

# march what's going on at Mason this week?

E-mail news@broadsideonline.com with events for the calendar! Deadline for our Monday publication is the Friday night before at 11:59 p.m.

MONDAY   31	TUESDAY   1	WEDNESDAY   2	THURSDAY   3	FRIDAY   4	SATURDAY   5	SUNDAY   6
<p><b>GREEK WEEK</b> ONE WEEK, ONE CAUSE, ONE GREEK 3/29 - 4/5 MICHELLE GUOBADIA, (703) 993-2909</p> <p><b>CONCEALED CARRY ON CAMPUS</b>, 7 P.M. THE HISTORY OF FIREARMS IN AMERICA, PRESENTED BY LARRY PRATT, PRESIDENT, GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA. J.C., ROOM E SPONSORED BY COLLEGE REPUBLICANS.</p> <p><b>PHILOSOPHY LECTURE</b> 9:30 A.M. - 11 A.M. SOCRATES, PLATO, AND ARISTOTLE, PRESENTED BY ROSE CHERUBIN. TALLWOOD HOUSE PHILOSOPHY, (703) 993-1290</p> <p><b>THE SIMPLE DECLARATIVE SENTENCE IN A NEW MEDIA WORLD</b> PRESENTED BY KEVIN KLOSE, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO. STEVE KLEIN, (703) 993-2199</p>	<p><b>CAREER SERVICES WORKSHOP</b> 5:30 P.M. - 7 P.M. SUB I, ROOM A PLANNING &amp; FINANCING GRAD SCHOOL. FREE. CAREER SERVICES, (703) 993-2370</p> <p><b>ART EXHIBIT</b> FINE ARTS BUILDING, GALLERY CLARITA HERCE, MASTER OF FINE ARTS EXHIBITION. 4/1 - 15. ART &amp; VISUAL TECHNOLOGY, (703) 993-8898.</p> <p><b>GUITAR MASTERCLASS</b> 10:30 AM CONCERT HALL, GRAND TIER III ELEFTHRIA K. MUSIC DEPARTMENT, (703) 993-1380.</p> <p><b>ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH</b> THE PRELUDE: APA HERITAGE MONTH KICK-OFF 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. J.C., DEWBERRY HALL FREE. OFFICE OF DIVERSITY PROGRAMS &amp; SERVICES, (703) 993-2700</p>	<p><b>APRIL FOOL'S DAY CHAMBER CONCERT.</b> 7 P.M., HARRIS THEATRE FREE. CFA BOX OFFICE (703) 993-8888</p> <p><b>RINGLING BROTHERS AND BARNUM AND BAILEY CIRCUS</b> PATRIOT CENTER <b>WEDNESDAY</b>, 4/2, 7:00 P.M.; <b>THURSDAY</b>, 4/3, 7:00 P.M.; <b>FRIDAY</b>, 4/4, 10:30 A.M. &amp; 7:30 P.M.; <b>SATURDAY</b>, 4/5, 11:30 A.M., 3:30 P.M. &amp; 7:30 P.M.; <b>SUNDAY</b>, 4/6, 1:00 P.M. &amp; 5:00 P.M.; <b>WEDNESDAY</b>, 4/9, 7:00 P.M.; <b>THURSDAY</b>, 4/10, 7:00 P.M.; <b>FRIDAY</b>, 4/11, 7:30 P.M.; <b>SATURDAY</b>, 4/12, 11:30 A.M., 3:30 P.M., &amp; 7:30 P.M.; <b>SUNDAY</b>, 4/13, 1:00 P.M. &amp; 5:00 P.M. \$95; \$65; \$50; \$28; \$18; \$14. PATRIOT CENTER, (703) 993-3000.</p>	<p><b>HEALTH &amp; FITNESS EXPO</b> HEALTH-RELATED DEMONSTRATIONS, HEALTH INFORMATION TABLES, AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES DEMONSTRATIONS. 10 A.M. - 4 P.M. PRINCE WILLIAM, BULL RUN HALL, ATRIUM SPONSORED BY KAISER PERMANENTE. FREE. CATHY PERDUE, (703) 993-8425</p> <p><b>GREEK WEEK</b> 1 P.M. - 5 P.M. INTRAMURAL FIELDS FIELD DAY. MICHELLE GUOBADIA, (703) 993-2909</p> <p><b>CAREER SERVICES WORKSHOP</b> 5:30 P.M. - 7 P.M. SUB I, ROOM 348 FEDERAL GOVERNMENT JOB/INTERNSHIP SEARCH. FREE. CAREER SERVICES, (703) 993-2370</p>	<p><b>RUSSIAN OLYMPIADA</b> MID-ATLANTIC REGION COMPETITION OF SPOKEN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS. 9 A.M. - 2 P.M. J.C., CINEMA JAMES LEVINE, (703) 993-1233</p> <p><b>MEN'S &amp; WOMEN'S TENNIS</b> MASON V. ROBERT MORRIS 1 P.M. TENNIS COURTS BY PE BUILDING FREE. ATHLETIC TICKET OFFICE, (703) 993-3270</p> <p><b>CINEMA SERIES</b> <i>JUNO</i> 6 P.M., 9 P.M. J.C., CINEMA MASON STUDENTS W/ID, FREE; MASON FACULTY/STAFF W/ID, \$1; GENERAL PUBLIC, \$3. STUDENT ACTIVITIES PROGRAMMING, (703) 993-1702</p>	<p><b>INTERNATIONAL WEEK</b> MASON: ONE COMMUNITY, MANY IDENTITIES. 4/5 - 12. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS &amp; SERVICES, (703) 993-2970</p> <p><b>GREEK WEEK/ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH</b> CULTURAL SHOWCASE: SPARK HOPE, SPONSORED BY KAPPA PHI LAMBDA SORORITY, INC. 7 P.M. - 10 P.M. HARRIS THEATRE OFFICE OF DIVERSITY PROGRAMS &amp; SERVICES, (703) 993-2700.</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE</b> THE ACTING COMPANY - MOBY DICK REHEARSED 8 P.M., CONCERT HALL, \$34; \$26; \$17. CENTER FOR THE ARTS BOX OFFICE, (703) 993-8888</p> <p><b>INTERNATIONAL WEEK FILM</b> <i>HIMALAYA</i> 3 P.M. J.C., CINEMA FREE. OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS &amp; SERVICES, (703) 993-2970</p>	<p><b>CONCERT</b> GMU CHAMBER ORCHESTRA &amp; GROUPS CONCERT. 6 P.M. MILLENNIUM STAGE, KENNEDY CENTER, WASHINGTON, D.C. MUSIC DEPARTMENT, (703) 993-1380.</p> <p><b>PERFORMANCE</b> THE ACTING COMPANY - <i>THE TEMPEST</i> 7 P.M. CONCERT HALL \$34; \$26; \$17. CENTER FOR THE ARTS BOX OFFICE, (703) 993-8888</p> <p><b>CONCERT</b> PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE CONCERT. 7 P.M. HARRIS THEATRE FREE. MUSIC DEPARTMENT, (703) 993-1380</p>

## This Week in Mason History

### From Commuter to Residential Campus

On March 4, 1976, university officials broke ground on the university's first student housing complex located between Patriot Circle and SUB I, known at the time as the Student Union Building. During the ceremony in the Student Union Building, Mason President Vergil H. Dykstra hailed the planned student apartments as a significant shift from a commuter to a residential campus. The audience also listened to remarks by the Dean for Student Affairs Donald J. Marsh, Student Government President Michael Cholko and a benediction by Father Richard Wozniak of the Campus Ministry.

Following the ceremony, the crowd gathered outside where John C. Wood, Rector for the Board of Visitors, donned a Mason construction hat and grabbed a gold shovel. He remarked on the importance of the housing for the 500 future



residents while acknowledging that even more housing would have been desirable. At the time of the groundbreaking, officials projected that students would pay from \$115 to \$125 per month depending on whether they lived in the six, four, or two-person apartments. The student housing opened in 1977 and the buildings underwent renovations in 2002.

Photograph and Text Courtesy of Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries

## Harder Better Faster Stronger: Health Expo

By MRINALINI RAMANAN  
Staff Writer

George Mason University students took a break to attend the Health and Fitness Expo on March 26 and 27 in Dewberry Hall.

The Expo was organized by the Health and Fitness Expo Taskforce, comprised mostly of faculty and administrators from the Health Services department. Carol Filak, the Administrative Director of Student Health Services at Mason, has been overseeing the success of the event since 1999. Filak collaborates between various departments in Mason, namely dining services, Student Media, Nursing and Athletics, to help organize the Health and Fitness Expo.

"[The] vendors we get are mostly George Mason Alumni," said Filak, pointing out that vendors from the community also offer to set up their stalls and talk to Mason students about their services and products that would benefit their health. Vendors such as the

Washington Regional Transplant Community have been regulars at the Expo, offering information on how individuals can donate their organs, if they choose to do so, after dying. Julie Trapp, a media center assistant from a high school in Maryland, is a volunteer in this organization.

"In a very small amount of time, my husband and I had to make a decision to donate my son's organs after he died," Trapp said. "I do not want people to go through what I went through. I think students should know how to make informed decisions on their own organs while they are still alive and not let someone else decide for them."

Other vendors were familiar faces from Ciao Hall, who served chicken and pineapple noodle delicacies to whoever drew near them. The executive chef of Mason's dining services assisted in an Iron Chef competition between the Feminist Ninjas and the Student Activities Staff on Wednesday. The audience was impressed by the dishes the teams produced, and were commenting on the techniques of

the chefs.

The event drew students from various walks of life as well. Jinky Recerone, a health system management senior, heard about the expo from her teacher during her first year at Mason. She has been coming to the Expo since then "This year, there are a lot more people, the food is a little healthier, there are more fruit and vegetables around in the stalls," Recerone said. "My favorite part is the give-aways," she said, as she stood in line for a free T-shirt.

The free T-shirts, however, were not just give-aways, but rather, rewards for the participants in the expo who talked to five different categories of stalls. The participant had to solicit information on health, nutrition, recreation and fitness, alternative therapies, get a health screening and receive a sticker for their interest. This cumulative activity then awarded the participant with a green T-shirt that read, "HFE made me...Harder Better Faster Stronger," a motto that matched the charged atmosphere in Dewberry Hall.

## FREE TICKETS FOR MASON STUDENTS!

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\$34, \$26, \$17 Concert Hall  
Tickets Available Now  
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*Swan Lake*  
Sat., Apr. 12 at 8 pm  
\$54, \$46, \$27 Concert Hall  
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Sun., Apr. 13 at 1 pm  
\$14, \$10 Concert Hall  
No Free Student Tickets Available

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## Center for the Arts



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## POLICE FILES

March 24	<p><b>Two Vehicle Accident</b> Lot L Veh#2 was legally parked and left unattended in Lot L. Veh#1 struck veh#2 and fled the scene. Estimated damage \$400.00. (22/Barton)</p>
March 25	<p><b>Theft From Building</b> Amherst Complainant stated that an unknown person(s) stole \$800.00 from a bag that was located in her dresser. This case is under investigation. (20/Brudvig)</p> <p><b>Theft From Vehicle</b> University Drive Complainant stated that an unknown person(s) had broken into his vehicle and stole a GPS, Debit card and driver's license. This case is under investigation. (37/Radfar)</p> <p><b>Vandalism</b> Presidents Park Complainant/Victim reported that someone tossed eggs on her vehicle while it was parked in Presidents Park. No damage was reported. (40/Ross)</p> <p><b>Lost Property</b> Aquatic Center A Law Enforcement Officer reported loss of his credentials while at the Aquatic Center on 03/25/2008. (49/Kalenich)</p>
March 26	<p><b>Petit Larceny</b> Lot A Complainant reported his decal stolen. Loss 180.00 dollars. (55/Higgins)</p> <p><b>Accident</b> Braddock@Roanoke One vehicle rear ended another at the intersection. One driver was charged with following to close. Damage estimated at 4000.00 dollars for both vehicle. (45/Galle)</p> <p><b>Hit and Run</b> Lot K Complainant reported returning to his parked vehicle to find damage left by unknown vehicle. Total damage estimated at \$1000 (54/Galle)</p> <p><b>Underage Possession of Alcohol</b> Commonwealth Hall Non-GMU students Nathaniel Littner of Fairfax, VA and Devon Welcher of Burke VA were issued summons for the above charge. GMU Students Anthony Turner of Chantilly, VA, Rachel Daniel of Virginia Beach, VA, Haseen Raza of Chantilly, VA, and Shannon Pitzer of Bristow, VA, were issued summons for the above charge and released. (54/Galle)</p>
March 27	<p><b>Vandalism</b> Patriot Circle A drivers car was kicked by a pedestrian as she was traveling on Patriot Circle causing approximately 150.00 dollars in damage. (29/Aman)</p> <p><b>Damaged property</b> Roberts Road Complainant reported the window to his vehicle broken out while it had been parked for several days along Roberts Road. Damage appeared to have been caused by a small rock which may have been kicked by a passing car. Damaged estimated at 200.00 dollars. (45/Graham)</p> <p><b>Vandalism</b> West lot Complainant reported person(s) unknown threw a rock through the back window of their car. Damage estimated at 300.00 dollars.</p>

Police Files taken verbatim from [www.gmu.edu/police](http://www.gmu.edu/police). Broadside does not make any changes to public records such as these files.

# Connect Mason Becomes Finalist for Pacemaker Award

By ASMA CHAUDHARY  
News Editor

Connect Mason, a recent endeavor created by George Mason University's Student Media, has received recognition as one of 27 university publications entered in the 2008 Associated Collegiate Press Online Pacemaker finalists.

"I had to ask myself: How is that not great?" said senior Whitney Rhodes, Director of Connect Mason. "Others out there call it the Pulitzer Prize of college journalism."

After only two months of providing a media convergence Web site for Mason, Connect2Mason.com has already earned a fan base across the country.

"Our adviser suggested to fill out an application to see what would come of it, but we knew that we were brand new," Rhodes said.

Connect Mason received notification of their achievements this past week and will have to wait until October to hear the final results.

"It's been great to see our name as one of the finalists for online college publication even though we're listed at the very bottom of the list, which still makes it exciting," Rhodes said.

Although Rhodes serves as the director, she discussed the importance of having a great news team ready to cover breaking news and gather multimedia content as much as possible on campus.

"This is definitely something tangible for the university and I rely on my staff to turn their stuff in on time and get through the wonderful drama, crazy work ethic and problems because in the end it is a worthwhile venture," Rhodes said.

With journalistic techniques that combine photography, video, audio and updates, Connect Mason continues to expand with each day.

"I'm happy because we are consciously striving for making a kick-ass convergence Web site," Rhodes said.



Connect Mason is a finalist for the collegiate press Pacemaker Award. "Others out there call it the Pulitzer Prize of college journalism," Connect Mason Director Whitney Rhodes said. For more information about the Associated Collegiate Press, visit [studentpress.org](http://studentpress.org).

# 79357: Words From a Holocaust Survivor

## Hate Equals Violence: Waking Up Each Day Was a Miracle

By TINA MILLER  
Staff Writer

Approximately 70 students packed the ground level of the Mason Hall atrium to hear the story of holocaust survivor Manya Friedman last Thursday.

Friedman began her story by first saying that "the holocaust is a cautionary warning to all humanity to what can happen with hate." She then proceeded to share her life story.

Friedman was born in 1925 in Chmielnik, Poland. In 1938, her family moved to Sosnowiec, a larger city near Germany.

In September 1939, Sosnowiec was occupied by German forces, and Friedman began experiencing the atrocities of being Jewish at that time. She was forbidden from the schools, and she witnessed the burning of synagogues. By 1940, half of the Jewish population had been deported.

"We witnessed many miracles," Friedman said. "If you got up in the morning, that was a miracle."

In 1941, Friedman began working in a shop that produced German military uniforms. There, she experienced harsh working conditions and witnessed the malnourishment and fainting of her fellow workers.

It was while at this shop that Manya was finally deported. Her parents met her at the shop to bring her some belongings. "This was the last time I ever saw my parents," Friedman said. Her parents and two brothers were later deported to Auschwitz.

Friedman was taken to Gogolin, a transit camp, and later to Gleiwitz, a work camp where she underwent the

inhumane cruelties and brutalities of concentration camps. "I was called 79357, but they took away more than our names," Friedman said.

In January of 1945, Friedman was transported to Ravensbruck concentration camp, and finally to the Rechlin camp where she was rescued by the Swedish

in the camps, Friedman responded, "My friends. We were young. We wanted to survive. Sometimes kids write me and tell me I'm a big hero. But I am not a hero. Surviving was like having the right number in the lottery."

Currently, Friedman is a volunteer at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and an active member of the Museum's Speakers Bureau. She has lived in the U.S. since she emigrated in 1950.

Some additional students who could not find seats below watched from the railing of the second story in the open atrium.

President Merten introduced Manya Friedman, saying, "She is going to force us to look at something very awful... that's going to relate us to things happening today."

After President Alan Merten's introduction, associate history professor, Dr. Marion Deshmukh, provided a brief historical context for Friedman's testimony.

Friedman's visit to George Mason University was a part of the Never Forget Series, which host events in remembrance of the holocaust and is sponsored by the Mason University Scholars and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). Representing Mason University Scholars at Friedman's testimony was Megan Fowler, a junior majoring in history and theatre, who serves as chairwoman of the service committee, and also interned at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. Fowler intends to host more events in the Never Forget Series, including a panel with WWII veterans. For more information about the holocaust events or other events in the Never Forget Series, contact Fowler at [mfowler1@gmu.edu](mailto:mfowler1@gmu.edu).



Holocaust survivor Manya Friedman shares her life story with Mason students.

Red Cross in April of that same year.

Friedman recalled the fear that she and her friends lived with even after their rescue. They still associated showers with gas chambers, as they sometimes were in the camps. "When we went to bathe, none of us wanted to get into the showers," Friedman said. "A member of the Red Cross turned on the water and got in to show us that it was safe."

Friedman ended her testimonial by saying that she tells her story in memory of millions, so that their death is not in vain. "We have an obligation to them to fight against genocide. We are trying to convey to you [young people] what happens when hate, prejudice and disregard for human life prevail."

When asked by a student in the audience what motivated her to survive

# Pride Week: At the Crossroads of Faith and Identity

By ERICA TERRINI  
Staff Writer

As the events hosted by George Mason University's Pride Alliance carried on through the week, beginning on Monday, March 24, there were various topics to be discussed and new perspectives to be gained. This was particularly true for one of the first events of the week entitled "At the Crossroads of Faith and Identity."

The forum was held on Tuesday, March 25, at 4:30 p.m. in the Bistro within the Johnson Center. Initially, there were three speakers scheduled to appear for a brief presentation and lead discussion with a question and answer session to follow and wrap up the event.

The three main speakers for the event included Imam Daayiee Abdullah, a member of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Religious Leadership Roundtable. He has a Master's degree in Islamic Law where he began to deal with sexual orientation in Islamic law. The next

speaker was Ben Masters, a co-chair for Pride Alliance and undergraduate junior at Mason with an intended major of Conflict Analysis and Resolution and Rabbi Sarah Meytin, Assistant Director at the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington. Meytin could not attend due to illness.

Abdullah began the forum by providing a brief personal background, ultimately, how he came to find, identify with and practice the Muslim religion.

"I was exposed to a wide array of beliefs, which gave me an opportunity of how people related to God," Abdullah said.

After Abdullah spoke, Masters proceeded with his own experience with his own religious affiliation to the Presbyterian denomination of the Christian church.

"My father is a minister...I always had a church to go to and my father instilled a value of holding faith, but also questioning this faith," Masters said.

Both Abdullah and Masters then continued to carry the conversation, which was then directed specifically to the topic of balancing sexual orientation and religion. This largely pertains to social aspects affecting and in turn being affected by religious aspects, which was a proper introduction topic for Abdullah to bring the audience's attention to a theory of culture and theology being intertwined and integrated in today's society.

Abdullah noted that the laws go according to religion in many cultures and there is a "social expectation" strong bond that must be considered before decisions are made. Considering this integration Abdullah spoke about finding balance, not just with sexual orientation and religion but also with any aspects of religion that may go against the normality's enforced by society's bounds.

"We all have to struggle and we should question," Abdullah said. "This doesn't mean you question everything, but you question the things that don't

make sense."

As for Masters' perspective on the relations between social sentiments and religion and his ideas on how to balance the two, he felt it is important to acknowledge the differences within us and attempt to bridge them through religion.

"Learning theology is like learning a language," Masters said. "You look at what languages people use to define a presence of peace and love within their lives. We're given different languages to tell people where we are in our lives."

One topic that came up was different quotations from either the Bible or the Qu'ran that are widely believed to condemn homosexuality. Both Abdullah and Masters made it known that these passages from the texts were not directed to sexual orientation but to the actions of man himself. As Abdullah and Masters continued the forum, there was this idea of establishing concrete relationships as they encouraged others to do.

"As a Muslim, I still have standards. In our relationships we have to be forgiving but stand up for our standards," said Abdullah. "We must work towards a harmony, work towards an understanding, work towards a relationship."

With the concluding thoughts of both speakers, the floor was opened for discussion and questions. Many members within the audience shared the same enthusiasm for the message the speakers emitted.

"It was nice to get an insight to the Islamic and Christian faith and gender identity," said Alex Gant, co-chair for Pride Alliance and undergraduate senior and history major. "It assured me in my own path and that religion is not something to be afraid of."

The forum tackled a prominent and relevant issue that a wider audience through out the world can relate to.

"I have an independent Christian identity," said Masters, "and it's not that I am gay and Christian."

# Mason Community Unites Under the Stars

*Students, Faculty Visit Astronomy Observatory Session*

By ERICA TERRINI  
Staff Writer

For George Mason University students, faculty, staff and the interested public, an invitation to astronomy observing sessions has been in place since the beginning of the spring semester. The College of Science's Department of Physics and Astronomy has scheduled four observing sessions so far this semester, two of which had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

Observatory Director, Associate Chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy and term assistant professor, Harold Geller has led the observing sessions. Throughout his career, Geller has been affiliated with the College of Education and Human Development's Center for Restructuring Education in Science and Technology, the Math and Science Innovation Center and the University of Virginia's Department of Astronomy.

The most recent observing session was scheduled for March 24 at 8:30 p.m., but had to be cancelled due to cloudy skies. However, despite the cancellation of the actual observing sessions, Astronomy Program Director and assistant professor Dr. Joe Weingartner offered brief presentations on topics discussed and pertaining to the Mason Physics and Astronomy Club.

These presentations are held on the first floor of Research Building I usually an hour and a half prior to the observing sessions and take place regardless of the weather. The actual observing sessions take place on the top floor of Research Building I next to the Observatory. The building itself was only constructed in August of 2004 and the Observatory was just recently opened in January of 2007. It is important to note, however, that no one is

permitted to enter the observatory without proper authorization.

Geller leads the group in recognizing various constellations, stars, planets, etc. according to what is available for that particular month. There are sky calendars offered to those who attend to help map out the skies. In addition to the observing sessions of the night sky, there is also a brief tour of the observatory itself. Currently, there are several portable telescopes available for use held within the observatory and the Department of Physics and Astronomy is expecting to obtain a 32-inch Ritchey Chretien telescope, which is scheduled to arrive and become a permanent addition to the Observatory Tower in September of 2008.

The astronomy students currently use computer simulations instead of real images from a telescope.

"With the new and bigger telescope, the better the show will be," Weingartner said.

Until the arrival of the new telescope, which will operate with the 20 foot six inch rotating roof of the observatory tower, the three telescopes still allow students to take their classroom knowledge and apply it to situations outside of the typical setting.

"We hope to have all our astronomy students, especially once we get the telescope, to be able to make use of this knowledge in real life," Geller said, "so those who go on with Astronomy won't be surprised with the tools and newer models."

There are two more scheduled observing sessions that will take place during the remainder of the spring semester. The dates for these sessions are for Monday, April 7 and Monday, April 21. More information about dates and backgrounds on the session leaders can be found on the Department of Physics and Astronomy's web page, [www.physics.gmu.edu](http://www.physics.gmu.edu).

## Mason Residents Take On Energy Saving Competition

Overall awareness for energy conservation is consistently growing on George Mason University's Fairfax campus. A perfect example is in the Amherst and Brunswick residence halls. From March 17 through April 20, the two halls will compete to reduce energy consumption in Mason's first energy challenge. Heading the initiative is Mason's Sustainability Coordinator Lenna Storm.

"First and foremost, our goal is to educate the resident community on campus in Fairfax about the impact of their energy usage within the residence halls," Storm said.

Other goals of the sustainability office include providing support for student-driven initiatives that focus on improving sustainability on campus and promoting a

competitive and rewarding atmosphere in order to spread the word about decreasing energy consumption as a positive contribution.

Increasing sustainability and conserving energy is not a hard thing to do. Shannon Serum, one of the three students leading the challenge, explains how there are many small things students can do daily that could make a big impact in the future.

"Turn off your printer when you're not using it, shut down your computer overnight or when you've got classes all day," Serum said. "Don't leave the DVD player on all of the time, turn your television and lights off when you leave the room. Soon enough, little acts like these will hopefully become second nature so you don't even have to think about

it."

These are the very things that students in Amherst and Brunswick will strive to do during the four weeks preceding Earth Day.

Naturally, energy consumption fluctuates. For example, during the first few weeks of a semester, and during exam time more energy is used. According to the Sustainability Office's Web site, a small thing such as junk e-mail consumes more energy than 2.8 million cars each year.

In the future there are hopes of involving more resident halls in a similar competition.

The challenge ends on Earth Day, which occurs this year on April 22, when students from the winning building will receive an award.

## From Front: Protestors Collide

have problems, the military will fix them, just presto chango, but that's not the way it is; if anything my problems got worse while I was in the military," Khan said. "I think it's really important not to deceive people."

Khan explained that during a time that is meant to be fun, such as the Health Expo, he wants to remind people of what he believes the military to be.

"If they're going to be out here with these fun and games, I would like to be out here keeping this in people's minds," Khan said.

Two Mason students, Ryan Jindra and William Tryon, who are both management majors, saw Khan in protest and decided to counter-protest in honor of the military. The counter-protest consisted of a poster that read "liar" and displayed an arrow pointing in Khan's direction.

"We found him to be very offensive and wanted to say that you're [Khan is] a liar," Tryon said.

Tryon explained that he supports the troops because he believes that the war is

necessary. Jindra added that the troops were deserving of support.

"No war is a good war. I mean we're not doing this for shits and giggles," Tryon said.

"We support our troops because our troops support us," Jindra said.

Khan explained that his goal was not to oppose the individual soldiers, but to oppose those in high level leadership positions.

"I'm not opposing individual soldiers, I'm opposing the system. There's a difference between the individual enlisted and the people at the top," Khan said.

Khan suggested that people who are interested in enlisting should listen to soldiers telling their own stories instead of recruiters telling their stories for them. Khan also referenced Dave Airhart, who is known for attending a recruiting event and hanging an anti-military banner from a climbing wall in 2005.

"If he [Airhart] can do something, so can I," Khan said.

## From Front: Greek Life Director Michelle Guobadia to Retire

hours and endure outdoor conditions. On behalf of the event, proceeds will go to charity organizations like Habitat for Humanity and the Medical Care for Children Partnership.

Therefore, families with children who do not have medical insurance will benefit from the event through the money raised.

"It's been amazing and bittersweet at the same time and it's not like I'm mad or anything, it's just that I'm at the point where I have the option to take a career move to the next level," Guobadia said.

According to Guobadia, the Greek community at Mason raised \$8,600, which was a large amount for the organizations working collectively. Also, Guobadia discussed how important it was to maintain relationships

with stakeholders.

"It's not about Mason remembering me, but to see what we have accomplished as a community with stakeholders. I want Greek life to know that they can be better than yesterday and come together as brothers and sisters," Guobadia said.

Prior to obtaining the position at Mason, Guobadia attended the University of Delaware as well as North Carolina State University. She studied education in programming, leadership and student affairs.

"I am thrilled for this new opportunity and my experiences at Mason that have prepared me for this next level in my professional career," Guobadia said.

Not only was money raised during Guobadia's

three-year position but also she noted how much fraternities and sororities have improved academically with stronger grade point averages, which are now posted online on their web sites.

"Our staff in Student Activities is committed to ensuring that fraternity and sorority life maintains high standards and has knowledgeable support," Guobadia said.

Students are encouraged to become involved in Greek life and to learn more about community service projects and events.

"This is a great Greek community with amazing potential. I believed in you when I started in June 2005, I believe in you today and I will believe in you always," Guobadia said.

## Raising Awareness: Kenya Conflict

By ERICA TERRINI  
Staff Writer

As a prelude to the Victims' Rights Week for 2008, which will take place from April 13 to 19, Sexual Assault services for George Mason University worked closely with Mason's Global Health Student Beyond Borders Monday, March 24. The collaboration between the two groups resulted in a discussion and forum with the intent to raise awareness about the conflicts in Kenya.

The event, "Conflict in Kenya," was held in the Lecture Hall 1 at 7:30 p.m. and lasted until 9 p.m. There were three main speakers present for the event. Among the speakers was Dr. Carlos Sluzki who is currently a clinical professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences for George Washington University's school of Medicine and Health Sciences and a consultant at the International Criminal Court and an advisor to the World Health Organization.

Sluzki is also currently a professor at Mason and has established associations with the College of Health and Human Services as well as the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Connie Kirkland also led the discussion as the Director of Mason's Sexual Assault Services.

The last speaker represented the Kenya Diaspora Network, an organization with no political affiliations who is aimed at supporting the progression of the Kenyan Government. The discussion over the disruptions

within Kenyan Government and society began with a brief introduction by Dr. Constance Gewa, a professor within the Department of Global and Community Health at Mason. Gewa was the initial catalyst for this discussion when she approached Sexual Assault Services as well as the Global Health Students Beyond Borders for Mason earlier in February.

According to Jackie Brazier, an outreach specialist for Sexual Assault Services, "Dr. Gewa, who is a native of Kenya, expressed deep concern about the escalating political conflict and asked if Sexual Assault Services in collaboration with Global Health Students Beyond Borders could increase student awareness about the political conflict," Brazier said. "Upon researching the conflict, we found that there was an alarming increase in sexual violence, and rape was being used as a weapon."

The lecture explained that the current reason for the majority of the political instability within Kenya is the presidential win for Mwai Kibaki that took place in December. Kibaki's second term win was the cause of widespread chaos and outrage. Since then, there has been an estimated million displaced persons throughout the country due to social disorder and there have been a mass amount of accounts of using rape as a weapon of war.

As the topic of discussion and a brief outline of Kenya's political history were given at the start of the discussion, the three guest speakers shared

their perspectives on the crisis at hand.

There was a question and answer session to follow the speakers as well as an art display with photographs and original documents to provide visuals of the current outbreak of violence. Though their target audience may have originally been Mason students and staff working in related fields as well as the members of the local community, they welcomed the diverse audience that they received, including law enforcement officials and even persons planning trips to Kenya.

The popularity of this event holds promise for future events scheduled for Victims' Rights Week that will include "The Northern Virginia Annual Candlelight Vigil of Courage," "Hope and Remembrance" on April 13, at 3:00 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center with featured speaker Joe Samaha, father of Reema Samaha, a student who was murdered during the Virginia Tech shooting of April, 2007.

Other events will include "The 12 Annual Crime Victims Rights 5K Run/Walk," in collaboration with the Aimee Willard Endowment Scholarship Fund on Tuesday April 15. More information about Victims Rights Week can be found on Mason's Sexual Assault Services WebPage at [www.gmu.edu/facstaff/sexua](http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/sexua)

While there is a lot for many interested in these global affairs to look forward too, those who worked to set up and organize this event hoped to make efforts towards a peaceful solution in Kenya.

## Mason First To Use New Alert System

George Mason University is the first university in the country to participate in ALERT FM, an FM radio-based alert and messaging system that sends messages by satellite to FM transmission towers.

According to a press release, the potential messages include, "tornado warnings, homeland security notices, hurricane evacuation instructions, utility notices, plant or school closings, employee notifications and traffic alerts."

These messages are sent to ALERT FM receivers, wall units and mobile devices such as PDAs, cell phones and other technology equipped with FM chips.

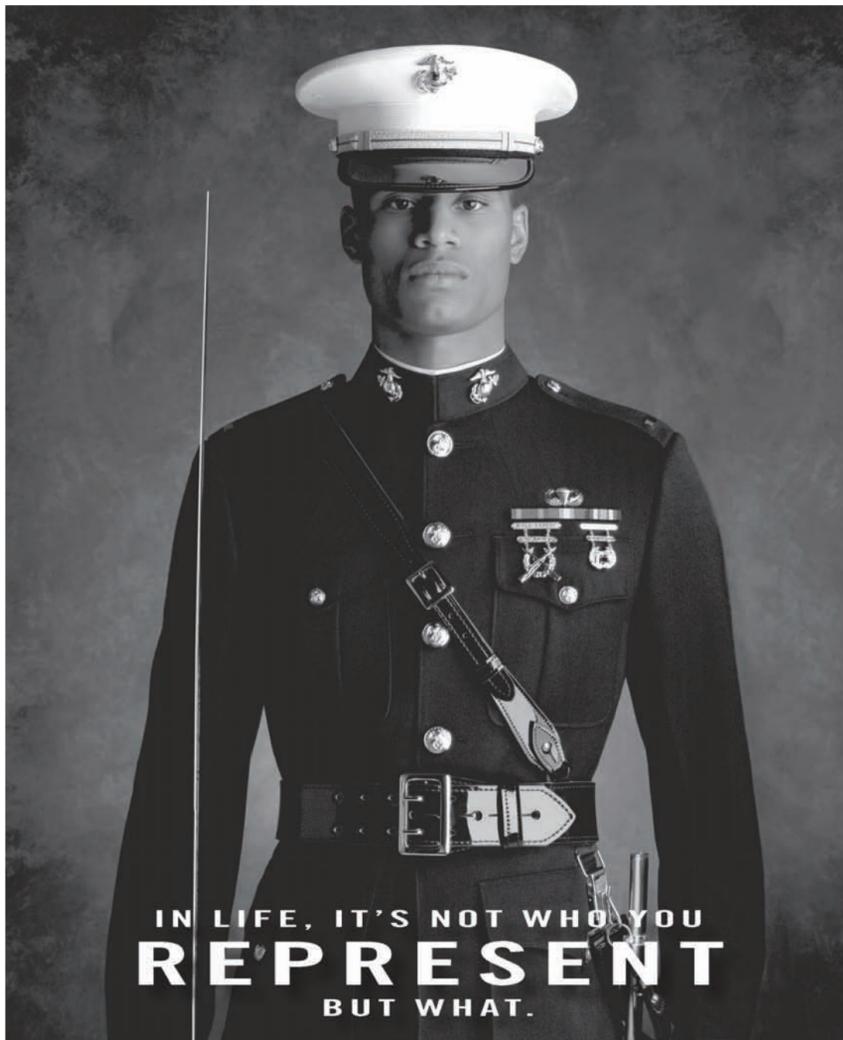
The ALERT FM program uses towers in a

pre-existing network, allowing the coverage to potentially reach more than the 30,000 members of the Mason community. Communities can set up specific groups based on geographic or organizational groupings.

While Mason currently has an SMS and e-mail emergency notification system, ALERT FM was purchased to provide another layer of security to offset the instability of SMS and e-mail technology.

Mason bought ALERT FM receivers, USB receivers and wall receivers to place in public locations on campus.

ALERT FM receivers were released to the public for purchase last October. For more information, visit [www.alertfm.com](http://www.alertfm.com).



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# Slumping Economy, Rising Tuition Affect Students

## Mason Community Starting to Face Financial Difficulties

By **ETHAN VAUGHAN**  
Staff Writer

The continuing deterioration of the United States economy, coupled with rising tuition costs for universities in general, and at George Mason University in particular, is beginning to be felt on Mason's campus.

The combination of falling housing prices, widespread foreclosures from the subprime mortgage crisis, the elevated cost of living, expensive gas, higher tuition and a restricting job market have hit some at Mason hard.

In order to understand the current economic situation, one must go back to 2001, which is roughly the time when many economists say that the housing bubble of the present decade began.

The bubble, a period of rapidly accelerating real estate prices and home construction, eventually led to an all-time high homeownership rate of 69.2 percent in 2004, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The unprecedented hike in the number of homes purchased, along with the astronomical leap in the prices for which they were sold, was made possible in part because of high-risk, or "subprime" mortgages, given by banks to those customers whose credit history would normally prevent them from being able to take out a loan for a home.

Traditional, or "prudent" mortgages, according to Mason's Economics Department are usually granted only to people who have previously demonstrated their ability to responsibly handle money and pay back their debts in a timely fashion. In keeping with this, homebuyers taking out a prudent mortgage typically place a down payment of 10 to 20 percent of their house's total value at the onset of the loan. This demonstrates wherewithal on the part of the mortgagee and also means that they have paid down part of the sum of their home.

In order to purchase a house that costs \$500,000, someone taking out a prudent mortgage would likely make a \$50,000 down payment and then make monthly payments in which a certain amount of the \$500,000 is reduced and a certain interest rate was also satisfied.

Due to the financial obligation incurred in such a situation, obtaining a loan, and thus, owning a home, was relatively difficult until the earlier part of the 2000s. Beginning in 2001 and 2002, banks greatly expanded the scope of their subprime mortgages, among these an especially-risky kind called an interest-only loan.

Offered to lower-income borrowers, interest-only loans allowed those unable to afford making down payments to obtain a home. Under the terms of interest-only loans, mortgagees typically contribute only to the interest on the

home loan, not to any of the home's actual value.

Thus, for a \$500,000 mortgage, an interest-only loan holder would merely make an interest payment, which, at a typical rate of 6 percent per year, would come out to roughly \$2,500 per month. After a certain period, however, typically five to ten years, the debtor must begin paying on the principal of the home along with the interest, leading to a dramatic spike in the cost of the mortgage.

The housing bubble, which had been expanding exponentially as a result of the millions of homeowners flooding the market with cheap and accessible mortgages, reached untenable levels in the summer of 2005.

Housing prices stabilized throughout the second half of that year, ending the wild streak of speculation that had proceeded since 2001. In 2006, a number of subprime interest-only loans taken out circa 2001 abruptly increased in price, leading to the first round of foreclosures and a sudden decline in housing prices.

That decline has since become precipitous, with a steadily-increasing rate of mortgage defaults on the part of subprime borrowers leading to foreclosures and empty houses.

The problem went from a sector panic to a market-wide crisis when mortgage companies and banks that had backed the subprime boom found that the money they had lent had evaporated and that they have lost millions of dollars.

On March 14, 2008, Bear Sterns, the fifth-largest bank in the country and a heavy investor in subprime mortgages, was saved from complete financial failure only when JP Morgan, another bank, stepped in with an emergency loan backed by the Federal Reserve. Two days later, JP Morgan purchased Bear Sterns for \$2 a share, a 93 percent discount on the company's market value, and market worldwide plummeted.

"[Banks] vastly overestimated the value of those mortgages," said Professor Donald Boudreaux, Chairman of George Mason University's Economics Department, a position he has held since 2001.

Boudreaux believes that major financial institutions acted irresponsibly in forwarding mortgages to those they knew were likely to have trouble paying them back. Boudreaux is at a loss to explain why the banks would back such ventures, remarking that "they didn't realize it was stupid."

He goes on to note that, while the Mason Economics Department is generally "more skeptical" than others in identifying publicly-declared trends, he has "no doubt that the economy is slowing down."

That being the case, Boudreaux cautions against panic, noting that unemployment remains at a low 4.9 percent and that the current market fluctuations are in his view a natural part of the economic cycle.

"Downturns don't scare me; these things happen," he said. "What scares me is the potential for overreacting to them."

Boudreaux cites the Federal Reserve's rescue of beleaguered Bear Sterns, a move that he says never should have been made as he believes it will encourage banks to make unsound decisions with the knowledge that the federal government will be there to provide a safety net from financial trouble, which he affirms is a justifiable consequence for unwise business practices.

"[Those investors] should have known what kind of risk they were undertaking," he declares. "There's no reason Uncle Sam should have bailed them out."

Boudreaux thinks that federal intervention in the economy only leads to more panic.

He also links the current economic problems to the Board of Visitors' recent decision, not yet formally agreed upon, to raise tuition by 10 percent next year and 77 percent by 2013.

Counties, he explains, draw a large part of their revenue from property taxes, which the foreclosures have made unavailable. As a result, the state of Virginia is forced to assume more of the basic needs of the counties while cutting funds from state institutions such as Mason.

Senator Nicole Kukuruda, Vice Chairwoman of the Finance and Student Services Committees, says that the tuition increase could severely impact some students.

"I think that there are people who are living on the edge who will find themselves [in their] Junior [or] Senior Year [in trouble]," she said.

She shares that the tuition rise, one of nearly 20 percent since 2005, has already affected her.

"I have to take out more student loans, it's going to take me longer to pay them off, and I have to get hired right after graduation."

Kukuruda says that the university has responded to state budget cuts in a way that betrays what she calls disordered priorities, continuing to fund campus construction projects while withholding money from school departments.

"They're charging students to grow instead of charging for quality," Kukuruda said.

Ann Schellman, a senior and global affairs major, says that gas prices, tuition and the rising cost of living, have forced her to purchase basic necessities, like groceries, on her credit card, a practice that has incurred her over \$1,000 of debt.

"I hope to pay that off by graduation," Schellman said. "But every time I turn around Mason has another fee."

And, with the cost of filling up her car at approximately \$40 a week, she doubts that she will find any relief soon.

"It's all too much," Kukuruda said. "It's all too much."

# Mason Professor Wins Lifetime Achievement Award

By **RASHAD MULLA**  
Staff Writer

Dr. Michael Behrmann, director of the Helen A. Kellar Institute for Human Disabilities at George Mason University, will be recognized for his 35 years of service in special education, during which he conducted research and developed assistive technology for students with learning disabilities, this Wednesday.

The Council for Exceptional Children will present him with the rare J.E. Wallace Wallin Special Education Lifetime Achievement Award, given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions throughout their careers. Lynda Van Kuren, Senior Director of Communications with the CEC, said Behrmann's contributions to the field of special education were far-reaching and a large impact.

"He has enhanced the ability of students with special needs to master the general education content," Van Kuren said. "[He] has enabled them to work successfully in inclusive environments."

Behrmann, who currently conducts research and teaches graduate-level courses in the special education field, believes the pioneer label may be justified.

Shortly after arriving at Mason in 1979, Behrmann became interested in finding out how computers could help bridge the academic gap between students with and without learning disabilities.

"I was interested in seeing if [infants and toddlers] with disabilities could interact [with] and control their environments," Behrmann said.

In one of his first experiments, Behrmann used an old Apple computer - with one of the first touch-screen monitors - and a train set to measure the attention spans of disabled kids between 18 months and two years-old. By getting them to touch the screen when the monitor turned different colors, he was able to measure their attention spans and develop assistive touch-screen technology.

Since then, it has been one innovation after another.

A few years later, Behrmann developed the first audio voice reader on Mason's campus.

He believed that the disabled children he was working to help were just as bright as average kids.

"These are individuals who are locked in bodies that didn't work," he said.

His theory was proved when a 5-year-old girl with cerebral palsy used the voice reader to say, "It's about time." Behrmann was overjoyed.

"It's someone who's never spoken, and [we] gave her a voice," he said. Aside from these and other numerous technological inventions, Behrmann is currently working on digitizing every textbook needed in Virginia schools. An online library of digital texts will open in two weeks, gradually building up its collection.

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