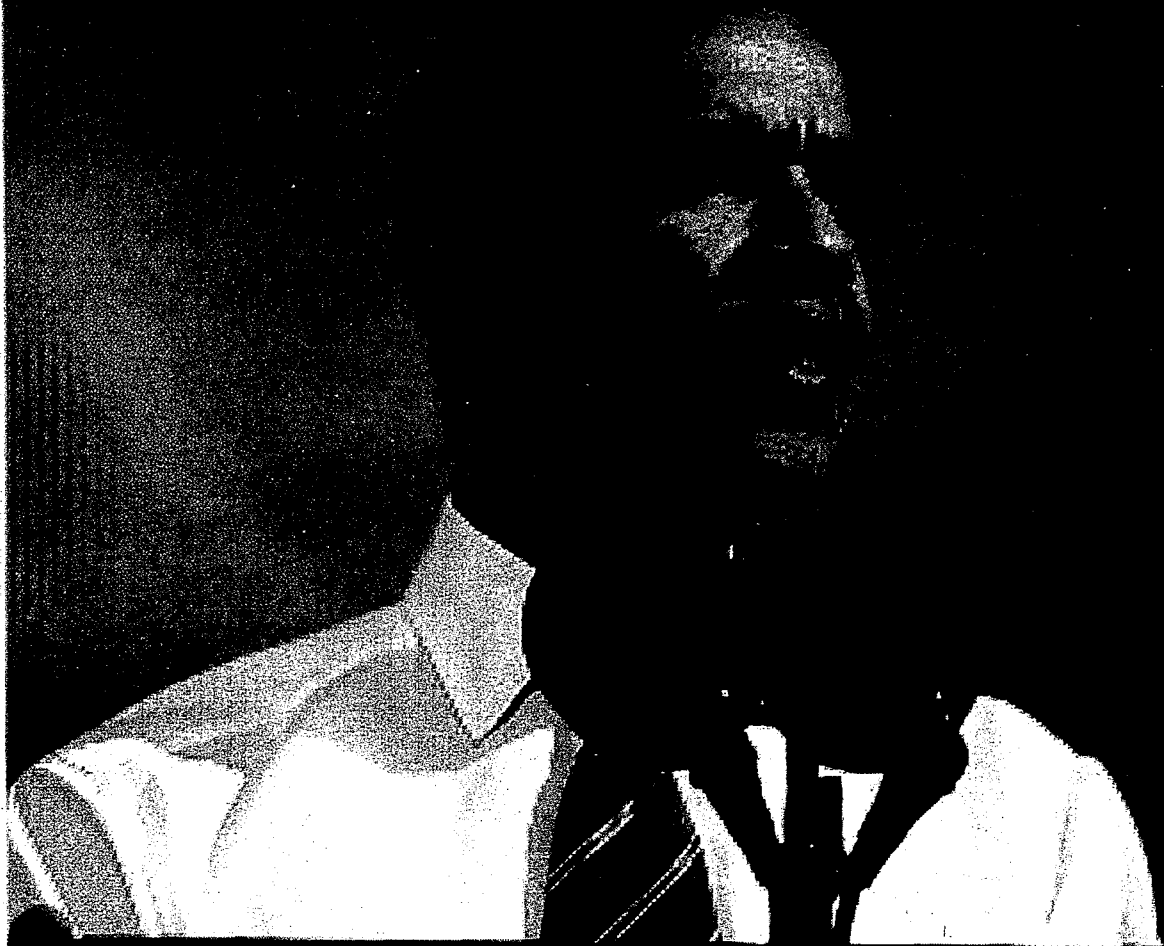


VOTE
2012
EDITION



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Ron Henderson, Chairman of Physics and Astronomy, and Veronica Brown, a junior majoring in education, participate in a suicide prevention awareness event for the non-profit group To Write Love on Her Arms.
Photo by Matt Masters

Cover designed by Kelsey Klingenmeyer

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John Bragg Mass Communication Building
Center for Innovation in Media
1301 East Main Street P.O. Box 8, Murfreesboro, TN 37132
Editorial: 615-494-7648

Sidelines Staff

Becca Andrews
Editor-in-chief
editor@mtsusidelines.com

Richel Albright
Managing editor
managing@mtsusidelines.com

Asher Hudson
Online director
online@mtsusidelines.com

Chris Bishop
Online assistant
asstonline@mtsusidelines.com

Alex Hubbard
Campus news editor
news@mtsusidelines.com

Emily West
Community news editor
commnews@mtsusidelines.com

Emily Kubis
Features editor
features@mtsusidelines.com

Jane Horne
Arts & Entertainment editor
ae@mtsusidelines.com

Mark Mize
Sports editor
sports@mtsusidelines.com

Alex Harris
Opinions editor
opinions@mtsusidelines.com

Kelsey Klingenmeyer
Design manager
design@mtsusidelines.com

Matt Masters
Photo editor
photo@mtsusidelines.com

Rebecca Huddleston
Ad manager
advertising@mtsusidelines.com

Leon Alligood
Advisor
leon.alligood@mtsu.edu

A letter from our editors



BECCA ANDREWS
editor-in-chief

Election 2012. You all had to know this one was coming.

Four years ago, I was a senior in high school, biding my time to leave my tiny hometown and make my own way.

I had no interest in politics and no knowledge of it. I was 17, and my main complaint about the 2008 election was that my boyfriend at the time had turned 18 before November and I hadn't.

My opinions at the time were not my own. Often, growing up in a small town means a certain level of conformity. Surrounded by white, conservative, mostly middle-class Christians who perhaps don't keep up with the news as well as they should, what political endorsement I had lay with the candidate they hailed as the best choice.

Disclaimer: Most of them are good people who I love dearly to this day. I have respect for their opinions and

their right to express their ideology. I may not (ahem, don't) agree with it, but their rights are the same as mine.

It's funny how much things can change.

Four years ago, in the grand scheme of things, isn't a long time. Somewhere in that span of time (about 10 months later) I transformed into the news junkie I am today. My friends made fun of me for staying in to watch the debates—disappointing as they were this year. I stalked Politico around a professor's office to watch newscasts, and followed every special election Twitter account from major news sources I could find obsessively. I've pored over live blogs, fact checking websites, *Rolling Stone* editorials and *Vanity Fair* political pieces for the past year.

Four years ago, I never imagined I would be leading a newspaper in presidential and local election coverage—the biggest project I've dared to undertake. I never imagined I would be working with some of the most talented journalists I know (who double as my best friends) to report on a professional level.

My point?

Over the past four years, I've become an

informed citizen and the editor of a newspaper. And yesterday, for the first time, I became an informed voter. I have to say, it wasn't a bad feeling.

Last week, I was in Chicago with the news team for the annual National College Media Conference. A former editor of *The Washington Post*, Bill Elsen, said something that stuck with me.

"Without journalism and informed people, the United States of America would die."

It's a bold statement, and it's one I agree with for reasons other than my fierce pride in my industry. This election is a perfect example of why we need to report the news as fairly and accurately as we can.

Watch the news. Read newspapers and political blogs. Even watch "The Daily Show." Form your own educated opinions and don't base your political views on that of your parents or peers. Don't be afraid to believe what you believe. Stand by it. Maybe don't tout it on Facebook—people don't seem to get anything out of that nonsense.

Without independent, informed citizens, our nation is doomed.

And I'll move to Canada.



RICHEL ALBRIGHT
managing editor

My, how things have changed in the past four years.

It is election night, and as I sit in the Center for Innovation in Media surrounded by so many of my favorite fellow news junkies, feverishly refreshing various news sites' election maps, it is hard not to feel bittersweet.

Four years ago, as I sat in my University of Alabama dorm room watching the 2008 election I felt the need to agree with my peers, and seeing as I was in the state of Alabama, we all know which way that state swings.

Needless to say, I was ill informed and the fault was all my own.

Now as a senior approaching an all-too-soon graduation date, I could not imagine that same girl sitting in an Alabama dorm room four years ago, who knew next to nothing about politics, would apply for a job at the Mecca of political reporting—Politico.

This is a bold move on my end, seeing as I know I have about as great of a chance of being hired by them as

Jill Stein did of winning the presidency.

Jill Who, you say? Exactly.

My point is that you never know how your passions and life goals may change in such a short amount of time. I certainly did not.

When I transferred to MTSU, I was a recording industry major, then eventually I made my way into journalism with absolutely no intent of ever getting involved at our school paper, ever.

Then my reporting class happened, and I became a contributing writer covering riveting stories like flute festivals and Meghan McCain lectures—the latter was actually pretty freaking cool.

In said reporting class, I also had to read *The New York Times* for a grade, which is way more overwhelming than one would think. After the class was over, I wasn't required to read the two-dollar-a-day newspaper, which made my wallet happy but my soul weep. I was done for.

Sonny Rawls had officially turned me into a news junkie, and since then, it's been a habit I can't quit.

But it is something I am forever grateful for, especially considering the path my life has taken.

I also cannot forget to thank my brilliant, insightful and passionate political science professors. While they may never realize it, their passion has only fueled my thirst to learn even more.

For those of you reading who may not be pursuing a career in journalism or politics, I encourage you to pick up a *Times* or *Washington Post* or even add the Politico app to the smartphones I know so many of you have.

There is no shame in being informed about what is going on in the world around you—seeing as so many of these issues affect us... students, young adults, young professionals.

Instead of flying off the wall when a piece of legislation you don't like is passed or a comment about binders full of women is made, I suggest you breathe for 15 seconds, reflect on it and research it.

This does not mean you have to devote your life to reading newspapers, political blogs and watching biased news networks. We are, after all, students, and we do have lives and can still completely enjoy the guilty pleasures of the world like "Keeping Up With the Kardashians"—yes, I'm guilty, I love me some Lord Disick.

I am proud of where my unexpected life has taken me, and I'm proud to be an informed voting citizen. Regardless of the outcome, I feel good about voting for a candidate whose policies and plans for the future I believe in.

I hope there are others who share my passion for knowing before speaking.

Corker sails to victory over controversial opponent

By Alex Hubbard
News editor

U.S. Sen. Bob Corker relaxed Tuesday night. The Chattanooga Republican easily bested his Democratic challenger, Mark Clayton of Nashville, 69 percent to 26 percent, or 1,205,239 votes to 452,606, according to unofficial returns. The night capped off a campaign that highlighted the struggles of the Tennessee Democratic Party to find a creditable statewide candidate.

The race never was in doubt and was called within minutes of the close of voting. Addressing a crowd numbering near 300 at Nashville's Cabana restaurant, including radio personality Dave Ramsey and Gov. Bill Haslam, Corker never mentioned his opponent and instead turned to a signature issue

"I think I am more optimistic and more energized even than I was six years ago when I had no idea what the United States Senate was like," Corker said. "We have major issues facing us. We all know that. The biggest threat that we have in our nation is this fiscal solvency issue, and it affects so much.

"It affects our economy, and it affects our national security, and it affects how we think of ourselves."

Corker also called for national unity no matter who wins the presidential race, saying, "Let's focus on the things that unite this nation."

Corker's victory

wrapped up a race that never was in doubt. The state Democratic Party tried, and failed, to recruit a viable candidate to oppose Corker. For a brief time, the party thought it found its star: Park Overall, who was a star herself as a television actress and a noted environmental activist. But Overall finished third in the party primary, and the race hit deep freeze at that point. Clayton received the nomination simply because his name appeared first on the ballot's alphabetical list, and lacking any name recognition for any particular candidate, voters selected the name at the top of the ballot, a party release stated.

Clayton's involvement with Public Advocate of the United States, a controversial group of activists, immediately came into question.

The Southern Poverty Law Center designated the Virginia-based group an anti-gay hate group, and the organization is involved in a lawsuit over the use of a gay couple's wedding photograph in an anti-gay mailer without the couple's permission. Clayton served as a volunteer for the group, according to the Washington Post.

Tennessee Democrats rejected Clayton's candidacy and urged Democratic voters to write in a candidate of their choosing.

Corker, who loaned his campaign \$2 million of his own money



U.S. Sen. Bob Corker speaks with a family of supporters at the Cabana restaurant in Nashville. Photo by Jay Bailey

in 2006 to push him to a narrow, three-point victory over U.S. Rep. Harold Ford Jr., barely cracked his campaign war chest for himself in this race and even admitted that his opponent was unknown even to him.

"I've never really met my opponent, nor know much about his background or what he's been doing," Corker told the Associated Press. "I'm sure he's a fine person."

Clayton struggled to raise even hundreds of dollars and did not maintain a presence on the campaign trail. Despite this, Clayton guaranteed victory in an email to reporters that the Tennessean

released.

"I'm expecting victory because we have reached four million Tennessee voters, and most Tennesseans know that Bob Corker betrayed them," Clayton said in the email. "I congratulate my opponent for a great race in advance. Former Senator Bob Corker could be of assistance to our staff because of his institutional knowledge and be a great asset to help our senate office staff. I will allow my staff to continue to consult with him throughout my tenure, and both he and his staff will be welcome to stop by any time."

The race received national attention when the Washington Post

labeled Clayton 2012's worst candidate.

"In a state that produced Democratic icons including Andrew Jackson and both Al Gores, the party has fallen so far that it can't even run a good loser," the Post article stated. "Instead, it has this guy. In Tennessee, Clayton's unlikely run is providing an absurdist coda to a long Democratic disaster. Something like falling down a flight of stairs onto a whoopee cushion."

The Tennessee Democratic Party controlled virtually all levels of state government as recently as 2006, but fortunes changed as Tennessee increasingly turned to

the Republicans, and another generation of Democratic candidates had not taken the stage. But one Corker supporter pointed toward a different reason for the Democrats' failure to find a creditable challenger: Corker's popularity.

"That's reflective of how strong of a leader he is," said David Bailey, a Nashville architect. "Guys like Bob Corker don't come along all the time, and his ability to bring people together and lead, seems to me, pretty special, and not something you see every day." ■

Republicans take county races for state legislature



Dawn White, Republican, speaks with supporters at the Maple Street Grill in Murfreesboro. Photo by Davion Baxter

By Sinclair Sparkman Contributing writer

Republicans won Rutherford County's state-legislative races Tuesday night in a clean sweep.

In the county's only race that did not feature an incumbent, Dawn White defeated Democratic opponent Bob New 64 percent to 35 percent. In the district 34 race, Rep. Rick Womick defeated challenger Luke Dickerson 68 percent to 32 percent. In district 49 Rep. Mike Sparks defeated challenger Mike Williams 58 percent to 41 percent.

Rep. Joe Carr and Sen. Jim Tracy were unopposed.

White's supporters rallied in the second floor of the Maple Street Grill Tuesday night to watch the 2012 election returns.

White will be the county's only new representative in Nashville.

"Her focus is to bring the economy back on track, education reform, and reduce government waste," said Amelia Bozeman, White's campaign manager. "She is a Rutherford County girl."

White agreed with the assessment herself.

"Education reform is near and dear to my heart," White said.

Attendees of White's party were confident in her ability to win. "I'm at the winner's party, dear," Kerry Boylan said excitedly as the night began. Boylan met White at a volunteer event for MTSU's Project Help. Boylan said she supports White for her sense of humor and straightforward honesty. "I really admire her

desire to help others, the energy she has spent on this amazes me."

Another supporter noted the joy of local politics.

"It's always best at grassroots," said Bill Harper of Rutherford County, who said he supports White's ideas on education and taxes. "I've met so many people throughout this process, and that's been a great thing."

White's sister, Gina Throneberry, attended the event to support her sister.

"I think about growing up, where she was then, where she is now, and how far she's come," she said. This is the next step for her, and I'm proud to be her big sister." ■

Local democrats lost state house seats to Republicans



Bob New, Democrat, was running for 37th Representative District. Photo courtesy of rcdp.org

By Alex Reeves Contributing writer

Rutherford County Democrats clung to hope, but their hopes were dashed as results released late last night by the Rutherford County Election Commission showed every Democrat running in the county lost.

At press time, 34th District candidate Luke Dickerson lost to Republican Rick Womick 64 percent to 32 percent. Bob New, running for the 37th District, lost to Republican Dawn White 59 to 41 percent. The other Democratic candidate Mike Williams, running for the 49th District, lost to Mike Sparks 59 to 41 percent.

While at their party at the Fanatics Sports Double Tree Hotel Bar, the candidates discussed education and jobs, realizing many voters were most concerned with those two issues.

"Education and jobs go together," New said. "If we want to attract the high paying jobs from out of state, we need to have a good education system because the jobs of the future are going to take more than a high school education."

Candidate Luke Dickerson from the 34th District echoed New, agreeing that education needed to be the county's top priority.

"I want to make sure [state funding] is being

spent on the children and not on assessment and teacher evaluations," Dickerson said.

Mike Williams, who ran for the 49th District was unavailable to comment on any of these issues facing the county.

However, residents expressed their support for all the candidates as well as the Democratic Party.

"I really am an Independent," said Brandon McCullen, Murfreesboro resident. "Lately as I've gotten more experience, I've turned toward the Democratic side."

Although the candidates wondered the results from their own races, they all expressed their faith in President Barack Obama as he was re-elected for another four years.

"Obama is trying to do so much good," New said. "He is trying to do so much, and it's not going through because there's too much resistance in the house and senate." ■

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DesJarlais defeats Stewart for 4th District win

By Emily West
News editor and
Quint Qualls
Staff writer

With Rutherford County having absentee ballot complications for most of the evening, the Rutherford County Election Commission finally started releasing results from the county showing the Republican incumbent Scott DesJarlais led Eric Stewart 57 to 43 percent for the 4th Tennessee Congressional race.

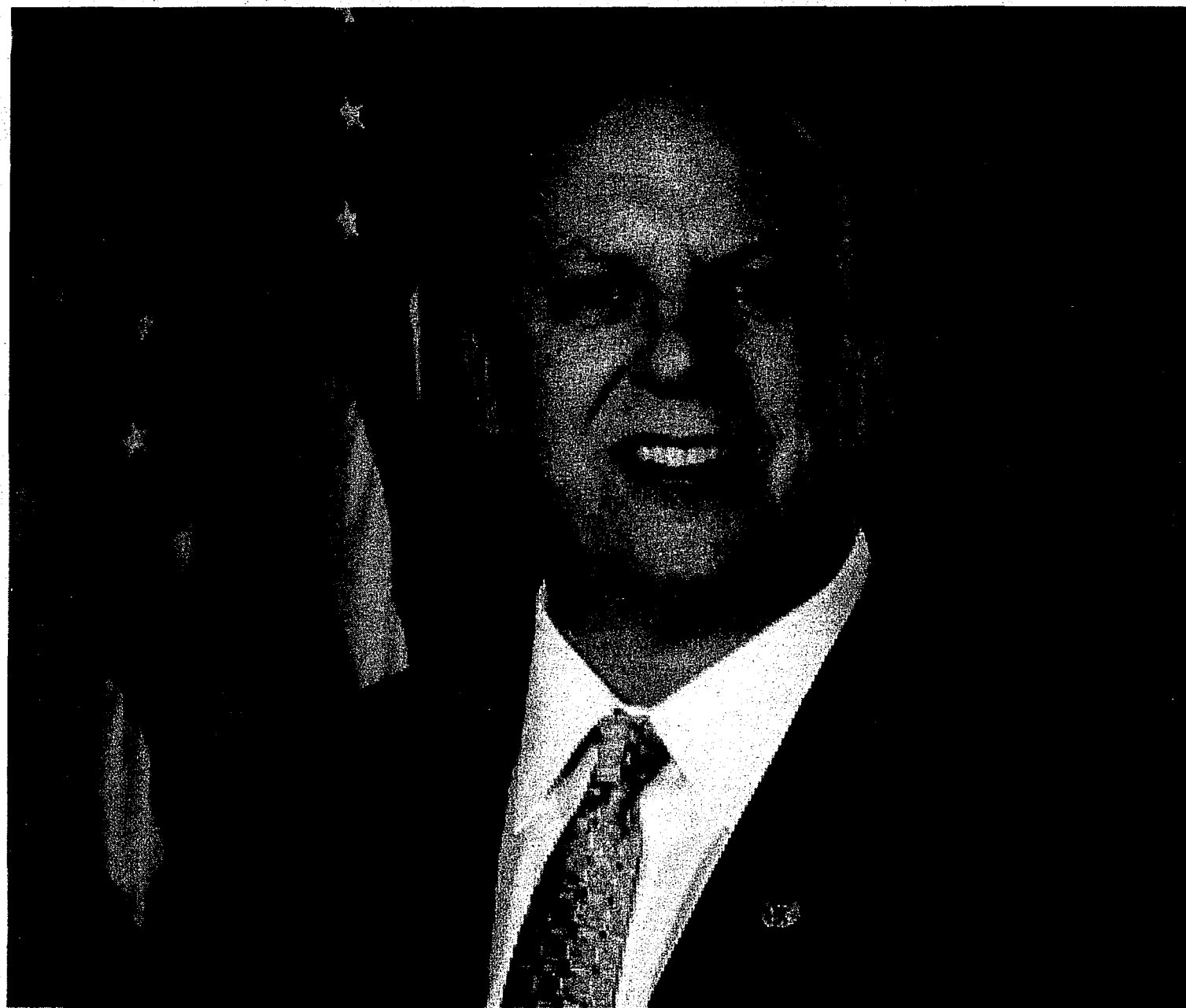
Rutherford County could not release any results until almost midnight of Election Day because of state law preventing the release of voter totals without counting absentee ballots. The Rutherford County Election commissioner told the Daily News Journal that the county did not have a choice.

However, the county holds 37 percent of the vote of the 4th District. At press time, DesJarlais lead with Bedford, Bledsoe, Bradley, Franklin, Lincoln, Marion, Marshall, Maury, Meigs, Moore, Rhea and Sequatchie counties.

The DesJarlais campaign had no comments in regards to its victory at press time.

Stewart only won three counties with Grundy, Van Buren and Warren counties.

"Win or lose, my biggest hope is that folks can work together, and I mean it's tough on folks when that doesn't happen," Stewart said. "My hope is that whoever wins or loses we can set



After a contentious race, DesJarlais pulls out the victory from Democratic upstart, Eric Stewart. facebook.com/ScottDesJarlaisTN04

aside the divide and the partisanship and start working together. At the end of the day just that folks can begin getting along."

If Stewart were not to win office, he was going to devote more time to his family and stepping out of the political

limelight.

"I've got a 10-year-old, a 12-year-old, a wife who loves me -- I'm going to spend some time with them," Stewart said. "I'm going to be the husband that they deserve. It's their turn now. The only thing I've ever wanted in this

life is for Judy and the kids to be proud of me."

DesJarlais held his campaign party in South Pittsburg, Tenn. while Stewart stayed local holding his party with the rest of the Rutherford County Democrats at the Fanat-

ics Bar and Grill at the Double Tree Hotel.

"Tennessee has an interesting demographical history," said David Colin, retiree political activist in Rutherford County. "It used to be very democrat and evolved to republican. It's rather complex. It

has to do with some issues that have been lingering for over 100 years."

While the election drew to a close, DesJarlais has been sitting in the Hamilton County courtroom rather than out campaigning for last minute votes.



Willie Keith (left) and Cliff Dan (right) spent election night at Fanatics Bar & Grill in the Double Tree Hotel in Murfreesboro. Photo by Leigh Koger

Hamilton County Circuit Judge Jacqueline Bolton requested the DesJarlais divorce trial transcript for the public record. However, the 600-page document was not transcribed in time for the election, and DesJarlais' attorney Haryey Cameron asked the court to hold off the release until completion.

"I chose Scott to be my representative because whatever he did ten years ago doesn't matter," said Kerry Boylan, Rutherford County resident. "He didn't break any laws, and I am more worried about his ability to get the job done."

Over the course of October, the congress-

sional race received national attention with DesJarlais' divorce and past relationships being forced into the spotlight. Court files revealed that DesJarlais admitted to having four affairs outside of his first marriage that ended in 2001. Two of the affairs were with women that were his patients.

Both candidates reported to spending heavy dollar amounts in the Chattanooga and Nashville areas for media purposes. Stewart collected more campaign donations, raising \$63,707 compared to DesJarlais' \$30,216 from Oct. 1 through Oct. 17. ■

CRIME BRIEFS

THEFT **Peck Hall**

Oct. 31, 9:09 a.m.
A complainant reported that money had been stolen from her desk.

TRAFFIC **Greenland Drive Lot B**

Oct. 31, 11:27 a.m.
A witness reported that a person had struck a parked vehicle and left the scene of the accident.

VANDALISM **Sigma Alpha Epsilon House—Greek Row**

Oct. 31, 2:52 p.m.
A complainant reported that a window had been broken on the SAE

house.

VANDALISM **Peck Hall**

Oct. 31, 9:43 p.m.
A complainant reported that a bench at Peck Hall had been broken.

VAGRANCY **James E. Walker Library**

Oct. 31, 11:47 p.m.
Authorities caught non-students trespassing from campus after causing a disturbance in the library.

TRAFFIC **Founders Lane**

Nov. 1, 8:02 a.m.
A complainant reported being stuck by a car that left the scene of the

accident.

VANDALISM **Corlew Hall**

Nov. 1, 9:56 a.m.
A complainant reported that the east doors to Corlew Hall had been vandalized.

THEFT **Student Union Building**

Nov. 1, 10:50 a.m.
A complainant reported that her MTSU ID had been stolen and charges made to her account.

VANDALISM **Sigma Chi House—Greek Row**

Nov. 1, 11:27 a.m.
An unknown subject

kicked over two spotlights in front of the Sigma Chi House.

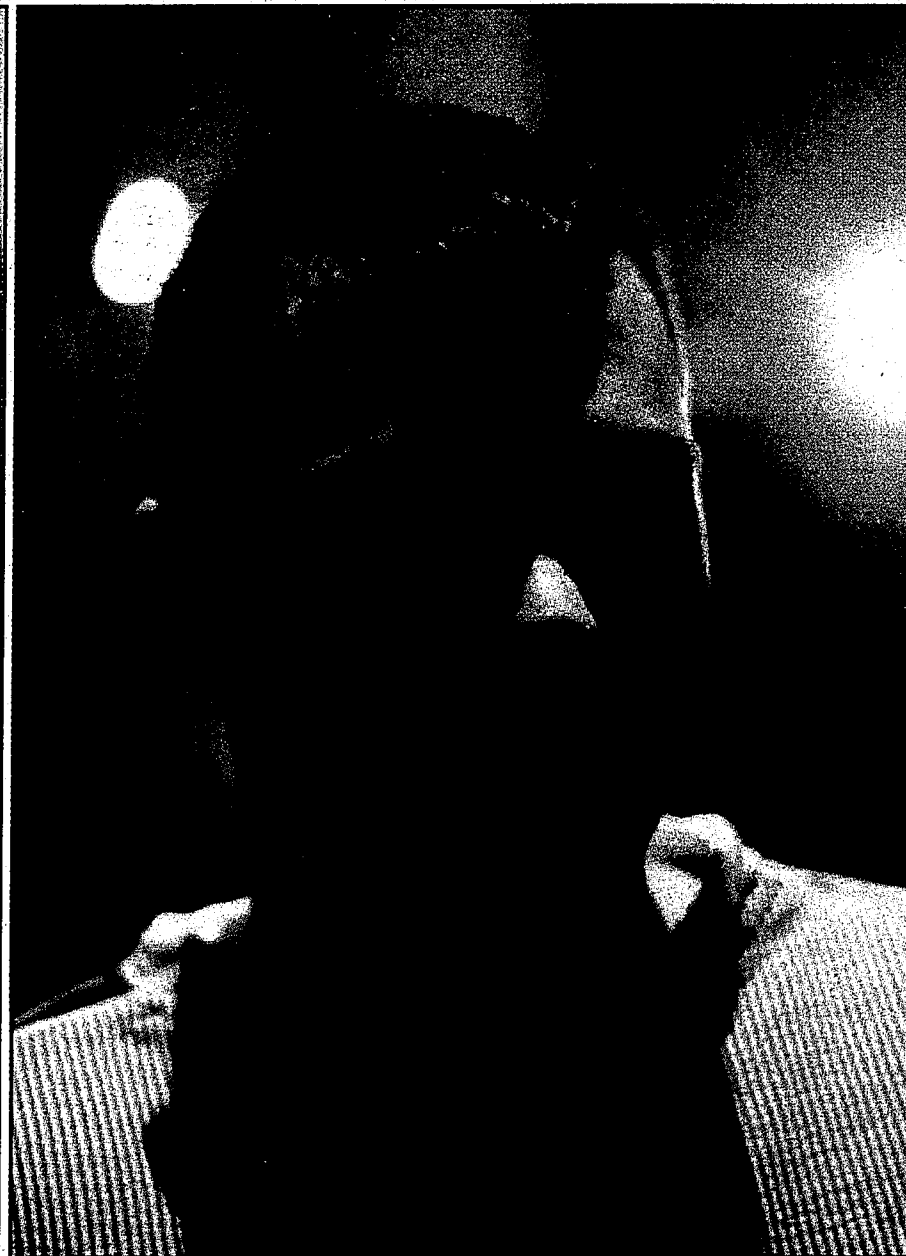
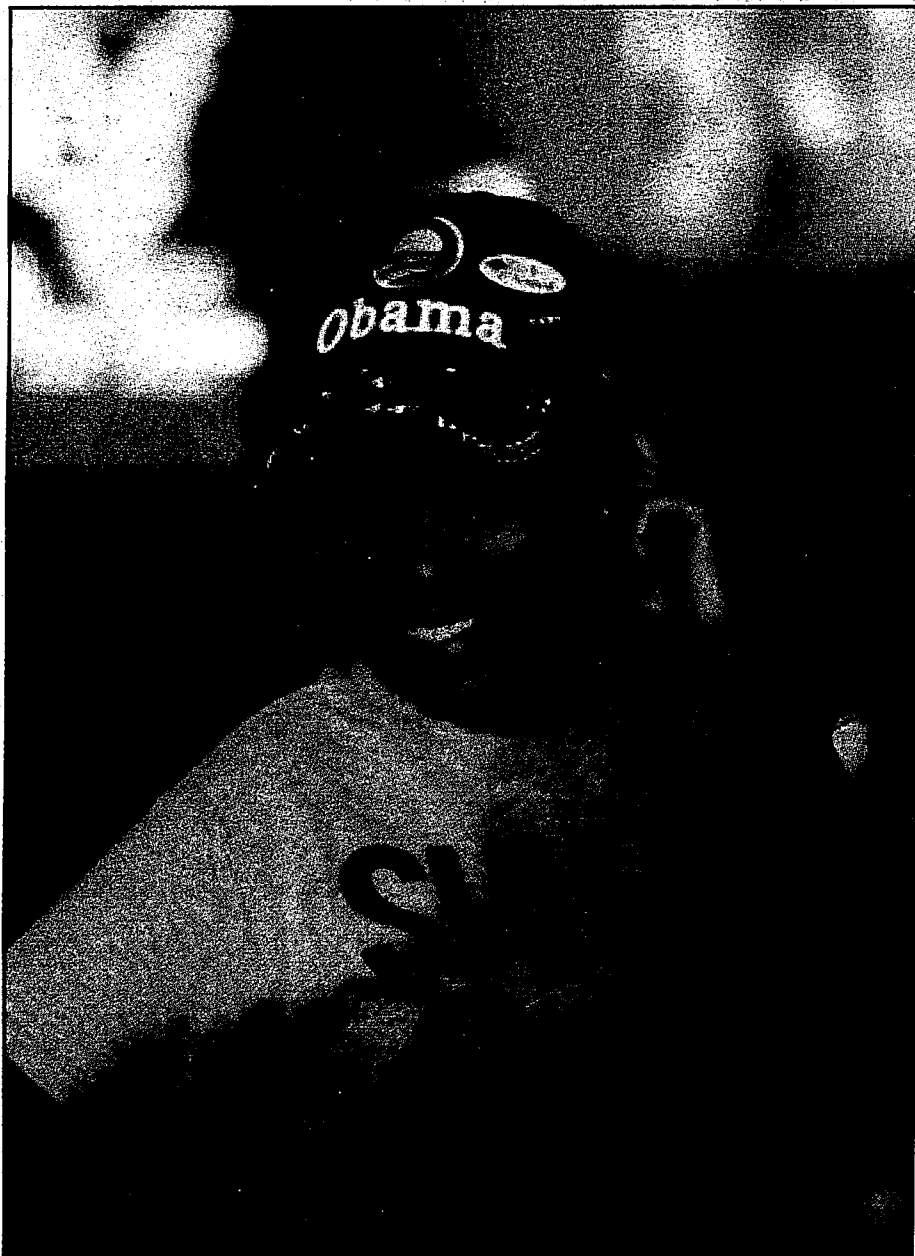
ALARM **Corlew Hall**

Nov. 1, 12:32 p.m.
Authorities responded to a fire alarm. The Fire Department determined that the alarm had been activated by burnt popcorn.

TRAFFIC **Bell Street Lot**

Nov. 1, 1:17 p.m.
A complainant reported that her vehicle had been struck while parked on campus.

Murfreesboro voters disagree on which election matters most



Names from left to right: Chloe Harris, Jonathan Slayton. Photos by Trent Wilkinson

By Emily Kubis and Jane Horne Editorial board

Murfreesboro voters were divided Tuesday on whether national or state elections have a greater effect on Middle Tennessee residents.

Casting votes for three national and two state offices, some vot-

ers felt as though the presidential election took precedence over statewide offices.

"You got to have leadership for the rest of them to follow," said local voter Beverly Wade. "If you don't set an example, then they're not going to do anything."

Others thought state House and Senate representatives were better situated to serve the community.

"It's all important," Brian Ader said. "But local [representation] gets stuff done."

But while national and state priorities ranged, all voters had a

few issues that mattered most. These were the issues that guided hands and aided decisions.

The Economy

National issues had some voters valuing the presidential election, like Rutherford County resident Jaime Olsen.

"We're at a crucial point in our economy," she said.

The economy was a deciding factor for many voters, including Grady Alexander.

"There's things the poor need because of the economy," he said. "We shouldn't take them away. The presi-

dent saved our jobs. It wasn't a handout, it was a hand-up."

Small-business owner Amy Walker was also concerned about the economy and taxes – particularly pertaining to small businesses. "I know that one of the candidates plans to increase taxes on small

businesses, which will have a definite impact on employee hiring and firing. That was my bottom line," she said. "I don't want to let anybody go, and I would like to be able to hire more people," Walker said. "Small businesses cannot withstand more taxes."

Change in the Community

Other voters felt local elections would affect them personally, while national decisions were more broad.

Chloe Harris, a sophomore majoring in liberal arts, said she felt more obligated to participate in the state vote over the presidential. "Voting for state representatives and governors and councilmen; they're the people that directly affect my life and directly affect the lives of others around me," she said.

Local issues such as community violence and the environment mattered most to Murfreesboro resident LeShae Carey.

"The president is the U.S.—he's got bigger stuff. We need stuff in the community," LeShae Carey said. For Ashley Benkarski, the local election was also a priority.

"I don't really like the way legislature is in this state...I try to vote for equal rights, and I don't think the current legislature has any idea what that means. At this point, I just voted with my conscience," Benkarski said. Because Scott Poland

considered his presidential vote insignificant in the context of the electoral college, the local election brought him to the polls.

"That's what I came to vote for," he said. "I'm not electing the president."

Jonathan Slayton, a freshman majoring in liberal arts, said the state election was more important to him because of his status in the National Guard.

"I serve the governor before I serve the president," he said. Social issues played a huge role for many voters, such as Harley Walker, who voiced concerns about gay rights and women's issues.

"This is the first year I get to vote, so I think that's what made voting for the president so important to me," she said.

College students had an additional reason to prioritize the presidential election over state offices.

Darron Harris, a junior majoring in public relations, said as a student, he does not really view himself as a citizen of Murfreesboro because of his student status. Social issues such as gay rights, health care and abortion influenced his vote.

Funding for Higher Education

Student loans are a hot issue for college students, including English major Jessica McMullen.

"It's really the student loans. Student loans and women's health are the two biggest things for me," she said.

This statement was echoed by Teshell Gales, a freshman majoring in behavioral and health sciences.

"As a college student, we need as much help as we can get," she said. "And if that's been snatched from us, as students, no one wants that. I think if our financial aid gets snatched from us, a lot of us won't be here next year."

Chloe Harris agreed, saying, "I'm a Republican, but I voted for Obama because I don't agree with how Romney is trying to change college funding—I don't appreciate that he doesn't support Pell Grants and federal funding for college students."

Impacts to Come

The effect of Tuesday's election will be felt throughout Tennessee and the nation for the next four years. Though Murfreesboro voters disagreed on impact and issues, by casting their vote, all demonstrated concern for their community—both local and national. ■



Teshell Gales. Photo by Trent Wilkinson.

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Make a difference: First-time voters share their opinions

By **Mary-Margaret Weatherford**
Staff writer

The hotly-contested presidential race of 2012 marked a first time voting for several MTSU students, and these three students assert differing opinions representing various political parties. These voting newbies embraced the opportunity and civic duty to express themselves at the polls.

Batten Votes Blue

When punching the button on the ballot for Barack Obama, it would be easy for 20-year-old Everett Batten to feel that his vote didn't matter. The MTSU junior knows our state usually bleeds red, and some Tennessee Democrats even choose not to vote. Yet, Batten sees things differently.

"I don't want to say my vote doesn't count," Batten said. "There's always a chance to try."

Batten describes Obama as a humanitarian.

"There's just so many people that need help right now," he says, adding that he thinks Obama could provide that help.

Though voting democrat this year, he considers himself non-partisan. Batten didn't know from the get-go who he would vote for, but his decision formed as the election campaigns unfolded.

"I don't want to say it's because of a lot of the outlandish things that Mitt Romney

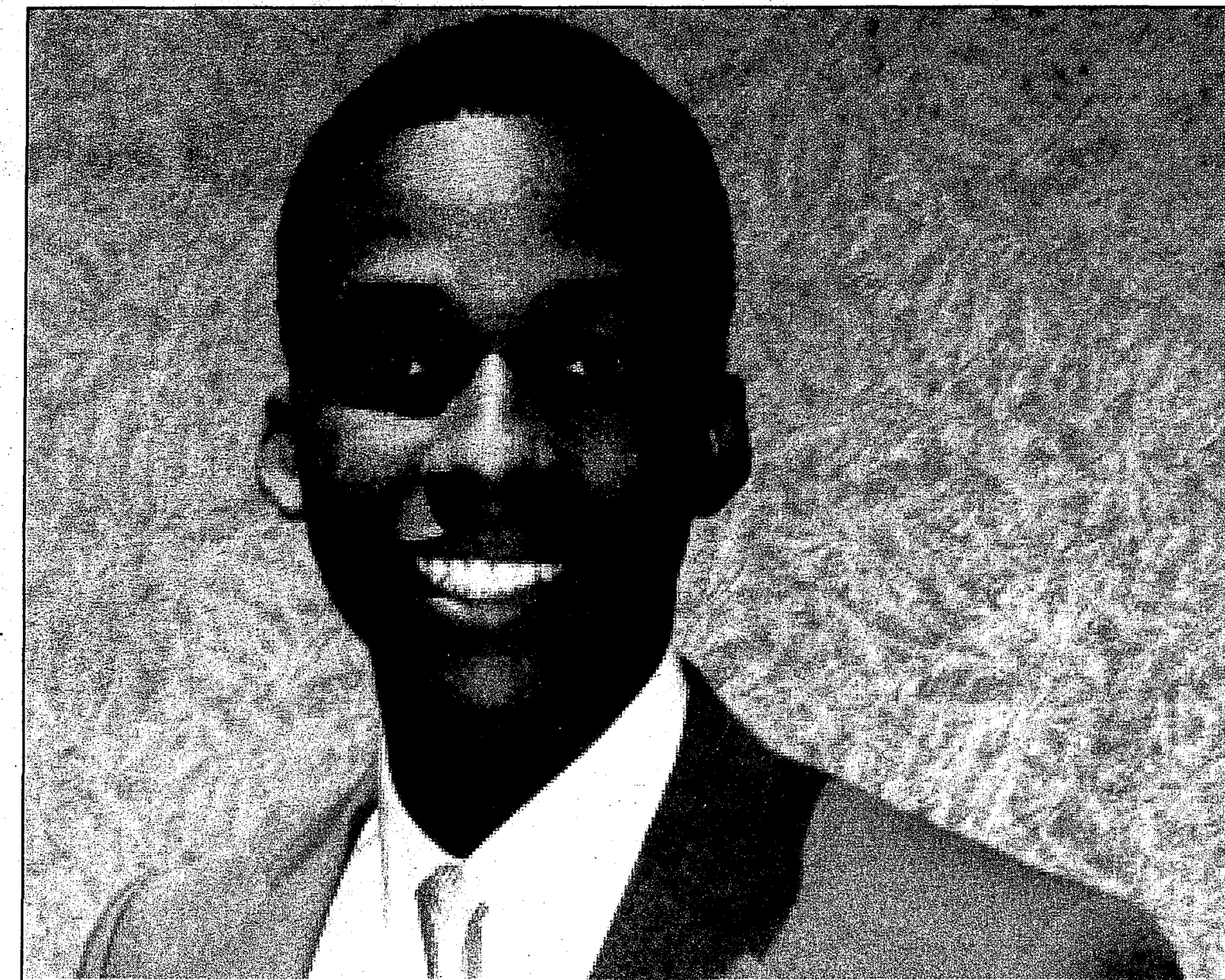


Photo courtesy of Everett Batten

said, but," he paused briefly, "it's pretty much because of a lot of the outlandish things Mitt Romney said."

The 20-year-old from Memphis said he used to think he didn't depend on politics, but his mindset has changed since he's become independent. Batten is

getting a taste of the "real world."

"I'm seeing day after day how politics actually affect my life," Batten said.

Batten said "Obamacare" is important to him because he may not have healthcare coverage in his first post-college job. He said

loan forgiveness would affect him as well, since he uses student loans and will most likely be in debt right out of college.

"I see [issues] on TV, and I see how I can apply them to my life," Batten said. "Politics are definitely playing a huge factor right now

— huge." His peers have similar views on what matters most.

"The biggest thing my friends and I talk about is giving help to those who need it. Hands down," Batten said.

Madewell Supports Romney

Lauren Madewell is enthusiastic about her first-time voting in the presidential election.

"I feel like it's kind of like a new step into my adulthood," Madewell said.

In the 20-year-old's

first dabble with voting, she pressed the square button beside Mitt Romney's name.

"I think [voting] really does make a difference as opposed to what other people my age think," said Madewell, a junior majoring in mass communication.

She doesn't completely disprove of those who don't vote; after all, her boyfriend isn't voting, she said. However, Madewell was adamant about one thing.

"You can't complain if you don't vote," she said with certainty.

Madewell calls herself a Republican, and said she knew this entire election cycle she was going to vote for Mitt Romney.

"I think [Romney's] business savvy views can help bring us out," Madewell said, in reference to the state of the economy. "He has a different perspective on [policies]... He's a businessman, and he knows what he's doing."

The abortion issue is also important to this first-time voter. She agrees with Romney that under certain circumstances, like rape or endangerment of the mother, abortion is acceptable, but the 20-year-old female is pro-life. Madewell contradicts the idea that pro-choice turns women away from the GOP candidate.

As for the last four years, Madewell is skeptical.

"I don't blame the whole downfall of the country on Obama, but I think that he made a lot of promises that he couldn't keep," she said.



Photo courtesy of Lauren Madewell

Madewell pointed out that she lives in a free country, and she noted the importance of Americans expressing political opinions without being penalized.

"I am so excited to finally be able to voice my opinion and choose who I want to vote for," Madewell said.

Parrow Has a Vote for Johnson

Tyler Parrow, 20, constitutes what most would refer to as a

Libertarian, but he said he would never confine himself to a particular party. The junior pushed the button on the presidential ballot for Gary Johnson this year.

Some would also deem Parrow's vote a "waste," since a third party candidate win is seemingly impossible. "I think wasting your vote is voting for someone you don't believe in," said Parrow.

Parrow said he thinks the No. 1 reason people are voting for Obama

is Romney, and the No. 2 reason people are voting for Romney is Obama.

"I'm voting Gary Johnson. My reason is Gary Johnson," he said, emphasizing Johnson's name.

Parrow sees the importance of voting, but is not opposed to people who choose not to vote.

They most likely aren't informed citizens anyway, he said.

"I vote because there is nothing else to do. It is the only outlet for expression in the politi-

cal realm."

Parrow said Johnson delves into issues the two main candidates won't touch, such as the war on drugs, military interventionism, the Federal Reserve and the monetary system.

According to Parrow, Johnson has no rules and no fears.

"He's not afraid to look at something and say, 'this is not right.'"

Gary Johnson's monetary policies majorly contribute to Parrow's voting choice because, he said, the nation's

current policies are plunging us further into debt.

The 20-year-old Smyrna native is the president of MTSU's chapter of Young Americans for Liberty.

"Its one thing to understand what's going wrong with the zeitgeist of America, its another thing to take charge—to be energized," Parrow said. "That's something that I think the libertarian party has that no other party has." ■

COVER STORY

President Obama moves forward with re-election in 2012

By Becca Andrews
and Richel Albright
Editorial board

To the millions tuning in last night it was a case of déjà-vu as President Barack Obama gave his second acceptance speech from Prudential Plaza in Chicago, which faces Grant Park where Obama gave his acceptance speech in 2008.

Around 10:30 p.m. central time ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox News, and NBC all reported that Barack Obama had been re-elected for a second term as president of the United States.

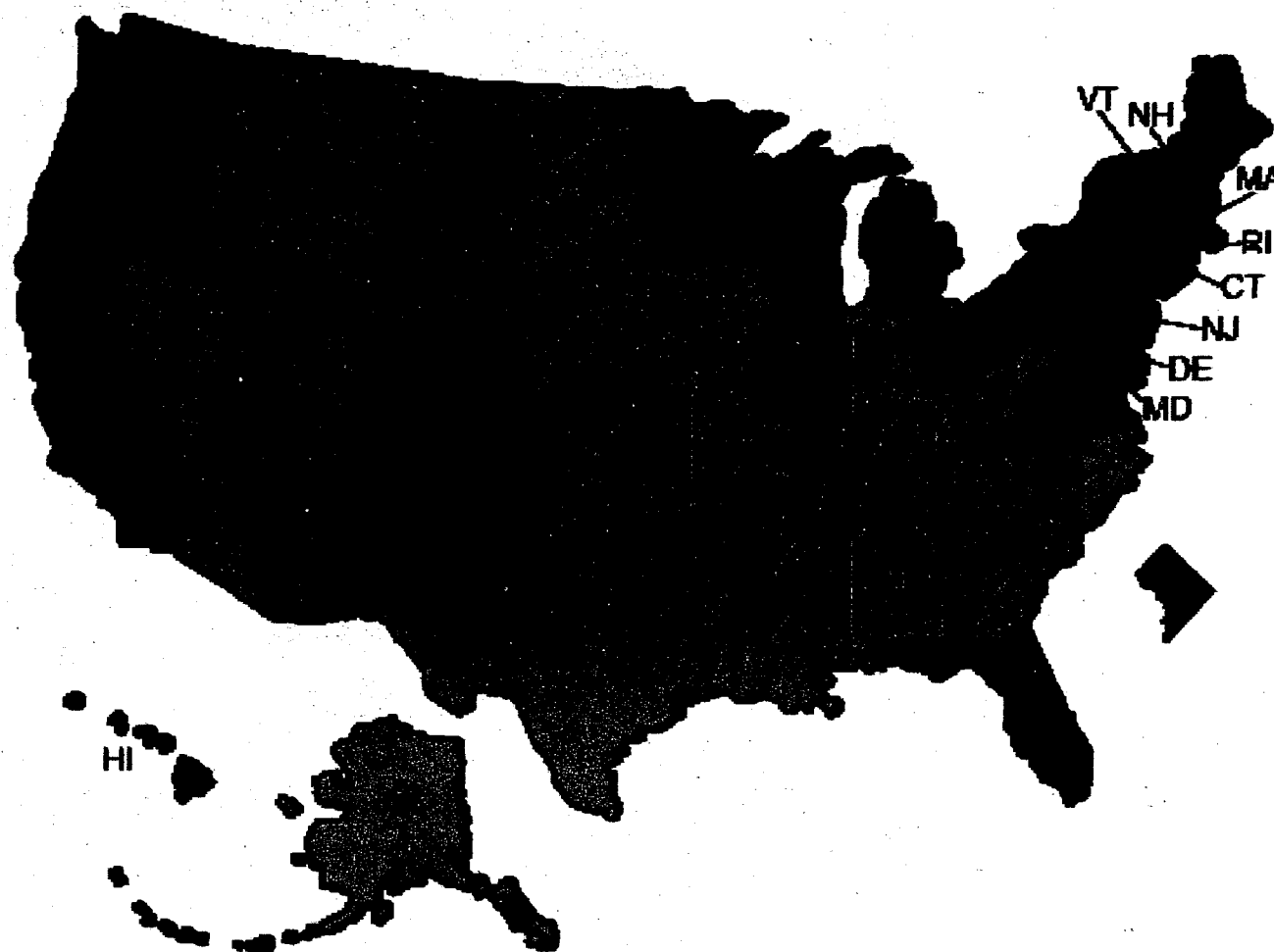
Obama won critical states such as Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania and Michigan to gain the needed 270-electoral college votes for re-election.

At the time of print, former governor of Massachusetts Mitt Romney and Obama were tied at 49 percent of the popular vote, with Romney leading with 207,321 votes.

Mitt Romney won Tennessee with 59.5 percent of the vote, giving him the 11 electoral votes held here.

Debate blunders
Going into the first debate at the University of Denver, President Obama led Romney by eight points. It appeared almost as if the incumbent did not show up as Romney surprised Obama, and the rest of the country, with his bold performance that had yet to be seen in the campaign.

Fact-checkers were in full swing throughout the debate season catch-



Infographic designed by Andrew Williams

ing each candidate in inaccuracies in all three debates.

This year's debates also produced hashtag-gable moments such as "I like Big Bird," "binders full of women," and "bayonet's and horses."

After a lackluster showing at the Denver debate, Obama was prepared for the last two debates, with polls showing victories for the president at Hofstra University and Lynn

University. Accomplishments

During his campaign for re-election, Obama had three main accomplishments he showcased: ObamaCare, the death of Osama bin Laden and the resurgence of the automobile industry, particularly in Detroit.

After taking office, Obama's top priority seemed to be the economy. Over the course of his recent

campaign and debates, he focused several times on the bailout he negotiated for General Motors and Chrysler in Detroit. The companies recovered from bankruptcy and have even thrived, once they gained their footing.

ObamaCare began making its way through the system in 2010, despite heated debate and controversy over the repercussions it would have on insurance policies and job availability

in the health care system. The president was widely criticized for his "socialist" policy, but stood by his claim that all Americans need insurance coverage. The bill made Medicaid policy more expansive and insurance a requirement for all citizens.

On May 2, 2011, Navy SEALs shot and killed Osama bin Laden, eventually disposing of his body off of the USS Carl Vinson into the North Arabian Sea.

The victory was a major one for U.S. morale. Over the past four years, many al-Qaida leaders have been killed and the United States itself hasn't suffered another terrorist attack. The only act of terrorism came on Sept. 11 of this year on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, sparking criticism of both candidates' views on foreign policy.

Most of the criticism facing Obama has been
continued on page 13

COVER STORY

continued from page 12

in regards to the unemployment rate, ObamaCare and the military forces that remain in the Middle East.

Education

According to his website, Obama aims to keep federal loans at a minimum for students and lower tuition rates for college students.

"President Obama's efforts of reform in higher education funding have produced the largest investment in student aid since the G.I. Bill, while resulting in a more efficient, reliable, and effective system for students to help them afford college and manage debt," his website says.

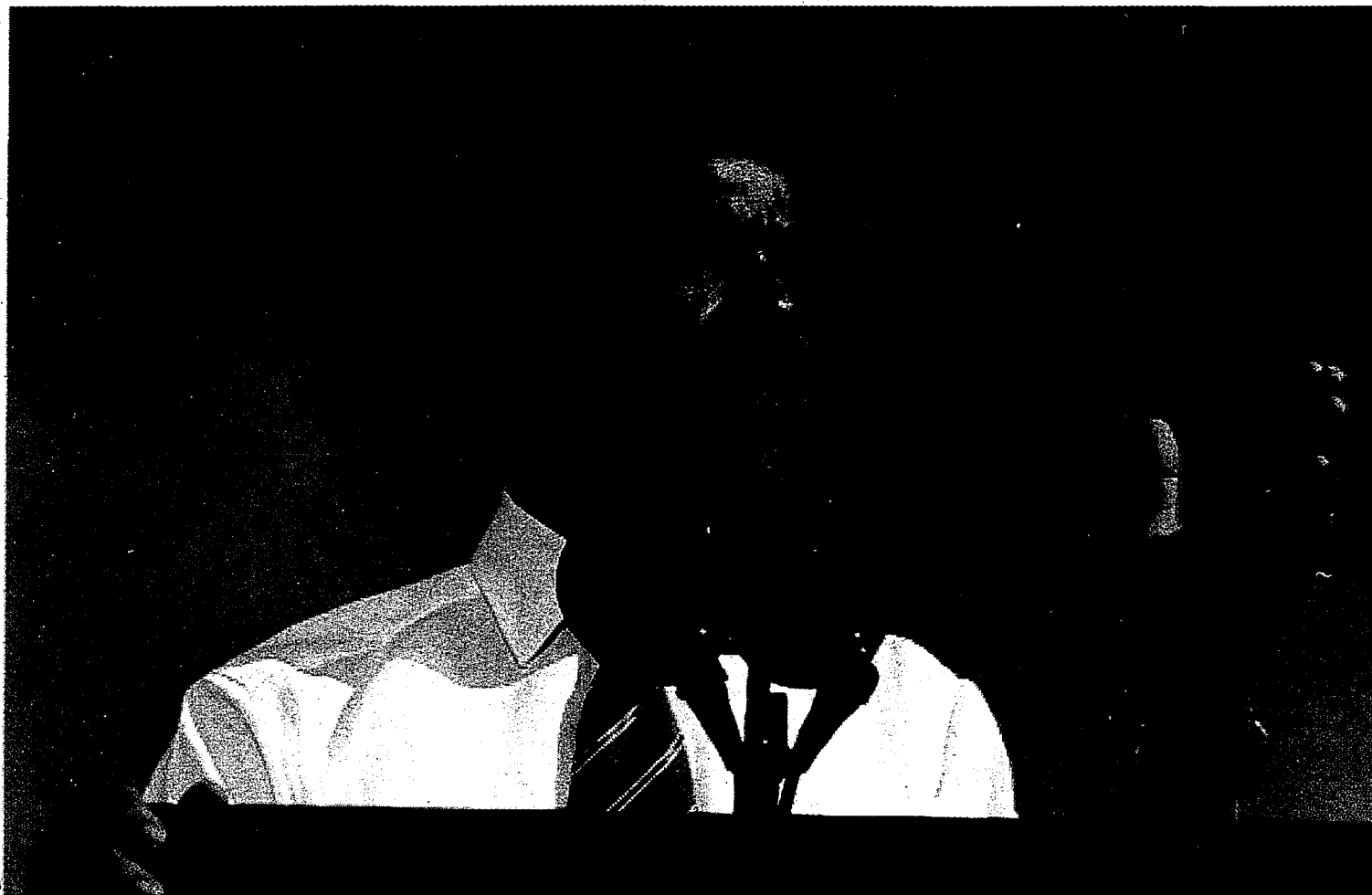
He also has claimed a devotion to improving public school systems and abandoning the No Child Left Behind policy Bush implemented during his term. He replaced it with Race to the Top, which fosters competition for funds between schools and is gauged by test scores and success rates.

Plans for Future

"It's important for people to understand how much we've gotten done," Obama said in a recent interview with Rolling Stone regarding his first term.

After dealing with gridlock in Congress regarding defaulting on U.S. debt and vastly divided views on health care reform, the critical and controversial Affordable Care Act was passed and is expected to fully kick in 2014.

Obama is still fo-



Barack Obama. Photo courtesy of npr.org

cused on dealing with the national debt and unemployment rate, which was at 7.9 percent at the end of October—the highest unemployment rate an incumbent has ever been elected with.

In his interview with *Rolling Stone* he said he is "committed" to ending the war in Afghanistan by 2014.

"We're going to have a full agenda in the second four years," Obama told *Rolling Stone*. "But people shouldn't underestimate how much we can get done."

About Barack

Barack Obama has roots ranging from Kenya to

Kansas.

His father Barack Obama, Sr. was born in Kenya and attended college at the University of Hawaii. While there he met Obama's mother, Ann Soetoro. Soetoro was raised in Kansas and moved to Hawaii with her parents after she graduated high school.

The couple divorced three years after Obama was born and his mother married Lolo Soetoro from Indonesia.

Barack Sr. died in 1982 from a car accident and Ann Soetoro died of cancer in 1995.

President Obama was born Aug. 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii, and raised by his grand-

parents, Stanley and Madelyn Dunham.

He attended Occidental College for two years, then transferred to Columbia University to study political science.

He obtained his law degree from Harvard University.

He met his wife, Michelle, while he was an associate at the Chicago law firm, Sidley Austin.

The two were married in 1992, and in 1998 their first daughter Malia was born followed by Sasha in 2001.

Obama graduated from Harvard Law School in late 1988, beginning a career

that would eventually see him into the Oval Office. He worked as a lawyer in Chicago for several years, even dabbling in teaching at one point. In 1996, he was elected to the U.S. Senate from Illinois. He announced he was considering a run for the presidency in 2006, and eventually began his campaign in January 2007.

In November 2009, he became the first black president of the United States of America.

And in 2012, he has done it again.

The past four years have been complex and messy. President Obama has seen disap-

pointment, failure and success, but says he still has hope for the next four years. As president of the United States, he will no doubt see more of that.

During his campaign for re-election, Obama has said it takes more than four years to make a change. Supporters hope eight will bring a seamless transition into ObamaCare, a steadily improving economy and an end to overseas conflict.

The details are yet to be seen, but one thing is for certain: President Barack Obama will be in office from 2012 until 2016.

RANTS AND RAVES

<p>November 7 Project 615: Wednesday Night Chili Dinner Set Free Church 816 S 16th St., Nashville 6 p.m. FREE</p>		<p>Let's be real: most of us complain about the method of change the politicians we just voted against advocate. How many of us are actually agents of change? You don't have to be religious to subscribe to the fact that the homeless are the "least of these." With</p>	<p>colder weather here and the holidays quickly approaching, it would be a great idea to help out some people who need it. Project 615 in Nashville offers a unique opportunity to serve an impoverished community every Wednesday with people just like you. You</p>	<p>can bring a bag of food and hygiene supplies, or just yourself; any little bit helps. So whether you consider yourself quite religious or not at all, make this Wednesday your day to help out.</p>
<p>November 8 Citizen Cope Marathon Music Works 1402 Clinton St., Nashville 9 p.m. Admission: \$25-28 Ages: 18+</p>		<p>Lyrical genius. Musical mastermind. Perjured poet. Fearle...well you get the idea. Citizen Cope is pretty dope. Some of you may recognize the name from the Live On the Green lineup last year, and for those who have never heard of him, check out his album The</p>	<p>Clarence Greenwood Recordings, released in 2004. It has killer tracks such as "Son's Gonna Rise" that was featured on "One Tree Hill" and a trailer for "Sons of Anarchy," as well as the tune "Bullet and a Target" that has had huge television success on "Entourage"</p>	<p>and others, as well as the movie "Alpha Dog" and others. He's sure to play some songs that will make you want to move and you'll leave happy... maybe or maybe not from a contact high.</p>
<p>November 9 Joshua Radin w/ A Fine Frenzy Marathon Music Works 1402 Clinton St., Nashville 8 p.m. Admission: \$23-27 Ages: 18+</p>		<p>BAM. On the heels of Citizen Cope on Thursday, Friday is another amazing show. Marathon Music Works is one of the coolest venues in Nashville with killer history. They've been open for a year this month, and they have a stellar track record of bring-</p>	<p>ing in great artists. This one is no exception. Joshua Radin has been on the scene since 2004. Some of you Scrubs fans may recognize the song "Winter" that he wrote for his friend Zach Braff. Radin's sound is a blend of folk-style, acoustic guitar work with a softer,</p>	<p>Ryan Cabrera-type vocal timbre. A Fine Frenzy, or Alison Sudol, has had success with her song "Electric Twist" from the album Bomb in a Birdcage and has toured with acts like Rufus Wainwright and burst onto the scene after 2007's South by Southwest.</p>
<p>November 9 An Acoustic Evening with Desert Rose Band Franklin Theatre 419 Main St, Franklin 8 p.m. Admission: \$39-55 Ages: All ages</p>		<p>Some of the best musicians still alive are in a group called Desert Rose Band and they're playing in Franklin at the Franklin Theatre. Names like Chris Hillman who is in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (pretty big deal), Jay Dee Maness who rocks the pedal steel</p>	<p>like a boss for Vince Gill and John Jorgenson who has played with Bob Seger and Bob Dylan, to name a few. Individually, any of the six musicians who make us Desert Rose band can hold their own with pretty much anyone, but together they make up a three-time Acad-</p>	<p>emy of Country Music Awards-winning supergroup. Hillman's songwriting along with the skill from the seasoned musicians who back him will make for an unbelievable evening.</p>
<p>November 10 Donavon Frankenreiter with Anderson East and Special Guests 3rd and Lindsley Bar and Grill Doors: 6 p.m. Show: 8 p.m. Admission: \$20 (includes free album) Ages: All Ages</p>		<p>Album release parties are fun. Usually the artist has worked really hard on a new album and is psyched out of their mind to share it with anyone who will listen. Donavon Frankenreiter may have a weird name, but he has great tunes. He began his career under the wings</p>	<p>of Jack Johnson and has taken cue from Johnson in both song and lifestyle. He has a family and a life in Hawaii and can shred the gnar with the best of the best given his extensive surf record. His sound reflects that journey, but he definitely has something unique.</p>	<p>His music is worth giving a chance. So is Anderson East's. He is an MTSU alumni and has a similar sound with acoustic guitar soundscapes and honest lyrics that make you think.</p>

RANTS AND RAVES

November 10
 Peeland-Z with Electric Eel and The Joy of Painting
 Mercy Lounge
 One Cannery Row,
 Nashville
 9 p.m.
 Admission: \$12
 Ages: 18+

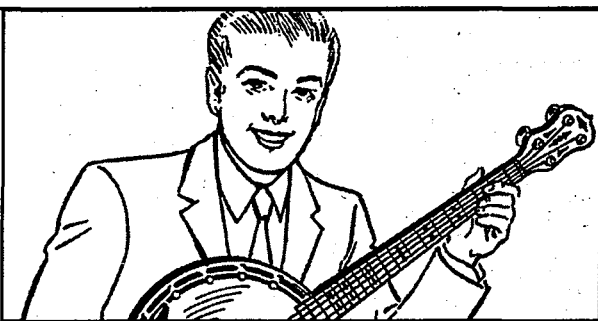


Do you like Anime? Cool. Do you like music? Cool. Do you like to exercise? Didn't think so. You can pander your baser desires for all of those things at the Peeland-Z show happening at the Mercy Lounge. The whole band is usually decked out

in colorful spandex and will not be going insane (unless they do the cheesy freeze thing that, like, EVERY band does). They were at Bonnaroo, and you probably didn't get to see them because of Radiohead or String Cheese or something. But they're fun, and they

know how to party. The Joy of Painting is a local act that knows how to do music right – like direct-to-tape, live recordings for their debut EP, the use of loads of vintage instruments and a focus on quality songwriting that will stick in your head.

November 11
 Bluegrass Jam
 The Station Inn
 402 12th Ave S
 7 p.m.
 Admission: FREE
 All Ages



Banjos, mandos, guitar-fiddles, regular fiddles and the butt-kickin' upright bass. The Full Moon Pickers Party season is over and if you still have to have your banjo fix, the next best thing is the Bluegrass Jam at The Station Inn. There will be food, drinks, a

lot of live, three-part harmonies, quick pickin' banjo players and flat pickers. No one has to really stress the legacy of bluegrass and the appeal of it to those raised in the south. It's who we are and you can't deny it. If you aren't from the south, come see what it's

all about. And if you hate bluegrass and you really know you hate it, we can respect that, but don't hate it until you at least give real-roots bluegrass a shot.

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Dress comfortably and in style with this fall's new trends

By Meredith Galyon
Staff writer

Now that summer is finally fading away, and winter is slowly creeping upon us, it is time to put those sundresses away and make room for the newest fall trends.

Oversized sweaters and vintage sweatshirts

While this trend may never have technically gone away, it will definitely be in full force this fall. The best part about it is that it is super easy to pull off, and is one of the more affordable ones to follow because you can find them at your local thrift store. Looking in the men's section is recommended as well, especially if you are going for a very oversized look to wear with leggings. If solid colors are your style, try wearing one layered over a printed maxi dress or with printed leggings. If you are looking to try a more bold print, like geometric or animal, these look great just paired with solid colored leggings or jeans. An extension of this trend is the vintage sweatshirt, complete with tacky graphics such as wolves, unicorns, cats, etc. This is also something that can be found at a thrift store, which would give you a more authentic vibe, but places like Forever 21 and H&M also offer them for a more expensive price.



At the Local Honey Fall Fashion show held at Mai, the resurgence of grunge was dominant in their '90s-styled outfits. Photo by Nhu Duong.

Leather

In addition to the ever-popular leather jacket, there has been a recent surge of looks involving leather shorts and leather leggings. Either of these choices can add an instant punk

element to your style. If you opt for shorts, try wearing them with printed tights and a silky blouse. If you are dying to see what leather leggings are all about, try pairing them with a graphic t-shirt and an oversized cardigan. The

great thing about these leggings is that they are usually thick enough to function as an alternative to skinny jeans, so worrying about whether or not your shirt is long enough should not be an issue.

Smoking Slippers

These shoes have become the newest alternative to the basic ballet flat. They are just as comfortable and versatile as regular flats, but the design has

a hint of the menswear look that is still popular this fall. They can be found in several different patterns, styles and colors. Some of the more popular styles include studs, leopard print and jewel tones like magenta and mustard. Try pairing them with knee socks and a patterned dress, or with your favorite skinny jeans and button-down shirt.

Grunge

The '90s are resurfacing this fall, complete with denim jackets, flannel shirts, combat boots and bomber jackets. All of these pieces can be combined together to create the perfect grunge ensemble, or you can weave single pieces into your everyday wardrobe to create a hint of grunge where it would not normally be found. Try wearing a black beanie with a floral dress and denim jacket, or a flannel shirt open over your favorite '90s band T-shirt with black combat boots.

Athletic shoes

Keds and other styles of athletic shoes have been popular recently and can spice up any outfit. Whether they are solid colored, patterned or even covered in glitter, they can put an interesting spin on a dress when worn with tights or knee socks. You can also use them to jazz up a simple sweater and jeans combo, or with a vintage sweatshirt and leggings. ■

Celebrate our freedom to vote with presidential films

By Claire Osburn
Contributing writer

Another Election Day has come and gone, and Americans have spoken. Gone are the days of outlandish political attack ads, at least for another four years, now we can collectively get back to worrying about other things, though nostalgia for this country's former presidents will remain. Lucky for us, numerous films have been made, both fiction and non-fiction, to commemorate this patriotic event. So, here are just a few of the best:

1. "Game Change" (2012) is the product of the 2008 presidential campaign of Senator John McCain (Ed Harris—"Man on a Ledge") and running mate, Gov. of Alaska Sarah Palin, played by a spot-on Julianne Moore ("Crazy, Stupid, Love"). The book, "Game Change," was penned by Mark Halperin and John Heilemann in 2010, and picked up by the HBO network. The film also stars Woody Harrelson ("Zombieland") as senior campaign strategist, Steve Schmidt. This follows the events of McCain's campaign run, Palin as his "game change," and chronicles his ultimate defeat in 2008 and, more prominently, vice presidential candidate Palin's rise to controversial fame.

2. "The Ides of March" (2011) is a film directed by George Clooney ("The Descendants"), who also stars as leading man Mike Morris, Gov. of Pennsylva-

nia who is one of the Democratic presidential candidates vying for the nomination. The story itself, however, is told through the eyes of junior campaign manager Stephen Meyers, played by Ryan Gosling ("Drive"). With senior campaign manager Paul Zara (Philip Seymour Hoffman - "The Master") hovering nearby, the audience gets a glimpse inside the intricate workings of the campaign trail, throwing in blackmail, secret deals, sexual scandals and a dirty reporter to boot.

3. Ron Howard ("Arrested Development", "Apollo 13") directed "Frost/Nixon" (2008), a film based on the true events surrounding a series of four lengthy interviews between British journalist David Frost (Michael Sheen - 2006 play, "Frost/Nixon") and former president Richard Nixon (Frank Langella - "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps"), post-Watergate scandal. This re-telling serves as a permanent reminder of the notorious interviews in which Nixon publicly discusses "letting the American people down."

4. The year 2008 produced yet another presidential term recount in the form of "W.," a film directed by Oliver Stone ("Savages") chronicling George W. Bush's (Josh Brolin - "True Grit") journey from booze-guzzling Yale graduate, to being the 43rd, as well as one

of this nation's most controversial, president. Elizabeth Banks ("Our Idiot Brother") portrays Bush's wife Laura, with James Cromwell ("The Artist") as his you'll-never-be-good-enough-for-me father, George H. W. Bush.

5. "John Adams" also premiered in 2008, and is technically an HBO mini-series that was released in seven parts. It is the biographical tale of the life of one of America's founding fathers. Played accurately and passionately by Paul Giamatti ("The Ides of March"), "John Adams" dissects the political career and milestones that helped solidify Adams' place a prominent figure in our nation's history.

6. "Fahrenheit 9/11" is a documentary film by Michael Moore ("Sicko") that was released in 2004 at the Cannes Film Festival. It received many accolades for its ruthless divulgence into the terrible events of Sept. 11, as well as the presidency of George W. Bush and both his and the media's role in the day Americans will never forget.

7. "Primary Colors" is a 1998 film based on "Primary Colors: A Novel of Politics," written by Newsweek journalist Joe Klein about Bill Clinton's presidential campaign and 1992 election. It stars John Travolta ("Savages") as Jack Stanton, fictional governor of the South who is striving for



Wikipedia.org. Facebook.com/All-The-Presidents-Men. facebook.com/FrostNixonFilm. facebook.com/IdesOfMarchMovie

the Democratic Party presidential nomination, Emma Thompson (the "Harry Potter" series) as his wife Susan and Adrian Lester ("The Day After Tomorrow") as campaign staff member Henry Burton. The based-in-truth events unravel around affairs, lies and the rigorous campaign trail, that lead up to the presidency of the supposedly fictitious Stanton.

8. "The American President" is a unique type of presidential movie. Released in 1995, the film is based in fiction and starred Michael Douglas ("Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps") and Annette Bening ("The Kids Are Alright") as, President Andrew Shepherd and lobbyist Sydney Ellen Wade - a pair with ul-

terior motives. Written by Aaron Sorkin ("The Newsroom"), the movie focuses on the romantic relationship between the two, also emphasizing the crucial relationship between lobbyists and the presidency.

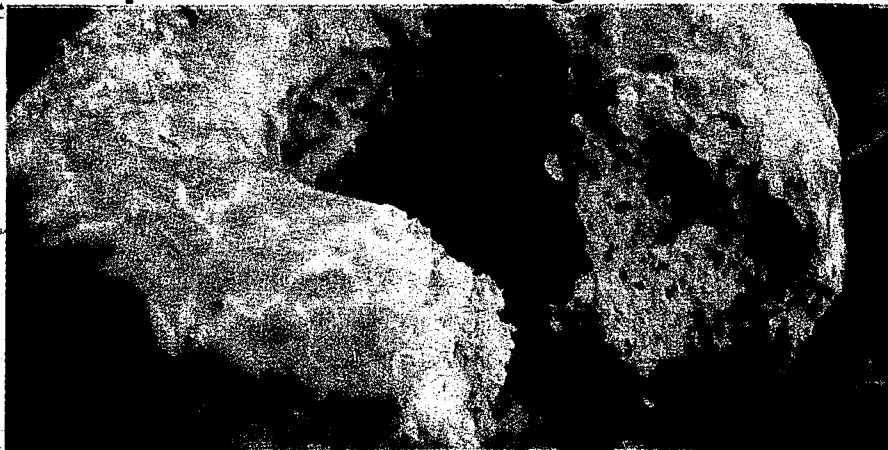
9. "All the President's Men" is a 1976 film on the never-ending controversy of the Watergate Scandal. Yet this time, it is done through the viewpoint of The Washington Post's investigative journalists Bob Woodward (Robert Redford - "The Company You Keep") and Carl Bernstein (Dustin Hoffman - "Luck"). Woodward and Bernstein penned a book titled the same two years prior to the film's release, all of which documents their real-life findings. Since its release, "All the

President's Men" has received a multitude of critical acclaims.

10. "Lincoln," which will be released nationwide Nov. 16, is the 10-year baby of Director Steven Spielberg ("Super 8") which should convey the level of expected excellence. With Daniel Day-Lewis ("There Will Be Blood") as Abraham Lincoln, and Sally Field ("Brothers & Sisters") as his wife Mary, the film - drawing from "Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln," a biography written by Doris Kearns Goodwin - will recount the final months of Lincoln's life. This includes the major historical moments his presidency produced, like the ending slavery and the Civil War. ■

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

A Murfreesboro guide to pumpkin-flavored goodness



A pumpkin-flavored cake donut from Donut Country is a cheap and easy way to celebrate the popular fall flavor. Photo by

By Jessica Kryza
Food critic

It's that time of the year to embrace the flavors of fall: nutmeg, cinnamon, clove and, most importantly, pumpkin. There are many places in Murfreesboro that offer more than just your traditional pumpkin pie.

Here are five places sure to fix those pumpkin cravings:

Aspen Leaf

2136 Middle Tennessee Blvd; Price depends on final weight of yogurt

Just right off of campus, Aspen Leaf serves creamy, semi-sweet Pumpkin Pie Frozen Yogurt with hints of cinnamon and other spices. Suggested toppings for this cold treat are graham crackers and whipped cream to mimic the flavor profiles of a pumpkin pie served in a cup.

Donut Country

1311 Memorial Blvd.; \$0.89, plus tax
This donut shop has won many Daily News Journal "Ruthies" for its

amazing creations. Stop by Donut Country in the morning or afternoon, and grab a Pumpkin Spice Donut. Because this is a cake donut, it will be denser than your typical glazed donut, so milk or coffee will most certainly be needed.

Gigi's Cupcakes

451 N. Thompson Lane; \$3.25, plus tax
Once you have a cupcake from Gigi's, you will be hooked. These cupcakes are pricey, but worth it. The Pumpkin White Chocolate Cupcake is baked with white chocolate chips, covered with a white chocolate, cream cheese frosting, and dusted with pumpkin pie spice. This guilty pleasure is only served on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Panera Bread

1970 Old Fort Pkwy.;
Prices will vary
Panera Bread has multiple options for pumpkin lovers. Instead of getting a bland white bagel, how about trying something different like a Pumpkin Pie Bagel? This freshly-baked

bagel is topped with a crumb topping and a cinnamon sugar mixture, then dusted with powdered sugar. You can also try a Pumpkin Cookie – a crowd-pleasing, pumpkin-flavored, shortbread cookie with icing. Pumpkin Muffins are also available. This breakfast staple is made with real pumpkin and honey, and is topped with powdered sugar. And for those in need of a caffeine kick, try a Pumpkin Spice Latte – espresso, foamed milk, pumpkin spice with whipped cream and caramel sauce.

Wild Flours

307 S. Church St.;
Prices starting at \$1.50+
This organic, all-natural bakery and mill is dishing out healthier pumpkin products to satisfy our cravings. Wild Flours offers Pumpkin Bread, Pumpkin Spice Muffins, Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Muffins and gluten-free Pumpkin Muffins for those who are living a gluten-free lifestyle. ■

Artist spotlight: Tyke-T driven by music



Tyke-T will be performing at Marathon Music Works on Dec. 1 and with MT Storytellers on Nov. 16 in the KUC Theater. Photo courtesy of Marcus Tompkins.

By Megan Richmond
Contributing writer

Tyke-T is not what anyone would describe as the stereotypical hip-hop artist. Raised in Smyrna, Tenn., from a single-parent home, he graduated from MTSU in 2009 with a degree in marketing and in 2011, became the first member of his family to receive his MBA. Even with his long list of accomplishments, Tyke-T is still just an inspiring young man trying to pursue his No. 1 dream: music.

SL: Why do you love hip-hop?

Tyke-T: There are so many things that I like about hip-hop. The way that you can express your feelings, your emotions, your soul. Because a lot of people that do hip-hop have so much struggle, and so many things we gotta go through. We're trying to give you everything we have in these songs, in these chords; trying to give you all our passions. That's one reason why I love it, you know? It goes

so deep. Hip-hop is just amazing. The way you can express yourself. I love that.

SL: What is Driven By Music?

TT: Driven By Music is everything. It's my baby. It's my brand. The thing I love about it is that I get to be me. I don't have to act. I can do anything. Music is my passion. But to the next person it could be art or video games or whatever – whatever drives you to be successful. That's what Driven By Music embodies. And I love it because there are no limits on it. Another thing that I love about it is that it's a brand that everyone can relate to.

SL: What are some of your major musical influences as far as other artists and why?

TT: It's like two levels to that. The first side, of course, is people who are out right now. I love Kanye West. I think he is the best artist out right now. He just can do it all. His subject content is amazing. His beats are

amazing. He brings you music. He's an artist. I think the best lyricist out right now is J. Cole. Nobody can mess with him on the lyrics and having a great content. I like him as well. And I really, really like R&B. Like old-school R&B. Bobby Brown, Jodeci, Mint Condition. Those are the type of things that I listen to and get inspiration from.

SL: Tell me about what's coming up for MT StoryTellers [the independent hip-hop show in the KUC Nov. 16].

TT: It's gonna be a great show. Nov. 16 with First Flight ENT – lot of performers that have graduated from MT and some who are still on campus. And our whole thing that night is we're going to give you our stories with a live set.

For more information about Tyke-T and also to purchase Driven By Music merchandise, please visit www.drivenbymusic.net ■

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Pizza, cereal, music fuel local outfit Joy of Painting

By Jane Horne
Arts & Entertainment
editor

Separately, they're a group of 20-something guys. But any time this group of friends come together, they make up the pizza, fun- and cereal-loving, local garage-pop band that is The Joy of Painting.

The five piece is made up of frontman and guitar player Garreth Spinn, lead guitar and backup vocalist Dave Armstrong, keyboard/saxophone/backup vocalist Kyle McCormick, drummer Chris Houser and bassist and backup vocalist Mark Bullock.

As they finish up band practice around 6 p.m. – they've been at it since 10 that morning – they discuss the time lengths of certain verses, and which songs they're playing for the upcoming show at Mercy Lounge opening for Peelander-Z. It's a normal scene, as the group finishes up being all business. As they sit down, they transform into five regular guys who joke about bad band names such as "Man Chest Hair Orchestra," and YouTube videos, ultimately representing the essence of the band they have all become devoted to.

The Joy of Painting works to create songs that are fun and accessible, while they remain invested in making music that friends and family in their age group, and with similar life experiences, can relate to.

"I started exploring what was happening in Nashville, and I realized

that there were some people that were making more energetic music and I felt like, 'OK, let's make something that's fun, let's make something that people can connect to, but not get overly emotional,'" Spinn said. "If it's fun to listen to, and we're fun to watch and they're having fun, then that's the big idea."

Amid the essential and relatable songs about love and break-ups, JOP writes about the changes that come with being in your mid-20s – becoming independent, watching friends get married, moving away and freaking out about it, make their messages about life that any of their friends or family members can relate to.

"As a general rule, I like to send stuff to my mom, and if my mom doesn't like it, chances are the general public's not going to like it," Spinn said. "The songs that she loves – like the song 'Good Mood' with the saxophone? I sent her that song and she was like, 'Garreth, that song is going to be a hit.' And that's currently our most popular song."

The Joy of Painting is coming up on their two-year mark. Spinn, Armstrong, McCormick and Bullock all met during their time at MTSU. With degrees in the recording industry program, it wasn't long before the four were running in the same circles. While Spinn and Armstrong were doing the singer/songwriter folk duo thing, Mc-

Houser were playing for indie-rock band One Big Owl.

By January 2011, Spinn realized that he was growing bored with his and Armstrong's current project, and they could not achieve the heavier sound they were looking for with two people.

At this point, the five came from their separate projects to come together as one, McCormick, Bullock and Houser coming from One Big Owl, led by Sephra Scheuber.

"I basically stole her band," Spinn said.

"Sephra's vowed to kill Garreth, one day," McCormick said.

"Yes, she's in Oklahoma, but she's slowly plotting to take me out," Spinn said.

Hence, The Joy of Painting began, getting their name from the Bob Ross television show.

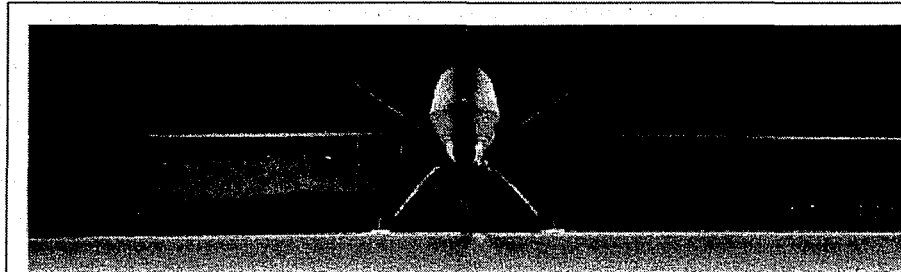
"There is a lot of elements of that show that you could connect to this band," McCormick said. "The lightheartedness and sheer joy of whatever Bob Ross is doing – we love doing this, and that dude loved painting."

As JOP prepares for their Nov. 10 show at Mercy Lounge, it is obvious that their environment contributed to their continued growth as a band. Experiencing the Nashville music scene helped to humble them, challenge them and encourage them to keep working harder. And with such a saturated environment of musicians, being a band in Nashville helps to keep

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"If there was one thing I could go back and tell my freshmen self ... just keep your eyes out for the people you want to be married to musically. We all met at MTSU. Some people go to find their spouse, some go to find their band," Armstrong said. Photo by Briana Mailley.



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It takes more than a new president...

By Alex Harris
Opinions editor

If you're making your judgments based on the polls and pundits, the 2012 election seems to be one of historic importance—one in which the country is divided down the middle on some serious issues.

Judging by its portrayal in the media, this election potentially determines the very fate of America.

But in reality, from November 7 onward, no matter the election outcome, things will not



Alex Harris

be dramatically different. Rather, they'll most likely be undramatically similar.

Those issues that

have been at the focus of this election cycle have been mostly superficial, and the differences between the candidates remarkably small.

The political discourse in the months leading up to this election has focused on the different ways in which the candidates have mistreated dogs in the past, whether the government should fund Sesame Street or not, women in binders, whether entrepreneurs built their own businesses and which

candidate would be better at bombing foreign countries.

Additionally, the fact that "Obamacare" is based on health care legislation that was the brainchild of Romney while he was the governor of Massachusetts has put the GOP presidential candidate in the awkward position of denouncing a plan very similar to one that he used to tout as a political victory.

Gary Johnson, the Libertarian candidate for president, is the only

candidate who statistically stands a chance to win against the two major parties who is also actually discussing real issues such as the War on Drugs and our overextended global military presence.

Johnson is also the only candidate with an ambitious plan to balance the budget and reduce our national debt by cutting the federal budget by 43 percent across the board.

But, even if by some miracle Johnson was able to pull off an elec-

tion victory, the president is just one person, and he would be dealing with a Congress still ruled by petty politics and lobbyists.

However, Johnson, knowing the enemy he faces in the entrenched two-party political system, isn't campaigning in hopes of winning the presidency. Instead his campaign is focused on garnering at least 5 percent of the national vote. If the campaign is able to do this, it will mean the Libertarian party will automatically



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OPINIONS

appear on the ballots in all 50 states next election.

They will also qualify for federal campaign funds, giving them a better budget and potentially allowing Johnson to gain more media attention and name recognition, helping him to poll at numbers high enough to hopefully gain access to the presidential debates in 2016.

Johnson's strategy seems more focused on playing the long game. He is following in the

path of Ron Paul and attempting to build a movement and change the political landscape. This strategy suggests that he is aware that true change needs more than just a politician, more than an election cycle.

True change takes time and effort. True change begins with the individual.

Remember, it was on a platform of "change" that Barack Obama was elected president.

However, in four years, little has changed. We're still involved in Middle

East nation building, we're still fighting a war in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay is still open, our economy is still operating at around 8 percent unemployment and our national debt has skyrocketed to over \$16 trillion.

After the 2008 election, America seemed to expect that a new president would magically fix every problem that the country faced.

But it takes more than a new president.

If Americans truly want to see a change in

government and society, then we need to get serious about doing things differently. We need to be more involved in the aspects of life that affect us, and we need to pay more attention to the actions of our political class.

As the cliché goes, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

In order to do that though, we need to stop relying so much on the government to fix those problems that we perceive in our lives and

communities.

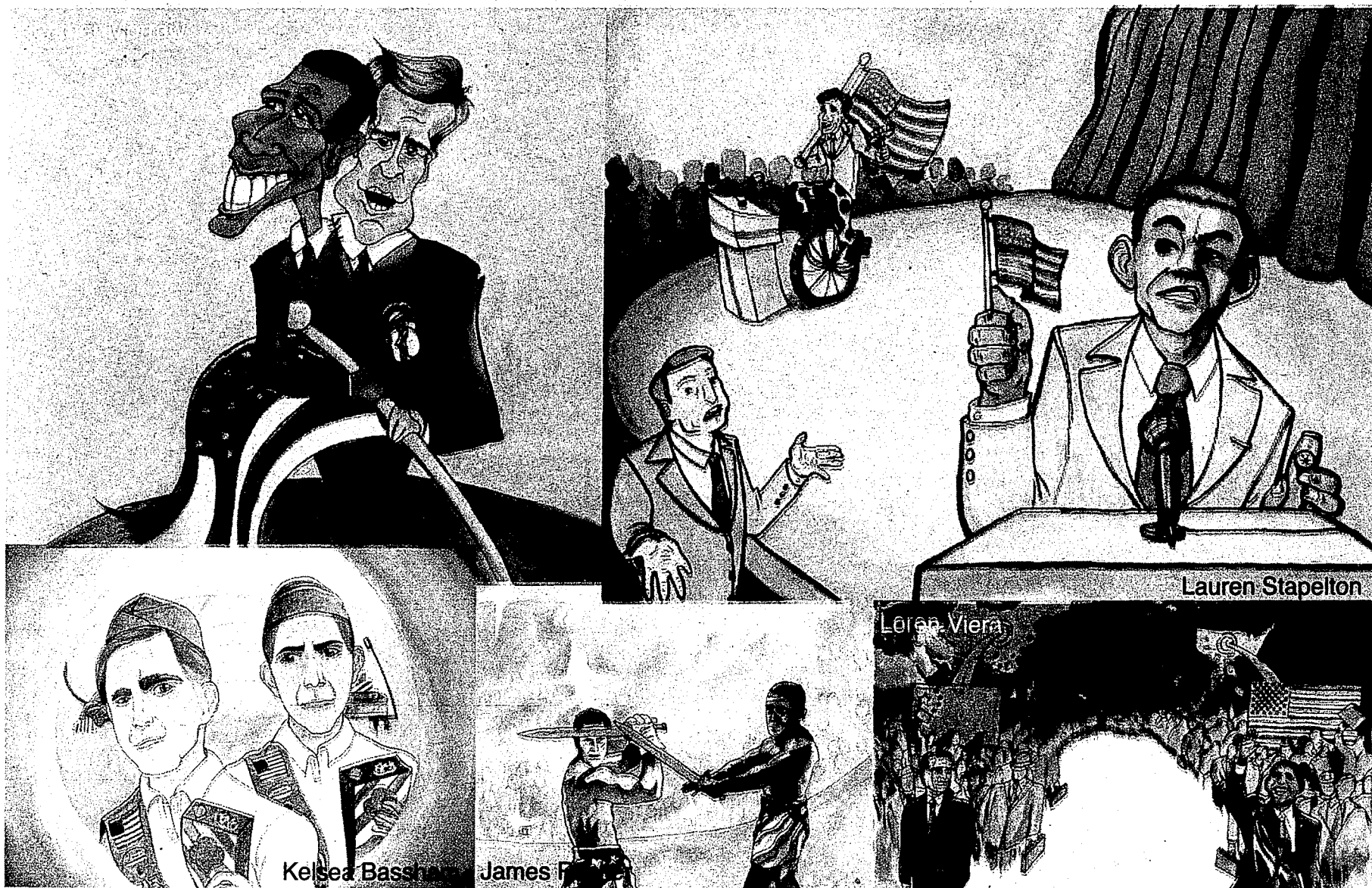
In the well-intended interest of providing solutions with efficiency, many of government's attempted solutions are one-size-fits-all. However, the problem with this approach is that as each individual is different from his neighbor, so is each community faced with problems different from the next.

Additionally, politicians are generally concerned with one thing: getting elected or re-elected. Much of what is said or done by

a majority of our politicians is to that end, not in the interest of finding real solutions.

As Groucho Marx once said, "Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedies."

We need to take personal responsibility for the problems in our lives and communities, and actively work with our neighbors to find solutions, before we can actually expect any changes to take place. ■



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SPORTS

Last season's mistakes could help Blue Raiders reach new heights

By Connor Grott
Staff writer

The Middle Tennessee men's basketball team played with efficiency last season, going down in the books as one of the best seasons in program history with 27 wins, second Sun Belt East Title in three seasons and deep National Invitation Tournament run.

But could the Blue Raider men's basketball team have achieved more?

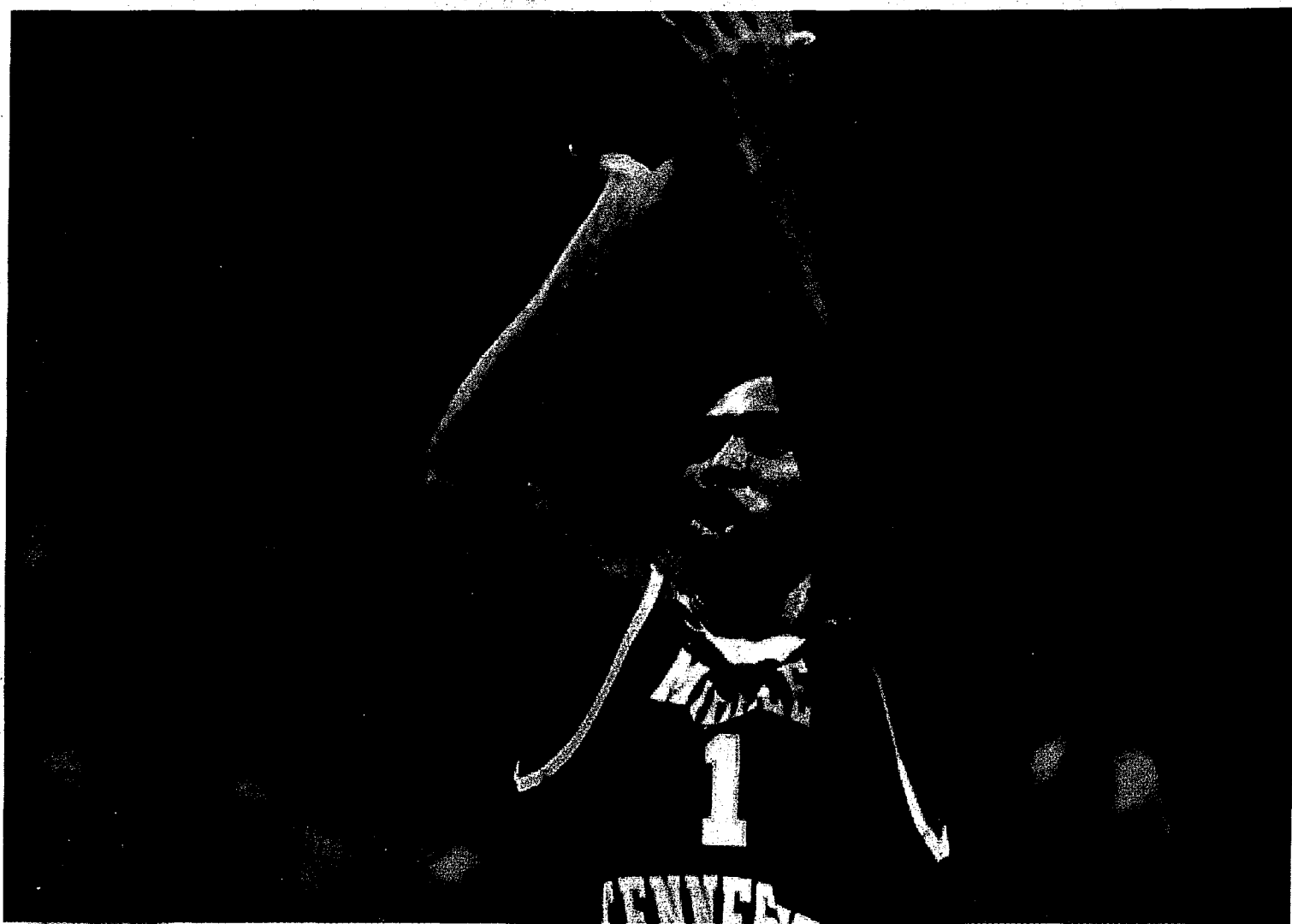
One area that MT will look to improve on will be free-throw shooting.

Throughout last season and in the few losses as well, MT struggled heavily with free throws, finishing the season at 63 percent, ranking 320th in the country. In a double overtime contest against Belmont, MT shot 16 for 30 from the line, going 4 for 11 combined in both overtime periods, in what could have been a different outcome if the free throws were converted.

In the regular season finale against WKU and also in a 64-61 loss to Arkansas State in the Sun Belt conference tournament opener, MT shot a mere 50 percent from the charity stripe.

Despite free-throw shooting issues, MT proved to be one of the top shooting teams in the country last season, ranking fourth in the nation in field goal percentage and 55th in three-point percentage.

Although the Blue Raiders picked their shots and converted each attempt at a high



Replacing the post presence of departed forward LaRon Dendy could go a long way toward taking home a Sun Belt Title for the Blue Raiders. (Photo courtesy of MT Athletic Communications)

rate, MT did not attempt many shots compared to other top teams in the country. Middle Tennessee attempted 52.1 shots per game, 283rd in the country, while totaling only 1,616 shots, the fewest since the 2005-2006 season and good for 271st in the nation.

In addition to overall shot attempts, the Blue Raiders did not attempt enough three pointers. MT converted 36.6 percent of their three pointers, but only 19.6 percent of their points

were from three-point range, ranking 330th in the country despite fielding hot shooters like Raymond Cintron. Heading into 2012-2013, Cintron has been picked as one of the nation's top 50 shooters by CBSSports.com.

MT will also be searching for someone to step up and replace last year's Sun Belt Player of the Year LaRon Dendy, who was the team's leading scorer and rebounder last season. Dendy was

a talented scorer, averaging over 14 points per game, but the quality in Dendy that MT will perhaps miss the most is his rebounding abilities and post play.

MT was in the middle of the pack when it came to rebounding last season, averaging 34.9 boards per game and ranking 148th in the country.

Senior forward J.T. Sulton and senior guard Marcos Knight, who both averaged 5.2 rebounds per game,

will look to improve upon these numbers and dominate the boards this season to fill in for Dendy, along with role players who should receive more time on the court this season like Shawn Jones, Torin Walker and transfer Neiko Hunter.

MT will be looking to improve on last season's miscues, attempting to put together another historic season and bring home a conference title, and perhaps an NCAA tournament appearance.

Fans will get their first chance to witness the program's last installment of Blue Raider basketball when MT takes on Auburn-Montgomery on Monday, Nov. 5 in an exhibition game at the Murphy Center. The Blue Raiders will open up the season at home against Alabama State on Friday, Nov. 9 in their home-opener for what looks to be another exciting season for the Blue Raiders. ■

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you on your toes.

"The guy that serves you coffee can probably play guitar in circles around you," Spinn said.

"AND make a really mean espresso," Armstrong finished.

Spinn goes on to talk about the snobbishness that can come off from Nashville crowds due to the competitive nature of the Music City.

"We don't want to come off as pretentious, or like we think we're above anyone or anything. I know like, when the show's over, I make a point to anyone that says anything that's complimentary, to learn their name, shake their hand, let them know that I'm accessible and we're excited to be here," Spinn said.

"We play music on stage for a lot of people. Let's not forget that that's a lot of fun," McCormick said.

The four that attended MTSU developed skills that they are using as a result of their education.

"It's really cool to have all the skills that one band could possibly need in-house," Spinn said.

Bullock takes charge of the producing and musical engineering and Spinn takes the initiative with all of the booking. McCormick has also done all of the album artwork for the band.

"And I play pretty much all the video games," said Houser.

Education only takes you so far, however. After that, you have to get out there and just do it. JOP just returned from their first tour, which



cutline

came as a result of hours of Spinn emailing and talking to venues. Bowling Green, Indianapolis and Pontiac, Mich. were among a few of the stops on the tour.

"If you're going to do this, if you don't

plan on having a 'real' career, you have to be totally into this or totally out of it. There's no in-between," Spinn said.

The experience was as successful as it could be, but the group's favorite part was get-

ting to stay after the shows and hang out with people. The band and the fans developed more of a bond that ultimately makes the music more meaningful for both parties because in the end, it's all about having fun.

"We wanted to be the band that lets you remember that you can forget yourself," Armstrong said.

The group has a varied list of priorities that range from feelings to food.

"That's the only

thing that really matters as a musician, is getting better. Unless I'm mistaken," Spinn said.

"Pizza matters," McCormick said.

"Pizza and cereal," Spinn said. ■

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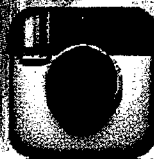
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