

## State lawmakers to vote on campus gun bill

By CALLAHAN D. MILLER  
Staff Writer

A bill to allow fulltime faculty and staff to carry concealed weapons on Tennessee college campuses will be put up for a committee vote in the state House next month.

The bill's sponsors, Republican Sen. Stacy Campfield, from Knoxville and Republican Rep. Andy

Holt of Dresden, and the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police are still negotiating details of the bill.

The bill would require a two-hour class specific to campus handgun training, and all weapons would have to be concealed, Holt said.

"There is not a chance on this Earth that I will be carrying a gun to class," said Edward Bowan, a professor of electronic media

communications.

The Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police sent a letter to all 132 members of the General Assembly indicating that the bill could "create scenarios where police would not be able to determine whether armed people were well-meaning or committing a crime," according to the



Campfield

Associated Press.

With the recent violence on campus, the topic hits close to home.

"I don't think it's necessary, but I think it can be a good way of protection," said Eric Jepson, a sophomore in the College of Mass Communication. "I would rather have teachers [with]

guns than students."

Holt said he believes it would allow faculty and staff to protect themselves and others if something were to happen on campus. He said he revived the controversial proposal at the urging of professors from University of Tennessee at Martin and at MTSU.

As for the opposition, he said colleges are quick to celebrate the first amendment

but rarely the second.

"I don't own a gun, so I would not be a part of the program," said Bob Gordon, a professor in the College of Mass Communication.

Gordon said that he was not sure that the program is necessary, though, anecdotally, there seems to be more reports of violent crime in and around campus.

GUNS, PAGE 3

## Efforts for Japan continue

By AMANDA HAGGARD  
Associate News Editor

The department of foreign languages has raised more than \$4,000 for Japan through a series of fundraisers and continuous donations on campus through the American Red Cross.

"We are very grateful to the MTSU community for coming forward with a big helping hand for this important cause," said Priya Ananth, an assistant professor of Japanese in the department of foreign languages and literatures.

Nine students were studying in Japan at the time of the 8.9 magnitude earthquake and resulting tsunami. Several aftershocks have continued to damage the country in the two months following the disaster.

The groups took donations on campus the last week of March in front of the Keathley University Center to aid the Japanese through a program called Genki for Japan.

They have also continued taking donations after the official fundraising campaign.

"A lot of people were very willing to donate," said Yumiko Hirao, an instructor in the department of foreign languages. "Many donated the coins out of their pockets."

Hirao teaches Japanese and said she is not sure if any other student groups are initiating fundraisers, but that many individuals continue to donate money to the Red Cross.

"People are still donating," Hirao said. "I

JAPAN, PAGE 3



## Abducted

By LINSLEY JONES  
Contributing Writer

Thirty-five years after the mass kidnapping, Jennifer Hyde cannot forget the first words of her abductors: "Get to the back of the bus."

Seven words interrupted and irrevocably altered her childhood.

Seven words that make

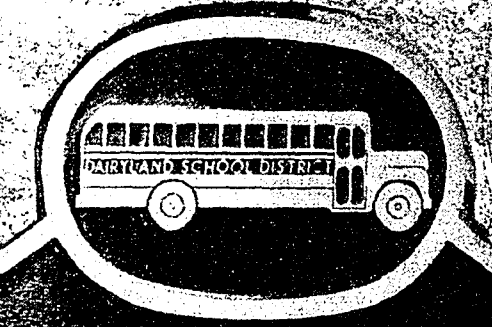
her heart race, and her breath quicken.

Seven words that, even after all these years, she still finds terrifying.

Hyde, who has shoulder-length, mahogany hair and a pleasant, wide smile, is a secretary in the department of

KIDNAPPED, PAGE 4

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Hyde  
Jennifer Hyde stands Aug. 22, 1976, next to the monument that sits outside the Chowchilla Police Department in California. It was erected to commemorate the safe return of the 27 kidnapping victims.



HEART FELT THANKS, THE PEOPLE OF CHOWCHILLA COMMEMORATE THE SAFE RETURN OF 27 SCHOOL CHILDREN AND THEIR BUS DRIVER WHO WERE ABDUCTED JULY 15, 1974 AND ESCAPED UNHARMED 30 HOURS LATER. THE BUS DRIVER, EDWARD F. RAY, AND THE CHILDREN: JODY HEFFING, SHERYLL HINE, MIKE MARSH, JODY MATH, BARBARA PA, ANDREA PAR, LARRY PARK, JUDY REYNOLDS, BECKY REYNOLDS, ANGELA, DARLA DANIELS, JOHNNY ESTABROOK.

## Master's program highlights middle school math

By KELSEY WELLS  
Staff Writer

College of Education students will be given the chance this fall to simultaneously obtain a master's degree and a license to teach mathematics to children in fourth- through eighth-grades.

The program's mathematics courses center on what teachers need to know and "how they need to know it" to teach math effectively, said Dovie Kimmins, a mathematical sciences professor.

"This [program] is ideal for anyone who wants to change career directions, or who loves working with children and would like to become a licensed teacher," Kimmins said.

Jeremy Winters, a professor in the College of Education, said he thinks the new program will attract students who have experience working with children. A similar program for kindergarten through sixth-grade licensing has already been successful, he said.

"Several people in the current K-6 program have had previous experience working with children, such as coaching or working in after-school programs and have decided that a teaching career is for them," Winters said. "I believe the new

MASTER'S, PAGE 3

## Women speak out against sexual violence

By APRIL BAILEY  
Staff Writer

Life after being raped may never be the same, but it does not mean that a woman remains a victim for the rest of her life, according to participants at the annual Take Back the Night rally Tuesday.

The ladies of Women in Action and supporters rallied together in recognition of Sexual Assault and Violence Awareness Month. Members of the student-run organization said the event's goal was to allow women

to reclaim what they feel they may have lost through experiences of injustice and to inspire other women to do the same.

"After six years, I am no longer a victim - I am a survivor," said Ariel Johnson, a sophomore in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, as she described with teary eyes the tragic memory of being raped by a family friend.

Johnson said she was mad at God and lacked the courage it took to verbalize what had happened to her. She said the pain she



Photo by Drew Gardonia, staff photographer  
Letimicia Fears, a senior in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, speaks April 19 during Take Back the Night, sponsored by Women in Action, in the Keathley University Center Theatre.

was trying to mask later resurfaced but knew that she had to overcome it and

no longer feel like a victim. The event began with monologues that were held

in the Keathley University Center Theatre. Participants gave fictional and personal accounts of sexual assault experiences. Following the monologues, Women in Action and supporters participated in the annual Take Back the Night march around campus.

The event has been part of the university's Sexual Assault Awareness Month since 1993.

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network's website, 60 percent of sexual assaults are not reported to the police. With

monologues and a march across campus, members of Women in Action said they want to break the silence, and they encouraged others to do the same.

Sentara Jones, a sophomore in the College of Mass Communication, expressed to listeners that she knew how they felt during certain situations.

She said she has previously dealt with issues of drug and emotional abuse, adding she was at the point of feeling helpless,

WOMEN, PAGE 3

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### IN TODAY'S ISSUE



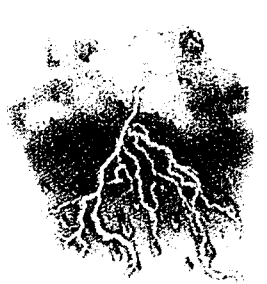
Did you miss the Lady Gaga concert? Find out what one attendee thought about her performance.  
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### EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE



View photos from the charity fashion show held on campus this past weekend.  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### WEATHER



THURSDAY  
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# NATIONAL AP NEWS

## Man accused of hacking into women's Facebook accounts

MINNEAPOLIS - A 26-year-old man has been charged with identity theft for allegedly hacking into Facebook accounts and stealing photos of women to post on adult websites.

Prosecutors allege Timothy Peter Noirjean would contact the women online and dupe them into providing him with personal information. They say Noirjean would then reset Facebook passwords and pretend to be the account holder, contacting the person's friends to get more information. He allegedly stole photographs of eight women.

Authorities said Wednesday there's nothing they can do to get those photos taken down from sexually explicit websites.

## BP files \$40 billion lawsuit against drilling companies

NEW ORLEANS - BP is suing Transocean for at least \$40 billion in damages, accusing the rig owner of causing last year's deadly blowout in the Gulf of Mexico that led to the worst offshore oil spill in U.S. history.

The British oil giant also is suing the maker of the device that failed to stop the calamitous oil spill.

The developments came in separate court filings in federal court in New Orleans on Wednesday, the one-year anniversary of the disaster.

BP says every single safety system and device and well control procedure on the Deepwater Horizon rig failed. It also says Cameron International provided a blowout preventer with a faulty design.

## Verdict to be read today in Mattel-Bratz copyright case

SANTA ANA, Calif. - A California jury has reached a verdict in the copyright infringement and trade secrets case pitting Mattel Inc. against MGA Entertainment Inc. over ownership of the popular Bratz doll line.

The jury reached the verdict late Wednesday, but U.S. District Court Judge David Carter ordered its reading at 8:30 a.m. Thursday to allow all parties time to arrive in court.

The panel deliberated almost two weeks.

Mattel alleges that Bratz designer Carter Bryant created the billion-dollar Bratz line while he worked for Mattel and the toy giant therefore owns the doll line.

MGA denies those claims and counter-sued, alleging Mattel engaged in corporate espionage and unfair business practices to squelch competition from Bratz.

## ROTC cadets prove fastest in annual ranger competition

STAFF REPORT

A female ROTC cadet team from the university proved to be the fastest in the 12th annual Best Ranger competition last weekend.

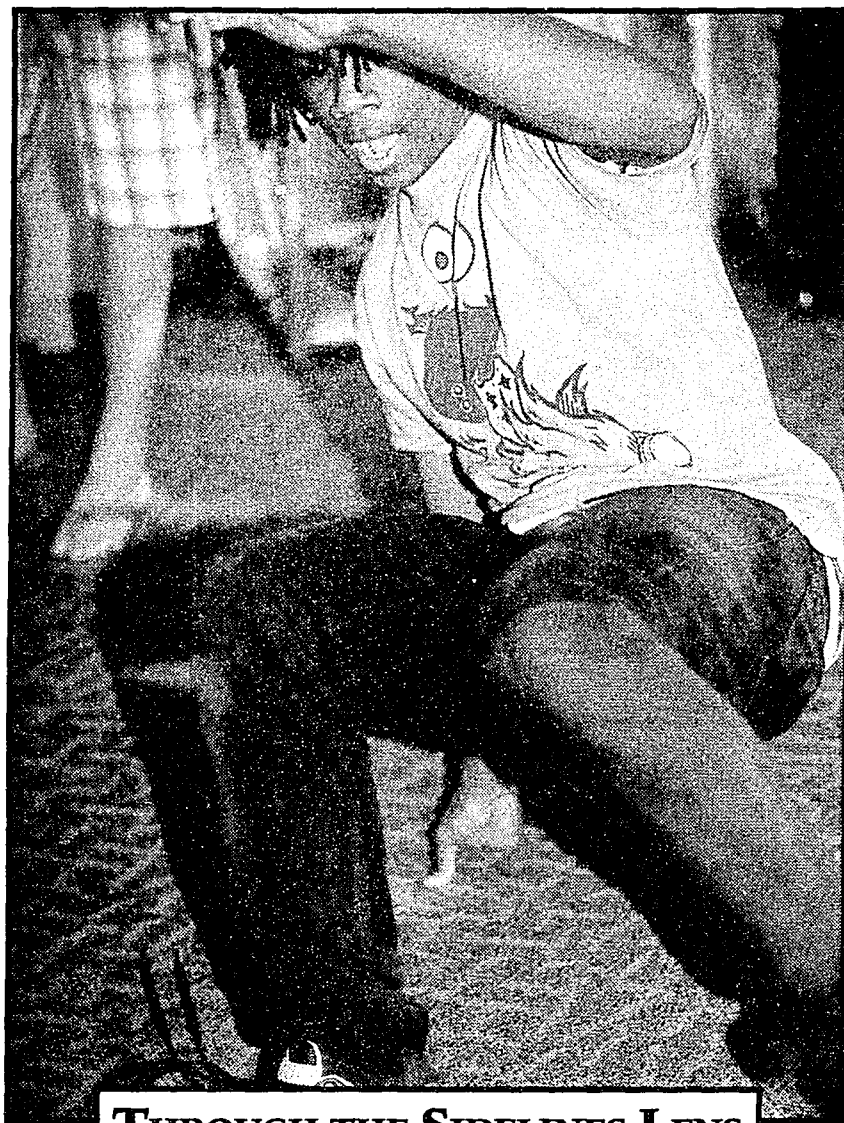
The cadet team competed against teams from 11 universities last weekend.

Junior Kimberly Isham, a junior in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, and Kelsey Kirby, a senior in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, endured the challenges of a physical fitness test, a rope bridge, hand-grenade assault course, land navigation, rifle marksmanship and patrolling, all culminating in a 10K march through Mt. Airy Forest.

The event is organized and run entirely by the Xavier ROTC Cadets with oversight from the Military Science Cadre.

The "Best Ranger" competition serves as a training ground for aspiring Army officers.

The event lasted from 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. and was held at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.



THROUGH THE SIDELINES LENS

Photo by Bailey Ingram, photo editor

Devin Fletcher, a sophomore majoring in radio broadcasting in the College of Mass Communication breakdances to a song April 20 during Silent Disco in the Keathley University Center Lounge. The annual event is held by Student Programming to give students a chance to have fun in between classes.

## Activist urges end to coal mining

By APRIL BAILEY  
Staff Writer

The Appalachian Mountains are being destroyed by the coal industry's practice of mountaintop removal said Larry Gibson, a well-known environmental activist, on Tuesday during a lecture in the State Farm Room of the Business and Aerospace Building.

Gibson said he has lived in Kayford Mountain, W.Va., "all 65 years of his life," and he refuses to sell his land to any coal company. He said he continues to fight not just for his home, but also for the home of others despite threats and occasional physical abuse from mine workers.

"My mother gave me birth - the land gave me life," Gibson said.

He said the clear water system of Appalachia has been replaced with poison because of coal mining.

"For every ton of coal taken out of this land, about 95 gallons of water is used to clean it," Gibson said, adding



Photo by Justin Bingham, staff photographer

Amber Whittington, an environmental activist, speaks with Larry Gibson on April 19 in the State Farm Room of the Business and Aerospace Building.

that clean natural resources are taken for granted by other states.

Amber Whittington, an environmental activist who is training to be a speaker for the Keeper of the Mountains Foundation, lives in Appalachia and has witnessed the effects of coal mining.

Whittington said "water is precious" and that she is amazed by how clean the water in Tennessee is because where she is from, the water is the color of tea or darker.

She said there are people

related diseases. He said coal emissions have caused about 640,000 birth defects.

"If you don't fight back for the environment, if you just stand by, then you are just as bad as those people," Gibson said, adding he hopes people will begin a revolution.

Kayla Connelly, a sophomore majoring in studio art, screamed "hell yeah" when Gibson mentioned starting an environmental revolution.

"I love the environment and want to protect it, and I want to inspire my peers to do the same," said Connelly, who is a member of Students for Environmental Action.

Gibson said although activists have been able to save some homes, it was not enough to celebrate just yet.

"I'm not looking for a short-term victory," Gibson said. "I want to celebrate the end of the war."

This article has been condensed for print. To read the full version go to [www.mtsusidelines.com](http://www.mtsusidelines.com).

# LOCAL AP NEWS

## Suspect sentenced in death of 18-year-old TSU student

NASHVILLE - A Nashville man has been sentenced to a total of life in prison plus 42 years for the murder and rape of a Tennessee State University student who disappeared after leaving her job at a shopping mall.

Twenty-three-year-old Deshaun Lewis was sentenced Wednesday for the February 2009 slaying of 18-year-old Raquel Johnson, whose body was found in an abandoned duplex several days after she was reported missing by her mother.

Lewis was convicted in March.

Criminal Court Judge Steve Dozier sentenced him for murder, aggravated robbery and aggravated rape.

## Valeo to open parts factory in Middle Tennessee this fall

SMYRNA - Auto parts supplier Valeo is opening a factory in Smyrna that will create 63 jobs.

According to a news release from the state office of Economic and Community Development, the company plans to spend up to \$5.4 million to renovate a building for the new plant. It should be fully operational by the fall, when hiring will begin.

The factory will produce front-end modules for Nissan, which has a plant in Smyrna and whose North American headquarters is based nearby in Franklin.

Front-end modules typically act as a body frame and include the bumper and radiator.

## School sexuality bill to head to state Senate for floor vote

NASHVILLE - A revised proposal that would require the Tennessee Board of Education to review what's being taught in schools regarding sexuality is headed for a Senate floor vote.

The measure, sponsored by Republican Sen. Stacey Campfield of Knoxville, was approved by 6-3 vote by the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday.

It will now be scheduled for a vote by the full Senate.

Campfield says currently it's not clear what can be taught and is fearful something other than heterosexuality might be.

His original proposal would have allowed parents to decide what's "age appropriate," but the bill was amended to let the state review school curriculum.

The companion bill has been taken off notice in a similar committee in the House but could be revived.

## LOCAL EVENTS CRIME BRIEFS

### ON CAMPUS

**Earth Day Celebrations**  
April 21, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
KUC Knoll  
Tickets: FREE

**International Festival**  
April 21, 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.  
Tom Jackson Building  
Tickets: FREE

**Spring Concert**  
**MTSU Dance Theatre**  
April 21, 7 p.m.  
Boutwell Dramatic Arts Building  
Tucker Theatre  
Tickets: FREE

**Ping Pong Tournament**  
April 23, 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.  
Felder Hall lobby  
Tickets: FREE

**Intercultural Diversity and Affairs Center Year-End Cookout**  
April 28, 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.  
Recreation Center  
Tickets: FREE

**Outdoor Movies: "Inception"**  
April 28, 7 p.m. - 11 p.m.  
KUC Knoll  
Tickets: FREE

### OFF CAMPUS

**"Burn This"**  
April 21 - 24, 7:30 p.m.  
Out Front on Main  
Tickets: \$10

**Promocalypse 2011**  
**Zombie Prom**  
April 23, 9 p.m.  
Cannery Ballroom  
Tickets: \$10

**"13: The Musical"**  
April 22 - 23, 7:30 p.m.  
Keeton Theatre  
108 Donelson Pike  
Tickets: \$15

**"Oklahoma"**  
April 22 - 23 7:30 p.m.  
Murfreesboro Center for the Arts  
Tickets: \$12

**Easter Parade**  
April 23, 2 p.m.  
April 24, 2 p.m.  
The Belcourt Theatre  
Tickets: \$6.75

**Molotov Solution**  
April 26, 7 p.m.  
The Muse  
Tickets: \$8

### CRIME BRIEFS

**Traffic**  
April 15, 11:37 a.m.  
James E. Walker Library  
A complainant reported that her vehicle was struck while parked near the library.

**Traffic**  
April 16, 3:02 a.m.  
Middle Tennessee Boulevard  
Ryan Johnson Waldren, 25, was issued a state citation for driving on a suspended license.

**Alcohol**  
April 17, 1:27 a.m.  
MTSU Boulevard  
Amelia Hart Thompson, 20, was charged with driving under the influence, underage consumption, underage possession of alcohol, implied consent and resisting arrest. Jacqueline Galloway Thompson, 20, was charged with driving under the influence by allowance, underage consumption and resisting arrest.

**Theft**  
April 17, 6:40 p.m.  
Health, Wellness, and Recreation Center  
A complainant reported that her vehicle had been broken into while parked near the loading dock.

**Vandalism**  
April 18, 8:57 a.m.  
Homecoming Circle  
A GPS was stolen from a person's vehicle.

**Warrant**  
April 18, 4:58 p.m.  
Clement Hall  
Avery Smith, 20, was arrested on an active capias warrant for theft.

**Theft**  
April 18, 7:20 p.m.  
James E. Walker Library  
A complainant reported that his backpack was stolen. The backpack was later recovered, but some items were missing.

## CRIME STOPPERS

A cash reward of up to \$1000 is being offered for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons who stole a Rogue Acoustic Guitar from Cummings Hall on March 5.

A cash reward of up to \$1,000 is being offered for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons who are stealing computer equipment from the second floor of Andrew L. Todd Hall.

A cash reward of up to \$300 is being offered for information leading to the arrest of the person or persons who broke a window outside of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity house on April 4.

Anyone with information about these incidents should contact MTSU Crime Stoppers at 615-898-2424. All callers will remain anonymous.

### EVENTS POLICY

Sidelines welcomes current campus and community events submitted by all readers. Please e-mail events [sidelines@mtsu.edu](mailto:sidelines@mtsu.edu). Include the name, date, time and location of the event, as well as your name and contact information. We reserve the right to refuse events at our discretion as our space is limited.

## Bill would allow professors to have guns on campus

### GUNS

FROM PAGE 1

"A more obvious police presence on campus might suffice to address the problem," Gordon said.

Kristen Scott, a junior majoring in journalism, said that she thought the bill would be inviting more problems.

"If you start allowing some people to carry concealed weapons, you are stripping rights from

others," Scott said.

Scott said a potential problem could arise if a group starts an altercation, and one professor pulls a gun out to contain the situation.

"It wouldn't take much for those students to overpower the one professor and take the gun," Scott said.

The bill is in its preliminary stages, and so far it has cleared the first legislative committee. The next step has been

delayed for two weeks in order for debates to continue on the specifics of the bill.

"The right to bear arms is a constitutional right, and I am not opposed to the innocent and the responsible being armed against the criminal and the disturbed," Gordon said. "Though having a selected teaching staff armed may be both a deterrent and a rapid first-response to an attack on campus, I think such

a program would fly in the face of the traditional academic culture and would be a nonstarter."

An effective measure would be more of a police presence on campus and ensuring the buildings and classrooms have an effective lockdown procedure, along with eliminating the many cell phone holes in campus buildings, Gordon said. "It is hard to give or receive an alert when the phones don't work."



Photo by Drew Gardonia, staff photographer  
Ariel Johnson, a sophomore in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, relays her story April 19 during MTSU's annual Take Back the Night rally.

## Survivors support strength

### WOMEN

FROM PAGE 1

when she looked to Jesus to see her through.

"I've been there," Jones said Kalandrian Davis, a senior in the College of Liberal Arts, described being at a junior high school party that led to a gathering at one of the partygoer's houses, where she said she was threatened at gunpoint and forced into sexual intercourse.

Davis, who serves as president of Women in Action, said she did not tell what happened to her for eight years because she did not want pity, but now her "tragedy has turned into triumph."

"I refuse to wear the mask of defeat," Davis said.

Members went on expressing their feelings with issues of a women's sexuality and the "curse of the video ho," labels given to women and men who do not give women the respect they deserve.

"Respect me damn it,"

said Jasmine Mobley, a sophomore in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, while giving her monologue.

James Huff, a junior in the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences, and Anthony Adewumi, a senior in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, were the only two males who gave monologues.

Huff told the story of two young brothers and a mother who became homeless after the she lost her job. He said the brothers were forced by their mother to perform sexual favors on other adults who offered compensation.

Adewumi spoke directly at the men, asking them to stop playing a role in a woman's insecurities.

"A woman shouldn't have to luck up to find a man," Adewumi said, adding that although he was not a member of Women in Action, he wanted to give them his full support.

"It was really empowering," said Elizabeth Sharp, a freshman in the College of Liberal Arts. "It's good to know that some guys understand women."

## Students step up aid for victims of Japanese quake

### JAPAN

FROM PAGE 1

heard we got a \$40 check in this week."

Ananth, Hirao, and Chiaki Shima, a graduate teaching assistant, were the main organizers of the event that was set up to aid Japan as it struggles to recover from the March 11 earthquake, the tsunami and the ongoing nuclear crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex.

"My deep gratitude goes to my colleagues Yumiko Hirao and Chiaki Shima," Priya said. "I also would like to thank all the student volunteers who tirelessly worked during

the entire campaign."

Nationally, the Red Cross has donated more than \$100 million to the Japanese for relief, according to its website.

Hirao said it was difficult to tell how many students participated in organizing the donation process because more volunteers helped than they had originally planned for.

"Easily more than 30 or 40 [participated]," Hirao said, adding she helped get everyone together.

"Some people donated \$100 and \$200 checks," she said.

The Red Cross forwards its donations to the Japanese Red Cross to be dispersed where it feels

they are most necessary.

This week, the officials with the Red Cross announced they are going to transfer \$800 million of the money raised domestically in Japan, not money from donated outside of the country, to the Japanese committee responsible for handing out cash grants to survivors, according to the organization's website.

Officials with the Japanese Red Cross have said they intend to only use domestically raised funds and will not dip into international donations until they have worked through "at home" donations.

Although the Japanese

Red Cross has not made an appeal for international assistance, the group said it intends to fundraise through the end of September, according to the Red Cross website.

The domestically raised money will be divided into smaller grants, ranging from \$2,100 to \$4,100 per family, depending upon the extent of the loss they suffered.

The grants will be distributed to those who lost family members, those who lost their homes, those who lived within 30 kilometers - or 18 miles - of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plants, and those whose homes were only partially damaged.

## New program focuses on building mathematics

### MASTER'S

FROM PAGE 1

program will interest individuals of a similar disposition."

The new program is a good path to obtaining a license, Kimmins said.

"What a fine opportunity for a housewife or a youth counselor - someone who enjoys working with that age group but doesn't possess the credentials to be in the classroom,"

Kimmins said.

Students reflected on the necessity of learning math for life skills.

"The kind of thinking required by mathematics is beneficial to everyone," said Tyler Loucky, an undeclared freshman, who is considering a major in math. "So many people I talk to don't understand the purpose of math in real life. Math requires creative, analytic and meticulous thought in order to be successful."

Loucky added that she

thinks it is fairly obvious that these thought processes would help anyone in their day-to-day life.

Chelsea Fleet, a sophomore in the College of Liberal Arts, said she remembers being doubtful of her ability to do math early in middle school.

"I was homeschooled, and I was not good at math," she said.

But, things changed when she went to a private school in eighth grade, Fleet said.

"I excelled in pre-algebra," she said. "I'm not sure what it was, but I've excelled in math since then."

Fleet said she thinks having a good teacher, more structure and good methods of teaching were important to helping her succeed.

The new program will offer classes in the evenings, weekends and online.

Potential students should have a bachelor's degree in any field of study with a 3.0 undergraduate grade point average.

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- June/July Term S4 (10 weeks): June 6 - August 12
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# FEATURES

## Seven words linger thirty-five years after mass kidnapping

### KIDNAPPED

FROM PAGE 1

the Information Technology Division. On July 15, 1976, she was one of 26 children and their bus driver who were kidnapped in Chowchilla, Calif., while the youngsters were returning from summer camp.

The perpetrators were a trio of brazen young men who foolishly thought they could collect a \$5 million ransom for the children, ages 5 to 14, and their bus driver, Ed Ray. The young men, brothers Rick and Jim Schoenfeld and their friend, Fred Woods, didn't realize the kidnapping would galvanize all of America, prompting such a massive manhunt that caused their plan to go awry almost immediately.

Hyde, whose maiden name is Brown, was 9 years old on the day she was kidnapped.

She and her older brother, Jeff, had been attending a day camp at Dairyland School during summer vacation. They would leave their family's home in Chowchilla, a mostly agricultural town of a few thousand residents in central California, in the morning when Ray would pick them up in the school bus. He'd bring them home again in the afternoon.

"The school was in the country so the children who lived closer to town were dropped off last," Hyde recalled, during a break at her desk in the Telecommunications Building. "Normally, the bus ride would have been about an hour long."

On that particular day, however, the ride home on Avenue 21, a county road despite its city-sounding name, ended when the bus approached a white van stopped in the road. When Ray tried to maneuver the bus around the van he saw two masked men holding guns standing in the other lane, forcing him to brake to a stop.

The two men got on the bus and pushed the bus driver and all the children to the rear. The children revealed mixed emotions: some cried and some laughed, thinking



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Hyde  
Jennifer Hyde in the summer of 1976, a few weeks after the kidnapping.

it was a prank. Hyde, however, sensed the situation was dire.

"I remember being so afraid that during all of the commotion, I fainted," she said.

One of the kidnapers drove the bus to a drainage ditch and covered it with brush. A second kidnapper sat in the front watching the children and the bus driver to make sure they didn't try to escape or leave clues. A third kidnapper followed behind in the white van. After the bus was hidden, the children and bus driver were transferred into two windowless vans.

Hyde said her brother tried to notice as many details about the men and the vans as possible, in hopes of finding a way to safety. For hours and hours, they drove without stopping for food or bathroom breaks, in an effort to confuse the children and Ray as to their end destination. It was a miserable ride, Hyde recalled.

The children worried about what their parents would think when the bus didn't arrive in town. Hyde doesn't remember how long the ride actually was in the dark, cramped van, but news reports of the day said the youngsters were driven around all through the night.

"I personally told the kidnapers that they were messing with the wrong kids, and that when my father found them, they would be sorry," Hyde said.

The kidnapers drove to a quarry in Livermore, Calif., almost 100

miles away from the youngster's safe town of Chowchilla.

Ray was the first person taken out of the van. The kidnapers ordered him, as well as the rest of the children to state their name and age, take off their pants and shoes, and then instructed them to climb down a ladder that seemed to lead to a cave. But, it was actually the trailer from a tractor-trailer moving van that had been buried, the top covered by some sort of metal mesh.

"This was one of my first recollections of praying and it has forever changed my life," Hyde said,

**"This was one of my first recollections of praying, and it has forever changed my life."**

JENNIFER HYDE  
ITD SECRETARY

### Plot is quickly foiled

All of the kidnapers were from wealthy families near San Francisco. The father of the Schoenfeld brothers was a podiatrist in the Bay Area, and Wood's father owned many properties, including the rock quarry where the children were buried in the trailer.

According to *Why have they taken our children?*, a 1978 book written about the kidnapping, the Schoenfeld boys felt that their parents were disappointed in them, considering them spendthrifts and lacking purpose.

According to authors, Jack W. Baugh and Jefferson Morgan, the brothers felt taking hostages for ransom would solve all of their financial problems so they would no longer have to rely on their parents.

Baugh, an investigator in the case, came to believe the kidnapping and ransom scheme was only a "mental exercise" at first, particularly for the Schoenfeld brothers. But, Woods wanted to see if the plan could be executed.

Sometime in the winter of 1975, the threesome decided to make their plan a reality. Woods bought the trailer, using his own name, and buried it in the quarry owned by his father. According to Baugh and Morgan, the young men gathered a cache of weapons and ammunition. During a three-month period in the spring and early summer, they fine-tuned their idea, choosing Chowchilla.

Their plan was to hide the kids, call Chowchilla police and demand the ransom. With money in hand, they would tell authorities where to find the children.

Their "perfect crime" scenario fell apart almost as soon as they left the quarry. They couldn't get through to investigators in Chowchilla because of the flood of calls from reporters, other law enforcement agencies and tipsters, whose tips often proved worthless, Baugh and Morgan wrote.

But that was the least of their problems.

### Victims find way out

Dusk was fast approaching when the students' parents began to flood the school's phone lines. Officials at the school try to calm parents' nerves by telling them the bus had probably broken down and Ray wasn't allowed to leave the children alone. At this point, school officials



Photo courtesy of TruTV  
The three kidnapers entombed their victims in a truck in July of 1976 and demanded a \$5 million ransom.

began driving the route in search of the bus, but the familiar yellow vehicle was nowhere to be seen.

School officials began to worry. Police were notified and quickly learned that Ray had dropped three students off before disappearing. There were no apparent signs of

where Ray and the children could have gone. Surrounding counties were notified and were asked to help with the search. Small planes began circling the skies, looking for the bus, hoping to find it before nightfall.

A few hours later, word leaked out that the bus was found, but it was empty and there were no clues as to how it got there, or most importantly, where the missing children and their driver had gone.

Police continued as best as they could through the night until a storm came, causing them to reluctantly postpone the investigation until morning. Officials knew evidence that may have been out there would probably be ruined by the rain and wind.

A hundred miles away in the quarry, where the children and bus driver were crammed inside a trailer, the youngsters wondered if anyone would ever rescue them from the makeshift dungeon that was holding them captive. Hyde said the kidnapers had outfitted the trailer with thin mattresses, a makeshift toilet and a few gallons of drinking water.

"There were small holes for ventilation," Hyde said, adding it was "almost suffocating in such a tight place."

Some of the older boys helped Ray devise a plan of escape. They began by stacking the mattresses on top of one another until they could reach the ceiling. But the lid wouldn't budge. A weight was on it. After a period of trial and error, the boys, led by Ray, found that they could move the lid using a length of lumber found in the trailer.

Eventually, the lid opened enough to shift a number of heavy industrial batteries that had been placed on top by the kidnapers. An opening was made so that one of the smaller boys could squeeze out. When he saw that no one was in sight, he went to work on expanding the opening so that the rest could climb out.

They had managed to escape.

### Manhunt traps kidnapers

Before dawn on the morning of July 17, two workers at the rock quarry saw a curious sight.

They saw a string of children and one man, most of them without pants or shoes, coming toward them.

"I remember Mr. Ed walking up to the workers saying, 'We are from Chowchilla, we are lost,'" Hyde said.

Police were called and the workers gave Ray an old pair of overalls to put on and gave all of them water.

By 4 a.m., the children were being treated at a hospital, and FBI agents were conducting interview to find out what had happened during the 36 hours they were missing. Soon, they were on their way to Chowchilla, where their parents, and an army of media from all over the country, welcomed them home.

The kidnapers had not planned for their victims' to escape.

When the young men heard the news, they tried to distance themselves from the event but quickly realized they had left too much incriminating evidence behind.

In particular, the buried trailer led authorities to Woods. When his room was searched, detectives found Woods' handwritten note outlining the kidnapping.

Jim Schoenfeld and Woods planned to hide in Canada. Schoenfeld was to drive a truck filled with backpacking supplies across the border in Idaho and meet up with Woods, who had flown to Vancouver and was holed up in a cheap hotel under an assumed name, according to Baugh's and Morgan's book. The pair planned to meet up at a post office in a certain section of the city.

The book details how even their escape plan was riddled with flaws.

Schoenfeld was turned away at the border. The border agent didn't believe his story of heading to Alberta to see a friend, then moving on to Montreal to see the summer Olympics. One reason:



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Hyde  
Kidnap victims at Ed Ray Day. The town held a celebration and parade for the victims in Chowchilla, Calif., on August 22, 1976.

Schoenfeld wasn't carrying much money.

A few days later, he tried again with more cash in his pocket, only to have a border agent find a pistol belonging to Wood that Schoenfeld didn't know was in the car. He was turned away a second time.

Meanwhile, Rick Schoenfeld went to his parents and told all.

On July 23, he was arrested and jailed, with bail set at \$1 million.

Jim Schoenfeld wandered around for a while before, inexplicably, heading toward his family's home in San Francisco. He was a wanted man but didn't seem to care. On July 29, two weeks after the kidnapping, a motorist spotted him and flagged down a policeman.

Woods, meanwhile, was left stranded in Vancouver. He wrote a letter to a friend in California asking him for help and told him not to tell anyone. But, the friend reported the letter to the FBI and alerted the Vancouver police to be on the lookout for Woods near the post office. On July 29, he, too, was arrested.

On Aug. 4, the men pleaded not guilty to more than 40 felony charges.

One year later, the men pleaded guilty to 27 counts of kidnapping.



Photo courtesy of TruTV  
(From left) James Schoenfeld, Fred Woods IV and Richard Schoenfeld were found guilty and sentenced to life in prison for the kidnapping of 26 children and one bus driver in Chowchilla, Calif., in July of 1976.

The men were sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. The official charge was kidnapping for ransom without afflicting injury.

But there was injury, Hyde said. Hyde had to testify in one court hearing because she had received cuts and bruises from hitting them on the bumper of the windowless van.

In 1981, the kidnapper's sentence was changed on appeal to life with possibility of parole.



Photo by Emma Egli, features editor  
Jennifer Hyde smiles outside of her office April 20 at the Telecommunications Building on campus.

### Childhood lost

Because of the kidnapping, Hyde never experienced the joy of a carefree childhood, she said. After being buried alive with her brother and classmates that hot summer day, it changed her forever.

As an adolescent, Hyde often dreamed of herself dying.

"I have been told that dreams like that are rare in children and occur in people who have truly prepared themselves to die," Hyde said. "There would be times in the middle of the night when I would wake up screaming and run into my parent's room."

Consequently, throughout Hyde's childhood, her parents were overprotective of her and Jeff. If they wanted to go to a

friend's birthday party, or an event at school, Hyde said her parents agonized about their children's safety. But even when Hyde wanted to go on an overnighter, she found herself beset with fear. She attended 4-H Camp one summer and stayed in the nurse's office most of the time, upset and worried.

To this day, Hyde sleeps with a night-light and sometimes wakes up from a deep sleep, shivering with fright of the time she was buried in the dark.

"That is something that was the most damaging and wasted many years of my life trying to change that thinking," Hyde said. "I went to counseling for many years to help me deal with the impact of the kidnapping."

Hyde said that for years, she felt she was not valued, and consequently, spent years in abusive relationships.

"The anger and hatred I carried with me made me an unhappy, bitter person for years," she said.

"It was not until I turned those feelings into forgiveness and moved forward that I was able to start to live my life the best that I could."

Hyde has now been happily married for 14 years, and she is the mother of two sons.

"As a parent, I can understand the feeling of despair the mother of the kidnapers must have felt all these years," she said. "As a parent, you raise your children, but [you] don't know the type of person they will become or how they live their life. What type of Christian motherly example would I be setting for my boys if I can't say I forgive my kidnapers for their heinous act?"

Hyde says she can forgive, but she will never forget.

"The scars I have from that ordeal have helped mold me into the person I am today," Hyde said. "I am very proud of the woman I have become and the example I have set for my children. If I can show them that you can forgive the unforgivable, then I am one step closer to living my life by bringing glory to God."

After being denied parole 20 times, the California Board of Parole Hearings granted Rick Schoenfeld parole April 5, and he is scheduled for release Nov. 13, 2021.

One of the main issues during countless parole hearings was that these men were being punished under today's law and not the laws of 1976. However, the governor of California has until 90 days before his release date to rescind the parole board's decision.

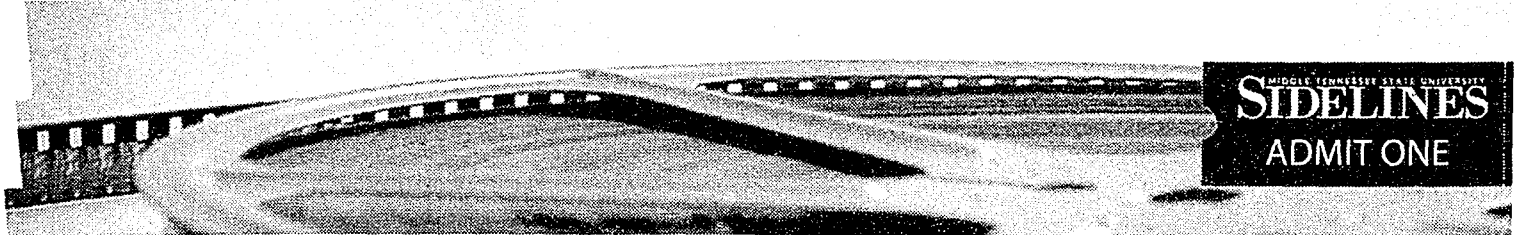
For now, the other two men are not eligible for parole due to prison rules violations. However, both are scheduled to appear before the parole board within the next two years.

According to Hyde, one of the kidnapper's attorneys released a statement to the victims, stating, "He is sorry for the horrible crime that they committed, but these men need to be tried under the 1976 laws and not the laws of today's time."

After the news broke earlier this month about Schoenfeld's 2021 parole date, Hyde initially didn't know how to respond. Should she be afraid? Should she be angry? She said she didn't know how to feel.

"God has gotten me through the last 35 years, and he will get me through that date in 2021 too," Hyde said. "I just want to get over the initial shock and get on with my life again."

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
**SIDELINES**  
ADMIT ONE

## Music documentaries strike a bittersweet chord

By EMMA EGLI & JAMES ECHOLS  
A&E Editor & Contributing Writer

Every year, the Nashville Film Festival screens musically oriented films as part of the Music Films/Music City Competition. This year's festival boasted 13 documentaries that showcased some talented directors and the amazing artists they devoted their films to.

The featured films gave inside looks at artists that span all sorts of musical genres. Our must-see picks for this year's festival included "Bob and the Monster" and "How to Grow a Band."

The '80s post-punk rock scene in Los Angeles was a time of reckless abandonment. If you weren't in a band or a drug addict, you sure as hell weren't living life to the fullest, and outspoken and eclectic Bob Forrest thrived in this ruinous environment.

Keirda Bahruth's "Bob and the Monster" follows this rise and fall of the once prominent musician of the band Thelonus Monster, who seemed poised for showbiz success. Turning out to be far too self-destructive to sustain a career amidst a community of junkies, Forrest cut ties with his band members, and we see his downward spiral.

Once Forrest hits rock bottom, he realizes who the real monster is: his heroine addiction. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, he becomes the least likely person to turn his life around and utilizes his life-lessons to reach out and provide free counseling to musicians battling similar drug addictions.

Bahruth tells the story through interviews, concert footage



Photo courtesy of Shaker Films  
"Bob and the Monster" offers a glimpse of an often overlooked and forgotten side of the music scene.



Photo courtesy of Shaftway Productions  
"How to Grow a Band" covers a carefully constructed look at the Punch Brothers.

of a horrific onstage meltdown, and claymation re-enactments of a heroin fix that could have killed him. Forrest goes on a search for the cure that can help rehab-averse addicts to finally kick the addiction. Forrest's curiosity leads him to work with Dr. Drew and a former jazz icon that founded a musician's assistance project.

Now known for his work with "Celebrity Rehab," Forrest's knack for treating people he encounters with utmost respect and dignity led him to find his calling as a drug counselor of sorts. Having worked with celebrities such as Courtney Love and John Frusciante, he embodies hope for celebrities battling drug addictions.

Bahruth's "Bob and the Monster" delivers a truly unique perspective of a music scene often overlooked and forgotten about, as well as the heart-rending failure and ultimate success of a man who could have had it all.

Mark Meatto's "How to Grow a Band" is anything but punk rock. But, if you're a diehard bluegrass, instrumentation, alternative, or progressive acoustic fan – or just a fan of good music in general – you'll appreciate this in-depth documentary.

The film follows the somewhat recently formed Punch Brothers, a band carefully constructed by musical prodigy, Chris Thile, of Nickel Creek. While the Grammy-winning Nickel Creek may have disbanded back in 2007, the Punch Brothers have slowly but surely been asserting their place in musical stardom.

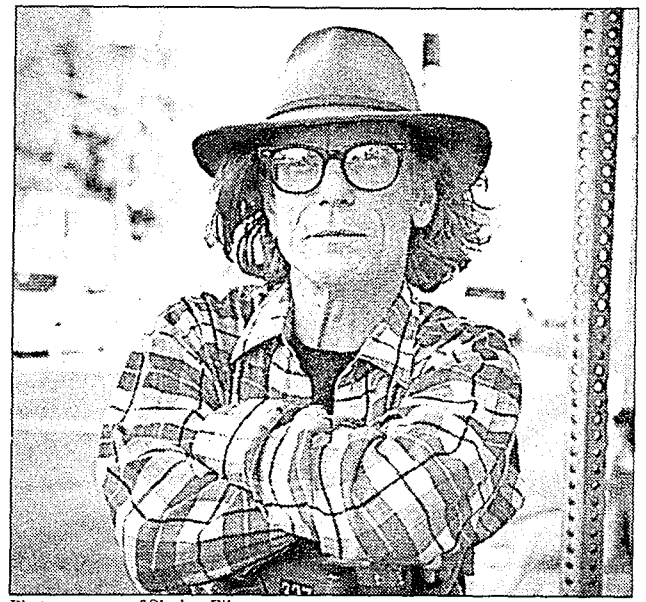


Photo courtesy of Shaker Films

Their fusion of bluegrass instrumentation and modern classical puts the band in a completely new genre, often leaving audiences in a tizzy with their breakneck string-playing speeds, as the documentary shows.

Each member's talent is uncanny, and Thile's preternatural mandolin skills will give you goosebumps.

But, starting a band isn't a walk in the park. Meatto's footage of the riffs and unpleasanties that occur between the band members as they try to figure out their purpose and path will lead you to putting second thought into that jam band you and your buddies were thinking about starting.

The film tends to drag on in some parts, especially the footage of Thile's ambitious 40-minute, four-movement string suite that their album, The Blind Leaving the Blind, is based off of. But, if you're aware of what constitutes really good music and incredibly talented musicians, you'll enjoy this documentary.

**Bob and the Monster**  
★★★★★  
**How to Grow a Band**  
★★★★☆

## 'Jess+Moss' an innovative success

By EMMA EGLI  
A&E Editor

A desolate dirt road leads to a dilapidated house, nature having claimed the abandoned abode. The cicadas' shrill droning rings through the sticky and smothering summer air. The flash of white, bug-bitten legs rush through the lush foliage of endless tobacco fields.

Director Clay Jeter of Clarksville captures the essence of childhood in his feature,

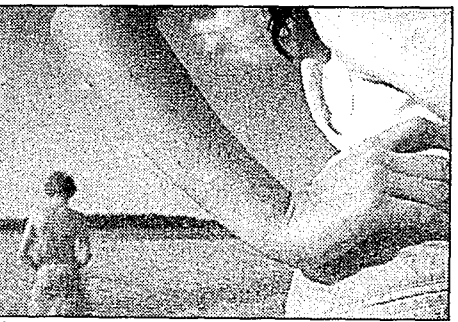


Photo courtesy of Blood River Pictures



Photo courtesy of Blood River Pictures

"Jess+Moss." The film is the quintessence of suppressed or forgotten memories and how our minds work to fill in the blanks.

Jess (Sarah Hagan), age 18, and her 12-year-old cousin, Moss (Austin Vickers), seem to be utterly alone in the crumbling home in rural Western Kentucky. The lack of human interaction gives the film an eerie, uneasy loneliness, but further draws the adolescents together. Little is revealed about the characters through the minimal dialogue; audiences are left to draw their own conclusions to their backgrounds.

The chronology of "Jess+Moss" is disorienting at times, and the constant flash backs, flash forwards and juxtaposition of tape-recorded speech over slow motion imagery will leave your mind in a jumble.

But, the soft hues and innovative use of camerawork and timeworn film gives the movie an incredible are-my-eyes-playing-tricks-on-me feel. As the movie dips in and out of darker memories that seem to be reaching the surface, these techniques actualize how our minds function.

Producer Brian Harstine, a senior majoring in electronic media communications, says this look was accomplished by use of 28-year-old reels of film, the most discombobulated scenes of the movie indicating where the most deteriorated parts of the reels were.

"It was a discovery process," Harstine admits. "With those old film stocks, we weren't sure what we were going to get. But, it worked out perfectly, sometimes even



Photo courtesy of Blood River Pictures

"Jess+Moss" has garnered a positive reaction from movie audiences around the globe.

better than we expected."

Vickers and the former "Freaks and Geeks" star, Hagan, do a superb job at embodying their characters. Their relationship, at times childish and funny – at one point Jess "lights" a cigarette for Moss, and he pretends to puff on it like a grownup – is sometimes more cultivated as they face suppressed memories, hidden fears and worry about the future.

Made with a bare-bones crew in a mere 17 days, "Jess+Moss" was a hit at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah this year – so successful that Jeter and his crew took it to the Berlin National Film Festival.

"It was amazing to travel over there and have the movie sell out a theater that seats 1,000, especially to a European audience,"

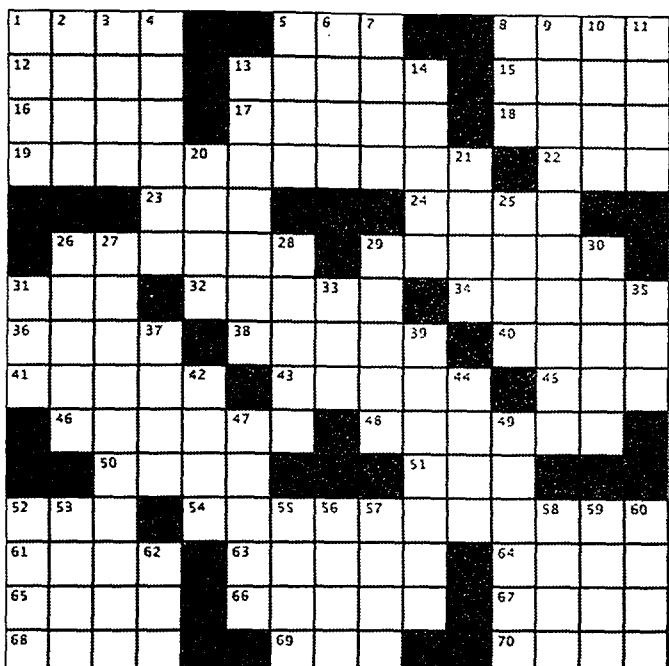
Harstine says.

"Jess+Moss" garnered the same type of reaction at the Nashville Film Festival this week as it did at Sundance and Berlin, selling out both its showings days in advance. The film was chosen as one of the "Back by Popular Demand" picks, and the encore presentation will be today at the Regal Green Hills 16 Cinema at 5 p.m.

**Jess+Moss**  
★★★★☆

## SIDEWORDS

The weekly Sidelines crossword puzzle



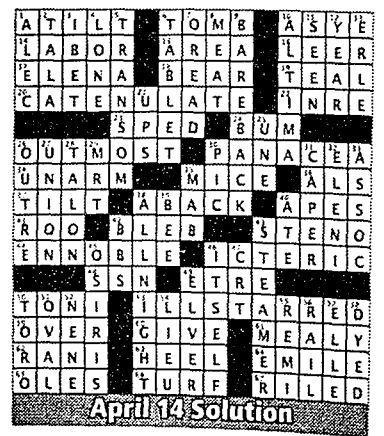
Crossword courtesy of bestcrosswords.com

### ACROSS

- 1- Poet Pound; 5- Religious sch.; 8- Wall St. debuts; 12- Showy trinket; 13- Seine spot; 15- Canvas shelter used on camping trips; 16- \_\_\_ Domini; 17- Dadaist Max; 18- Mex. miss; 19- Not complimentary; 22- Junior; 23- Green shade; 24- Words of denial; 26- Metamorphic rock; 29- Bitter conflict; 31- \_\_\_-hoo!; 32- Stagger; 34- 4th letter of the Greek alphabet; 36- Sturdy wool fiber; 38- Indian form of address; 40- Wonka's creator; 41- Steeple; 43- Giver; 45- Hair goo; 46- Building for horses; 48- Killer; 50- "Dancing Queen" group; 51- Actress Tyler; 52- Buddhist temple; 54- Spontaneous activity; 61- Bridle strap; 63- Nuremberg trial defendant; 64- Small combo; 65- Golf club which can be numbered 1 to 9; 66- Having auricular protuberances; 67- A wedding cake may have three of these; 68- Accent; 69- Acapulco article; 70- "\_\_\_ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto);

### DOWN

- 1- Mild oath; 2- Madcap; 3- Flows; 4- Brewer Coors; 5- Delhi wrap; 6- Sea eagles; 7- Atomizer output; 8- T.G.I.F. part; 9- Bantering talk; 10- Aware of; 11- Ollie's partner; 13- Winged horse; 14- Episode; 20- Trompe l'\_\_\_; 21- Thin rope; 25- Bound; 26- Lathers; 27- Contemplation; 28- Commerce; 29- Lower legs; 30- Early anesthetic; 31- Decade divs.; 33- Comic Margaret; 35- Competitor of Tide and Cheer; 37- Seize; 39- Kevel; 42- Declines; 44- Drops from the sky; 47- Pass into disuse; 49- Actress Mimieux; 52- Court order; 53- Dynamic beginning; 55- Fall birthstone; 56- Emperor of Rome 54-68; 57- Driving aids; 58- Coloured part of the eye; 59- Connections; 60- Long ago; 62- Vane dir.;



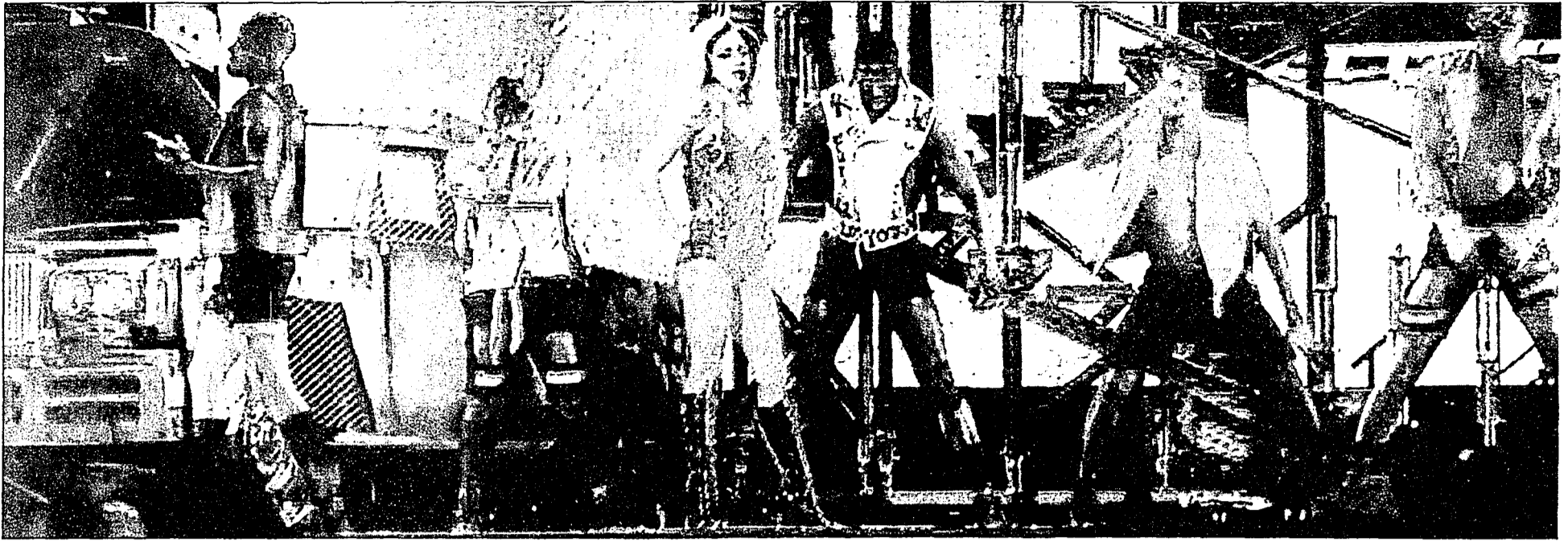


Photo by Drew Summers, contributing photographer  
Lady Gaga dazzles her fans with her outrageous performance and outfits April 19 at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville.



Photo by Drew Summers, contributing photographer



Photo by Drew Summers, contributing photographer

# Mama monster shows her teeth

By BRANDON THOMAS  
Opinions Editor

Lady Gaga and her eclectic choice of costumes wowed and dazzled fans Tuesday night at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville. She entered the stage after a short vignette that counted down the few short seconds before Gaga was to appear on stage.

The main aspects of the evening were Gaga's ability to make her fans "just dance," while also posing an important point about the ideas of individuality and "being yourself." These ideas were best expressed through the metaphor of "the Monster Ball," described during the show as a place where everyone can be who they want to be.

"It doesn't matter who you are or how much money you have in your pocket because tonight and every night you can be whoever it is that you want to be," Gaga said to an excited audience.

The storyline of the concert was pretty simple: Lady Gaga takes her fans through a series of sets and songs that will eventually lead them to the Monster Ball.

According to Gaga, once fans were in the auditorium, on their way to the Monster Ball, there was no way out because she "locked the f\*\*\*ing doors."

Lady Gaga seemed to take on some of her critics throughout the night. When a fan threw a handmade shirt with the word "Judas" on it, Gaga picked up the shirt, examined it and thanked the individual, saying she knew that people would love the new song.

The Catholic Church has denounced the song "Judas." Lady Gaga retorted by saying "It's just a pop song," insinuating that these religious officials should get over it.

The night also had the theme of reclaiming religion and even a slight mocking of it as well. During her performance of "Teeth," Gaga told the audience that one of her dancers liked Nashville girls and that he also liked Nashville boys.

"Just like Jesus," Gaga said, adding "Michael loves everybody."

Another event in which she challenged her critics was when she called a fan in the audience. Earlier in the evening,

fans could enter in a contest to get a phone call from Gaga. Additionally, if a fan answered, Virgin Mobile would donate \$25,000 to a homeless shelter for LGBT youth.

"You just saved a life," she said to the audience member. "Their parents just don't understand they were born that way."

After the highly emotional fan collected himself, he gave Gaga some words of encouragement. She assured him that when someone challenges who she is as a person, she "digs [her] heels in the ground" and doesn't budge.

Gaga told her captivated audience that she "[doesn't] lip-sync one word of this show" and knows the audience doesn't want to watch a "rich b\*\*\*h sing her way through a show."

Throughout the show, Gaga would make fun of herself. When one of her acrylic nails fell off, she jokingly said that one of the "queens" would be upset and write a bad review.

"I was enjoying the show until her nail fell off, then I was distracted for the rest of it," she said mockingly.

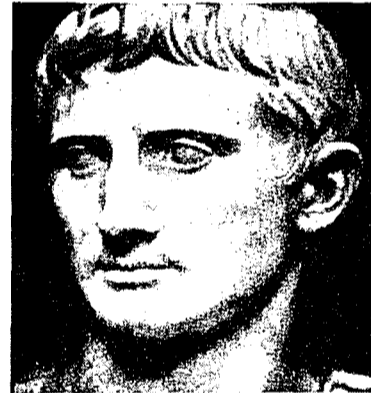
Gaga played two versions of "Born This Way." The first version was mainly acoustic, with just her and the piano, eventually an accompaniment followed. The second version was similar to the track version, and it was the last song of the night.

She also performed a new song on the piano called "You and I," which will be on the Born This Way album. Some other songs that were performed were "Teeth," "Just Dance" and "LoveGame."

The concert overall was entertaining, and there was never a dull moment. When a song set was over, a big screen came down from the ceiling, engulfing the stage and hiding the interworking of set changes.

Projected on the screen were short, artful vignettes, which solved the problem most shows have when it comes to awkward silence during set changes. Her costumes were amazing as always, but there wasn't anything extraordinarily new, nor did her infamous meat dress make an appearance.

There was so much that went on during the concert that one reviewer would not be able to describe every aspect. Lady Gaga is an act you must see for yourself.



## THEY CONQUERED EVERYTHING BUT DEATH.

Past rulers like Alexander the Great, Tutankhamen and Augustus Caesar all have one thing in common: the past. They're stuck in it. Doesn't it make more sense to follow someone who has conquered death? Jesus Christ accomplished what no ruler ever could. He paid the penalty for our sin. And by rising bodily from the grave, he conquered death — not only for himself but for us. Listen to what he said: "He who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." (John 5:24) Jesus conquered death. Would you like to know what else he's capable of conquering in your life? Read the section called "John" in the Bible, or see the feature article BEYOND BLIND FAITH at [www.EveryStudent.com](http://www.EveryStudent.com).

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As a part of the MTSU Christian Faculty Fellowship, we believe that personally knowing Jesus Christ and following His teachings provide intellectually and spiritually satisfying answers to life's most important questions. We are available to interested students, staff and faculty who might like to discuss such questions and the claims of Jesus Christ.

**Letters Policy**

Sidelines welcomes letters to the editor from all readers. Please e-mail letters to [slopinions@mtsu.edu](mailto:slopinions@mtsu.edu) and include your name and phone number for verification. Sidelines will not publish anonymous letters. We reserve the right to edit grammar, length and content.

# OPINIONS

Sidelines is the editorially independent, student-produced newspaper affiliated with Middle Tennessee State University and the College of Mass Communication. Sidelines publishes Monday and Thursday during the fall and spring semesters and online during June and July. The opinions expressed herein are those of individual writers and not necessarily Sidelines or the university.

## Visibility essential in gay rights activism

Last summer, the National Organization for Marriage – a group dedicated to fighting the legalization of gay marriage – took a bus tour of the United States, spreading its message of hate. One of its members helping to organize the tour was a strategist named Louis Marinelli.

Recently, however, Marinelli has come out in favor of gay marriage.

What was his rationale? He finally got to know some of the counter-protesters, and realized that they were real people, who were being hurt by his work. Louis is now a vehement supporter of marriage equality, hoping to make up for the damage he has done.

He even tweeted President Barack Obama recently, urging him to support marriage equality. There are plenty of marriage equality "allies," even politicians who have more access to the president than a random Twitter user, who would not be willing to put themselves out there like that.

I'm having trouble believing we should lavish praise on Marinelli for his actions because even he himself has made it clear that they're partially to ease a guilty conscience. But, I do think this situation should teach us the importance of visibility and education.

To Marinelli, gay people were an abstract concept. He might have met gay people before, but he either didn't realize or neither party made the effort to get to know the other. As soon as that took place, though, his views changed completely.

A common meme in the gay rights debate is that there are certain groups you just can't get through to. The elderly are "just too set in their ways." Christians are "a lost cause." Southerners are "too backwards." In deciding that gay rights activists are making



**Michael Finch**  
Columnist

the same mistake that Marinelli did. They're not seeing their opponents as real, complex people with real, complex motives and feelings. No one can be discounted. Anyone can benefit from exposure and education.

I don't believe that every gay, lesbian or bisexual person has an obligation to be vocal about his or her sexual orientation.

This idea reflects a lot of privilege. Some people would be at risk for extreme violence, and loss of their home, job or

family if they came out. However, those who are already out should make an effort to engage those who fight against them, especially people who seem to be on the fence, or who seem merely ignorant, not hostile.

As we've learned from Marinelli, realizing they have gay friends, family, neighbors and co-workers can be the tipping point in pulling people from anti-gay ideology.

There are gay, lesbian and bisexual people who are elderly, who are Christians, or who live in the South, or any combination of these groups. If they became more visible to people in their communities, I can only imagine how quickly anti-gay beliefs could decline.

It's a scary thought, I know. Walking up and shaking the hand of someone who wants to deny you rights, and forcing them to confront the fact that you're a real person. It's a strategy that has been avoided in the past, but as we've seen in the case of Marinelli and many others: It works.

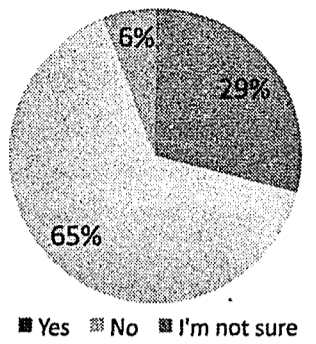
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“It’s that time in the semester, friends. The one moment, where everyone at MTSU realizes, ‘Oh crap, I’m in school. Grades!’” – Austin W. Powell

“The year is winding down here at MTSU. A short two more weeks and we will be checking in to summer.” – Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity

“Looking at other colleges, I have realized how limited MTSU is. It makes me feel like I’ve wasted my time on what I could’ve been learning.” – Alex Williams

“I enjoyed speaking with MTSU Athletic Training students the past two days. What an honor to address this group.” – Rod Walters

“Wish I could’ve testified in favor of [state Sen. Stacey] Campfield’s bill. I used to be MTSU’s Concealed Carry leader.” – Matthew Hurtt

**More straight allies needed in LGBT fight**

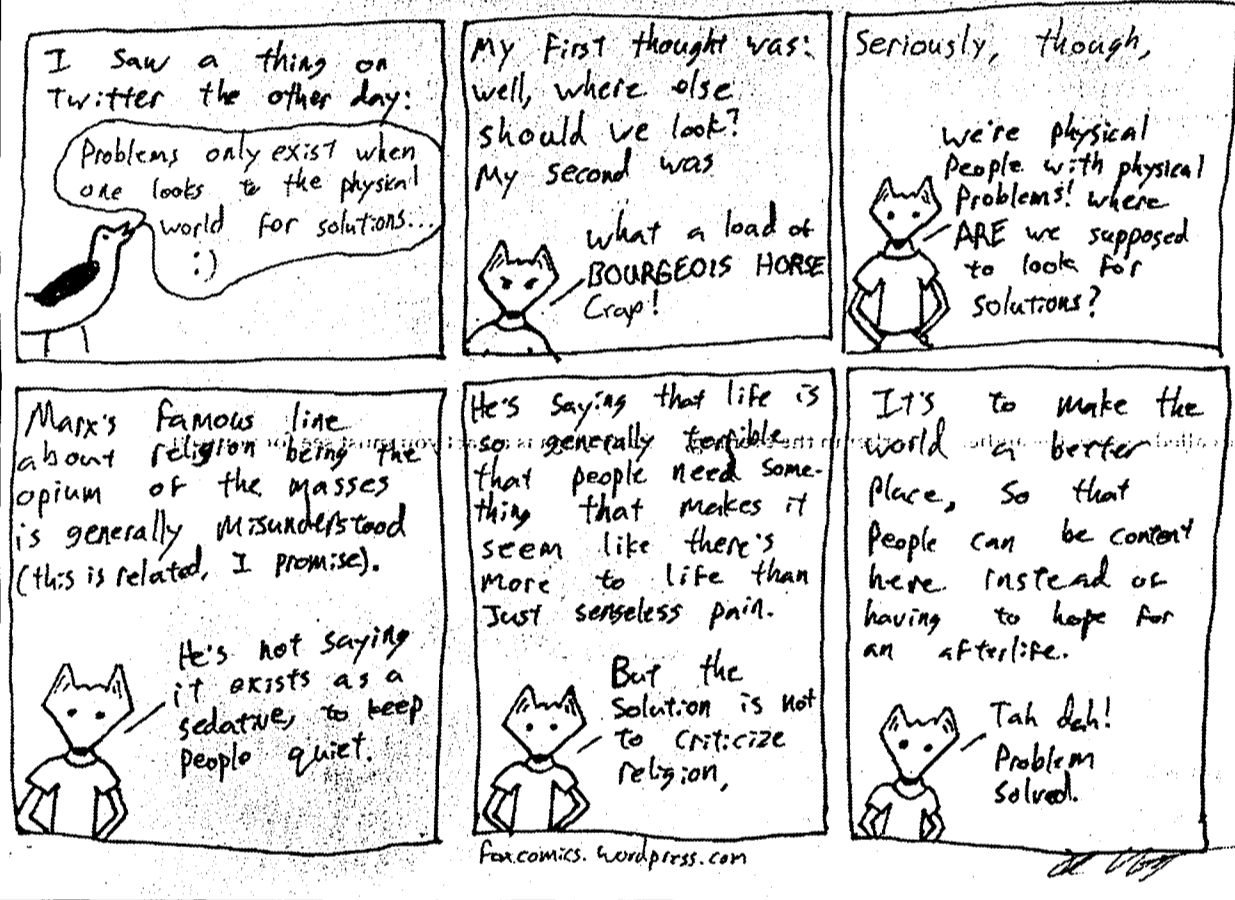
“It’s nice to know that there are other heterosexual people in the cause too. I often get asked why I care so much about the gay community, and this article is just the perfect example of an answer.” – Jacqueline McGibeny

**Longtime professor retires from college**

“Love you and I will miss you, Mr. Norton.” – Kevin Bernatek

**NFL lockout worries fans, not economists**

“[It] doesn’t worry this fan.” – Darrell Ray Land



## Flood victims should not be forgotten

I was there the day that the churning, muddy waters came raging across the roads and crept into houses. In my pajamas with rain pouring down, I stood in one foot of murky water debating whether or not I should venture deeper down the driveway. I would have to get waist-deep to help a close friend get his possessions out of his house.

While debating, the water rose another foot, covering the only high, uncovered spot where the car was parked. Now, the tires were almost submerged. I panicked, and my boyfriend and our friend came out and began the trek back up the driveway, holding trash bags full of sentiments above their heads. We moved the car farther away and all sat on its hood watching the waters rise and take hold of the house.

When the cleanup began, streets were littered with muddy debris and small remnants of people’s lives. Once the houses were gutted, every single yard looked like a landfill. I couldn’t help but think that the saddest part was that this was only one of many neighborhoods to lose everything.

The Opryland Hotel and the Grand Ole Opry House, along with several other landmarks, have reopened. The destroyed homes and neighborhoods, however, are not receiving the same attention. People are still in trailers, and it is hardly ever addressed on the news.

“Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” came to Antioch in September, four months after the devastating rains hit Middle Tennessee. The major project was to rebuild the infamous school whose mobile schoolhouse went floating down Interstate 24 on national television.

I noticed, though, that when I was on the school



**Katie Zamminer**  
Guest Columnist

building site helping out, not many people were present. The first day, there were hundreds of volunteers, but the last night there were probably only 50 of us.

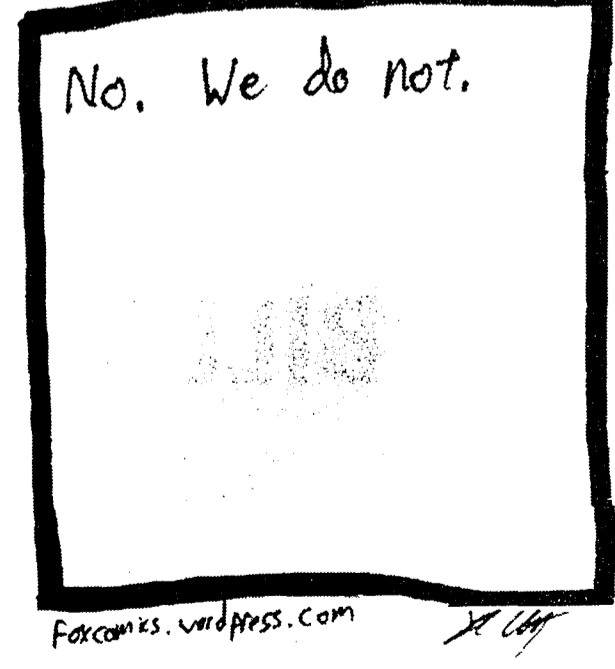
Interestingly enough, the cameras were only rolling inside the house where people were. Were they worried about looking bad on television? The footage could have raised the issue and motivated people to help, but instead, the television crew members made it look like they had all the help they needed.

Yes, the support from all of the celebrities and country stars has raised an immense amount of money. However, with the exception of Garth Brooks’ concert series in December, most of the publicity for the relief has stopped. It is even difficult to find current new articles discussing progress.

Try looking for flood progress stories on the Internet. It took me almost half an hour to find one from this year. According to *Tennessee Alumnus*, as of February, there were still more than 2,000 people who had yet to even find the resources that would lead them to rebuilding.

If more media attention were given to the issue, help would come faster. Unfortunately, that doesn’t seem to be the case, and the one-year anniversary is approaching. Help should still be as overwhelming as it was during the first month of recovery, and I think the victims would agree.

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