



THE CENTURION

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Terror on Campus 33 Dead, 29 Injured



Virginia Tech Students in Shock and Mourning After Violent Rampage

ASA JAMES CARR
Centurion Staff

The terrible massacre at Virginia Tech had a devastating impact on that campus that has reverberated to colleges across the nation.

Cho Seung-Hui, a 23-year-old senior majoring in English at the university, was armed with a 9 mm and a .22-caliber handgun when he shot and killed 32 students and faculty members in two separate attacks on the morning of Monday, April 16.

The first attack occurred in one of the college's dormitories, and left two students dead. Then, two hours later, the other attack occurred in a classroom building, leaving 31 people dead, including Cho.

Cho committed suicide as the Virginia State police were entering the building.

The tragic event is the deadliest shooting in modern U.S history, surpassing the previous record that occurred in Killeen, Texas, in 1991, when George Hennard plowed his pickup truck into a Luby's Cafeteria and shot 23 people to death, then himself.

This also is the largest campus shooting since Charles Whitman climbed the clock tower on the University of Texas campus, and opened fire with a rifle from the 28th-floor observation deck. He killed 16 people before he was shot to

death by police. Though no motive was clearly evident in the Virginia Tech shooting, police did find a multiple-page letter in Cho's dormitory that stated some reasons for the attacks. The letter contained a list of grievances, expressed rage towards women and "rich kids", and ended with the statement, "You made me do this."

"It's scary to think that he carried out such a harsh act with no valid reason. It just reminds us that it could happen anytime, anywhere, and to anyone," said Bucks student William Jeffers, 24, liberal arts major from Newtown.

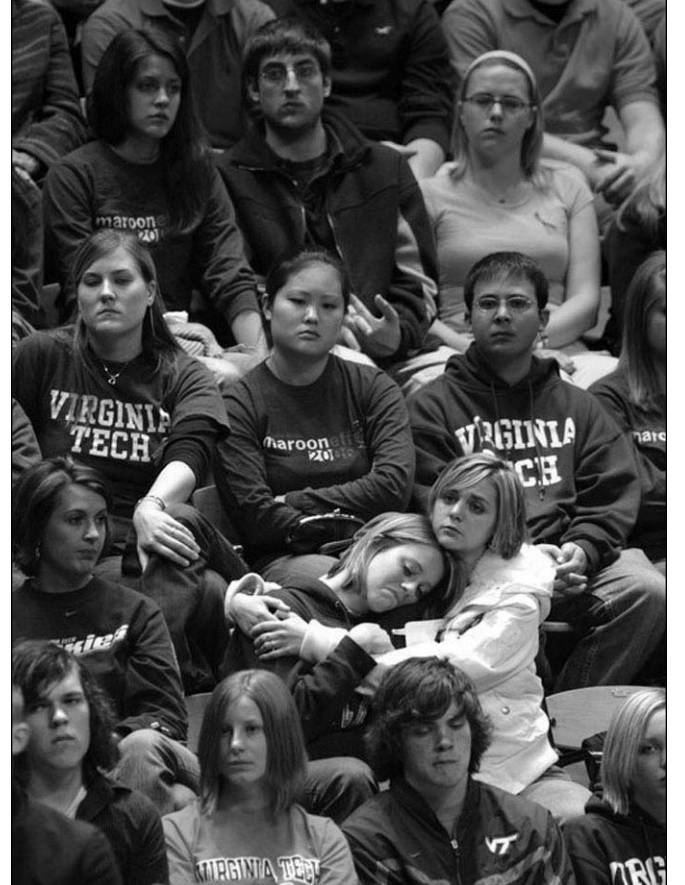
While searching Cho's room, Virginia State police found a receipt from March for a Glock 9 mm pistol and 569 rounds of practice bullets.

Cho, who was originally from South Korea, moved to the United States in 1992 and lived in a suburb of Washington, D.C. He held a green card, which legally gave him the right to purchase the handgun.

The receipt was traced back to a small Roanoke gun shop, where store owner John Markell recalled selling Cho the gun more than a month earlier.

"He was a nice, clean-cut college kid. We won't sell a gun if we have any idea at all that a purchase is suspicious," Markell told The Associated Press.

Prior to the killings, many who knew Cho described him as a loner, who was starting to show troubling signs.



Students of Virginia Tech console each other.

Picture Courtesy: Whitehouse.gov

Believed to be on anti-depressant medication, Cho was often isolated in the back of his classes, and rarely participated in any on campus activities.

Along with an unsociable attitude, Cho was reported to college authorities for lighting a fire in his dorm room and was accused of stalking several female students.

The change in Cho's behavior did not go unnoticed. His creative writing professor advised him to meet with the university's counseling service, after he turned in a disturbing paper that featured bloody fights and plots of murder.

See Campus Shooting, Page 2

This special issue of the Centurion will focus entirely on the tragic shooting at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, also known as Virginia Tech.

Inside this issue:

A Virginia Tech Student Talks to Bucks

Security on the Bucks Campus

MySpace/FaceBook: The New Way to Communicate After Tragedy

A Closer Look at Gun Control Laws

Bucks Student Reactions to Campus Violence

SGA Holds a Vigil for Virginia Tech Victims



Above: An image of ChoSeung-Hui taken from a package sent to NBC News containing, what NBC is calling, Cho's manifesto.

Courtesy of NBC

Below: A map marking the location of Virginia Tech in relation to Bucks



Campus Shooting

Continued from Page 1

In the aftermath of the attacks a lot of blame has been thrown at Virginia Tech. Many parents of students are demanding answers regarding why the university failed to promptly shut down the campus and warn students about the first shooting.

"Not saying the second one could've been prevented, but students should have had some knowledge as to what was happening," said Bucks student Elle Tomlinson, 21, nursing major from Levittown.

A memorial service for the fallen victims was held at Virginia Tech on Tuesday April 17. Due to the overwhelming number of attendees, campus officials moved the event from the basketball arena to the college's 70,000 seat football stadium.

Among the speakers at the service were, Virginia Tech President

Charles Steger, Va. Governor Tim Kaine, and President Bush and the first lady, Laura Bush. Steger opened the memorial service and, despite the controversy surrounding his handling of the shooting, was greeted with a 30 second standing ovation from the crowd.

President Bush, who gave a lengthy speech, ended by saying "As you draw closer to your families in the coming days, I ask you to reach out to those who ache for sons and daughters who are never coming home."

Following the combined hour long speeches, portraits of the victims were raised. Among the faces hanging in the air were staff members Christopher James Bishop, 35, who taught German at Virginia Tech and helped oversee an exchange program with a German university, and Jocelyn Couture-Nowak, a French instructor and the head of the horticulture department at Virginia Tech.

As a sign of respect, all classes have been cancelled for the rest of the week, and the buildings in which the shooting took place will be closed for the remainder of the semester.

After attending the services many Virginia Tech students packed up their belongings to head home. Many leave to escape from the media and negative atmosphere that is surrounding the campus.

The effects of shootings have been felt on both national and international levels. Multiple universities including Oklahoma, Texas and UCLA have shut down classes for the week.

South Korea also addressed the matter and, in a released statement to CNN, expressed sympathy for the victim's families and hopes that the effects of this incident do not carry over into any racial discrimination.

THE CENTURION

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VT Student Shares His Story

CHRIS FRANKLIN
Centurion Staff

Confusion. Heartache. Sorrow. He has felt them all in the days following the shooting spree at Virginia Tech University on April 16th. Why? Well, maybe it is because of the deaths of 33 of his fellow classmates and professors. Maybe it is the panic he sensed while locked down in his dorm, wondering if the "hell-on-earth" would somehow find its way to him. Or maybe it is the thought that he too could have been among the dead. As his wary voice echoes over the phone-line, the only thought that seems to be on his mind is, "thank God I'm alive."

Cody Hunt still has trouble with the realization that he has been amidst the pandemonium of the largest school shooting in the history of the United States. An 18-year-old freshman at Virginia Tech and a graduate of Morrisville High School, Hunt never saw much in the way of major historical events taking place in his presence.

"You don't see much happening in Morrisville, so the shootings were a big shock to me," he said.

On that Monday morning, the first initial shots were fired around 7:15 a.m. in West Ambler Johnston building, a co-ed dormitory that houses 895 students. Hunt lived two buildings over in "Slusher Wing" when the first shooting took place that killed two students. He and his roommate were in their rooms at the time and remembered hearing the shots. Since there was a lot of building going on in the area, they figured that it was just construction work. Soon after, Hunt received an e-mail that a "domestic disturbance" had occurred. However, something didn't feel right and Hunt began to hear rumors circulating.

"People were saying that there

was a shooting going on and that something big was going down," he said. "I didn't know what to believe, but the e-mail told us to stay in our rooms." And that is exactly what he and his roommate did.

After locking the doors and shutting the windows, Hunt turned on the television a few hours later. And that's when the news broke.

"I didn't understand how the death-toll for a domestic disturbance went from a couple kids to 22... that's when I knew the rumors were true," he said.

As Hunt and his roommate sat in their room, preparing for the worst, the second round of the killings spree had already gone underway.

The second shooting took place in Norris Hall, where over 30 were murdered before the shooter, a 23 year-old English major named Cho Seung-hui, took his own life.

It took place only a short distance from Hunt and his roommate's dorm room. He heard screams and shouts that reminded him of "something out of a horror movie." The sirens soon followed. At that point, his only fear was that the gunman would try to come into their residence hall. Hunt was relieved when the news reported that Cho had shot himself and was no longer a threat.

"I had met two of the girls who were killed... they lived one floor up from me," he said in a quiet voice.

The whole experience has brought a heavy dose of reality to Hunt and to all college students. The idea that institutions of learning can be the sight of mass killings is a concept that doesn't sit well with us all.

As for the killer, Hunt had mixed feelings about him. Many reports have been released regarding the mental health of Cho, but all conclude that he was a typical outcast and a loner.

Instead of initially lashing out,



Former Morrisville High School, and current, Virginia Tech student Cody Hunt

Photo Courtesy: Cody Hunt

Hunt offered some advice...

Hunt loves music and took to meeting new people by playing bass guitar in various bands in the Blacksburg area. At first he had trouble meeting new people, but as the year progressed he made many new friends. He said that he understood how Cho felt and suggested that he should have joined some clubs and made some attempts to meet people like himself.

"I had never met him, but if I had,

I would have tried to be a decent person to him... but I don't think it wouldn't have made much of a difference because I was told that he never talked- that he was a mute," Hunt said.

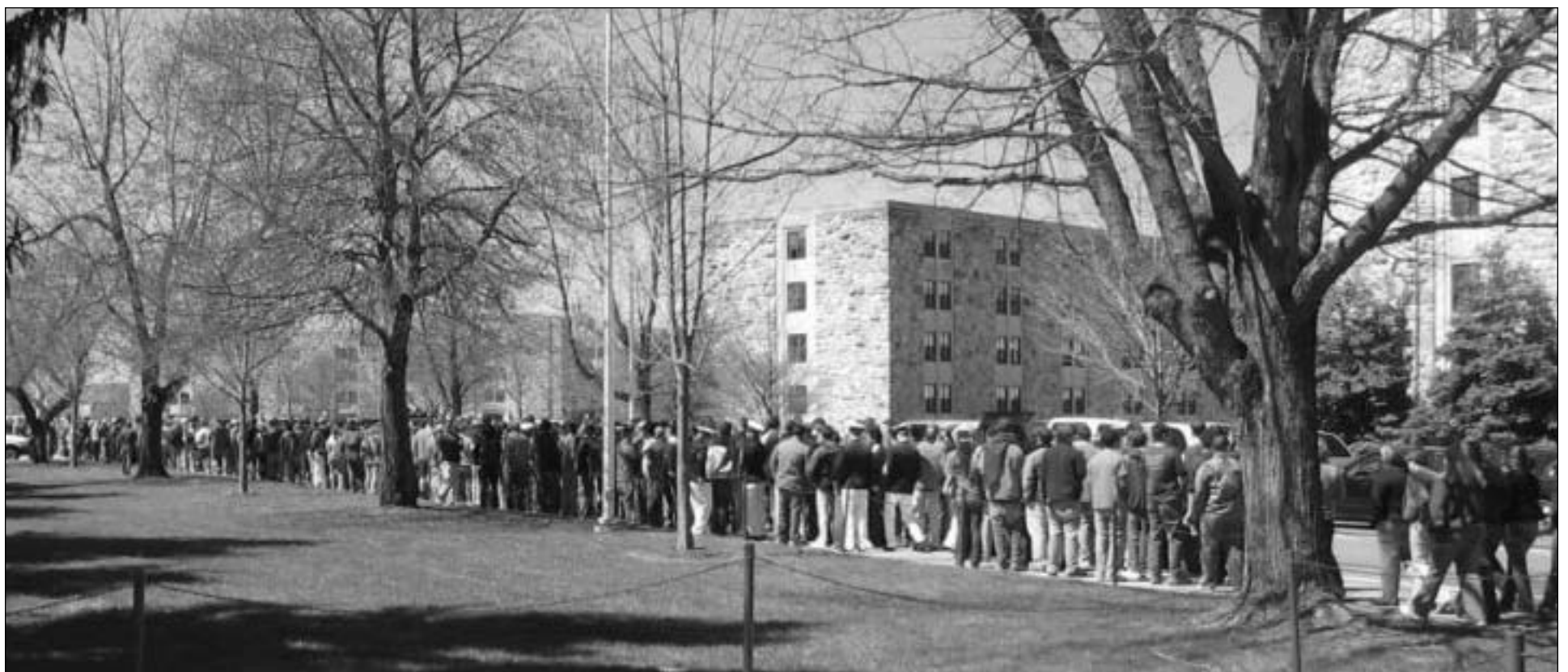
Even though the devastation of the experience has not fully set in for many, Hunt and many of the Virginia Tech students have been quick to start the healing process and get through the experience.

On Tuesday, April 17th, thou-

sands of students gathered on the campus commons, known as the "Drillfield," to hold a candlelight vigil for all who died. Hunt confessed that the emotions were "very intense." Thousands of students gathered to mourn and come together as a college.

"I will never forget this for the rest of my life, but I hope that people don't always associate this university with tragedy... we're above and beyond that."

Centurion Exclusive: Interview with a VT student.



VT students gather outside as the campus is evacuated

Photo Courtesy: Wikipedia.com

Struggling to Understand

AMANDA CARDEN
REBECCA FAUCETTE
BLAIR SHUPE
Centurion Staff

As Bucks students and faculty struggled to understand how the massacre at Virginia Tech could have happened, many said they felt unsafe and were outraged by the lack of security on the VT campus.

"It is messed up, security should have been more tight," said John Nussbaum, 19, liberal arts major.

Students were told to stay in their dormitories or classrooms. Students were informed that there was a shooter on campus by email, and many students didn't hear about it until after the shootings had already happened. Many college students and faculty from all over the country are reconsidering campus emergency procedures.

Kathy Webb, a professor in the math, science and technology department said, "The reality is that it can happen anywhere."

When asked about a possible emergency plan for Bucks, she said she didn't think we have one. "The biggest problem here is there is no way to get information broadcasted."

There was a suggestion post 9/11 to install a warning siren, but it never went through."

On the other hand, Jean Dolan, the assistant director for public relations, said her initial reaction was shock. "We do have an emergency communication plan to notify the campus in event of a shooting act. There is also an evacuation plan for students and faculty. The campus also has close ties with the nearby Newtown fire depart-

ment."

For many Bucks students security isn't the main issue. The fact that someone can be evil enough to kill so many people is what worries them.

Shaina Harris, 21, a communications Major, said, "I think it is ridiculous. How can a person kill 32 people? I don't feel any safer here than I would at a major college."

Harris also said that she would like to see stricter gun laws in place.

"Cho Seung-Hui checked into a mental hospital two years prior to the shooting.

Why didn't it show up when he bought the gun," asked Natasha Demer, 22, another Bucks student.

Worried parents, friends and family members were forced to wait to hear from their loved ones who were on campus when the shootings occurred.

Since students from all over the U.S. attend VT, the tragedy affected families all over the country.

"Global warming isn't going to end us. We are going to end ourselves," said Margy Matarazzo, 19, a Bucks bookstore worker. "Where was security when they heard a gun shot? We can't control guns because if people want guns they will find a way to get them anyway. Everyone is going insane, slowly but surely."

In the two hours in between the shootings Cho mailed a letter to NBC news containing a video explanation for the massacre.

"I think he had too much time to plan what he did," said Nick Keenan, 20, a general education major. "It is too easy for anyone to do what this man did."



Bucks students sign cards for the victims of the VT shootings.

Photo by: Asa Carr

Bucks Supports, Mourns With VT

ASA JAMES CARR
Centurion Staff

Flags hung at half-mast as Bucks students gathered for a memorial service for the victims of the Virginia Tech massacre.

The impact of the shootings was felt throughout the nation, as support from many universities continued to pour in to Virginia Tech.

Bucks was among the schools showing support, as students held a memorial service on Thursday in the Quad.

"We might not have been directly impacted by the shootings, but we are still feeling the pain of those who have died and lost loved ones. It feels nice to have an opportunity to reflect and pay our respect to the victims and their families," said Bucks student Taj Carr, 20, liberal arts major from Levittown.

Matt Cipriano, the director of student life, opened the event with a short but heartfelt speech. Cipriano expressed compassion for the VT students, but also urged them to remain strong during what has become one of the deadliest events in US history.

"It's a tragic event that occurred and all I can hope for is that everything turns out fine for the families and those impacted by this horrific ordeal."

Cipriano also used the time to reassure current Bucks students that their safety was not in jeopardy, but any concerns or improvements they felt could benefit the college should be suggested to the Bucks security office.

Before ending the speech, Cipriano asked the surrounding students and faculty to accompany him in a moment of silence for the victims.

As part of the service, Bucks students received the chance to write heart-filled messages for VT students.

These messages were to be mailed to the Virginia Tech university relations department.

Karen Marks, 21, an art major from Newtown, was among the many eager students who seized the opportunity to express their sympathy for the fallen victims and their families.

"It's such a tragedy what that university has gone through. It might only seem like a small gesture, but sending these messages gives students a chance to do something positive during such a dark time."

The opportunity to pay respect and support for VT was a gift that many attendees did not take lightly. Bucks students used this time to personally reflect on their own situations and lives.

"It gives you a new perspective on life. It's a scary concept to think that it could've happen on this campus, then they would've been the ones holding a service for us. If there's one thing I'm taking away from this, is to live life to the fullest cause at any time it's could be over," said James Lofton, 22, sports management major from Southampton.

Bucks is taking every possible measure to help show support for both VT and its own students.

Along with the memorial service, Bucks also set-up a counseling service for students who have been directly affected or are having difficulties coping with this tragedy.

Anyone in need of the counseling or wishing to send a message can contact the Bucks Student Life office at (215) 968-8257.



Showing respect for the victims at Virginia Tech, Bucks flew their flag at half-mast.

Photo by: Asa Carr

A Story Told in Pictures



Students huddle in a classroom during the "Lockdown"
Photo Courtesy of Wikipedia.com

KELLI CRONMILLER
Centurion Staff

Whomever coined the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" couldn't have anticipated how correct they were, when looking at the pictures surfacing all over the news and internet of the shootings at Virginia Tech.

In addition to all the photos surrounding the event, there were several videos, both from media crews and students who were on campus during the massacre.

A student at VT, Jamal Albarghouti, was so close to the events as they were unfolding that he captured a brief video on his cell phone in which one can hear shots being fired. Every one of the more than 20 shots can be heard.

One picture clearly depicts the chaos on campus. It shows the police, in full protective gear, sprinting across the campus trying to get control over the situation.

The rest of the background is what seems to be a quiet and deserted place.

None of the videos or pictures are as scary or vivid as the package Cho sent to NBC news, during the hours between the two shootings on campus.

The package contained a lengthy video of Cho explaining why he was doing what he did.

He pushed blame, made accusations and waved around guns. Some of the pictures can be found on the internet.

They are mostly of Cho aiming guns at the camera, but there is also one of him wielding a hammer. Clips of the video were shown on NBC news, adding to the shock of the massacre.

VT held a memorial at the campus football field. A picture shown on the front page of the Collegiate Times, VT's student newspaper, is of students gathered in a circle holding hands.

This picture shows just a portion of the grief and shock felt around campus for the students and teachers lost.

The chaos has ended, but the videos, pictures and memories of the most horrific school shooting in history will remain forever.

A Closer Look at Gun Laws

MARK BENNETT
Centurion Staff

The Virginia Tech massacre left many wondering whether tougher gun laws could have prevented such a tragedy.

"Virginia gun laws are some of the weakest state laws in the country," Josh Horwitz, the executive director of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, told The New York Times.

According to www.handgun-control.org, Virginia currently rates a C- on its gun control laws when compared to the other states across the country.

And in what may come to a shock to many at students Bucks is that Pennsylvania actually rated

worse than Virginia, scoring a disappointing D+.

After comparing the different state gun laws, many are left with a sense that gun laws are too weak.

For instance, when buying a firearm in Virginia, there is absolutely no waiting period from when you purchase the gun to when you receive it, greatly increasing the chances of passion shootings, which are defined as when the shooter recently has some sort of argument with a person(s), goes and buys a gun and immediately kills them.

The waiting period of three to five days that both Virginia and Pennsylvania used to require are no longer in effect.

In other words, there is no time

period that would allow someone to cool off and calm down before buying a gun.

In the Virginia Tech massacre, however, both guns used in the shootings were bought weeks prior to the slaughter.

Another loophole in Virginia is that no permit is required to carry a concealed weapon, and no background check is required to sell weapons in private dealings or in gun shows, which are frequently used by hunters and collectors to access slightly used guns at much cheaper prices.

There are no limits on the amount of ammunition that someone can buy in either state.

In Pennsylvania, if someone buys a pistol, assault pistol or

assault rifle, they are required to undergo a background check, no matter where the purchase occurs.

Also, each person is run through a state and federal database when the background check is conducted, preventing criminals and others deemed dangerous from owning weapons.

Pennsylvania requires more licensing as to gun ownership than Virginia.

For example, a permit is issued to allow someone to carry a concealed firearm, child safety locks are put on all guns before they are sold, children under the age of 18 cannot possess guns without parental consent and people under the age of 18 cannot purchase guns.

That's not the case in Virginia.

There a 12-year-old child can walk into a gun shop, purchase a shotgun, rifle or assault rifle without a parent being present, and without a background check or a waiting period.

Virginia is popular for hunting, and the legal hunting age is 12.

Many parents find that hunting with their children is a great way to bond with them, but should a child of grammar school age be able to purchase a gun?

But guns are not always bought legally.

And once someone is determined enough to kill, there may be very little that can be done to stop them.

Mourners Turn to Internet

In the aftermath of tragedy, students turn to websites such as Myspace and Facebook to say their farewells.

LAURA IRWIN
Centurion Staff

The massacre at Virginia Tech prompted students, and millions of other Myspace and Facebook site subscribers, to log on and alert one another, spread information, and share reactions.

The immediate response system during the tragedy was not campus officials, but internet jockeys — logged on, blogging and emailing.

The use of cell phones and computers to share information quickly surpassed any other method of bonding for those in search for answers.

Since the massacre at VT, more than 500 groups have appeared on Facebook to support and counsel grieving and shocked peers. Many Myspace and Facebook profile pictures have been changed to black ribbons with the letters "VT" in the school's colors.

On the profile of victim Maxine Turner, comments were posted in search of the student, only too late.

"We just want to know that you are okay. Please call us. Tom and Lesley."

Or—
"MAXXXXXX-please call us!!!"

Once the news was broken, the messages changed.

"Max, Christine just called me and said you were one of the people who got hurt real bad. Please call me and let me know you are

okay."

And—

"Max, I hope you're feeling better

today, up there in Heaven or wherever you are. I don't know what to say, but I'll miss you, and I just hope that you knew how important you were to all of us. Everybody loved you; I know they did. I love you and still can't believe you're gone. You were a real success. Just 2 weeks from graduation - you did so well for yourself. I'm so proud of you, and I'm sorry this had to happen to you."

Similar messages appeared on the profile of 20-year-old victim, Ross Alameddine.

"If only you were here to read this Ross... You'd know what an imaginative, intelligent, compassionate and most of all hysterically funny human being you were, and how appreciative I am to have spent last summer working with such a great kid. My every thought is with you and your family."

And—

"Ross man you will be missed by me and everyone who knew you, and I want to let you know my heart is with you and your family man, Love you."

And—

"My baby cousin... I LOVE you with ALL MY HEART... I MISS YOU... you will always be "my little man" and my "first baby"..... watch over all of

us.....xoxoxoxoxo I promise I'll take care of your sister and mom. xoxo."

And—

"Rossmo, I love you with all my heart. My one regret is that I never actually told you that."

Each heart-wrenching message was out there for the world to read and share in the pain—and the world did.

On groups created by members of different colleges, nationalities and organizations, message boards united the logged-on. They shared prayers, thoughts and feelings.

"I have a few friends that attended Virginia Tech and after hours of panic and frustrations at the inability to get a hold of them my heart began to crack. In honor of those students who lost their lives, were injured, VT students, and friends across the US who have friends at VT and at a request of a new found VT friend, please show your support by wearing Orange and Maroon today. No matter where you live or what school you go to let's come together and show our support. Thank you."

And—

"I am deeply saddened by these careless inhumane acts of atrocity and my thoughts and prayers rest with all the families affected by this awful, awful time. I only wish that someday peace can be found in restless minds, not resulting in violence. I pray for peace on

Earth, especially within the minds of troubled people, that such an act never happen again."

Since this was a college shooting, the fact that Myspace and Facebook were immediate points of interest was not surprising. These sites specifically target college-aged students, so who better to break the news of a nightmare on campus than those who are witnessing it? And where better to print the information than the sites used by those witnesses?

"It's hard to believe someone could do this. I look at my life and when times are hard they still aren't bad enough to do that. I have no relation to anyone affected in this tragedy, other than the fact that I am a college student; I went to a High School that had gun threats frequently and was on lock down. My prayers are with each and every person affected yesterday."

And—

"My thoughts and prayers go out to all of u at VT. My friend goes there and I wasn't able to get in contact w/her until late last night and she's ok, but her roommate was shot when she was in her French class. She is ok and was released yesterday."

To view or share your thoughts or feelings on Myspace or Facebook, you need to be a member. To sign up all you need is a valid email address and the willingness to share your information with the world waiting to read it.

“

Max, Christine just called me and said you were one of the people who got hurt real bad. Please call me and let me know you are okay.

”

“

My baby cousin... I LOVE you with ALL MY HEART... I MISS YOU... you will always be "my little man" and my "first baby"..... watch over all of us.....xoxoxoxoxo I promise I'll take care of your sister and mom.

”

“

I only wish that someday peace can be found in restless minds, not resulting in violence. I pray for peace on Earth, especially within the minds of troubled people, that such an act never happen again.

”



Above: Students use the Internet to seek each other out.

Right: Some of the many postings made on internet blog sites regarding the Virginia Tech shooting.

Security on Campus

JEN COOK
TODD MILLER
Centurion Staff

Bucks officials said they were reevaluating campus security plans in the wake of the Virginia Tech massacre, but added there's only so much the college can do to prevent such a tragedy.

According to Bucks President Dr. James Links, the campus is difficult to entirely control at any given moment.

"Students are everywhere at all times, which makes it difficult to inform all individuals. There are lots of ways to get on campus, which poses a great challenge with monitoring comers," he said.

In response to the horrendous event at VT, Links expressed condolences to all individuals affected by the tragedy. He believes that because of the random nature of the shootings, they probably could not have been prevented.

"If students were closed-in, different individuals may have been killed, but it most likely would still have happened."

On Friday a statement from Links was sent to Bucks faculty. In it he said security will be re-evaluated.

"The Deans' Council, president's Staff, and various offices on campus have begun a bottom-up review of our policies, procedures, handbooks, and processes to determine how best to sharpen our edge. This review is focusing in two major areas. First we are reviewing our emergency plan and proce-

dures, as well as the attendant communications plan and protocols. Second, we are reviewing our procedures for dealing with students who demonstrate unsettling characteristics," the statement read in part.

Links affirmed that this is a continuous process, and never something that can be set in stone.

"We learn by the unfortunate circumstances at other schools. In light of them, we look for ways to improve our own campus."

Annette Conn, the academic dean at Bucks, agrees with Links in that "hindsight is always 20/20." But Conn said she believes the massacre could have been prevented if school officials had erred on the side of caution.

Conn was thankful that nothing of this sort has ever occurred at Bucks.

"We've been very fortunate," Conn said. "Aside from a few break-ins, we've been quite lucky."

Conn and Links both said the VT tragedy has prompted a review of things like patrolling, lighting, and other components that can contribute to a safer college.

Already in place are survival kits on campus, 24-hour security, and on-going committee meetings to improve safety.

Temple University is requiring each student to have an ID in order to enter any building including dorms, classrooms, and the cafeteria.

West Chester also requests ID cards from students to get into



all dorms and resident halls. Like other schools, Bucks has had a campus emergency plan in place since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but does not require student identification to come on campus. Why not?

"Because there are so many ways to get on campus, a gate-keeper system would not be effective. People can enter our campus by foot through Tyler State Park," Links said.

On a positive note, the fact that Bucks does not have dorms allows

students other outlets for problems they may face. No one, besides security, is here 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chris Lloyd, head of security at Bucks, said no drastic changes have taken place since the VT shootings, but that he does consider the college's emergency plan to be up-to-date and effective.

Lloyd urged students to report anything suspicious on campus. The standard protocol at Bucks, if ever in a similar situation

as VT, is to call the Newtown police and assess the situation.

Lloyd also thinks that a campus-wide intercom system would be a great improvement to the college's security plan. He said, "It would be a quick and easy way to get the word out."

Although many agree that Bucks' open-campus makes it virtually impossible to be a gated community, it is also agreed that improvements can always be made to ensure a safer place.





April 23, 2006

Bucks Counselors Here to Help

ART SHKOLNIK
Centurion Staff

The shooting at Virginia Tech was a tragedy, and the most tragic part about the incident is the many follow up questions that grief ridden survivors are left asking.

What drives a person to go on such a rampage?

Could it have been prevented?

Did the school do everything it could?

Very little information is currently available about the gunman. He has been described as a lone wolf who sequestered himself from others, and became increasingly violent with the passing of time. It was also speculated that he may have been taking medication for depression.

Jim Gilligan, a counselor at Bucks spoke briefly about the events and suggested that there may be a few warning signs that could indicate destructive tendencies, and might warrant notice.

A sudden change in behavior is something to look for, including

unusual irritability and sporadic, inappropriate, social behavior.

But can tragedies such as the rampage at Virginia Tech be averted?

"It's possible," said Gilligan. "Cases like these need to be dealt with on an individual basis. Motives may range from depression and anger to psychosis; the bottom line is to prevent it before it happens."

Gilligan also suggested that counselors can offer help beyond the reach of peers.

Besides discussing the problem and helping to chop it down at its roots, counselors can offer outside assistance, such as medication and safe havens such as hospitals, depending on the severity of the problem.

"If a person is a danger to themselves or others, it would probably be best to have them admitted to a hospital for treatment and even small possibilities should be considered as potentially problematic," said Gilligan.

The faculty and staff at Virginia

Tech showed genuine concern for the student, and suggested he seek counseling, yet never quite followed up on the disturbed student's mental health.

Being a college student isn't always easy, particularly on a campus with as much diversity as Bucks.

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Students hear counseling and they think we deal solely with psychosis

JIM GILLIGAN
COUNSELOR

”

There are students fresh out of high school, some working towards a degree, others testing the waters and many returning to fur-

ther their education after a hiatus.

Some work, or have children, and keeping a level head may sometimes seem to be an exercise in futility, juggling multiple matters with a single free hand.

Luckily, the counseling center at Bucks offers a helping hand to any student who may feel overwhelmed at the prospect of a transfer, a career, personal problems, or even an upcoming test.

There are two part-time counselors as well as two full-time counselors, in order to ease the appointment process.

All meetings are free and completely confidential, meaning if you wish to keep your identity private they are obliged to do so.

The center tries to make all appointments within a week of a student's inquiry.

"Of course if a student is facing a crisis we will see them immediately," said Gilligan.

Gilligan has been counseling at Bucks for nearly two years now, and has helped students with a

multitude of troubles.

"Students hear counseling and they think we deal solely with psychosis," Gilligan continued. "If a student is uncertain about their career future, or is looking for help obtaining a job, they should feel free to see a counselor."

If a student is looking for help to ease the transfer process, is confronting personal plight or just needs somebody to talk to, they should also see a counselor.

"We assist students with their courses, study skills and time management. All you need to do is schedule a meeting; we are here to help," Gilligan said.

The path of destruction paved at Virginia Tech has shocked us all, and the results beg the question: could preventative measures have been taken?

To make an appointment with a counselor, call 215-968-8182.

The counseling center also has a website address at

<http://www.bucks.edu/advising/CounselingServices.html>



The Virginia Tech Campus Photo Courtesy by Wikipedia.com

Don't Use Video Games as Scapegoats

LAURA IRWIN
Centurion Staff

Along with everyone else glued to the TV screen, websites and newspapers awaiting more information on the murderous rampage at Virginia Tech, I am aghast at the scenario that played out on another wise everyday location. It can happen anywhere, it can happen to anyone, and why?

Sometimes the predisposition to commit horrific acts is blamed on many aspects of our generation's

lifestyle. For example, video games, movies and media.

But I, for one, do not think that a marathon of "Halo 2" will lead to undeniable urges to purchase a handgun. I do not think owning "Reservoir Dogs" means you have any tendencies toward going on a killing spree. Reporters, like me, putting the news out there for all to see, are not responsible for creating copy-cats.

The killer is insane. The killer is unable to handle a normal and healthy lifestyle that the rest of us

can handle. The killer has seen images of death and violence as much as the rest of us, but there is something inside a killer that makes him a killer; it is based internally.

We live in a world where the idea of one's rights is constantly questioned.

Will limiting the creation of violence-based movies and video games stop the violence? Will pretending that human beings do not hold the potential for carnage stop the violence? I don't

think so.

The rampaging bloodbaths that cover our frontpages and litter plot lines stem from reality, not fiction.

What puts the ideas of hate and anger into video games and movies are the very real human emotions of hate and anger.

Some people can deal with it, and unfortunately, some cannot. Banning people from playing "Counter Strike" or from watching "The Departed" will not control humanity's potential to create violence.

The insane don't know they are insane.

It is the responsibility of the sane to do something when the potential for violence is evident within someone.

Again, it can happen anywhere, it can happen to anyone.

More security and less privilege will not stop someone with an out-of-control inclination to violence from fulfilling their need to hurt.

The history of murder and hate and violence began thousands of years before Playstation.