

newsstreak *alumni* notes

Volume I, Issue 2

2008 Spring Edition

Cruise plans set
Meet at the Port by 1:00 p.m. Usually, you can board earlier, so arrive and beat the lines! Don't forget it costs \$10/day to park at the port, but if you car pool you can save money!

Alumni can receive free Newsstreaks!
If you aren't already on our mailing list, please email Penton your address and you can begin receiving the Newsstreak every two weeks for free! Don't forget to email Penton your new address for next year if you're changing your address!

Where are they now?
We are planning to do a story for each issue of alumni notes that profiles a Newsstreak alumni or two. Please get in touch and let us know your story! (Every person has one, remember?)

Newsstreak.com
It's here and it's looking HOTT!!!! You had better get to it soon! I'd love to start posting timely alumni news (I've given you your own section). Please send me your comments (that's available on all articles)

Simpson living happily ever after in a yurt

randy simpson '00

We lived most of last year without electricity, a phone, or interior plumbing. Katy Melton and I were married in winter of 2006, and we decided to do the most logical thing and go live in a tent in the woods. To make a long story ridiculously short, we found an affordable, comfortable home in a yurt. A yurt is a large tent house based on Mongolian nomadic homes that are round and open inside. Ours is made of modern materials and visitors are surprised at how sturdy it is.

Why a yurt? I graduated from Ferrum College in 2004 with a BA in Spanish and decided to stay in the Ferrum area. I happened into a 7th grade English teaching position at the local middle school that fall. At the end of that year I was nearly killed in a severe car crash that left me with several injuries and no memory whatsoever of what had happened. Apparently another

driver caused the wreck and then fled. Memory loss and related problems from the crash forced me to resign from teaching to take some time to heal. We were back at square one financially, and the affordability of a yurt was our best option for staring over.

Once ordering our yurt, we had only a few short months to clear an acre of mountain forest land- by hand. From May to July we felled tress with axes, chainsaws and sweat. In July we built (with much help from my dad and a few friends) an elevated deck for the yurt to sit on. In middle August our yurt arrived on a delivery truck, and with a few extra hands, we put it up in one day.

Water, power and phones are back in our lives. We appreciate these amenities even more after going without them. This November we installed the state of Virginia's first legally approved greywater system- after a year of hauling water jugs we finally have run-

ning water. We've done 100% of the building, plumbing, greywater system and wiring with our own hands (and much help from friends and family).

Currently I work at Ferrum College in the Academic Resources Center as Coordinator of tutoring services. Katy, who has a studio art degree from JMU, works for a local animal hospital, and is studying for a Veterinary Technician license. She continues to produce beautiful ceramic work. Working part-time on a local organic farm produces much of our seasonal food and free-range eggs. I'm heavily involved as a student and instructor with the Traditional Karate Research Institute, and teaching the college Karate club. And I'm still playing music, presently with the band Kerosene Willy

For a look at pictures of the yurt in progress and other stuff we do, visit: www.randyand-katy.blogspot.com and www.coloradoyurt.com/yurts. ♦



Different views of the yurt Randy and Katie Simpson live in and have built themselves.



calendar of events

June 2: Newsstreak Banquet, 6:30 p.m. Cost \$8/person
July 12: Cruise leaves from Port of Baltimore

memory of the month



Suna Nikic and Nan Turner met Grand Old Opry Star John Anderson at the 2006 trip to the JEA Convention in Nashville, TN. Students stayed at the gaylord Opryland resort and enjoyed a riverboat cruise and a tour of Nashville and stars homes. Trips next year are planned to St. Louis and Phoenix.

where are they now?

The dynamic trio featured this month were the only three in their graduating class who made it through four years of journalism at HHS! This year's freshman class has 24 students, up from sight last year.

Justin German '05: Mary Washington University currently serving as an intern for 9th District Congressman Rick Boucher
Alex Truong '05: University of Virginia
Katherine Dunahoo '05: Virginia Tech

White up to old tricks in her new journalism job

caite white '03

I've written four drafts of this column. All while perched at my butcher-block desk at Charlottesville's C-VILLE Weekly, staring at my monitor, which sits on a piece of wood elevated by two halved PVC pipes. Next to me sits a few cups (one which is filled with highlighters and red pens), a woman warrior figurine and a Valentine's



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I'm a pretty-pretty princess today, didn't you hear? I'd say as unknowing editors and writers walked by. Hello Maturity.



- Caite White

since this is meant to be a sort of “Look what I'm doing in the real world!” kind of piece, and most of the time I still feel like a middle-schooler (did I mention the Hello Kitty?), and not the wildly successful journalist I've turned out to be.

Case in point: Last week, I got into a ridiculous argument (on-line, naturally) with my coworker (whom I like to kick in the shins when he aggravates me), which resulted in him calling me a “pretty-pretty princess.” Now, apart from the obvious punctuation error (as a proofreader, I was inclined to ask him if he, as a graphic designer, knew the difference between a hyphen and a comma and what each are used for), I was appalled at his name-calling. Hello Kitty aside, I'd like to think I'm a little more scrappy. For instance, could a pretty-pretty princess be bothered with answering a question like, “How much garbage does Charlottesville throw away each

year?” Or, “Who do I call if I see a dead animal in the road?” I think not, but these are exactly the sorts of things, as writer of “What's up with that, C-VILLE?,” I have to investigate. Hello Paycheck.

But I digress. After he called me a “pretty-pretty princess,” I felt inclined to yell (and a princess never raises her voice). Now, I'm not sure if you're aware of the typography of yelling online, but it goes something like this: YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ME, SO SHUT UP. He got offline after that; we haven't spoken to each other in six days. Of course, I did make sure to wear a plastic tiara to work the day after, just to really bring it home. “I'm a pretty-pretty princess today, didn't you hear?” I'd say as unknowing editors and writers walked by. Hello Maturity.

So, you can see why I'd be a little apprehensive. After all that, I sort of feel like an imposter—a middle-school princess posing as a mature adult. Of course, a princess would insist upon a rhinestone-studded computer screen with a tulle duster across her desk. She'd want a velvet pillow placed below her. Two handsome men would fan her and hold a torch so she could read. As for me, I like life as a mere mortal. It's not glamorous, but it's fulfilling my own sort of fantasy. ♦



Remember your Newsstreak wardrobe? Add to the collection!!!

Order this year's Newsstreak Shirt!

Just \$7!!! Send a check made payable to HHS in care of Ms. Penton to Harrisonburg High School, 1001 Garbers Church Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. Include your size and the color you'd like! (Available in deep purple, lavender, light pink, fuchsia, light blue, navy and teal.



Olivia Quach and Simone Giovanetti, 2007-08 Editors-in-chief, model this year's shirt. Quach has been accepted to Princeton and Giovanetti to William and Mary, both through early applications.

It's almost time to scream Bon Voyage!!!

emily reifsteck '03

If you are not part of the planned Bermuda '08 adventure, then I definitely feel sorry for you (maybe next year?). If you were smart enough to plunge right in and commit to the not so scary \$25 deposit, the slightly scary \$200 room deposit, or the fully committal (and terrifying) \$785 full cruise payment last summer, then you are undoubtedly looking forward to the adventures that await in Bermuda.

I, myself, was one of the alumni to take the middle road on the financial commitment and pay \$200, so I will continue to flounder until April 21 when the rest is due. So in reality, I have not even paid for the cruise that I look forward to on a weekly basis. Just in case you are one of the alumni coming on the cruise, and you don't find yourself thinking about it enough, let me share the top three moments that make me daydream of pina colodas, hot sun and endless ocean.

1. When the weather flips from cold to hot. I just want it to be hot. In Bermuda.
2. When life gets boring and monotonous. I remind myself that life on a cruise boat is never dull, and from what I read St. George is no sleepy town either. In Bermuda.
3. When the travel bug bites me. All I want to do is leave my town, the state or (best case scenario) the country. Here I come Bermuda.

If I got you interested and you haven't yet checked it out fully, I encourage you to find out more about activities on the ship and excursions off the boat at www.ncl.com (fyi: our boat is the Majesty). As long as I get my tax return check by April 21, I will be seeing you this summer!

Newsstreak Scholarship Fund

Members of the Newsstreak alumni are interested in forming a scholarship committee to raise money for HHS students to attend journalism conventions and/or college scholarships. If you would like to serve on this committee or you're willing to donate to this effort, please contact Ms. Penton.