

The Spotlight

Official Newsletter
for First Year
Students

March 2007

Brought to you by the letters F, Y, and I, which stand for First Year Involvement

National Women's Month Female Inventors *By Sean Branigan*

International Women's Day was first celebrated in 1908. Over 15,000 women marched through the streets of New York City demanding shorter work hours, better pay and voting rights. Today, International Women's Day is celebrated from Armenia to Vietnam. Congress passed a resolution in 1987 expanded the holiday, naming March as Women's Month.

In view of March as National Women's Month, here is a list of ingenious inventions by American women:

- While on vacation in New York City, Mary Anderson noticed how streetcar drivers would open their windows to drive in the rain. In 1903, Ms. Anderson patented the windshield wiper, a few years before Henry Ford invented the Model-T.
- The disposable cell phone was patented in 1999 by Randi Altschul.
- Bessie Nesmith was a secretary and an artist. In 1951, Bessie used white paint to correct her typing mistakes. She soon began the Liquid Paper Company and became highly successful.
- Anna Connelly patented the first fire escape in 1887.

- From 1978 to 1986, Maria Beasley invented the life raft, the process for making barrels, the steam generator, and improvements in roasting and baking pans.
- The first recipe for chocolate chip cookies was printed in "Toll House Tried and True Recipes." In 1940, Ruth Wakefield invented chocolate chips by crushing up bars of semi-sweet chocolate, thus inventing the chocolate chip cookie.
- Beulah Henry was named "Lady Edison" along with a few other creative female inventors. Ms. Henry is credited for 110 inventions and 49 patents including an ice cream freezer and improvements on the sewing machine and umbrella.

Don't forget to enter to win an iPod Nano by submitting answers to the following questions to res-life@jmu.edu:

- **What is the date of this year's Clothesline Project?**
- **How do you know whether credits transfer into JMU?**

Don't forget to include "Spotlight" in the subject line.

Spring Break Paupers

By Joshua Hahn

Students often return from Spring Break with tales of adventure and random acts of debauchery; for the most part, such stories are at least partially based on truth. However, the fact that these miniature vacations at the beginning of March cost anywhere from a couple hundred dollars to over a couple grand suggests at least some students feel the need to embellish stories to justify the expense. Regardless of whether your Spring Break pictures are worthy of Facebook, if you plan to go anywhere outside the state boundary of the Commonwealth, you're likely going to be carrying much lighter pocketbooks.

Fortunately, this doesn't necessarily mean you'll need to get a job, or in some cases, a second job. Nor does it mean your social life need be limited to group walks around the parking lot. What it does mean is you're probably going to need to live a bit more frugally. Here are a few thrifty ideas:


- 1) Put your credit card away - somewhere safe - but away. Students rack up tons of debt in school, but this time of year especially. There's no need to add to the damage incurred over Spring Break.
- 2) Contrary to what you may be thinking, you probably didn't gain significant weight in the single week you were gone. However, that doesn't mean you can't use your guilt to eat a bit more healthily. Midnight pizza binges can become midnight turkey sandwich snacks fairly easily, and a good deal cheaper.

- 3) Take a hike! No seriously, daylong hikes with your friends are tons of fun, and you don't have to go far. You can find trails fairly easily, and maps are available fairly cheap at local stores and sometimes free online. If you're not planning on spending the night in the woods, you might even be able to get away free. Hikes are an excellent group activity, and can be rewarding in a variety of ways. Just don't forget water!
- 4) Find some cheap fun. For example, various establishments around Harrisonburg host free Texas Hold-Em tournaments, only asking for small donations to worthy causes. (Some of these locations have age requirements, so do your homework.) If this isn't up your alley (forgive the pun), try going bowling during cheap nights, catching some quality entertainment at TDU during open-mike nights, or taking in a movie at Grafton.
- 5) You're not going to like this one, but if you use it, you'll thank me later. Go to the library. If you're like most Spring Break veterans, you didn't get much studying done. Going to the library in the evening forces you to focus on why you're in school - to get an education.

Hopefully you made the most of your Spring Break, now make the most of your education. One to two hours every evening in the stacks, even for just a week, could yield some very positive, obvious results. Plus, if you manage to earn good grades despite your Spring Break insanity, you're that much likely to be able justify another vacation next year.

Speaking Out Against Violence Towards Women:

The Clothesline Project & *Take Back the Night*



Every year in the spring, women and men on college campuses across the U.S. gather to speak out against violence towards women. These events are known as Take Back the Night and the Clothesline Project. This year at JMU Take Back the Night will take place on March 27th from 5 pm to 11 pm on the Commons. The Clothesline Project will take place March 28th and the 29th from 12 noon to 8 pm in Transitions in Warren Hall.

Take Back the Night will kick off this three day event and usually includes musical performances and various speakers in an attempt to raise awareness about violence against women. The end of the night will involve participants carrying lit candles through campus while “breaking the silence” about violence.

The next day the Clothesline Project will open it’s doors to the public. The Clothesline Project originally began in

1990 in Hyannis, MA as part of the “Take Back the Night” rally. Women and men could come and decorate a t-shirt about their experiences with violence against women. The t-shirts were later hung on a clothesline and viewed by others as a testimony. Every year men and women are invited to come and create a new t-shirt to be included in the project.

Both Take Back the Night and the Clothesline Project have the potential to be both healing for victims and their families and eye-opening for everyone who attends. It is estimated that over 500 projects exist nationally and collectively there is more than 60,000 Clothesline Project t-shirts in existence. Come out this year and take part in these sobering, but informative and worthwhile events.

Visit <http://www.jmu.edu/women-resource/TBTN.shtml> or www.clotheslineproject.org for more information.

Acing those Essays

By Danielle Danko

Maybe you're a seasoned writer. Or maybe you need a little bit of help. Either way, most writers can benefit from a little bit of help here and there. Here are some tips from one student writer to another:

- Before writing, think about your audience. Depending on who will be reading your paper, your tone, subject, and diction can change.
- Stay away from clichés. Cliches are just that—overdone. Nothing is more unoriginal than a cliché.
- Do not use contractions in a formal paper.
- Transitions between ideas are very important. You don't want your readers to be startled when you change topic. Use phrases like "in fact, rather, although, hence" to show a relationship between your ideas.

- Avoid making your paper one long string of quotations. Quotations should not be used to fill up space. Rather use quotation when your source is newsworthy or knowledgeable on the subject matter, when you can't rephrase the quote better than the author stated, or to reproduce important factual information.
- Make sure your thoughts flow in a logical order.
- When proofreading and editing your paper, read it aloud. You will catch mistakes you might miss if you just read it silently. Have another pair of eyes read it. This could be your roommate or a writing professional (like those at the Wilson Writing Center, or the FYI Writing Center).

Dig Yourself Out of that Rut!!

By Melissa "Get me the shovel" Alfano

Monday. Get up. Go to class. Meet the suitemates at D-hall for lunch. Pretend to do homework while checking Facebook. Go to UREC. Go to friend's place to watch awesome action/ overdone drama/ unbelievably confusing show that you totally always have to watch together. Tuesday. Wednesday. Thursday. Repeat. Bored yet? It's time to get out of that rut! Here are some helpful tips to put the Tony Chachere's back in your life.

- That skill that you always wanted to learn? What's stopping you? Pick up that camera/ guitar/ crochet hook. See where your creativity takes you.
- Check out the awesome shows at TDU. Not only will you discover some awesome bands, you'll find some cool people that share similar tastes in music as you do.
- Spice up your workout by trying something new. Try out a group fitness, or try to conquer the rock wall.
- Once the weather warms out, take a stroll around the arboretum. Nothing like fresh spring air to invigorate you.

Ask Chris: Academic Advising & Career Development

Q. How long do I have to complete my General Education requirements?

A. Freshmen are required to finish Cluster One during the first year. If unable to complete or pass all three courses by the spring semester, a deferral form must be filed in the General Education Office. Those students will be pre-registered for the fall semester into any remaining Cluster One requirements, or may take during summer session at JMU. The Tech Level I and ISST (due on 4/20/07) tests must also be taken the first year. Completion of Cluster Three is recommended by sophomore year. Many students try to finish their General Education during the first two years, but may not be possible depending on the major or class availability.

Q. When is the deadline to withdraw from a course?

A. The end of the course adjustment period for semester courses is Friday, March 16; and Monday, April 9 for second 8-week block courses.

Q. When do second 8-week block courses begin?

A. Second 8-week block courses begin the week of March 12. Attendance at the first class is required in some courses, such as IS 202, Career and Life Planning.

Q. If I'm not certain whether to remain in my second 8-week course, how long do I have to decide?

A. The end of the free drop/add period for second 8-week block courses is Wednesday, March 14. After this date, you will receive a 'W' on your grade report and transcript if you withdraw.

Q. How soon can I register for JMU's 2006 summer session?

A. Advance registration begins the week of March 19 for the summer session at JMU. You may view your appointment time on e-campus when you return from spring break. The summer schedule of classes will be available on e-campus beginning March 1.

Q. Can I take courses at a community college in the summer to improve my GPA and standing?

A. Grades do not transfer from other schools. Therefore, only courses taken at JMU will improve your grade point average and academic standing.

Q. How do I know whether a course will transfer into JMU?

A. You will need to fill out a transfer credit evaluation form at the Registrar's Office in Warren 504A. The Transfer Credit Analyst will evaluate each course on an individual basis. For General Education requirements (all clusters), approval must be granted by the General Education Office in Hillcrest 205. You will have to fill out a Permission to Transfer Credit form, that is available at Registration Services in Warren Hall, prior to taking the course. Students cannot take more than 3 General Education courses at a school other than JMU, and the courses cannot be from the same cluster. For example, you cannot take the Fine Arts requirement and the Literature requirement in Cluster 2 at another school.

Q. Is there a deadline to declare a business major?

A. The College of Business has a deadline each semester in which you must declare. The deadline for the 2005 spring semester is Thursday, March 15. Any student missing this deadline will have to wait until the start of summer session (May 15) to have their change of major approved by the College of Business.

Q. If I have an interest in Early Childhood Education, is there anything I need to do?

A. Students interested in the PreK-3 or PreK-6 licensure program must attend an Orientation Meeting. Upcoming Meetings are: March 15th at 4pm in 3165 Memorial Hall, March 27th at 6:30pm in 3110 Memorial Hall and April 10th at 4pm in 3165 Memorial Hall. These meetings are for students who have not yet been assigned an early childhood advisor or a start date. If you cannot attend the session, contact Dr. Martha Ross to schedule an appointment at rossmk@jmu.edu.

Undecided?

By Cory Scott

So you're about two months into your second semester, and while those Gen-Eds are quite fantastic, it would be wise to invest some serious thought into that question many of us seem to avoid: "What do I want to do with the rest of my life?"

A daunting question, but one we all have to answer eventually. Choosing a major can be a trying task—most of us will change our major at least twice during our college career—but it'd be wise to just sit and think things over before you're stuck walking a path you'd rather not. It's easy to just write down "Chemistry" or "History" simply because you enjoyed the subject in high school, but personal experience has shown that one should take more into account when choosing your major.

Here are a few things to take into consideration:

- Research the job market—make sure you're interested in the sort of work described. Sometimes it turns out that a job isn't what you thought it would be.
- What's the pay like? As the saying goes, money doesn't buy happiness—if you're really passionate about an interest, then go for it—but it does help pay the bills.
- How competitive is the field? We can't all be astronauts.

Talk to JMU's Career and Academic Planning Department, as they'll be more than willing to help you out and explore all your options. All it takes is a little time to avoid regret.

Improve your skills with Academic Skill Instruction!

If you want to develop your skills in a specific area, Residence Life offers 30 minute small group sessions on various topics, including:

- Study & Test-Taking Skills
- Time and Stress Management
- Grammar Skills
- Proofreading & Revising Papers
- Communication: In Person & Online
- Reading Skills & Learning Styles

Email Ana at adinolag@jmu.edu with questions or to receive the semester schedule and session descriptions. This week's ASI schedule is available at www.jmu.edu/reslife.

Calendar of Events:

- **March 5-10:** Spring Break
- **March 14:** Centennial Celebration Kickoff (James Madison Day), Wilson Hall Auditorium
- **March 20:** Conversations About Diversity, 7 pm, Hillside Hall
- **March 27:** Take Back the Night, 5 pm, The Commons
- **March 28-29:** The Clothesline Project, 12-8 pm, Transitions
- **April 10:** Conversations About Diversity, 7 pm, Potomac Hall