

# THE COLLEGIAN

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## = Inside = Textbooks

Students and alumnae create competing Web site for buying and selling textbooks.



page 2

## Hoongle Ends

Hoongle shut down after a Google policy violation

page 5

## Guster Goes Green



Guster incorporates environmental efforts into its coming concert.

page 11

## German Play



Three penguins and a dove

page 10

## Marijuana



Opinion columnist talks about how Uncle Sam wants you to take up.

page 16-17

## Seniors

Read parting words from seniors about college.



page 16-17

## Lacrosse

Women's lacrosse has the No. 2 seed in the A-10 tournament.

page 23



# KEEP OUR PROFESSOR

## Students protest to keep professor

By NICK MIDER  
Collegian Staff

When University of Richmond students found out that Mary Middleton's contract had not been renewed for the 2009-10 academic year, they wrote e-mails to the school administration and started a Facebook group, urging the school to keep her.

Middleton, a professor of nine years in the accounting department of the E. Claiborne Robins School of Business, found out in January that her contract would not be renewed.

Jess Lofgren, a senior, and Martha Van Dale, a Richmond alumnus, started the Facebook group, "Keep Dr. Middleton at

UR," which had 225 members as of April 23. Lofgren and Van Dale started the group because they wanted the school to understand that it was making a huge mistake, Lofgren said.

"I want Dr. Middleton to know that even if this university chooses to let her go, this is not at all reflective of the feelings of her students, as so many of us appreciate and admire her greatly," Lofgren said.

Lofgren and Van Dale also sent an e-mail to students in the accounting department urging them to e-mail University President Edward L. Ayers, Herbert C. Peterson, vice president for business and finance, and Stephen Allred, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

"One major concern we have is that students were not consulted and, in large part, not considered when this decision

See Middleton, page 5

"I made a difference in their lives."

— Mary Middleton



COURTESY OF MARY MIDDLETON

ELIZABETH YGARTUA/THE COLLEGIAN

# GrouperEye.com connects graduates with employers

By JILL CAVALIERE  
Collegian Staff

Graduating seniors looking for employment in the rapidly shrinking job market can add GrouperEye.com as another tool for their search.

GrouperEye.com, officially launched Jan. 15, 2009, seeks to increase the contact between students and potential employers. The Web site provides a venue for students to create solutions for actual company problems and gain employment consideration in the process.

Companies can post a specific case on the Web site and students have 40 days to submit a solution. The companies then evaluate and rank the proposals. The winner will receive a \$100 prize.

Although employers are not contractually obligated to offer employment to case winners, the process provides students with a chance to network and build a portfolio.

"It is a chance to show companies what you can really do," said David Graham, vice president of marketing for GrouperEye.com.

Graham said the idea behind the Web site came from his friend and fellow Washington & Lee University 2007 graduate, Ted Williams, the founder of GrouperEye.com. After graduation, Williams was talking to a group of 15 recently graduated friends at a party and discovered that only two of them had found meaningful work. The rest were just doing something to get by, Graham said, and the incident made Williams wonder what could be done to improve the system.

The belief statement of GrouperEye.com includes three principals: 1) The system for young people finding meaningful work is broken. 2) The solution is for organizations to meet, talk and collaborate with young people earlier, more often and in creative ways. 3) Young people are valuable.

See Jobs, page 5

# Wellness revisited

By GUV CALLAHAN  
Collegian Staff

The University of Richmond's Recreation and Wellness department is revising the wellness graduation requirement after students expressed a need for more realistic and interactive courses.

The past month has been dedicated to collecting student input. Recreation and Wellness faculty visited PLUS2 courses to interview students and also sent out surveys to about 1,200 students, said Tom Roberts, director of Recreation and Wellness. They also organized student focus groups and a steering council, or an advisory board composed of select students.

These students thought a number of the wellness requirement's aspects needed improvement. Students said the UR Aware alcohol awareness course needed to be more realistic and focused on actual college life, according to a summary of these student's feedback compiled by recreation and wellness employees.

Students suggested that instructors should teach specific safety tips.

"It's not reality based enough," said freshman Becca Cooper, an office assistant in the Recreation and Wellness department who helped run the focus groups. "People would like to see it more like, 'If your roommate has alcohol poisoning, here's what you do.'"

Students also said many other students think UR Aware repeats too much information they learned in high school. The course should provide new, university-based information, they said.

See Wellness, page 5

# Professor aids Afghanistan in getting first park

By DAN PETTY  
Collegian Reporter

A cluster of six, pristine deep blue lakes tucked into the mountains of Afghanistan's remote center has tentatively become the war-torn country's first national park, thanks largely to the work of Peter Smallwood, a University of Richmond biology professor.

Three decades of fighting had stalled previous efforts to protect the area from resource decimation. But at a small ceremony in Kabul on Wednesday, in conjunction with Earth Day celebrations, the head official for the National Environmental Protection Agency signed an executive order establishing the park, pending the expected approval from the country's parliament.

The creation of the park — named Band-e-Amir for "Lake of the Ruler" — is a burst of good news in a country that has slowly slipped back into the grips of a rising insurgency and faces an increase in American troop presence to quell the resulting violence.

The project is more than a year in the making for Smallwood, who has been on leave from Richmond since January 2008 to serve as the country director for the Wildlife Conservation Society, a non-governmental organization that aims to preserve biodiversity worldwide.

"It's a beautiful place that's been in the Afghan consciousness for some time," Smallwood said Wednesday in a phone interview from Kabul. "For them, it's a real achievement to establish it as a

See Afghanistan, page 3