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Jeff Baum/Hatchet photographer

STEPPIN' IT UP
Members of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity from GW, American and Catholic universities perform in Saturday's step show before a rowdy crowd in a packed Lisner Auditorium. See story, p. 18.

University plans to end Madness

—by Brian Costa and Lauren Silva
Hatchet Sports Editors

The GW Athletic Department is changing the structure of its pre-season basketball kickoff and is leaning toward canceling Midnight Madness. Though no plans have been finalized, Athletic Director Jack Kvanz said he would like to replace the hoopla of past celebrations with a more basketball-related event.

Midnight Madness is a decade-old tradition at GW celebrating the first official men's and women's basketball practices, typically on Friday night of Colonials Weekend, formerly Family Weekend, in early October.

But recent years have seen less basketball and more fireworks. This past year, teams were not introduced until about 20 minutes after midnight because outside acts took longer than anticipated, causing leading GW administrators to rethink the tradition.

"The (side acts) are pretty cool, but the basketball part isn't what it used to be," Kvanz said. "It looks good on paper, but when midnight comes we're not even on the court yet, the audience is saying, 'I've got to get out of here.'"

Senior Vice President of Student

and Academic Support Services Robert Chernak said that because the outside acts take so long, crowds leave before the teams are introduced, and that a new format would tailor more to the basketball purist.

"The exodus has created a concern," he said. "People are not sure if it's the right way to launch the basketball season. If there are 400 students that are hardcore basketball fans and we could give them a better program, I would rather do that than give 5,000 students a shallow token introduction to the program."

While plans are still in the early stages of development, Kvanz said he would like to organize an open practice for both teams on Saturday at the Health and Wellness Center instead of the traditional Friday night festivities.

"What we're going to do is have a Saturday practice that people will be invited to come to, have a juice or a cup of coffee and watch the practice," he said. "It will be an opportunity for people who are really basketball fans to come watch."

SAC officials said they were not consulted with the decision but said they will work with whatever changes occur. Student Activities Specialist and head cheerleading

• For an in-depth look at GW spirit, see p. 10

See MIDNIGHT, p. 20

TAs discuss unionization

by Lizz Chernow
Hatchet Reporter

Adjunct faculty and graduate teaching assistants are discussing possible unionization plans despite strong objection from the University. Plans for unionization with the United Auto Workers to increase bargaining power have received mixed reaction from TAs.

Unionization efforts by graduate teachers and adjunct professors have been sporadic for more than two years, University officials said.

According to a policy statement released on Sunday, the University has not been presented with a demand to "recognize a union of graduate assistants and part-time faculty for the purpose of collective

bargaining." The statement noted, "unionization ... has the potential to undermine our academic mission and sharply curtail academic freedom."

Angela Hewett, a part-time professor in the English department and organizer for the D.C. Coalition of Academic Labor- UAW said TAs are concerned about their current position in the University. GW has about 400 graduate teaching assistants and about 220 adjunct professors.

"One thing that we have found in talking to people is, there are a lot of concerns and we all have a desire to have a voice in improving our current situation," Hewett said.

TAs rarely have a say in what classes they teach and when the

classes are scheduled and often don't have offices, phones or competitive salaries and benefits, USA Today reported in December. These "outside" instructors are not eligible for tenure or traditional union membership.

Nationwide, unionization has won support from TAs who do not typically receive the salaries and benefits of other University employees yet share a substantial burden of conducting academic activities. Between 1981 and 1999, the number of nontraditional faculty, adjunct professors and outside instructors has increased by 79 percent to more than 400,000, according to *The New Professoriate*. An

See UNION, p. 16

Provisions on par with competition

by Thane Tuttle
Hatchet Reporter

Santes Frazier sits in his narrow office in the back of Provisions. It's so small that he has to move his bike just to open the door. But Frazier's not complaining. As director of Food Services, one of his jobs is to listen to complaints, and prices are at the top of the list.

"A lot of students say the prices at Provisions are too high," Frazier said, "but our own numbers show that they're right in line with, and sometimes well below, (similar stores)."

While he receives student complaints regarding high prices, Frazier echoes many Aramark and University officials, noting that Provisions does not have the storage capacity of a normal grocery store and cannot afford to have lower prices.

"We're talking to vendors, but right now Provisions just can't get the bulk discounts of large grocery stores," Frazier said.

"When you compare Provisions to a Safeway or a Shoppers' Club,

you're not comparing apples to apples," said Joe Pasterkiewicz, director of operations for dining services. "They do a million dollars a day. Provisions doesn't. It's more fair to look at a 7-Eleven or a WaWa."

The Hatchet looked at the prices of 10 items at Provisions, the 7-Eleven on New Hampshire Avenue, the Watergate Safeway and Shoppers' Club, a large grocery store in Arlington, Va.

The items selected were all either staples or foods commonly associated with college students, including eggs, milk, bread, ramen noodles, Ben & Jerry's ice cream and soda.

The survey found the Provisions total was almost \$2 less than that of 7-Eleven and only slightly more than Safeway's. Shoppers' Club, however, had a significantly lower total than any of the other stores, even factoring in Virginia's 4 percent food tax.

The totals were as follows:

- 7-11: \$22.94
- Provisions: \$21.16
- Safeway: \$19.63
- Shoppers' Club: \$16.88

Some students were surprised to

hear the results of the survey.

"It's pretty surprising – everyone says Provisions is overpriced," said sophomore Brett George, adding that he shops there a few times a week.

"As a senior, I don't have many points," Andrew Bakaj said. "And, when I went to Provisions one time to buy a bottle of A-1, the cashier said, 'Are you sure you want to buy this?' I looked at the price and decided not to."

Other students still had complaints about the lack of service at Provisions.

"The prices may be similar, but I shouldn't have to stand in line 20

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Our own numbers show that they're right in line with, and sometimes well below, (similar stores).

—Santes Frazier
Director of Food Services



Leanne Lee/Hatchet staff photographer

YEAR OF THE SHEEP
Revelers parade a decorative dragon through Chinatown to celebrate the Chinese New Year Sunday.

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