



# The GW Hatchet

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## CLLC accepts student excuses

by Elizabeth Maxwell  
Hatchet Reporter

Fifty-two freshmen so far have taken advantage of a special exemption form GW created this year to allow sophomores to move off campus. Citing financial difficulty, religious reasons, medical conditions and other circumstances, freshmen said they were surprised to find how easy it was to dodge a new GW requirement that all sophomores live on campus.

"Right there on the spot (a housing services staff member) checked it off, copied it and gave me a copy, and I was done. Five minutes. No problem," said freshman Alex Lesevare, who turned his exemption form into the Housing Services office in New Hall last week.

Lesevare said he plans to commute from his parent's home in Virginia next year.

Students can download the one-page exemption form on the Community Living and Learning Center Web site. They can mail the form in or deliver it in person to the New Hall housing office. The offer expires as soon as a student signs a housing contract.

Although some students said they would lie to get off campus, others presented exemption reasons permitted by the city order that spurred the new housing requirement. The order, issued last March by the Board of Zoning Adjustment, requires all freshmen and sophomores to live on campus except those who commute, are married, have children, have disabilities or hold religious beliefs "inconsistent with residence hall life."

Freshman Mustafa Dimvilogu, a Muslim, reported that his reason for seeking exemption is two-fold.

"Living with many other people in one area is not really correct in our religion," said Dimvilogu, who also said financial reasons prevent him from living on campus.

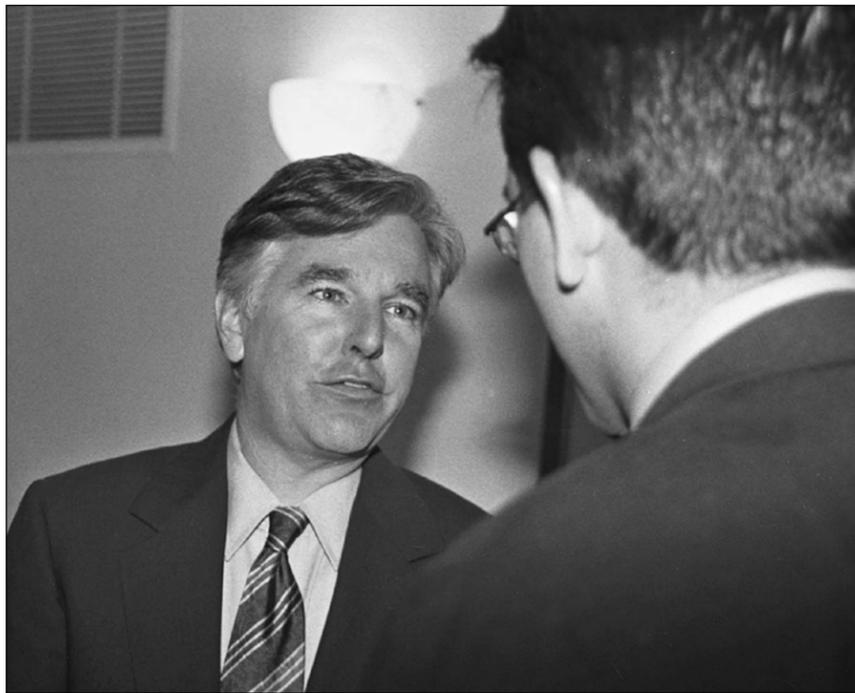
Other students provided excuses that fall outside the D.C. order's criteria. GW announced earlier this month that students could add financial difficulties to acceptable excuses, along with a host of others.

The University has until fall 2003 to comply with the BZA order, which also requires GW to house 70 percent of undergraduates in residence halls that fall within official campus boundaries by 2006.

Housing Services Director Andrew Sonn said GW has not yet denied any exemption forms.

And it seems that students are

See STUDENTS, p. 8



Andrew Snow/Hatchet photographer

Campaign finance reform advocate Rep. Marty Meehan (D-Mass.) talked money and politics with GW students and faculty at a University Club lunch Tuesday.

## Meehan lunches with GW students

by Drew Wiseman  
Senior Staff Writer

One of the key sponsors of campaign finance reform said Tuesday the Enron scandal is helping his cause.

At a University Club luncheon, Rep. Martin Meehan (D-Mass.) told about 100 students and faculty members that large campaign donations can give donors "undue influence" on government decisions, citing Enron as an example.

"No member (of Congress) should be able to pick up the phone, call a company or union and ask for millions of dollars," he said. "The system makes

good people do bad things when people raise six-figure sums."

The discussion was the first in the club's "In The Know" Series that will draw political leaders, artists and other notable figures to the 19th Street club.

Meehan correctly predicted that President George W. Bush would center Tuesday night's State of The Union address on the war on terrorism.

He said he sees a positive change in the United States in the aftermath of the attacks.

"The country came together, and

See CONGRESSMAN, p. 11

## University hosts secret Russia-Chechnya talk

by Joshua Riezman  
Senior Staff Writer

Chechen and U.S. State Department officials secretly discussed political solutions to conflicts in Chechnya at GW last week, a State Department spokesman said.

Chechen Foreign Minister Ilyas Akhmadov and the Russian desk officer from the State Department met at GW because President George W. Bush was worried an open meeting between the two on government property would spur an international response, said Mark Toner, a public affairs officer at the State Department.

"The meeting was held outside of the State Department in part because of Russian sensitivity to the issue," Toner said.

Russia has been quashing Chechen separatists in the southern Russian region since the early '90s, as the United States and other western governments have urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to reach a political settlement. While Russia claims to

control the area, Chechen forces continue daily shooting and bombing campaigns, according to reports.

University President Stephen Joel Trachtenberg said GW officials had no prior knowledge of the Jan. 23 meeting and only became aware of it when they read a column by Fred Hiatt in Monday's Washington Post that revealed the rendezvous.

"Something happens here, but sometimes they don't want you to know it happens," Trachtenberg said.

Toner said it was not necessarily meant to be a secret meeting but that the current international situation required discretion.

"We have met with (Akhmadov) three other times. He is just one of a great number of contacts we have that are involved in the Chechnya dispute," Toner said. "This meeting was part of (the State Department's) overall strategy to promote a

See DIPLOMATS, p. 6

## GW denies liability in music theft

by Heather Sala  
Senior Staff Writer

At least one music student has threatened to sue GW for the loss of an instrument in the recent rash of thefts from the music department. Risk Management officials maintain that the University is not responsible for the December thefts.

Senior Jenna Kwiatoski, whose \$1,500 trumpet was stolen during winter break, said GW is responsible for her loss because the Department of Music provided the lock for her locker in the basement of the Academic Center.

"My lawyer told me that if I put something of mine on someone else's property that is supposed to be safe, then if it is stolen they are responsible for replacing it, especially since I signed no contract with the school saying they weren't liable," Kwiatoski said.

On Wednesday, Kwiatoski said she contacted UPD but has not received a reply. She filed a report with UPD Jan. 14. Kwiatoski said she also plans to contact Risk Management about getting reimbursed.

Director of Risk Management Barry Dempsey said the only way GW would be liable for a student's personal property would be if it was something the University "did or failed to do that caused the theft or damage."

He placed full responsibility on the students, unless a student could prove a lock GW provided was faulty.

Kwiatoski said University Band Director Ben Fritz gave her a combination lock. The locks are given to members of the University Band.

Students who do not belong to the band may rent lockers for the semester or the year but must provide their own lock.

Kwiatoski said no one ever warned her about the possibility that the lockers were unsafe, and students did not sign a form waiving GW of liability for anything that occurred to the instruments while on University property. Kwiatoski said she kept her trumpet in the locker whenever she was not using it.

"If they are going to provide these lockers, then they should be safe," Kwiatoski said. "For them to allow us to keep our instruments on school property and not reimburse us if they get stolen is absurd."

Now, Kwiatoski said she carries her instrument with her from 12:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on days when she has to attend rehearsal, because she lives off campus and cannot return to her room to drop off the instrument.

See GW, p. 5



Joe Gidjunis/Hatchet staff photographer

**APPROVAL**  
Juniors Oren Shur, Britta Schnoor and Miriam Epstein applaud the president's words watching the State of the Union address in the Hippodrome on Tuesday night. See story p. 5.

### INSIDE

**2** NEWS  
Neighbors probe University on hospital plans

**7** FEATURES  
How to make an American quilt

**9** ARTS  
Nobody puts The Hatchet punk in residence in the corner - not even The Slackers

**13** SPORTS  
Men drop fifth straight game. Are we sensing a pattern?

