Threatening words scrawled on board

By Christopher Hedges
Editor-in-Chief

Racist graffiti marred the Black Law Students Association's bulletin boards, officials at the law school announced earlier this week.

"Last Monday, it was discovered that the sign identifying the Black Law Students Association had been defaced with a threatening message using a racial epithet," wrote Anne Penway, admissions and student relations director.

In response to the vandalism, a forum was held in the law school atrium to discuss incidents where student group bulletin boards have been scrawled upon.

The identity of the perpetrator is unknown, but law school officials are not ruling out the possibility that a law student may have been involved.

"While it is painful for us all to contemplate, we must acknowledge that the possibility that the perpetrator may be among our own community," wrote Penway in the Feb. 26 memo circulated to all students.

"Wesemann Hall is open to the public and there is every possibility that these acts were committed by someone not affiliated with the law school."

Earlier this school year, bulletin boards belonging to the Jewish Law Student Association, the Federalist Society and Jews Vitae were attacked by vandals.

The school's Honor Code and school regulations condemn and punish racial and other forms of harassment. Punishment includes suspension and expulsion for a student found to have violated the rules.

"A student should scrupulously regard the rights of others and should observe high ethical standards in his or her conduct," states the VUSL Honor Code. "A student should strive to promote an academic environment where each student has an equal opportunity to use all of the resources of the school."

It wasn't the magical moment that many thought of when they heard about EJA's Kiss a Pig contest. Both Professor Laura Dooley and a little piglet have second thoughts about the contest after contributors to EJA gave the most in Professor Dooley's name.

If you're in the mood for recycling:

Save the environment: recycle!

By Malini Goel and Marianne Mannheim
Contributors

Environmental awareness should play a greater role among the student body at VUSL.

In the past, environmental issues and activities were seen as eccentric, esoteric, or for the "environmental people." But, the truth is, you don't need to wear Birkenstocks or eat granola in order to preserve and maintain the environment, even with our busy law school schedules. There are little things we can do that can make a big difference.

1. Use the back side of sheets of paper for rough drafts. It saves paper, money, and the environment.

2. After using both sides of paper sheets, make sure to throw them into the appropriate paper recycling bins that are placed in various places in Wesemann: in the locker room, computer lab, lounge, classrooms and so on.

3. If your organization sells pizza or any products in large cardboard containers, they can be recycled at VUSL. Just outside the front door of Wesemann.

The Forum invites all members of the law school community to respond to this incident.

Your letters and contributions are welcome. Readers are invited to drop off their contributions in locker #302, send via email: Forum@wesemann.law.valpo.edu, or send via U.S. Mail to The Forum, 202 Heritage Hall, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383.
Stop racism

It always seems to happen this way. Someone, with malicious intent, scrawls vulgar and racist graffiti on a bulletin board at a law school. The choice of words and the method of the expressing the message are directed at groups of students in the most hateful and vile imaginable.

Why do we have to put up with this sort of behavior? It would seem that in 1996 we would all be able to pull together and live with one another in harmony. It would seem that we should be able to come to school and not have to be confronted with vandalism that bespeaks evil against other human beings. We cannot tolerate this type of behavior from anyone in the community.

The identity of the individual or individuals is unknown to us. We hope that it wasn't a classmate or other member of the law school community. If it was a random act of vandalism by someone wandering the hallways after walking into the building from the street, the scope of the problem still doesn't change. We must all pull together and get to know one another so that this type of thing doesn't happen in the future. We must also send a signal and show of support stating that we will not tolerate racism.

We all support free speech -- but this latest episode of bulletin board vandalism does nothing to contribute to the free flow of ideas. If someone has something to say without resorting to the cesspool of racist language and thought, say it. This blatant scrawl of racism does no one any good. It is an obscene gesture against humankind. We will not tolerate it!

The Forum invites everyone in the law school community to comment on this incident. The free flow of information will help us understand and get to know one another. It will also allow those who were offended to condemn the actions of a twisted soul.

Racism seems to be rearing its ugly face on our beautiful campus. All of us have to join together as a community to stamp out the ignorance that fosters perverted and evil expressions of racism. We must all work together to get to know and understand each other. Only open lines of communication and a strong denunciation of racism will cure the sickness infecting some in our society.

Serving law students for over a quarter century

The Forum

"Let the people know the truth and the country will be saved." -- Abraham Lincoln

Published by Valparaiso University.
Feb. 29 -- Mar. 20, 1996
Vol. 26 No. 13

All are welcome to participate.

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The Forum encourages submissions from all law students. Please contact Christopher Hedges, editor-in-chief, chedges@wesemann.law.valpo.edu, for more information. Contributions can be placed in Locker #302 for placement in the paper. Please use Word Perfect 5.1 on a 3.5" floppy disk (available at the Library Circulation desk).

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Please feel free to contact
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or comments.

Please send correspondence to:
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An Assumption of Incompetence: Black History Month in America

By Professor Hatcher

As we celebrate Black History Month some African Americans are wondering what to celebrate? We celebrate freedom from slavery, however, many citizens of our country are not yet free. They are not free from poverty, joblessness or homelessness, and they are not free from racial discrimination and economic subjugation. Too many mothers and their children, barely surviving on welfare, look on with fear and suspicion as political figures from the State House to the White House call for “reform” of the welfare system in the United States.

Many of us are surprised by the all out assault on legal efforts to create a level playing field in race relations such as the current attack on affirmative action. America’s historic concern for “the least of these” is being victimized by the conservativefeeding frenzy in Washington led by two troglodytes named Gingrich and Gramm. In the name of belt tightening and a balanced budget, these two slash and burn artists are in the process of laying waste to more than forty years of progressive, compassionate political achievements.

There are still those among us who would blame the victim. There are those who would suggest that blacks in America are their own worst enemies. We see otherwise intelligent Americans, accepting T.V. catch-phrases like, “blacks must get off aid to work.” Translated, that means that blacks must get off the welfare rolls, get a job and work like the rest of us. They ignore the truth that most people on welfare are not black, and would love to work if they could get a job. Aid to trade is not the issue. African Americans have a right to aid from government if they need it, just like the rest of us.

The real issue is aid plus trade.

Another term that gets tossed around a great deal these days is full employment. However, for African Americans, the issue is not full employment either. It is full development. In 1865, when blacks came out of slavery, they did not demand full employment or jobs. After all, in those days, every black had a job. Slavery was full employment! Instead, blacks came out of slavery asking for land and mules, banks and schools. Even former slaves knew that it was not enough simply to have a job.

Slaves came out fighting for ownership and development. They clearly understood that development and ownership were not inherent in jobs alone. They were even able to secure a commitment from our nation along these lines in the 1860’s. Unfortunately, African Americans were betrayed in 1876 by a Democratic Congress and a Republican President, and never received the “forty acres and a mule” that had been promised.

Continued on page 6

An Assumption of Incompetence

NO BAR/BRI PROFESSORS HAVE LEFT!!

PUTTING RUMORS TO REST:
EVEY SINGLE PROFESSOR WHO HAS DELIVERED A SUBSTANTIVE LECTURE IN ILLINOIS THIS DECADE IS STILL WITH BAR/BRI!

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Let your voice rise across the land!

Write a letter to the editor or an opinion piece.
All viewpoints of interest to law students welcome.
Deadline: Thursday
March 15, 1996 at 5 p.m.
For more information, contact The Forum via email at: forum@wesemann
EJA kiss a pig contest successful

By Heather McCleery
Equal Justice Alliance
Via Email.

EJA thanks everyone who participated in, watched, and contributed to EJA's Annual Kiss-A-Pig Contest. For those folks who missed this rather messy event, the winner for 1996 was the infamous Professor Dooley. But, as she stated, this sow-kissin' event was not unusual for a native from Arkansas.

Due mostly to the intense competition around the last few minutes before the final verdict was read, EJA raised over $300.00! This greatly adds to our Summer Scholarship Fund for those law students interested in pursuing volunteer or low-paying public interest jobs for the summer.

Those unfortunate souls who missed this blessed event, the sow will be ready to pucker up again come 1997. And as Dooley so unforgettably stated at the end of the Kiss - next year we vow revenge against Berner! So, students, professors, Dooley, and Smoot you better start saving those pennies now.

As a side note, EJA will be having a panel of some VUSL professors and alumni Don and Kathy Evans who will speak and answer questions about their public interest experiences. This event is set for March 25th at 4:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served, of course. Also, information about VUSL's and EJA's Summer Scholarships will be readily available during this time. Don't miss it.

Listen for those photos when we get back! Have a great Spring Break!

Photo contest

The "M&M" spring break photo contest

By Malini Goel and Marianne Mannheim
Contributors

Have crazy plans for spring break???

Well, why don't you tell us what you're doing?

Or rather, why don't you SHOW us? Marianne and Malini are having a spring break photo contest! The best photo will appear in the next edition of our column, provided it isn't notorious or X-rated!

The winner will be awarded a free bag of M&Ms! Yum, yum!

For those of you who don't quite make it to number one, we will display the rest of these "chef d'oeuvres" (that's French for masterpieces) on a bulletin board in the library a couple of weeks after we get back.

Turn your photos in within the first two weeks after spring break to locker #123. Make sure the photo is clear and that you write your name and locker number on the back so we can return it to you when we're done exposing, exploiting, and blackmailing you.

It doesn't matter whether you went scuba diving in the Caribbean or whether you were reading Property in the Valpo Law School Library ... We WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU DID! Be thinking of us when you take those great photos ... And DON'T FORGET to submit your photos when we return. See you (and those photos) when we get back! Have a great Spring Break!

ODE TO LAW WEEK...

...Monday arrived with that yummy luncheon, "Where we were continuously and forever munching!" Awards were given to all the brains, And Mr. Oelman kept preaching that the cops were to blame. Tuesday came with beer and darts, A social gathering which warmed our hearts. Wednesday arrived with the Seventies dance, Boy, you should have seen some of those shirts and pants.

Thursday came...and of course the Roast, To Agent Berner, here's a Toast... For being the best H.B.I man we've ever seen, Ya' looked pretty spiffy with those rolled up jeans. The musicale charmed all and pleased our ears, From Chopin to Tap Dance...they all got cheers! Dooley, Blomquist, and the Electric Funk Band, I must say, every act was mighty grand. Barrister's Ball was a sight to be seen, Before that meal, everyone was still lean!

Men in suits and ladies in heels, Washing down cocktails, leaving only orange peels. Just thought we'd write a little ode to Law Week, To all the fun, friends, meals, and musique!

Quote of the Week:

Tim Russert: "How long did you take to prepare for that interview?"
Maria Shriver: "A couple of weeks, about two or three weeks, and I read everything. I memorized that book up and down. I memorized everything that was written about Whitewater, about Travelgate, about Hillary Clinton, about First Ladies... You want to admire her, and yet you're a journalist and you have to ask her those tough questions, you have to be skeptical, and you can't just come on and do this like 'Oh, you're so wonderful.'"

-- Maria Shriver on her interview with Hillary Clinton, CNBC's Tim Russert, Feb 4.

A Feeling of Jazz

with Professor Joellen Lind and Bill Saterlee

Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m.
only on WVUR 95.1 FM
Valparaiso University radio

Listed below:

Outfitters - Heather Hamilton Jewlers.

Career conferences offer many networking opportunities

Career, continued from page 8

1L, "I did get a clearer idea of what some of the practice areas encompassed, as well as suggestions of what practice areas someone with my background might pursue. All the practitioners were friendly and cooperative," said Dennis Bassi, 3L. "If you didn't have an idea (of what you wanted to do before you went), you got one! Now that we know enough to begin asking questions of attorneys, you can come away thinking something entirely different about that practice area (compared to what you thought before you came to law school). For me, it didn't formalize a career goal, but it was informative about options within practice areas. It was worth one day of my time and it was nice to go as a group. That gave me the opportunity to discuss ideas about these areas of law with friends who come from different backgrounds and experiences than me," said Daya Naef, 1L.

Talking with practitioners in a casual, low-pressure situation can provide the opportunity to:

Network

-- Attorney A knows Attorney B at XYZ office who would talk to you about your interest in (Property) law.
-- Practitioner X knows Practitioner Y who has or may have an opening for a summer clerk.
-- Lay the foundation for a future contact ad colleague in the legal profession: Get that practitioner's business card. Ask, "May I call you sometime in the future if I have more questions?"

Get yourself known

-- Practitioners might just recommend you send a resume to their office or that you call them next week.
-- Practitioners will NOTE your efforts, ability to network and sincerity in exploring a practice area of law.

Determine your career path in law a little more clearly

-- Find out just what it's like to practice in the area of law that you believe must be wonderful.
-- What are the downsides of the area of law you wish to practice?
-- What's the career path like for someone practicing in this area of law?
-- Once in a practice area, how easily can you transition to another practice area should you want to do so?

These opportunities will present themselves again next January or February in 1997. Plan to participate and generate results that will make a significant difference in your career/job search!

Have a story idea? Contribute to The Forum. Call 465-7831 for more info. Meetings every Tuesday @ 10 a.m. in Heritage Hall 202. forum@wesemann.law.valpo.edu

Thanks contributors! The Forum editors

Photo submitted by Anita Rees

Valpo law students gather in front of the Soldiers and Sailor's Monument in Indianapolis during a career conference. They had the chance to network with Indy attorneys.

The President's Column

By Renee George
SBA President

Some thoughts before we leave for spring break

Just a quick note from the desk of Renee S. George — There were just a few things I wanted to say before everyone leaves for SPRING BREAK.

* I hope everyone enjoyed themselves during law week. I know that the SBA Administrative board I and had fun putting the whole week together for you. All the credit for such a great week goes to Bridgett Ray (Vice President), she's the one responsible for planning such a good time. Thanks Bridgett!!

** Keep your eyes open for the Forum issue that will come out after spring break. In that issue, we will be addressing the defacement of organization bulletin boards, ie. racial epitaph. There will be a collection of articles attacking different forms of hate speech.

*** Remember, PAY YOUR LIBRARY FINES!!! This is a serious matter because if you do not pay your fines you will either not graduate (3Ls) or your grade reports will not be released. So, please take care of this if it pertains to you.

**** HAVE A GREAT TWO WEEK SPRING BREAK!!!

That's all for now, see you when we get back.

Computer issues will be resolved

By John Obermann
Technical Support
VIA EMAIL

I was promised by Zenith that the new machines were shipped on Friday, hence, they will "supposedly" arrive this afternoon or tomorrow afternoon.

Another issue is the whole remote access thing. Please refer all questions to me (not EIS) with regard to PPP. E-mail, printing, whatever. EIS employees (the student consultants) are not familiar with the necessary setting changes that need to be made in the Trumpet Winsock and the Pegasus Mail software for connectivity to Wesemann. Since only members of the law community are on our server, the EIS students have no way of knowing how to help you.

We are currently pursuing our own connection solution to our own system. (ie., no more PPP garbage, no more lost mail over the wires, etc...) We are also looking into a CD-server system to hold over 200 discs on-line for searching and retrieval.

I realize many things are "wrong". I will try my best to fix all of your problems (on the computer that is). We are attempting to extract more funding for technology support. Unfortunately, at this time, we just do not have the cash to give you the tools you need to be really effective on the PCs. After April, the lab will be switched to a Windows 95 environment. This should solve the occasional reboot problems we have currently.

As for the removal of the GUEST account, it was an inevitable change. As for the removal of the GUEST account, it was an inevitable change. If you don't like you. It's because your request has been completed.

So, ask me the questions, (not EIS or other law students who occasionally get irritated by late-night phone calls) and I will hopefully provide the answers. Linda Canada can reach me at anytime of the day if I do not happen to be in my office.

Thank you, JMO
Assumption of Incompetence

Continued from page 3.

In recent months, the city administration and local media have trumpeted the jobs that the boats will bring, while downplaying the fact that the millions of dollars in profits earned by these two developers will head straight for New York, Atlantic City or Detroit. It appears that the tune of $300 Million. The bottom line is that the people of Gary are left to beg for jobs from The Donald and little else.

Incompetence

Our current political leaders seem to defy explanation, personal adjustment and resignation to the will of God. It is only the only approach that produces an acceptable solution.

On matters of social injustice, concerns should be examined frequently; attitudes aired and prejudices then not only evident but acceptable solutions. As people of color, we must look at another with respect, not what he or her condition.

Where differences exist that allow discrimination, personal adjustment and resignation to the will of God is the only approach that produces an acceptable solution.

There is much left to be done here at Valparaiso and across the country before the “assumption of incompetence” can be overcome. Professor Derrick Bell of University in his brilliant book, And We Are Not Saved, quotes Chapter 18, Verse 20 of Jeremiah, which states:

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we won't be until each of us come to believe it.

Unfortunately, this sends a chilling and terrible message to our children. One that goes beyond the political and economic arenas. A message that permeates every facet of our lives. If black public officials are assumed to be incompetent and/or ineffectual, what about black teachers, doctors, lawyers, policemen and even African American religious leaders? Are they incompetent also? An

As we celebrate Black History Month some African Americans are wondering what’s to celebrate? We celebrate freedom from slavery, however, many citizens of our county are not yet free. They are not free from poverty, joblessness or homelessness, and they are not free from racial discrimination and economic subjugation. Too may mothers and their children, barely surviving on welfare, look on with fear and suspicious as political figures from the State House to the White House call for “reform” of the welfare system in the United States.

There is a Phil Donahue, there is an Oprah Winfrey. They know that there was a Larry Bird, there was a Magic Johnson; where there was a Robert Frost, there is a Maya Angelou; and where there was a Bill Clinton, there is a Jesse Jackson.

Thus, these blacks have come to understand that color does not determine intellect nor ability...a lesson that all Americans must learn if we are ever to overcome the “assumption of incompetence” that allows discrimination and racism to continue in our country. During the Presidential campaign of 1991, then Tennessee Senator Al Gore repeated over and over again, at campaign stop after campaign stop, "It is time...for them to go!" Of course, he made reference to the Bush administration.

Today, that slogan which Al Gore make so popular, could be modified. It is time...for each of us, black and white, to reexamine our commitment to America’s principles. It is time...to examine our own hearts and ask ourselves whether we harbor any ill will towards our brothers and sisters who may look different, or speak differently, or have different sexual preferences, or attend a different church than we do? It is time...to acknowledge that God made us all, and it’s all right with Him for some of us to be different, then it should be O.K. with us. God never makes a mistake. Every human being created by Him is here for a perfect reason.

Comprehension of this truth will cause every individual to look at another with respect, not what matter what his or her condition.

Where differences exist that seem to defy explanation, personal adjustment and resignation to the will of God is the only approach that produces an acceptable solution.

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Recycling: save our environment
Recycle, from page 1

and around the corner to the right are big recycling bins, and a big one for cardboard. No pizza cartons should be thrown away when we have a recycling bin for this purpose.

4. We should get into the habit of using e-mail as a way of communicating with fellow students about upcoming events and activities. If groups and organizations publicize their events via e-mail and students get into the habit of checking their computers at least once a day, we can prevent the excess use of paper (a lot of which gets thrown away from our lockers into the recycling bins anyway).

Next Forum deadline:
March 15, 1996
Please submit contributions by dropping off in locker #302, sending via email to Forum@wesemann, or by U.S. Mail: 202 Heritage Hall, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383.

The Forum wants you!
The Forum is interested in recruiting motivated and dedicated first and second year law students to fill editorial positions on next year's Forum staff. This is your opportunity to use your leadership skills in a high profile student organization. If you wish to be considered for an editor's position, please contact the Forum via our e-mail account, FORUM, by phone, 465-7831, by dropping off a letter in the Forum's mailbox in the SBA office, or by U.S. Mail at Forum, 202 Heritage Hall, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383.
VU Students networked, learned about law, at job fairs

By Anita Rees
Career Services

Eight Valpo law students braved the 40-degree wind chill factor and joined other Chicagoland law students at Chicago-Kent School of Law to participate in Practice Tracks on February 3. Students had the opportunity to talk with 55 practitioners about their practice area of law, how they obtained their positions, how they liked their jobs, what there recommendations were for students who wanted to be employed in that practice area of law, etc. One student commented during the Practice Tracks, “Where else can I go and ask questions like this and some employers ask me for my resume?!? This is great!”

Other students found:

“I wished I’d gone two years ago! I learned about a job opening and several professional organizations in one of my areas of interest. As I spoke with one practitioner about a particular organization, she asked me ‘WHY did you apply (there)?’ Everyone I know there hates their job!”, said Lora Grandrath, 3L.

“I found Practice Tracks to be very informative. I made three good contacts who might be very useful to me in the future. One of them gave me some great practical advice about what I should do this summer. Overall, it was a great experience because it gave me the chance to talk with Chicago attorneys and get used to networking. The practitioners in Computer Law was especially helpful because he actually had a handout of useful skills that his firm looked for when hiring associates. His branch of Intellectual Property law seemed very exciting,” said Samantha Friel, 1L.

Then, on February 10, fifteen Valpo students joined other Indiana law students and attended Career Day at the Indiana State Bar Center in Indianapolis. Approximately 38 practitioners attended and answered questions from law students. Valpo was well represented: only IU-Bloomington had more student! Practitioners were impressed and commented on the high level of student interest in Indianapolis employment.

Attorney practitioners were pleased with that day. Some of their comments:

“I loved it. The students were bright, eager and appropriate. I believe you had a great variety of applicable topics.”

Another said: ‘Nothing (no improvements!), this was fine!” Valpo students speak for themselves about the day:

“It was informative. Gave me ideas about what I want to go into and what areas of law I don’t want to practice! (Career Day) clarified what different types of law entail and gave me a clearer idea of how a practitioner’s time is spent in their area of law,” said Julie Dixon, IL.

“I talked to a Valpo alum who works in the same office that I had earlier learned had a summer internship available. Through her connection, I have a phone interview scheduled today! This same alum is helping me acquire a speaker for one of our ICLU sessions,” said Angelo Betancourt, IL.

“Good! Everyone was accessible. The practitioners were willing to go beyond the basics. It was not lecture-oriented, i.e., not ‘this is what you need to do.’ Career Day allowed a personal approach. I got 20 minutes to talk with a practitioner in the field in which I really want to be employed! I found out whether or not my background fit the field. Career Day confirmed my choice of what I want to do!”, said June Bules,

“Continued, please see Career, page 5

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