

Crossing the globe to learn about democracy in St. Mary's

A group of five Russian officials from that country's various political parties are visiting St. Mary's County to observe American politics and an American election in progress.

The group is here with help from the St. Mary's College Center for the Study of Democracy and the Library of Congress.

In the days leading up to

Election Day, and on Election Day itself, the group met with candidates for state and local office and went to several local polling places.

Today the Russians will



**This 'n'
That**

CARRIE RUSH

fall of the Berlin Wall. It's more fragile than ours.

"They coming her to observe how the old hands, who have the oldest living, continuing democracy, are working in a local arena, St. Mary's County."

meet to discuss their take on the election with St. Mary's College students, as well as the differences between Russian and U.S. elections.

Tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Old State House in St. Mary's City, the group will be on hand to discuss the elections during "A Post-Election Wrap-Up: Analyzing the Results of the 2002 National, State and Local Elections." Discussion panelists will include former Maryland State Sent. J. Frank Raley; Tom Denison, political reporter for The Enterprise and its sister Southern Maryland newspapers; and Michael Cain, an associate professor of political science at SMCM. The event is free and open to the public.

Thursday and Friday will take the group to Washington, D.C., and then Annapolis to see federal and state politics in action.

"Democracy is only seven or eight years old in Russia," said Marc Apter from the office of public and media relations at the college. "They didn't even have political parties before the