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# The COMMONS

Published biweekly by and for the Upper School students of Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa, OK

VOLUME IV NO. 13

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Computers are useless. They can only give you answers.  
— Picasso



Homemade buttercream icing—yum! . . . . . 3



An energy drink that actually works? . . . . . 4

The COMMONS is published biweekly during the school year by the Upper School Newspaper class at Riverfield Country Day School, 2433 W. 61st Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74132. No issues are published the weeks of Fall Campout, Winter Break and Spring Break.

The COMMONS reserves the right to edit any article or letter submitted for publication. Send all submissions to the Editor-in-Chief at [mfaeth@riverfield.org](mailto:mfaeth@riverfield.org). All opinions expressed are those of the individual writers and do not reflect positions of the newspaper staff, advisers, or school administration.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
Matt Faeth

MANAGING EDITOR  
Carl Berry

NEWS EDITOR  
Sam Laney

SPORTS EDITOR  
Ben Rao

A&E EDITOR  
Meghan Kelkar

OPINION EDITOR  
Bryce Rossler

FEATURES EDITOR  
Malachi Keeter

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR  
Ramsey Talladivedula

DESIGN EDITORS  
Ryan Peake, captain  
Chris Dickey  
Kenzie Zwyer  
Claire White

NEWSPAPER ADVISERS  
Mr. Daniel Hodges  
Mrs. Patricia Dickey

## Media Day awards



The award winning staff of The Commons proudly displays their plaque for Best Overall Newspaper. (Not pictured: Claire White)  
PHOTO BY PATRICIA DICKEY

By Matt Faeth  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On April 1, the staff of *The Commons* went to Tahlequah for their annual Media Day, hosted by the Department of Communication and Art at Northeastern State University's College of Liberal Arts. High schools (1A through 7A) and junior highs were invited, and any college that wanted to participate was also welcome.

Newspaper staffers attended sessions on publications leadership, social media, web design, and public relations/crisis management.

In addition, *The Commons* submitted a series of articles, page designs, graphics, photos, and complete issues from this year to be judged against other 1A-2A high schools. The astounding results are listed below.

In addition, on-site writing competitions were held for Sports Writing and Feature Writing. Competing against 1A through 7A high school students AND college students, Carl Berry took 1st Place in Sports Writing, and Malachi Keeter won 3rd Place in Feature Writing.

As a whole, the number of awards we received exceeded our expectations. "This was the first competition we have entered, so we had no knowledge of the judges' criteria, and we have never seen the competing publications," said Mrs. Dickey, one of our advisers along with Mr. Hodges.

*The Commons* is only four years old, but our paper has become more streamlined with every semester that passes. I am very proud of what this newspaper has become. This year's staff has been the most efficient I have ever encountered. We are a very young publication, and great things are coming for us in the future. Consider joining us next year!

### 1A-2A DIVISION AWARDS

BEST OVERALL NEWSPAPER — 1st Place (Entire Staff)  
FRONT PAGE DESIGN — 1st Place, Kenzie Zwyer; 2nd Place, Ryan Peake  
INSIDE PAGE DESIGN — 1st Place, Ryan Peake; 2nd Place, (tie) Chris Dickey, Kenzie Zwyer, Claire White  
NEWS WRITING — 1st Place, Malachi Keeter  
FEATURE WRITING — 1st Place, Malachi Keeter; 3rd Place, Marisa Morgan  
NEWSPAPER REVIEWS — 1st Place, (tie) Chris Dickey, Hayden Mears (contributing writer)  
OPINION COLUMN WRITING — 1st Place, Malachi Keeter; Honorable Mention, Bryce Rossler  
ORIGINAL GRAPHICS — 2nd Place, Kenzie Zwyer  
PHOTOGRAPHY — 2nd Place, Kaitlyn Richardson

ON-SITE SPORTS WRITING CONTEST (all divisions) — 1st Place, Carl Berry  
ON-SITE FEATURE WRITING CONTEST (all divisions) — 3rd Place, Malachi Keeter

## Richest man in the world

By Malachi Keeter  
FEATURES EDITOR

If you ask someone who they think the richest man in the world is, the majority will probably answer Bill Gates. A few might say Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple. Some ex-Soviet leader or a criminal boss, perhaps? The result might surprise you.

The wealthiest person in the world is named Carlos Slim. He is a Mexican telecommunications guru.

Mr. Slim is the owner of several companies that compose a huge sector of the market in Mexico and Latin America. Tel-Mex, Telcel, and America Movil are all under his rule.

Carlos has a net worth of around \$54 billion in U.S. dollars, edging out Bill Gates by just half a billion dollars.

I suppose that in the high-stakes world of being rich, that's not much money. However, I would love to have "just" half a billion dollars. Wouldn't you?



This wouldn't even be pocket change for Carlos Slim.  
PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

## Judge rules on controversial gene patents

By Sam Laney  
NEWS EDITOR

Recently federal judge Robert W. Sweet issued a very controversial ruling deeming patents by Myriad Genetics, a biopharmaceutical company, to be invalid. The patents were to be for the BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene sequences. The judge insisted that the ruling would not cause harm to the biotech fields, however biotech stock prices fell dramati-

cally after the ruling.

Myriad argued that the revolutionary research should be protected under patent law while the opposing side argued that since the genetic sequences were found in nature, Myriad had not "invented" anything and were therefore not eligible to patent their find.

Joe Mullin, a reporter for *IP Law & Business* magazine, wrote that those opposed went further to say, "genetic patents

aren't only banned under the patent laws, but that they violate the First Amendment because they prevent research and discussions with patients, and that they violate the so-called 'Progress Clause' of the U.S. Constitution because patents like Myriad's don't 'promote the progress' of science."

The ruling will likely be brought to the Court of Appeals of the Federal Circuit. The CAFC has already made rulings on a similar patent invalidation.

The Court stated, "Patents are not awarded for academic theories, no matter how groundbreaking or necessary to the later patentable inventions of others. A patent is not a hunting license. It is not a reward for the search, but compensation for its successful conclusion."

Whether the court sees the genetic sequences as just something found in nature or a true invention is yet to be seen, but until then the ruling remains controversial.

weekend weather

SAT 70

SUN 71

INFORMATION FROM WEATHER.COM, 4/16/10, 9:00 A.M.

# 2 Sports

**DON'T MISS IT NEXT WEEK:** Tennis matches at Holland Hall at 3:30 on Monday, 4/19 and also at Hale at 4:00 on Thursday, 4/22. Come out and support our players!

## Riverfield spring sports update

By Ryan Peake  
STAFF WRITER

Riverfield sports have not been quite as busy these past few weeks.

Tennis had a match at Central on March 31, and the girls won 6-0. Alex Lewis, the only boy, also won his match. Next, the team had a match against Beggs at Shadow Mountain, but our boys and girls lost 6-0. Earlier this week, Riverfield participated in the Metro Tournament. The matches are played at various locations around Tulsa. Ramsey Talladivedula finished 4th in singles, Tristan

Hightower finished 9th in singles, and Kenny Kite and Jon Kelley finished 6th in doubles.

On April 5, the boys' soccer team went to Cushing, Oklahoma, a 4A high school, and won 4-0. The team was led by Steven Sesso and Bonnie Duffield, who had two goals each. Riverfield's defense played so well they didn't let Cushing take one shot on goal! Prior to the boys' game, the girls' team played and lost 2-0. Cushing's coach was very complimentary of the girls' young soccer team. Both teams were supposed to play on April 8 against Broken Arrow, but conflicts with ISAS

caused the games to be canceled. The girls' last game was supposed to be against MTSC but it was also canceled. The boys are trying to reschedule a game or two, to make up for a few cancelled in the past weeks.

The golf team has participated in two tournaments so far, coming home once with hardware. Riverfield went to Stroud on April 1 and did alright. Then the team went to Drumright on April 7 and came in second behind Rejoice Christian. Riverfield's leading golfer was Kalob Crowe. He shot an 80, getting the fourth best score in the tournament.



(Top left) Michael Kelley, Coach Bogle, and Matt Faeth. (Top right) Kenny Kite. (Bottom) Coach Nsien and the boys' soccer team.  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOOSTER CLUB

## 2010 MLB prospects

By Carl Berry  
STAFF WRITER

Every spring, baseball fans hear about a young minor leaguer who will supposedly be the next great player. Often those players turn out to be mediocre, and don't play for long in the majors. Very few of them ever make an impact.

But this year, two players jump out from the pack of prospects: Jason Heyward and Stephen Strasburg. Unlike some prospects from past years, both appear to have long, promising careers ahead of them.

Heyward is the new right fielder for the Atlanta Braves, and he appears to be the most talented hitting prospect in the last 30 years this side of Albert Pujols. He has tremendous power, can hit for a high average, is relatively fast, and provides good defense in the outfield. However, none of these is his best quality. Heyward is extremely patient, a trait incredibly rare for a power hitter. He rarely strikes out, and he draws a high number of walks. Did I mention that he is only 20 years old?

Strasburg is far and away the best pitching prospect in the majors. A right-hander with the Washington Nationals, Strasburg set the record for the highest draft bonus ever when he signed for upwards of \$15 million. Strasburg has impeccable control, good command of his pitches, and tremendous velocity. He is routinely clocked around 98-101 mph. Look for him to make an impact in the majors in late May or June, after he works out the few kinks in his game in the upper minors.

In Jason Heyward and Stephen Strasburg, baseball fans can look forward to watching two once-in-a-generation talents play for years to come.



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## 2010 NBA playoffs

By Ben Rao  
SPORTS EDITOR

As the NBA playoffs approach, one wonders if having 16 teams in the tournament is necessary. This year most people agree that the playoffs are not even necessary. It is a guarantee that everyone's pre-season finals pick will come to fruition. Barring a devastating injury to Kobe Bryant or LeBron James, the Cavaliers and Lakers will meet for the NBA Championship.

James is having one of the greatest individual seasons in NBA history. His 30 points, 9 assists, 7 rebounds, 2 steals, and 1 block per game on 51% shooting has solidified his place as the best all-around player since Oscar Robertson. This season he passed Michael Jordan on the list of all time triple-doubles. Bryant has also had a brilliant season, yet not so statistically. His 27 ppg are

solid, and his six game-winning shots are astounding.

Despite these clear favorites, several other teams are capable of pulling off an upset. The Orlando Magic, who won the Eastern Conference last year, are led by star center Dwight Howard who is leading the league in rebounds, blocks, and field goal percentage. The Atlanta Hawks are young and have a deep bench. If Joe Johnson can take his game to the next level, the Hawks could advance. Out west there several teams that are capable. Dallas, Phoenix, Utah, and Denver all have the talent to beat the Lakers.

However, when all is said and done, this decade's version of Magic vs. Bird will finally hit the big stage. LeBron and Kobe will meet for immortality. My pick is: Cavaliers win series, 4-3. MVP: LeBron James (who else could it be?)

## Bryce Rossler's NFL mock draft picks

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  QB Sam Bradford (OU) — QB is the most pressing concern for St. Louis, and Bradford had a stunning pro day.         |  WR Dez Bryant (OSU) — Bill Parcells wants this playmaker badly, and he'll fit into their offensive system nicely.       |  OLB Sergio Kindle (TEX) — A legitimate, every-down pass rusher, and that's what they like about him.            |
|  DT Ndamukong Suh (NEB) — Shaun Rogers left a big void. Having acquired LG Sims, Detroit looks to improve D.        |  CB Joe Haden (FLA) — They need to help Willis by improving their secondary, and Haden is the best corner.               |  QB Tim Tebow (FLA) — With an improved motion, high character, and McNabb out, Tebow is next up in Philly.       |
|  DT Gerald McCoy (OU) — Remember Warren Sapp? That's what the Bucs see in McCoy (and will expect.)                  |  RB C.J. Spiller (CLEM) — Seattle needs a running back. New head coach Carroll sees resemblance to Reggie Bush.          |  WR Demaryius Thomas (GT) — Derrick Mason is just getting older, and Boldin isn't really a burner, to be honest. |
|  OT Russl Okung (OSU) — McNabb's now at the helm, the Skins look to patch up the line. A high value pick.           |  MLB Rolando McClain (BAMA) — Antonio Pierce is gone, McClain has all the assets Pierce had. The Giants like him.        |  LB Sean Witherspoon (MIZZOU) — Dansby left for Miami, and Whisenhunt will fill the greatest need.               |
|  FS Eric Berry (TENN) — KC is severely lacking in their secondary, and Berry's the best secondary player to be had. |  DE Jeanne Paul-Pierce (USF) — He reminds Tennessee of Jevon Kearse. Good rusher, bad stopper.                           |  DT Terrence Cody (BAMA) — Character is not a concern, it's all about talent and the show. Cody has both.        |
|  OT Bryan Buluga (IOWA) — A smart and safe player, Buluga will pick up on Gibbs' zone blocking system quickly.      |  FS Taylor Mays (USC) — San Fran will be looking to improve their secondary, and Mays has the athleticism to help.       |  RB Ryan Matthews (FRESNO) — He'll add some much needed power to the running game of the Bolts.                  |
|  FS Earl Thomas (TEX) — They filled the gap at CB and were high on Berry, but they'll gladly settle for Thomas.     |  C Maurkice Pouncey (FLA) — Steelers have always had a great line. Pouncey could be a future all-pro at center.          |  DT Dan Williams (TENN) — Soon enough, there will be a gap at nose-guard in New York. Williams will fill it.     |
|  OT Anthony Campbell (MD) — AI doesn't care about character and chemistry. He'll ignore those and take Campbell.    |  DE Brandon Graham (MICH) — May be the best overall defensive end in draft, the Falcs take him to solidify D-line.       |  CB Kareem Williams (BAMA) — Williams is big and physical, just the way the Vikes like 'em.                      |
|  QB Jimmy Clausen (ND) — Ralph Wilson wanted McNabb and didn't get him, so he'll take Clausen sure enough.          |  CB Kyle Wilson (BOISE) — With Dunta Robinson gone and the Texans looking to improve their D, this is a no-brainer.      |  OL Roger Saffold (IND) — Talented, fairly safe, and from Indiana, Saffold will fit right in with the Colts.     |
|  DE Derrick Morgan (GT) — They'll look to pair Morgan with Kampman to conjure up a double trouble pass rush.        |  TE Jermaine Gresham (OU) — He will complete their talented skill position lineup. They've lacked a TE for years.        |  DE Everson Griffen (USC) — The void left by Charles Grant needs to be filled, and Griffen makes sense.          |
|  OG Mike Lupati (IDAHO) — Want to power the ball up the middle? Lupati offers just that. Best guard = easy pick.    |  OT Trent Williams (OU) — He fell pretty far and Bellick won't pass up the talent, even if he doesn't need it right now. |   |

Let's see how many of these turn out to be right!...

# 3 A&E / Features

**DID YOU KNOW:** Today is Earth Day. Have you recycled anything?

## Preparing for finals

By Chris Dickey  
STAFF WRITER

Preparing for finals early is very, very important. Whatever happens, you do not want to have to stay up until 4 a.m. cramming for a final exam the next day.

There are a few things that



**Thinking ahead, Connor Schmigle studies for his finals weeks in advance.**

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLEDIVEDULA

you can do to help ease the burden of last minute studying.

One thing you can do is to start studying a week or two before the test. This means instead of five hours two nights before, you could study one hour each of the ten days before the final.

Another thing you can do to help yourself out and avoid headaches is to take notes in class and keep them organized so that when it is time for finals, everything you have done that semester is already organized and easier to study.

I asked some of my fellow students what they thought about preparing for finals. When I asked Malachi Keeter, he cleverly (?) responded with "I like cheese." Mr. Hodges heard Malachi say this and replied by saying, "Failing to prepare is preparing to fail." After that, Sam Laney laughed as he said, "If one is smart enough, like myself, they don't need to prepare."

## Trouble sleeping?

By Meghan Kelkar  
STAFF WRITER

For students to succeed at school, it is said they need at least eight to ten hours of sleep each night. There are some nights when certain people cannot drift into a deep sleep, and it can ruin their days. Here are some tips that will help you establish a better sleeping pattern.

- Try to go to sleep around the same time each night, and wake up at the same time each morning. (Going to sleep early at nights is highly recommended.)
- Try your best to avoid taking naps during the day. Naps can take away your desire to sleep at night.
- Do not drink coffee, pop, or anything caffeinated before you go to sleep. These drinks

may interrupt a full sleep cycle.

- Take a relaxing shower or bath to relax your mind before you go to bed.
- For some people (not all) relaxing "nature sounds" like the beach, rain, or wind can help them relax and fall asleep faster. (This works for certain people, but for others it may be too distracting.)
- Make sure you eat a light dinner, and keep the snacking light as well. The dinner should also be a healthy one.
- Turn off all lights and remove all distractions before going to bed. (Yes, this means logging off Facebook, turning off your cell phone, etc.) These days it is mainly the distractions that keep students up at night and less alert during the school days, so make sure you don't let these keep you from drifting off.

Sleep well!

## The bees are disappearing

By Kenzie Zwayer  
STAFF WRITER

The bees are disappearing. No one knows why, and the effects could be disastrous. The syndrome has been named Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), and it is affecting honeybee colonies worldwide.

If you haven't heard about this, that's probably because no one really seems to care about the issue. Maybe this is because not many people realize the importance of bees in "the great scheme of things." As a reminder, 27 percent of the human diet comes strictly from honeybee-pollinated foods, and \$15 bil-

lion worth of crops are dependent solely on honeybees. With the American and European bee population decreasing by 23 to 26 percent each year, the economy may be headed for trouble.

Over the last six years, some U.S. beekeeping operations have reported a 30-90% decrease in bee populations *per year* due to the mysterious CCD. Scientists and the National Geographic staff have warned us of the exponential decrease of bees, and they began investigating the issue as soon as it popped up, but they still have no answers.

Why are they dying out? Can we stop it? Will the bees be resilient enough to bounce back from their massive population

decrease?

While we don't have any reasons yet, there are many hypotheses about the disappearance. These include (in order of plausibility) pesticides, fungal poisoning, global warming, stress, and the electromagnetic radiation put into the atmosphere by cell phones. Personally, I side with Doctor Who's theory that the bees are returning to their own planet.

As the numbers drop, more attention is put on the CCD of honeybees, and researchers strive to find a solution. While you're waiting, stock up on those fatty refined goods: you may be living on bread and water in a few decades. (No, really!)

## Home Economics: Icing!

By Meghan Kelkar  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

On March 26, Mrs. Knight taught Ms. James' "Advanced Home Economics" class how to make a simple homemade icing, and how to properly spread it.

"A lot with icing is how to save money, but with homemade buttercream icing, it helps save a lot of money," says Mrs. Knight.

Her recipe calls for 1 cup of shortening, 2 Tbs. of water, 1 tsp. of almond extract, 4 cups of powdered sugar, and a pinch of popcorn salt.

Start out by blending the shortening, water, and flavoring. Then mix in the powdered sugar one cup at a time. After that is mixed, add in the pinch of popcorn salt.

The class made a simple yellow cake to practice spreading the icing. One piece of advice Mrs. Knight gave the students was to cut the cake using a cake lever, then put a little icing on the top. Then, turn it over and it will stick to the plate as you are icing. To prevent crumbs from coming off the



**Mrs. Knight frosts a fresh cake with homemade icing.**

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLEDIVEDULA

cake and messing up your icing, "while you are spreading the icing, keep the spatula touching the icing, not the cake. Instead of spreading the icing, go into the icing and move the icing at a soft pace," she advised.

Another tip: use Pringles cans to hold the pastry bags while filling them with the ic-

ing, along with mixing in a needle's worth of food coloring.

I tried icing a cake myself, and the best way is to hold the bag at a 45 degree angle like writing. Learning how to make icing is great for creating cakes for birthdays, graduations, special occasions, holidays—any time you want!

## Movie Review: Manos: The Hands of Fate

By Sam Laney  
STAFF WRITER

*Manos: The Hands of Fate* is possibly the most amazing movie of all time. That is, if you like bad movies.

In the words of Carl Berry, "It is the Lil B of the film industry." Written, directed, and starring Harold Warren, the film was made on a bet that Warren could not make a horror film.

*Manos* is no longer protected under copyright and is free to download.

The level of "bad" in the film is hard to comprehend without seeing it, but here are a few highlights.

The film begins with the most memorable driving scene in cinema history. You will



**Manos: The Hands of... Ramsey.**

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLEDIVEDULA

cringe every time you recall the eight and a half minutes of your life you wasted watching it. The

driving scene ends with Torgo, the mysterious large-kneed housekeeper, entering the scene. Torgo has trouble walking and is "stunned" during the entire movie.

Another lovely character is a heavily mus-

tachioed man wearing a black robe with red hands stitched on it. The film has so many "golden" moments that you will never forget, as well as entire scenes that are not even related to the plot.

*Manos* was filmed in thirty-second increments, and the camera did not capture sound. The sound was added afterwards using only two people, one man and one woman. When conversations are between characters of the same gender, some moments sound as though someone is talking to themselves.

As Carl said, "It is simply the greatest movie ever created by a manure salesman."



2010 EPISODE V: THE RAVEN STRIKES BACK

The 2010 Street Party is going VADER STYLE!

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# 4 Opinion

COMING UP IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: News about a 4D computer game, the taste of water, Bryce discusses prom dresses, and more . . .



Riverfield students would be affected if the legal driving age were changed to 18.

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

## A debate about the driving age

By Carl Berry  
STAFF WRITER

Did you know that every year almost 400,000 teenagers are injured in car accidents, and over 5,000 die?

These numbers are substantial and shocking, and I believe something should be done about them.

The easiest way to cut down on the number of accidents is to cut down on the number of inexperienced and immature drivers. To do this, I propose we move the legal driving age from 16 to 18 and lengthen the amount of time a learner's permit is required from six months to one year.

Sixteen year olds are much more susceptible to distractions such as texting or talking on the phone. They haven't been driving very long, so they have to concentrate more on the road in order to drive safely. But, because of the wide variety of distractions, they don't, and that's why they have more accidents.

Some may argue that changing the driving age is

unfair because it means that responsible teens have to wait longer to drive, too.

Think about it this way: You may be responsible, but are all of your friends? I know all of mine definitely aren't. I would rather not be able to drive than have one of my friends killed or seriously injured in a car accident.

A change in the legal driving age would be beneficial for everyone because it would save thousands of lives, and I believe that lawmakers should strongly consider implementing it.

By Bryce Rossler  
STAFF WRITER

Childhood: the time of life when you are meant to prepare yourself to conquer future challenges.

Imagine being thrown out into the world unready to face things head on. It would be frustrating, confusing, and quite possibly, scary.

This would be the result of postponing driver's license eligibility until kids reach the age of 18.

In addition to inconveniencing their parents, it would unnecessarily limit the social lives of teenagers and render them vague and mystified with the concept of personal responsibility.

People may argue that teenage driving results in millions of dollars of damage and thousands of lives lost, but adult driving results in these same things.

People may also argue that this would be yet another topic for parents to clash with teens on, but if you take away their mobile capabilities, they are just more likely to find trouble around the house.

Teenagers may be "stupid," "rash," and "impulsive," but it is better that they be stupid, rash, and impulsive before they grow up, enter the real world, and have to fend for themselves.

If we take away the right to drive for 16 and 17 year olds, we will only postpone the hazards they are encountering now until a time when they are legally responsible for themselves.

## NERD lives up to hype

By Malachi Keeter  
STAFF WRITER

NERD Energy Drink, an underground competitor of major brands like Monster and Red Bull, makes some pretty outrageous claims. It says it will improve memory, response times, and overall mental capacity—a rare claim for an industry that markets itself as "extreme."

I am a big fan of NERD, for the awesome taste if nothing else, so I decided to see if it actually works.

The four ingredients in NERD that supposedly increase mental function are vinpocetine, huperzine A, DMAE, and Chinese ginkgo biloba.

Light research turned up medical studies in which vinpocetine was shown to have positive effects on the memory of healthy adults. (Most of these studies were conducted by the University of New Mexico's Psychology Department.)

Huperzine A also turned up positive results, and I found that many have been experimenting with its use to cure Alzheimer's.

Ginkgo biloba also fared well. A study done by the Division of Psychology at the University of Northumbria found that it increased attention in healthy adults, its effects peaking about two and a half hours after intake.

I could find little about DMAE in relation to cognitive function, but three out of four isn't bad.

I decided not to take their word for it though, and I tried it myself. I also got fellow staff members of *The Commons*, Carl

Berry and Sam Laney, to try the drink. In all three cases, it met with good results.

Sam reported "feeling smarter" after drinking two 12 ounce cans. Carl Berry drank one, after which he was poked with a pen. He snatched the pen with lightning speed, breaking it with his bare hands, cutting himself on the plastic, and generally leaking blood and ink. To quote Carl, "I believe in NERD." I have had NERD on a few occasions, and I can say with all honesty that it does temporarily help my memory. I even used the drink at district competitions for Speech and Debate.

NERD was created by a college student in medical school to help him study, and from what I have read, seen, and experienced, he knew what he was doing. NERD, plain and simple, rocks.



NERD energy drink could overpower the energy drink market.

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

## Addiction or habit?

By Ramsey Talladivedula  
STAFF WRITER

There are basic symptoms of addictions: obsession, loss of control, compulsion, and continual use regardless of consequences. Some types of activities and substances that people have become addicted to include: sex, work, exercise, over-eating, under-eating, shopping, drugs, gambling, alcohol, hand washing, and I could keep going on. Instead of blaming their lack of self control, people often use the excuse of "addictions."

This is happening more and more in our society, and people are not taking responsibility for their actions. For example, just because you like to drink coffee every day, it does not mean you're addicted. You could survive without it. Your life would not change completely if your supply ran out.

Stopping a legitimately addictive behavior is a life changing decision, and it may take years to quit.

Facebook is another activity people claim they are "addicted" to. Many people log on to Facebook at least once a day, but

some log on and stay on for hours. They fear that something will happen when they aren't logged on. It's true, something is always happening, especially on Facebook, but there is no need to be logged on 24/7. These people are not addicted to the website, they just have a fear of pressing the little "x" in the top corner of the screen.

Real addictions are serious, but some people need to realize that a little effort would get rid of their so-called "addiction."



Do you think your coffee habit is an addiction?

PHOTO BY RAMSEY TALLADIVEDULA

## Virginia governor accused of racism for omitting slavery

By Ben Rao  
STAFF WRITER

We all would like to believe that all of America has long passed the era of racial prejudices. Fifty years after the civil rights movement, though, we still worry about whether something is offensive to anyone.

We now live in a world where anything and everything is scrutinized by attention mongers like Al Sharpton. So when Bob McDonnell, the governor of Virginia, designated April as Confederate History Month in a speech, he was blasted for not mentioning slavery.

"The failure to include any reference to slavery was a mistake, and for that I apologize to any fellow Virginian who has been offended or disappointed," McDonnell said in a written statement.

"The abomination of slavery divided our nation, de-

prived people of their God-given inalienable rights, and led to the Civil War," the statement continued. "Slavery was an evil, vicious and inhumane practice which degraded human beings to property, and it has left a stain on the soul of this state and nation."

Because of a slight lapse in judgment, McDonnell is being viewed as a racist and for him to celebrate the state's heritage, as many southern states have done, is viewed a blasphemy.

I don't necessarily agree with southern states and their passion for their Confederate past. Yet, people who criticize it are being hypocritical. Southern people are absolutely allowed to celebrate their past.

"The Confederacy wasn't about slavery, it was about economics, so no, he should not be blasted over it," said Malachi Keeter. "History is written by the winners, not the losers."

As for the speech itself, logical people would view the omis-

sion as minor and an understandable mistake. To call McDonnell a racist for a speech of celebration is absurd.

Should McDonnell have mentioned slavery? Of course he should have. It was a major part of the Confederate past of Virginia and should be recognized as a major downfall of the southern people. But the fact that he didn't mention it shouldn't be that big of a deal.

Think of this: As Americans, do we celebrate our "Manifest Destiny" and our seizing of western land? Yes. However, do people who celebrate western expansion focus on the harsh treatment of Native Americans and the ransacking of their land and animals and how dastardly it was? Not all the time.

So next time you demonize southerners who observe their Confederate past, keep in mind that the loser never writes the final story.