

## Quote of the Week:

**"I love deadlines. I especially love the whooshing sound they make as they fly by."**

— Douglas Adams

## 'PATRIOTISM' FROM PAGE 8

America may not always agree with what the world says, should it not, in the end, make its own decisions, independent of the world's popular opinion? After all, America is the only one looking out for itself, not those other countries.

At some point, the concept of an American patriot was reduced to a Southern redneck with broken teeth and a pick-up truck, waving a confederate flag in one hand and a bottle of beer in the other. Such caricatures are often shown to hate all those not American and all those who even hint that America is not absolutely perfect. This is, apparently, the modern American patriot.

I am not advocating that we blindly follow our government or refuse to admit to the possibility that America may be wrong; I am merely asking that we remember how lucky we are to be living in a country

filled with heroes and ideals, with hope and joy. With the obvious exception of Sept. 11, 2001, there has been very little patriotism in the country since the Vietnam War, and that is very sad.

There is one relatively recent burst of patriotism that my grandfather, a World War II veteran, told me about when I was young. It happened when the U.S. hockey team defeated the U.S.S.R's team (as shown in the recent movie *Miracle*) at a time when nuclear war was a real possibility. That night, a man out walking in a small town in Massachusetts began singing "God Bless America." Those around him heard him and, slowly, others began to sing until, at the end of the song, most of the town had joined in. People left their houses and came out into the street to literally sing America's praises.

Such incidents reassure me that the American spirit is still alive. It is up to us to rediscover it.

## The Feminist Voice: March to defend women's rights

Every day, every dollar and every politically driven step counts during an eagerly awaited election year. To demonstrate overwhelming majority support for a woman's right to choose safe, legal abortion and birth control, the largest pro-choice majority in history will march on Washington on Sunday, April 25, 2004.

Peaceful protest in the United States sends a powerful message to our nation's leaders. Our nation was founded in protest against oppressive government, and our right to protest, written into the U.S. Constitution, is fundamental to our democracy. You will find, if you seek it out, that media coverage of such an event is scarce, and replaced with abusive coverage that harms the peaceful protestor's image. The only way to know the true essence of political change, whether it be from the left or the right side of the political spectrum, is from within.

The National Organization for Women (NOW) held its first abortion rights march in 1986, and in 1992, 750,000 women, men and children turned out for a NOW-organized march in Washington, D.C. They massed behind a banner that declared: "We won't go back! We will fight back!" It was the largest march and rally ever held in the nation's capital. In addition to

the leadership and delegations from every pro-choice organization and hundreds of celebrities, thousands of students from 600 campuses across the country participated.

Students can acquire some knowledge about protest and revolution, but will never fully understand the power of activism until they are truly immersed. Behind a book, you will never hear of the doctors who risk their lives daily to administer safe and legal abortion procedures or family planning services. In a lecture you will never learn that there is a world outside of CNN; outside of Trenton, N.J., and outside the framework of hate. There are no ethnic, racial, sexual or religious boundaries when one common goal exists.

One current goal is to keep women's medical records out of the hands of John Ashcroft's Justice Department, which subpoenaed the private medical records of women across the country who have had abortion care, arguing that federal law does not honor confidentiality of the doctor-patient relationship. Additionally, George W. Bush's hand-picked head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration may reject the recommendation of his advisory committee and deny an application allowing emergency contraception to be sold over-the-counter.

The majority of individuals who march are not pro-abortion; they are pro-choice. They support safe reproductive choice on a global level, emergency contraception, family planning and the fundamental values of our precious nation's democracy. If nothing else, you will be paying a tribute to the foremothers of the reproductive revolution, and even if you never march again, you will be forever enlightened.

Contact Marilyn Quinn at [quinnma@rider.edu](mailto:quinnma@rider.edu), x. 5727 or Jessica Sidkoff at [sidkoff@rider.edu](mailto:sidkoff@rider.edu), x. 4254. Please join those Rider individuals who march to advocate privacy and choice in matters affecting reproduction and health, or please donate whatever you can to help defray student costs for bus seats (student seats are \$30 with breakfast and possibly an official march T-shirt; adult non-student seats are \$50 with breakfast and a T-shirt). Make checks out to PPMA and get them to Marilyn Quinn, Moore Library. Buses are courtesy of the Trenton Area Planned Parenthood.



Gina-Louise Monari

## Letter to the Editor:

### Rider swimming and diving teams have no shortage of determination

To the staff at *The Rider News*,

I want to thank you all on articles that were very well written about the men's and women's swimming and diving team.

Personally I would like to thank Mike Caputo and Jared Vichko. I've been reading *The Rider News* for two years and I have to say that Jared takes on all subjects and his articles are always very well written. Good luck to Jared, Mike and the whole staff at *The Rider News*.

I can only speak for the swimming and diving team about the total dedication it takes to compete at a very high level. The swimmers are up between five and 5:30 in the morning to go to the pool and swim for two or three hours. Then they go to classes and

go back to the pool at three in the afternoon to swim for another two hours. This is done six days a week and they get Sundays off.

You have to be either crazy or very dedicated to do this six days a week for five months of the year. They do this in all kinds of weather also; the post office knows what I'm talking about.

If they follow the practice of most swimmers, they're practicing for 11 months of the year. This is the part of swimming that 99 percent of people don't know about. Swimmers are very dedicated to their sport. They endure many hours of hard practice, pain and sickness, but they are still expected to perform at a high level. They do this because their coaches expect it, each

swimmer expects it from every swimmer on the team and they expect it from themselves.

The program at Rider is one of the best I have seen. Coach Stephen Fletcher and his coaching staff have done a great job! Coach Dennis Ceppa has done a great job with the diving team also! I also want to point out that when the swimmers practice, coaches have to be there so they must be crazy or dedicated too.

I also wanted to point out that not only is the team dedicated to swimming and diving, but they are doing pretty well academically too.

Sincerely,  
Curt Bergh  
Rider swimming parent

