiate career in 2 and two-thirds innings of shutout ball.

A three-run eighth-inning rally won the ballgame for the Rams. Farrar reached on a walk to lead the inning off. Carpenter followed him up with a single to set the stage for Kerrigan with one out and two men on.

Jimmy delivered when it mattered most yet again. His double scraped the left-field foul line and drove in Farrar, but Carpenter was cut down at the plate trying to tie the game.

Cody Acker and Brody Cook

followed up with back-to-back singles to complete the rally and give VCU it’s first lead of the day.

The Rams were unable to complete a sweep of the Cougars, as they fell in the Sunday early game by a final score of 7-4.

Charleston put VCU away early with a 5-spot in the third inning off Rams starter Jonathan Ebersole, who took the loss.

The Rams made things interesting with a three-run rally in the top of the fifth, but were never able to break through the Cougar pitching staff and gain an advantage.

Farrar led VCU offensively on the day with two hits to go along with two runs-batted-in.

The Rams are now 12-7 on the young season. They will continue their 2016 campaign when they return to the Diamond on Tuesday, March 22 to take on the Lancers of Longwood. First pitch is scheduled for 6:30.

### GAME STATS

	VCU vs. VMI		VCU vs. Monmouth University		in three game series VCU vs. CofC	
Runs	11	7	4	12	2 / 4 / 4	1 / 3 / 7
Hits	12	6	9	11	8 / 11 / 7	2 / 7 / 12
Errors	0	2	0	3	1 / 1 / 1	3 / 2 / 0
Final	11	7	4	12	2 / 4 / 4	1 / 3 / 7

GRAPHIC BY RACHEL LEE



Oklahoma edges a 4-point NCAA victory before 14,000 fans

— continued from page 1  
key shots VCU needed to keep pace with OU.

Brooks has played with a chip on his shoulder all season. Understanding his role after sitting behind seniors Korey Billbury and Johnson, the 3-point specialists wanted to get the guys going early with energy and aggressive play.

“We came back fighting, we had them on their heels the whole game,” Brooks said. “Basically we were out there just trying to play for each other and play for our seniors.”

In his last performance wearing a VCU uniform, Johnson did all he could to keep his team alive. The Bronx native tallied 23 points, knocking down five big 3-pointers that brought the game back to VCU.

“I mean, I think I had a pretty good career -- a roller coaster ride,” Johnson said. “But just coming into this year, I really blocked all distractions, really locked in.”

Johnson was adamantly positive about the play of junior guard JeQuan Lewis, saying it’s Lewis’ team now and he expects him to get the team back to the NCAA Tournament next year and to go even further.

“I just told JeQuan in the locker room, please keep working,” Johnson said. “He’s a big-time player, as you can see. Next year he’s going to be extremely dangerous when he has the green light.”

Lewis recorded his second consecutive 20-point outing in the Big Dance. The up-tempo guard regis-

tered 22 points on an efficient 9-15 shooting. He also had nine assist to add to the eight he had in the win against Oregon State.

Lewis did it all for VCU in Sunday’s loss. Matched up with Jordan Woodward and Isaiah Cousins, two big guards for OU, Lewis held his own and was the catalyst behind the 14-point comeback in the second half that found VCU with its first lead of the game with eight minutes to play.

“When we came out in the first half, we were a little slow and going with the motions,” Lewis said. “But in the second half, we didn’t come here to lose, so we had it in the front of our minds that we’re going to put up a fight.”

No doubt VCU put up a well-fought match for what many considered an easy OU win. But the Sooners’ Hield was just a different breed.

After recovering from just seven first half points, Hield, a senior from the Bahamas, rattled off 29 second half points to lead his team to a win.

“He’s just a phenomenal player, the best player I’ve seen in college basketball,” said VCU Head Coach Will Wade.

As soon as VCU found a way to get back into the contest, Buddy had a big-time three to silence the run and put a dagger in the hearts of the Ram fans that came out in support of their team in Oklahoma City.

The Rams out-scored OU in the second half 50-41, but missed

costly free throws at the end of the game, resulting in the narrow victory for OU.

“I think this is the best one because it means a lot, because it’s the NCAA Tournament, big stage, win or go home,” Hield said when asked where this game ranked for him. “And you don’t get these moments back every time.”

The Rams end the season 25-11 and co-champions of the Atlantic 10 division, in a year they were picked to finish fifth in the A-10. The season may have officially ended, but the legacy of Johnson and the play of his fellow senior Billbury will be a story for the ages.

“I just came here having faith hoping everything will work out,” Billbury said. “I got more than what I expected and I just can’t thank everyone enough for supporting me. It’s been crazy, it’s been a real nice ride.”

Wade expressed his gratitude for the resilient play of his team this season, saying the comeback performance today is indicative of the mindset the Rams have portrayed all year.

The game ended in a loss, but the team battled at the face of adversity. In front of a dominant OU crowd, VCU flexed its muscles, granting the 14,000 Sooners in attendance a moment to exhale when it was all said and done.

“We’ve been that way all year,” Wade said. “We’ve been resilient and we’ve always just battled, battled, battled.”

Luck of the Irish couldn’t save O’Boyle and the Rams from the Hoos



Beth O’Boyle, Head Coach

SOPHIA BELLETTI  
Staff Writer

The VCU women’s basketball team fell to the University of Virginia 52-50 Thursday night after losing control of an 11 point lead late in the fourth quarter. This game was the seventh postseason play in program history.

VCU wrapped up the regular season 21-8 to earn the fifth seed in the Atlantic 10 Conference Championship under second-year head coach Beth O’Boyle. The Rams defeated Richmond and St. Bonaventure in the first two rounds to advance to the conference semi-finals for the first time since the 2011 season as members of the CAA.

“(The seniors) have been a pleasure to coach,” O’Boyle said. “To come out and win 23 games and earn an National Invitation Tournament homegame. It’s tough to end this way but I’m really proud of our team’s effort.”

The Rams finished the season ranking first in the A-10 in scoring defense (55.2), rebounding defense (32.4), steals (8.5), turnover margin (+3.75), turnovers forced (17.31) and free throw attempts. The Rams have the 27th best scoring defense in the nation. They are also among the top-50 teams in turnover and re-

bound margin.

VCU’s speed and athleticism gave them the lead early against the Hoos. VCU outrebounded UVA 40-28. Redshirt-senior forward Jessica Ogunnarin led the team in rebounding with 11. Sophomore forward Curteona Brelove and senior guard Adaeze Alaeze recorded five each.

VCU used their speed to turn the contest into a track meet, recording 16 points off fast breaks.

“They’re probably the fastest team we’ve played this year,” said UVA. head coach Joanne Boyle. “They’re physical, they’re quick off their feet. They’re just a tough opponent.”

Both teams struggled to convert points. VCU shot 20-57 while UVA. shot 17-46 from the field.

To rub more salt on the wound, VCU converted 20 turnovers that UVA. scored 19 points off and UVA. converted 19 which VCU scored 15 points off.

For most of the game it seemed like VCU had the win in the bag, outscoring UVA. the first three quarters and keeping the Cavs within comfortable distance.

Then a dry spell hit.

In the last six minutes VCU couldn’t connect the ball with the basket until the final minute in regulation.

“I thought the team came out and played really hard. We can defend and dictate pace and I thought for 40 minutes we did that.”

— SUSANN COKAL

UVA. used this time to score nine unanswered points, coming from 48-39.

With 39 seconds to play, UVA. senior Faith Randolph made a jump shot to tie the game 50-50.

A turnover by VCU led to a drive down the lane by Randolph who was fouled and banked in two shots from the charity stripe with three seconds to play.

Randolph went into the match averaging 12.7 points per game. She recorded 21 against the Rams.

Ogunnarin just missed a double-double with nine points and eleven rebounds. The Athens, Greece native was the team’s top rebounder during the regular season.

Redshirt junior Galaisha Goodhope was the leading scorer for VCU, putting up 12 points in 19 minutes off the bench. The guard added two rebounds, two assists and a steal.

Alaeze added 10 points to the board and two assists in her final game as a VCU Ram.

“Adaeze has been the face of our program since I have been here,” O’Boyle said. “She wins every sprint, she’s in the gym working hard, she brings emotion, she leads us. She is a terrific player on the court but even a better person off the court.”

Junior Keira Robinson scored six points and grabbed five boards. Robinson, who was among the top 10 in the A-10 in assists as well as steals this season, came away with a team-high six assists and four steals.

This was the first postseason appearance for VCU since reaching the Women’s National Invitation Tournament in 2014. It was the first trip to the tournament under coach O’Boyle and the second of her career. The Rams are now 5-7 all-time in WNIT play.

“I thought the team came out and played really hard. We can defend and dictate pace and I thought for 40 minutes we did that,” O’Boyle said. “Unfortunately, in the fourth quarter we went through a stretch where they were sitting in their zone and struggled to get the shots we wanted.”



Head Coach Will Wade could not guide his team to victory against the Sooners.

IMAGE BY BROOKE MARSH

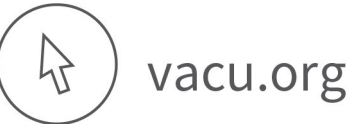
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# spectrum



ON THIS DAY...

in 1963, the infamous Alcatraz Prison in the San Francisco Bay closes its doors.

## The Peppas take the road



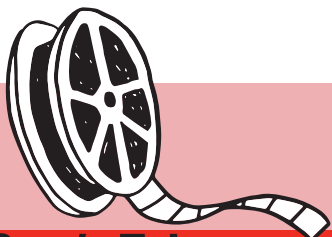
PHOTO BY BROOKE MARSH

Students in the Peppas perform in the Barclays Center in New York City during the Ram's game against Davidson two weeks ago.

—continued from page 1

and VCU basketball in general. “We love being ambassadors for the school,” Kopacsi said. “The time we get on the ‘Today Show’ alone is worth multi-millions of dollars in advertising. We are very lucky to be able to do it.” This was the Peppas’s fourth year performing in Brooklyn, and it’s a tradition loved by many band members. Steven Pagach, a junior trumpet player, described the experience as “something incredible.” “You never really think that you would ever be doing something like that,” said Pagach. “But when you actually are a part of it, it’s just mind blowing and awesome.” Fellow trumpet player Kayen Wilborn is also a fan of the trip, pointing out the many Ram fans that travel New York City for the game. “There are more VCU fans than I

thought, and they seem to be growing each year,” Wilburn said.” The band also uses the trip to sight-see and play for other venues around the city. In years past, they’ve been able to play at the Tribeca Hotel and the New York Library. Pagach felt that this experience “definitely brought us (The Peppas) closer together.” “When you have unique experiences like this it really brings individuals together and helps you realize that you are a part of something great,” Pagach said. The Rams on the court appreciate the sentiment, as they were able to win their first two games of the tournament against Massachusetts and Davidson. Even with the loss in the final game of the A10 tournament, the band accompanied the team to Oklahoma for the NCAA tournament to provide that Peppas flair.



### Sam’s Take “10 CLOVERFIELD LANE”

SAMUEL GOODRICH  
Contributing Writer

“10 Cloverfield Lane” has been described as a distant relative of the 2008 film “Cloverfield,” but the details have been a deeply kept secret by everyone involved. Thankfully, the film does not rely on it’s predecessor to be an intelligently crafted thriller. The movie follows Michelle, a young woman who wakes up in a doomsday shelter after a car crash. She is told by Howard, the owner of said shelter, that the world outside has been lost to an airborne disease and that he saved her life. With understandable doubt, Michelle teams up with a fellow survivor, Emmett, to discover if Howard is telling the truth. The film excels at creating mystery, ingeniously pacing the film to provide an equal amount of satisfying answers. It’s constantly laying a trail of questions and answers, one that will take hold of your attention and won’t let go until the credits roll. Yet it also finds time to develop interesting characters and a creeping sense of claustrophobia. The always great John Goodman delivers an especially sinister performance as Howard. His character is unpredictable and off-putting (to say the least) which only adds to the tension. There’s rarely a moment of rest, especially in the first two-thirds before the plot twists are truly is revealed.

Sadly, the film fumbles in the third act and starts to go off the rails. The events are somewhat farfetched, but it’s not enough to ruin the experience of the previous hour and a half For fans of “Cloverfield,” this may be a disappointment as the connections to the first film are minimal. For those who love character-focused “Hitchcockian” thrillers, “10 Cloverfield Lane” will be a smart, engaging and entertaining ride.

For those who like David Fincher, The Twilight Zone and falling off the edge of their seat.

## “RVA Stem in Sports” premieres Friday

MUKTARU JALLOH  
Staff Writer

In an attempt to find a crossroads between athletics and STEM education, the VCU Center for Sports Leadership program is hosting its first ever RVA Stem in Sports event this Friday. The event, which is also sponsored by the MathScience Innovation Center, the Science Museum of Virginia and others, will take place at the Siegel Center from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and host 400 students from Richmond City and Henrico County Public Schools. With various stations set at the Basketball Development Center, adjacent to the Siegel Center arena, partners will be showing how to connect STEM to various facets of sports. While many students love sports, there’s still efforts being made to increase interest in STEM education. While blame for this deficiency is attributed to many things, it remains that students learn better by applying information and what they learn to real world concepts. The program tries to make that happen through athletics, which attracts a wide range of students, simultaneously generating opportunities for many fields of study. “Instead of being in class getting a boring lesson, we want to get them engaged and to think science is cool,” said Chaz Coleman, a VCU graduate student in the program. “You can still be involved in sports through engineering, design, anything science related, not just by playing.” A Richmond native who played football at St. Vincent College, Coleman is hopeful that the event opens the eyes of many

students attending. Often times, he said students feel as though that the only gateway to sports is by actually playing. These students fail to see the other ways they can influence sports without actually having to play. Whether it is in business, administration, engineering or technology realm, there are a slew of opportunities for people in sports outside of playing. Thus, the one-day event looks to make students realize this by showcasing various stations that document how sport technologies relate and originate from what they learn in class – specifically STEM related subject matters. With all of the students being seventh graders of urban back-grounds, the organizers believe they have a chance to make serious improvements in the poor education system today. Many students of low socioeconomic and minority backgrounds aren’t being given the proper access and opportunity necessary for a solid education, caused a huge disconnect within student populations. “As far as STEM purposes, I think we’re definitely lacking in that department,” Coleman said. “Other countries are way ahead of us. Kids, by the time they reach high school, just aren’t interested in science anymore.” He said the event also looks to reverse the stereotype of the “dumb jock,” where students aren’t capable of being involved in both athletics and academics. “The stereotype that athletes aren’t smart leads many to just aim for scholarship offers rather than focusing on their academics,” Coleman said. “They’re pushed through just because they’re good at a sport, but professional sport careers aren’t long and there’s a serious need for a

backup plan.” In an effort to also show the behind the scene aspects of many of the sports that students love and the technology involved, the event will features student athletes along with staff members that hold strength and conditioning and coaching capacities. With 10-minute intervals, each student group will rotate to each station and get a chance to connect STEM to various sports such as basketball, soccer, baseball, racing and tennis. Coleman will be showcasing the Adidas miCoach ball, which provides instant feedback to soccer players by gauging several metrics of each kick, such as the speed of the ball, strength of their kick, the tracking of rotations and flight paths. After the event, students will be given gift bags that will have magazines, treats and networking information. If a particular student would like to follow up on a station that they found particularly interesting, the program coordinators will bridge the student to whomever administered the station. “The overall goal is to increase awareness and interest in STEM. There’s 400 students coming. If half of the students get something out of it, then we’ll be more than fine with that. It’s a great way for the students to get out of the classroom, go on a field trip to VCU and experience the event.” “It’s all about the students and making it fun and interactive for them. Who knows, if the science museum picks it up as an exhibit, we’d feel honored that we started it as students. Hopefully, it grows and reaches a bigger population.”

## Medical students learn from monsters

SOPHIA BELLETTI  
Staff Writer

How can fictional novel about a scientist’s creation of life in a laboratory reveal anything about science nearly two centuries after it was published? The answer can be found in “Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature” on display in Tompkins-McCaw Library until April 23, where medical discoveries during the lifetime of the book’s author Mary Shelley, along with other materials, are displayed to show the book’s impact. “We’re trying to get students to think and engage in their creative side and see the bigger picture of how these works like Frankenstein are cross departmental and there are so many aspects for people to discover,” said Emily Hurst, head of research and education at Tompkins-McCaw. Located in Bethesda, Md., The National Library of Medicine is the world’s largest biomedical library, and it maintains and displays a print and electronic resources on a wide range of topics accessed by millions of people around the globe. The library also supports and conducts research, development and training in biomedical informatics and health information technology. “Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature” is part of the library’s traveling exhibit program. These exhibits are free of charge to public, university and medical libraries, as well as cultural centers across the country. Online exhibitions are also available and have increased by multidisciplinary educational and career resources for educators and students in K-12, and in colleges and universities. Tompkins-McCaw Library has formed a relationship with

the National Library of Medicine from hosting so many past exhibits, so they contacted Tompkins-McCaw and asked if they wanted to be the first library to showcase the exhibit.

200 years ago, who would have thought the topics and the aspects in it relate to what’s going on today in science and engineering.

“We have a very good relationship with the National Library of Medicine and we love to put their exhibits up when we can get a hold of them,” Hurst said. The exhibit touches on several topics regarding anatomy and literature. The original images on the banners are available through

the National Library of Medicine in their collections in Bethesda. “It can relate to many different aspects of individuals at VCU,” Hurst said. “Those in literature may be interested in learning more about the history of the novel and, of course, Mary Shelley.” Although the exhibit has only been open for a week, Hurst said students and visitors have been really excited about it. The exhibit has sparked an interest in “Frankenstein” and biomedical sciences alike, so Hurst and library staff have stationed associated books by the exhibit. “I really like the aspects that relate to the interdepartmental,” Hurst said. “200 years ago, who would have thought the topics and the aspects in it relate to what’s going on today in science and engineering. We talk about Frankenstein monster and we’re making all kinds of advances in science and technology that could be the next thing.”



PHOTO BY ALI JONES

Banners for “Frankenstein: Penetration the Science of Nature” in the Tompkins-McCaw Library on the MCV campus.







QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Black Muslims should not feel like they are unwelcome or less valued in any community they wish to be apart of, especially those they identify with. Islam as a religion — Hiba Ahmad

# Race in news: conservative egalitarianism

SRITEJA YEDHARA  
Contributing Columnist

We are at a point in this country’s social and political progression at which it is inarguable to say that the media solely perpetuates racism — racism is preserved in many ways. This narrative is not only saddening, but alarming; or it should be at least.

Pacific Standard has reported that the infiltration of a racist mindset in today’s society can be explained on the basis of prolonged exposure. The more and more we see an idea or concept, the more easily we accept, recognize and even seek it out. This applies especially and increasingly in the association of blackness with violent crime. Pacific Standard also presents that, in New York City, 75 percent of news reports on violent crime indicate a black perpetrator, while only 51 percent of violent crimes in that city result in the arrest of a black person.

MediaMatters.org reports that the most influential and outspoken right-wing media representatives like Rush Limbaugh and Fox News contribute to the daily creation of a more hateful world by constantly presenting violent crimes through

a purely racial lens. This is occurring at an increasing rate due to the number of cases surrounding police brutality within the last two years.

When reporting cases involving a black perpetrator and white victim, right-wing news media often asks if there was a racial motivation to such crimes. However, when asked about the probability of a racial aspect to cases involving a white police officer and black unarmed victim, right-wingers immediately defer to the concept of black-on-black crime. Their defense is not an answer to the question, but rather, a quick ploy as to why “black-on-black” crime is not receiving the same sort of attention as cases involving white police officers.

Let’s just clear this up for anyone who believes black-on-black crime is an actual concept. For as long as there is no such vernacular as white-on-white crime, there should be no such thing as black-on-black crime. The existence of the term “black-on-black crime”, without an equivalent term for any other race, shows the purely racial understanding of this sort of crime — that which is occurring within the black community.

In today’s America, there is a certain innate segregation that

exists. Many areas are populated by many more whites than blacks, and vice versa. This segregation leads to significantly more intraracial crime than interracial crime. Yes, 93 percent of blacks who are killed are killed by other blacks, but this applies to whites as well; 84 percent of whites who are killed are killed by other whites. Trying to say “black-on-black” crime is anything more than “crime,” is nothing less than bigotry.

However, this is not where we need to begin looking at this issue. It is not only the media that perpetuates racism. Every time we, as consumers, accept a purely black television channel, a purely black awards show, or a purely black organization of any kind, we ourselves are perpetuating that relative

“difference” among races.

The intention of organizations such as the NAACP is to create inclusiveness and acceptance. However, by doing this, they inherently aid in this creation of separation and difference. At the same time, it is not adequate to “not see color.” We must see color. We must understand the implications of a certain culture as-

sociated with race, but we must not associate crime, violence, or hate with any race.

Yet this is what the media does. A prime example of this association of color with violence can be seen in the results of the “Doll Test” study. The study, which was conducted originally in the 1940’s by two psychologists, Kenneth and Mamie Clark, has been reconducted many times since. The results, have not changed: when asked which doll was “prettier,” white and black toddlers alike chose the white doll over the black one. When asked which doll was “mean”, they

all chose the black doll.

These children do not see laws of anti-discrimination, they do not see wealth disparities, or education differences. They see color; and this is what our society, through various forms of media, has taught them about what that color means. Our children must never look at their skin and think there is a limit to their future because of its color. They must never associate fear or harm to a race. For as long as the media portrays the black man as the perpetual creator of violence, and the white man as the ever-targeted victim, this mindset will persist. It is our duty and our right to refuse to let this ignorance and self-defeat live to see another generation.



ILLUSTRATION BY CLAYTON BONTRAGER

## Black Muslims face challenges in and out of community



ILLUSTRATION BY SIVEL LIM

HIBA AHMAD  
Contributing Columnist

The discovery of three dead black boys in Fort Wayne, Indiana made headlines on Feb. 28. Although this didn’t catch airtime on mainstream news, it did spark a long overdue conversation within the African American and Muslim communities alike.

After it was discovered that the three boys belonged to the traditional Muslim Sahel region in East Africa, Black Muslims sparked a conversation about the racial challenges they face in everyday society and in Islamic culture.

It is true that Black Muslims are often dismissed within Islamic communities, which are often dominated by Arabs and South Asians. Despite the massive concentration of Muslims that live in northern parts of Africa like Ethiopia, Somalia and Algeria, with over 50 percent of Muslims populating the region, they are still assumed to be lesser in the overall Islamic community.

African Americans make up over a quarter of the American Muslim population according to

a Pew Research poll from May 2015. One of two Muslim representatives in the U.S. Congress is a Black American Muslim.

It’s needless to say that Black Muslims play a vital role in the progression of the Islamic culture. It’s unfortunate that the death of three young black boys, whether they identified themselves as Muslim or not, was the reason the negligence of this specific community was brought to light.

Muslims must eradicate the present hierarchy of races within Islam. This is done by truly practicing what their religion preaches—community engagement.

— HIBA AHMAD

Black Muslims should not feel like they are unwelcome or less valued in any community they wish to be apart of, especially those they identify with. Islam as a religion and America as a nation should both be inclusive in their nature.

As strides are being made within America to end the present institutional racism that blacks witness today, Muslims must eradicate the present hierarchy of races within Islam. This is done by truly practicing what their religion preaches—community engagement.

The idea of the Ummah, or community, is seen as one of the greatest values within Islam. When Muslims travel to Mecca, the holy site of pilgrimage located in Saudi Arabia, and visit the Kabah—house of God—they are asked to wear the same clothes as one another. Men wear plain white garbs while women wear black. This is a way to promote equality despite race, economic means or societal status. If equality exists in the most important place to the Muslim community then how can it not be applied on a day-to-day basis to the local communities?

America and Islam both pride themselves in their vastness, and credit their strength to the present diversity in their populations. Being Black or being Muslim should not hold any individual back from reaching their full potential.

## “Beef Bans” promote religious intolerance

—continued from page 1

either played an active role in the violence or failed to address it until it was too late.

Such a violent history indicates that another outburst of widespread violence is in the works. Not only does Prime Minister Modi need to recognize that communal tensions have increased since his election, but also that his government must do more to fight religious intolerance in Indian society. Militant groups like the Shiv Sena, Abhinav Bharat and the RSS cannot be given the opportunity to dictate political discourse and government policies.

Additional steps must also be taken by the governments of countries like the United States. As India seeks to improve international relations and trade ties, the Obama administration must place pressure on the Indian government to strengthen its commitment to secularism and ensure the safety of religious minorities. Although India’s economic potential excites many developed countries, human rights concerns must be addressed before any trade deals or treaties are signed.

It is absolutely necessary that we recognize the strong connection between socialism and these deadly altercations. India and the rest of the world must recognize and appreciate the tremendous ethnic and religious diversity of the country. Such a step will promote the idea that minority communities are valued members of Indian society and free to practice their own beliefs and customs. As Gandhi himself said, “India belongs to all who live there.”



ILLUSTRATION BY JIAO ZHU

## Letter to the editor

### Paris climate conference failed to address the problem of animal agriculture

In late 2015, several of the United Nations’ most prominent environmental and governmental leaders got together for the 21<sup>st</sup> United Nations Conference of the Parties on Climate Change, also known as COP21. The focus of the event was to address the problem of climate change through research, studies, and discussion. Its primary goal was to find solutions that will keep global warming under an increase of 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

When it comes to speaking about global warming and how best to tackle it, it makes sense to examine the prime offenders. From there, progress can be made to lessen negative outcomes. While COP21 put plans in place to address some of the major threats to our environment, it failed on at least one important front.

On the plus side, the conference addressed the issue of carbon dioxide (CO2) as well as five other greenhouse gases. The primary greenhouse gas produced by human activities, CO2 emissions

from the combustion of fossil fuels cause destruction to the ozone layer and play a major role in trapping heat in our atmosphere. Although it’s been the subject of considerable criticism, we can take encouragement from the fact that the 195 participating countries made promises to limit future CO2 emissions. Logical steps for this include curbing reliance on fossil fuels by creating stricter regulations and investing in research on renewable energy sources.

With regard to addressing the next most prominent greenhouse gas, however, COP21 missed the mark. Methane (CH4) is also a major contributor to environmental damage. After fossil fuel production, animal agriculture is the second largest emitter of methane gas. Livestock animals such as cows, sheep, and goats have digestive systems that undergo enteric fermentation and the result this process is the release of large amounts of methane gas and a significant contribution to climate change.

As in the case of CO2, one would

expect to see COP21 address the sources of the problem. Although the resulting agreement from the conference does include a goal to reduce methane emissions, the connection between animal agribusiness, methane, and climate change was mentioned only a single time at the conference. The lack of discussion about the impact of animal agriculture on our environment is worrisome. If the world’s leaders and climate experts won’t speak to this problem, who will?

In the European Union, approximately 8.3 billion animals are consumed each year as food; in the United States, that number reaches 10 billion animals. This is a startling comparison to the 320 million people in our country. Greenhouse gases aside, producing meat demands immense amounts of our other valuable resources. Free-range cattle individually consume at least 265 pounds of forage and require 317,000 gallons of water throughout their lives. This doesn’t even take into account the fossil fuels needed to run the factory

farms and machinery to process the animals; large amounts of land and forests cleared for growing feed; or the vehicle emissions from the transport of these billions of animals to the millions of people all across the United States.

Thankfully, steps can be taken to help improve this! Last year, 400 million fewer animals were killed for food. With increasing education surrounding the environmental impact of our consumption, the health benefits of a vegetarian or a reduced-meat diet, and the ability to contribute to less suffering for so many animals, there’s no surprise why. Although the topic of animal agriculture might not have been adequately discussed in Paris, we as citizens can make the choice to raise awareness and bring positive environmental change with how we choose what’s on our plates every day.

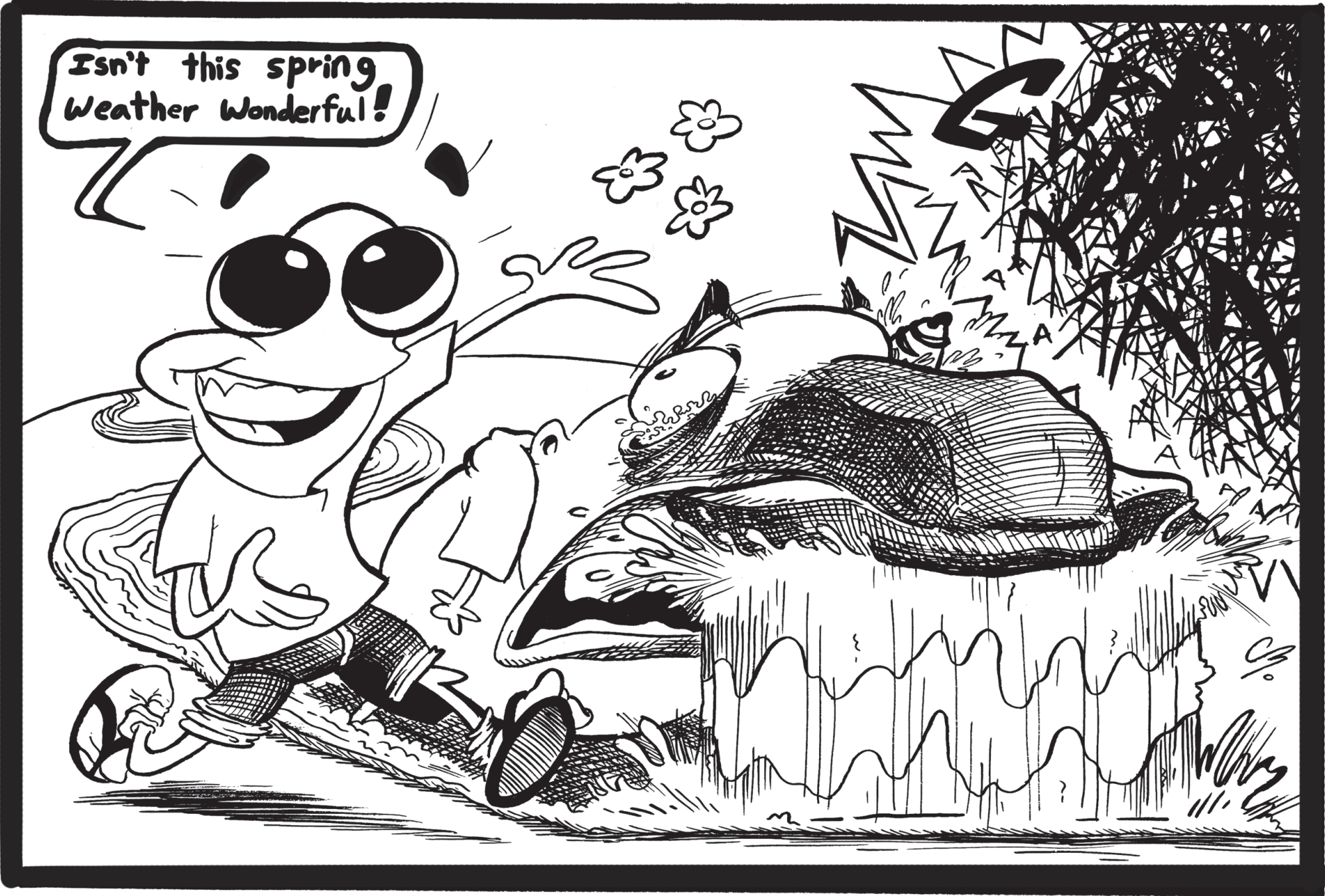
—Caroline Butler



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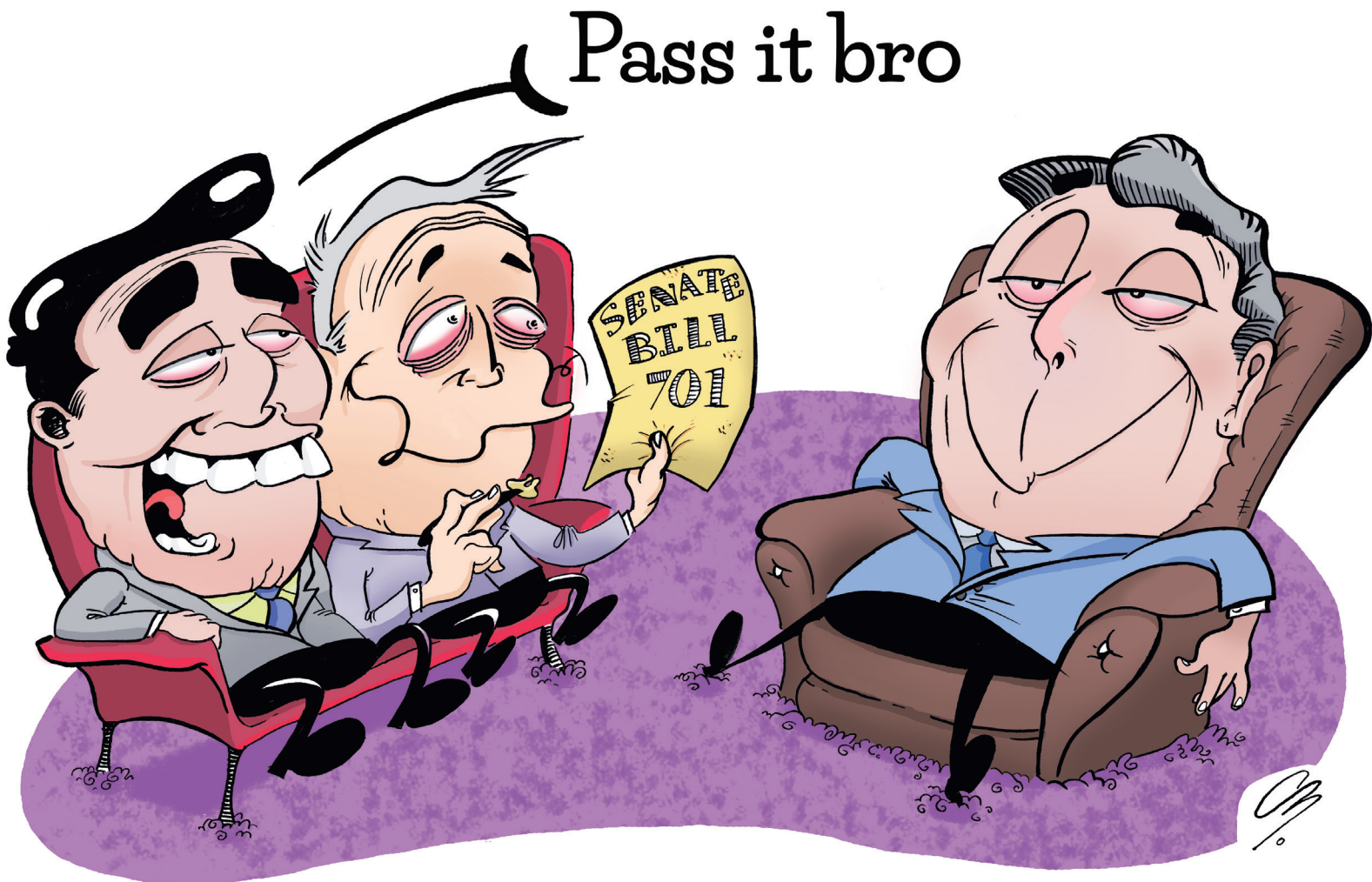
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