



Students (from front to back) Michael Doss, Jenner Johnson, Jacqui Helbert and Holly Tylicki visited Richmond this month as part of a legislative initiative called "Every Day is Community College Day." In addition to visiting legislators, they were introduced by Sen. William Wampler Jr. during the Jan. 28 Senate Session.

Wolves Chosen Campus Mascot Logo contest underway

Legend has it that Daniel Boone's hunting dogs were chased by wolves as he made his way through Abingdon in 1769, earning the town its original name of Wolf Hills.

That tidbit of local history inspired VHCC students, faculty and staff to choose Wolves as the new College mascot. The name was chosen during a recent secret-ballot election in a three-way contest that also featured Hellbenders, a salamander found in the region, and Ravens, the birds present along the birding trail that runs through the campus.

Already basketball uniforms for the VHCC Wolves have been ordered for the intramural team recently organized and a contest is underway to design a logo that can be used as an identifying mark of sports teams and other student activities.

The logo contest is open to the entire community and only original creations will be accepted. Detailed specifications are available at <http://www.vhcc.edu/index.aspx?page=977>.



VHCC News is produced each month by Anne Dunham of the Office of Institutional Advancement. If you would like to suggest information for the newsletter, please send your ideas to adunham@vhcc.edu or contact her by phone at 276-739-2456. VHCC is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

Virginia Highlands
Community College

www.vhcc.edu

or call

276-739-2400

Para la ayuda en español, llama por favor

(276) 739-2436

Remembering Dr. King's Dream

"How is the dream?"

The Rev. Donald Swift posed this question to the VHCC audience as he recounted the life and legacy of a young minister from Atlanta who would become a civil rights leader, a Nobel Prize winner, and a "drum major for justice."



Rev. Donald Swift

"On the occasion of celebrating a king's legacy, is there a need to celebrate?" Rev. Swift asked. "Have we been discovered stepping back in time instead of moving up to the dream? Have we been caught walking around issues of human need while taking no action?"

Rev. Swift served as guest speaker for the annual campus event celebrating the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and an evening celebration at Charles Wesley United Methodist Church, where Swift serves as pastor.

King championed the civil rights effort, eventually dying for the cause, Rev. Swift said, spurred on by the brave actions of a young girl on a city bus in Montgomery, Ala.

"For over 13 years, the world felt a powerful crescendo of what was called 'the movement,' sparked on by Rosa Parks refusing to give up a seat as she led a peaceful, massive demonstration," Rev. Swift said. "If one soul had not stood up for something while still being seated on a bus, where would we all be right now?"

What began with Rosa Parks continued to grow, led by Dr. King and joined by others who were inspired by the peaceful nature of the cause. The movement soon had supporters of every color and creed, Swift said, and received a powerful boost in Washington when King delivered his now-famous "I Have a Dream" speech before a crowd of an estimated 200,000 "representing every corner of the globe."

"It was a speech that inspired a nation on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and tested the very fabric of our lives. 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal ...' He knew that before him was an historic principle etched in stone, but that marred lives were all around him because of broken promises.

"Thinking about the impossibilities among all the turmoil, Dr. King's voice raised to a resounding promise. 'I have a

dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of this creed. I have a dream ...' "

Dr. King entered Morehouse College at the age of 15 and continued his education until he had earned a doctorate degree from Boston University. He became pastor of Birmingham's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, then founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. He joined his father in 1960 as co-pastor of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church. By this time, he was also leading the civil rights effort, making both friends and enemies along the way.

And while Dr. King is remembered

"If one soul had not stood up for something while still being seated on a bus, where would we all be right now?"

as a great dreamer of modern times, Rev. Swift noted that the Bible tells of another dreamer who can serve as an example to us all.

"You may get rid of the dreamer, but the dream will live on," Rev. Swift said. "When those around us are jealous, dream on. When everyone with every ounce of negative will distracts us from doing what is best in our lives, dream on. When our faith is tested, when our wall seems not to be straight and it sways thither and thither, when our determination is weighed under by the strongest pressure, dream on. Joseph was a visionary in the book of Genesis and God told him to dream on. I tell you to dream on, keep on dreaming. ... "

The celebration continued as English Instruction Phillip Ferguson examined the poetic words included in King's speeches, noting "the words pulse on the page itself. They don't even have to be read aloud."

King's use of the English language created powerful images that allowed him to inspire a nation, Ferguson said.

And Tim Harrison, VHCC coordinator of Student Activities, said King's "I Have a Dream Speech" is often cited -- along with Washington's Farewell Speech and the Gettysburg Address -- as one that defines the American consciousness. The words he used on that historic day were already familiar to those who had heard his sermons, Harrison said, noting that King described himself as a minister above all else.

Job Shadowing, Mentoring Announced

The VHCC Career Center recently announced two programs designed to help students learn more about the day-to-day duties associated with the careers they are pursuing.

- The VHCC Mentor Program is currently seeking community professionals interested in mentoring students and alumni and helping guide them through the career search process. Mentors are needed in a variety of fields. Those interested in volunteering for this job should contact Michael McBride in the VHCC Career Center, located within the ISC Building. Michael also can be reached at 276-739-2575 or mmcbride@vhcc.edu
- Students interested in learning more about their chosen field are invited to spend Spring Break participating in the annual Spring Break Job Shadowing Experience. The program offers a chance for students to explore possible career fields through limited observation and discussions with professionals at a selected job site. By participating in the program, students will gain a better understanding of what's involved in a particular career choice. This information will assist students in their career decision making process and/or help them to decide what industry or environment they wish to pursue after graduation. Sign up in the Office of Career Planning (ISC 101) by Feb. 5.



What in the world is Karen Copenhaver so happy about? She was excited to present a free Dairy Queen ice cream cone to a student who participated in the Educational Talent Search/Upward Bound booth at the Spring 2010 Winter Cruise festival. The event, which is designed to welcome students to campus and help new students learn about the programs and services available, is part of the week-long Campus Craze Dayz event. Karen's department won a luscious tray of desserts for their efforts.



Melinda Leland, dean of VHCC's Division of Workforce Training & Continuing Education, was named the winner of the Barry Firebaugh Leadership Award during the Washington County Chamber's annual meeting in January. Melinda is the fifth recipient of the award, which was established by members of the chamber's leadership program in 2005 and each year recognizes graduates of the leadership program who have made outstanding contributions to the community. Among her many contributions to the chamber, Melinda served as president in 2008 and as a member of the organization's long-range planning committee. She is pictured here with Mr. Firebaugh, coordinator of the leadership program.

Retirement Accounts at myVRS

Members of the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) have access to membership information through myVRS, a secure online service available through the VRS web site.

Set up a myVRS account and access member information such as service and compensation; check the status of an application for service retirement or purchase of prior service; create retirement benefits estimates using current information; and update individual contact information.

To learn more, go to www.varetire.org and click on About myVRS under the Members tab. A link to the VRS web site is also available on the HR web page under the Retirement Planning section.

Paperback books needed

Cold winter days are the perfect time to curl up with a good paperback and the VHCC Library wants to help. A new Paperback Exchange Shelf has been established to allow patrons to bring a book they've already enjoyed and exchange it for something else.



The shelf currently is located near the newspaper rack but, sadly, features only one lonely book at this time. Donations are needed to get the program started, said Reference Librarian Joel Rudy.

The program was kicked off last semester in an effort to encourage reading for pleasure. Those interested in donating paperbacks may simply place them on the shelf.

HVAC Program in Trade Publications

Associate Professor Jim Kroll and students of his Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration program have been featured in two trade publications recently for their stellar performance in the classroom and volunteer participation in community projects.

The winter edition of "HVAC Insider News" included a feature on the program that applauds student performance on industry exams and the training opportunities that are available for students enrolled in the program.

Kroll and his students are featured again in "RSES Journal" for their volunteer work on two homes for the Washington County Chapter of Habitat for Humanity. As members of the RSES Southwestern Virginia Chapter, they installed heat pump systems for two Habitat homes. The magazine also features a profile on Kroll and information about the VHCC program he leads.

"Student interests have changed a lot, and folks don't grow up doing mechanical work with their hands as much," he said when asked about the challenges of teaching. "Another challenge is getting experienced guys to realize how much the industry is changing and how important continuing education is. I've had several guys with decades of experience take my 13-week International Mechanical Code class and tell me how much they learned."