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Sidelines Lens



Students from Alpha Tau Omega and Phi Beta Sigma hold a candlelight vigil on the KUC knoll to promote suicide awareness and remember MTSU students who have been victims of suicide.

Photo by Davion Baxter

Cover photo by Emily West

Corrections:

In last week's cover story, we incorrectly reported Obama was reelected with the highest unemployment rate ever. It should have said "since the Great Depression."

Visit us at www.mtsusidelines.com

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Power-hungry squirrel raises campus energy questions

By Quint Qualls
Staff writer

After a single squirrel managed to darken the entire campus, the questions of university power sources staying above ground continue to cause concern.

Even though a \$9.2 million campus power underground system is slated for completion Nov. 2015 for prevention and safety reasons, the university experienced a campus-wide outage Nov. 5 starting at 7 a.m. Power was not completely restored until 3 p.m., leaving sections of the campus without Internet or electricity.

The eight hours students and faculty spent in the dark could have been avoided with a quicker repair response time.

"Right now the campus is trying to go from over ground to underground with their power systems," said Amy Byers, Murfreesboro Electric Department spokeswoman. "They're trying to get loops in there, so that when something like this happens, you can view the problem from a different direction.

The problem with that is that it is all in progress. Two or three years from now, the response time would not have been this slow."

While the university remained open, many professors canceled class depending on whether power had been restored in their building.

The power not only affected the classroom environment, but it also caused problems for media outlets such as the professional radio station WMOT that had dead air for more than three hours.

With the electrical equipment aboveground sealed, the rodents still find their way in. As temperatures get cooler and more inhospitable, these animals look to find any route possible into shelter — that includes a switchgear for a 13,000-volt grid.

"We are taking the utility system underground," Jimmy Hart, consultant with MTSU Facilities Service Department. "It helps reduce the number of outages caused by animals getting into the system, but it won't prevent it completely.



Graphic by Christopher Do.

The primary advantage for underground utilities is to prevent weather-related outages caused by conditions such as high winds or ice and snow-fall. The other benefit is to aesthetics by reducing the number of utility poles and lines visible above ground."

The process to alleviate the problem involved shutting off the grid for worker safety. Compared to an average household grid of 120 volts, the 13,000-volt grid of the university

would pose a serious hazard to anyone coming into contact with it while it is still running.

"We have to conduct a survey to identify those portions of the system that have been damaged and the extent of that damage," Hart said. "Once that was determined, in this particular case, utility workers had to bypass the damaged equipment in order to get power back up in a timely fashion. The affected equipment was taken

out of the system."

The university experiences these types of outages about once every 18 months for various reasons, but that is due to improve significantly once the underground systems project reaches completion.

"Quite frankly, you have far more reliable power when your system's underground," Byers said.

For now, the university generates its own power with the Murfreesboro Electric

Department contracted out to help maintain, facilitate and restore power when the campus needs it.

"We were there trying to get the system tied back in," Byers said. "We're more or less like a contract employee once they figured out what the problem was. Then we would go through and try to get everything reconnected, rework stuff to get things back on at different times."■

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Passive behavior, bone health inspire graduate student

By Jessica Kryza
Staff writer

Graduate student Saori Ishikawa is reaching out into the Rutherford County area to conduct research work to find the relationship between women's bone health and sedentary behaviors.

The study of sedentary behavior grew over the past few years as medical experts figured out what happens to a patient's health when continuing to do activities such as watching TV, using electronic devices or anything that involves sitting for long periods of time.

Ishikawa remains in the first process of her dissertation, which is the last phase of her doctoral degree. She proposed her study in mid-October and immediately began recruiting volunteers. As of now, 20-plus women volunteered themselves for the research.

Ishikawa's study is broken into two parts. The first part involves 40 working and non-working postmenopausal women, who she will be collecting data from. To collect and record data, she uses a high-quality machine called Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry to produce a bone scan to physically see volunteers' bone density or a lack thereof.

The volunteers are given a chart to document specific sedentary behaviors — work-related and otherwise — for an entire week to measure physical activity such as lying down,



Saori Ishikawa hangs out in her office in Alumni Memorial Gym. Photo by Daniel Meyes

driving or watching television at specific times of the day while wearing an ActiGraph.

"It gives me a really good idea of when during the day they are engaging in certain sedentary pursuits," Ishikawa said.

Ishikawa explained that a major factor that is causing the loss of bone density in older women is osteoporosis, a disease that makes bones fragile.

"No matter how hard one person tries to maintain bone density, if they are already genetically predisposed to osteoporosis, it is very difficult to prevent that person from losing bone mass," Ishikawa said.

Physical activity, as well as nutrition, plays a role in bone health, said Ishikawa.

"It seems like when people — older females

— look back and think about how active they were while they were in childhood," Ishikawa said. "It seems like the current bone density is higher compared to those who were less ac-

tive in childhood."

The second part of Ishikawa's bone health study, which will start in Jan. 2013, requires 30 more postmenopausal women, and she is hoping that she can

individualize a program for each individual to minimize sedentary behavior over a month-long intervention.

"The population is exactly the same — 65 and above females — except for the second study. All of them have to be non-working just because I need to have a specific population," Ishikawa said. "Those who are interested in the first part can still participate in the second part of the study (if they are eligible)."

Ishikawa explained why it is crucial to have non-working women in the second part of the study.

"If I had people that are working still, it's hard to intervene them and try to reduce sedentary time while they are working," Ishikawa said. "If they are retired, not working and staying home, then it's more feasible for me to say, 'Okay. During this

hour, it looks like you are engaging in sedentary behavior for three hours. Why don't we try and decrease that by one hour next week?'"

Ishikawa's interest in health and physical education started when she suffered a knee injury while competing as a gymnast for the University of Tsukuba in Tsukuba, Japan. It was there that she also earned her bachelor's degree in health and physical education. She not only has a Master of Science, but she is also a certified athletic trainer and a strength and conditioning specialist.

"My passion is in bone health in females across the life span," Ishikawa said.

She will be graduating from the doctoral program at MTSU Department of Health and Human Performance in August. ■

ROBBERY

**Scarlett Commons
Apt. 2**

Nov. 5, 10:55 a.m.

MTSU Public Safety received a robbery complaint from a student. The student reported that a male student approached her and grabbed her iPhone from her hand while she was at the Scarlett Commons Apartments Complex near Building #2. The suspect then fled on foot from the Scarlett Commons area toward Greenland Drive. The complainant did not sustain any serious injury in the confrontation. The suspect was described

CRIME BRIEFS

as a heavy set black male about 19 to 20 years old without facial hair, approximately 5'7," wearing a black hoodie, black denim pants and black shoes.

WEAPON

Parking and Transportation Parking Lot

Nov. 6, 8:25 a.m.

Officers received an anonymous tip that a female had placed a handgun under the seat of her vehicle. Officers were able to locate the vehicle and the owner. A handgun was found in the vehicle. Through investigation, it was

determined that the vehicle owner did not place the weapon in the vehicle. It is believed that this is the result of a domestic situation.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

Intramural Fields

Nov. 6, 11:39 p.m.

A complainant reported that an individual was causing problems and refusing to follow the facility rules. The individual left the scene prior to officers' arrival. The matter will be forwarded to Judicial Affairs for any disciplinary action.

THEFT

Corlew Hall

Nov. 7, 11:42 p.m.

A complainant reported that a pair of shoes had been stolen and contacted the department later to inform that the property had been returned. The complainant does not wish to press charges.

DRUG ABUSE

Lyon Hall

Nov. 8, 6:57 p.m.

A complainant reported that drug paraphernalia was found in the restroom.

-Rickey Fuquay

Box it up: Sheriff's Department encourages safe drug disposal

By Michael Wilson
Staff writer

The Rutherford County Sheriff's Department wants citizens to properly dispose of unused or out-of-date prescription medications, or even illegal drugs, in an unexpected way.

In early 2012, the Rutherford County Sheriff's Department became the home of a drug drop-off box through a grant to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, which allows citizens a safe, legal and anonymous way to dispose of legal or illegal drugs or substances. The box can be found in the main lobby of the Sheriff's Department located at 940 New Salem Highway in Murfreesboro.

The lobby is open 24 hours a day, said Deputy Jim Noe, who is assigned to the community service division. Students who feel pressured to sell their unused medications or if they are using drugs and want to get clean now have a way to get the drugs out of harm's way.

"Don't sell your medications," Noe said, concerning the student population. "For one thing, it is illegal. Another thing is, you're enabling addictions. You could be responsible for some very bad things happening."

The department only tracks what is deposited in the box for purposes of the TDEC grant, not

who does the disposing. "Any individual may drop off prescription medications or narcotics anonymously with no report," Lt. Phillip Martin said. Martin handles evidence for the sheriff's office.

Medications or narcotics should be tightly sealed in leak proof containers. It is preferred that medications be deposited in their original containers. Labels can be peeled off to protect the name of the individual to whom the medication was prescribed. If the original container is not available, well-sealed storage bags are accepted as well.

"Every week to two we empty it," Martin said. "It will usually fill up a 50-gallon bucket."

Needles should not be disposed of in the container. If individuals feel the need to dispose of needles in this way, they must seal the needles in a puncture-proof container.

"We don't want anything that could have an infectious disease transmitted via blood or anything," Noe said.

Liquid medications, medicated lotions and ointments can also be put in the box if sealed tightly. Non-medicated personal care products should not be disposed of in the drug box. A list of other do's and don'ts can be found listed on the front of the box.

Rutherford County is one of 13 counties in Tennessee that have a TDEC drug drop-off

box, and one of few that will accept illicit drugs. More boxes are expected in the future, but no dates have been set.

"We had to apply with the Department of Conservation here in Tennessee," Noe said. "We had to contact the [Drug Enforcement Agency], and let the TDEC know, and get their approval. There were certain criteria we had to meet for that, especially as far as disposing of it properly. Once all of that paperwork was finished, it was submitted to them, and they gave us, provided us the drop-off box."

Disposing of both prescription and illicit drugs properly prevents them from ending up in drinking and ground water supplies. Studies conducted around the country indicate that trace amounts of thousands of pharmaceutical compounds are in city drinking water, rivers and lakes. Some of these compounds can be effective even in very small doses, according to reports from the Environmental Protection Agency.

"Monitoring across the nation has indicated the presence of pharmaceuticals in our surface water and waste water," said Bob Martineau, TDEC Commissioner. "TDEC is pleased to present these permanent collection drop-off boxes, offering a save and viable disposal option to keep drugs out of our water and off the streets."

The Drug Enforcement Administration put on five national drug take-back days since Sept. 2010, but these are only temporary locations.

The last national event was held Sept. 29 at 5,236 locations, collecting approximately 244 tons of medications and other drugs. To date these DEA-sponsored take-back events have resulted in the collection of 1,018 tons of medications.

The next national take-back event is expected to take place in April 2012, but the box at the Sheriff's Department is always available. ☐



The medicine disposal box provides a safe, private place to dispose of unwanted medication. Photo courtesy of James Noe.



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FEATURES

Murfreesboro recreation perfect for getting active pre-holiday

By **Mary-Margaret Weatherford**
Staff writer

If you've been secretly munching on that tub of Halloween candy for two weeks, you may be itching for some exercise before the ample feasting times of Thanksgiving and Christmas roll around.

Or perhaps you're simply looking to get a jump start on your New Year's resolution of getting outside and living a healthier lifestyle. Murfreesboro is packed with outdoor recreation areas to walk, run, bike or take in some nature.

Tennessee's chilly weather is encroaching on its residents, but there's something about breathing in the crisp fall and winter air that trumps sweaty-smelling gyms every time. The outdoor recreation experience is open and freeing, far superior to enclosed areas full of iron-pumping beasts. Becki Johnson, the program coordinator for Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation, said recreation areas ensure physical fitness and wellness, enjoyment of nature, stress relief and socialization.

"Recreation areas are very important to a person's overall quality of life," said Johnson. The Murfreesboro Greenway is one of the better-known trails in our college town. Students can be spotted on the 12-mile paved trail that runs along Stones River, ideal for bikers and pedestrians alike.

If there is heavy rain, traipsing through high



A cannon sits in the graveyard across the street from the home office at Stones River Battlefield. Photo by Kelsey Kligenmeyer.

waters or mud puddles on the trail is likely because of the river's proximity. Trailheads are located on Thompson Lane, off of Broad Street at Cannonsburgh Village, Old Fort Park, Cason Lane, and there is additional parking and a trail beginning.

Marlane Sewell, employee of the Mur-

freesboro Parks and Recreation department for almost 27 years, resides in the Greenway Visitor Center on West College Street.

"People need to be able to get outdoors and enjoy it," Sewell said, "just to have something to do besides work and housework."

The Parks and Rec

veteran thinks everyone, particularly students, needs to implement physical outdoor activities into their lives instead of being constantly connected to technology.

"You need to have that balance," she said. Sewell complimented the trails, and explained why she thinks having

a place like the Greenway benefits the citizens of Murfreesboro.

"It's a good opportunity to get outside, be in the middle of town, but see some nature, hear the running water," said Sewell.

Canine friends can mix and mingle at the Greenway's Bark Park, since dogs need

exercise and a social life, too. The Bark Park is located at the General Bragg trailhead on West College Street across from the Greenway Visitor Center.

For those wanting to feel more in touch with nature through a slightly more rugged terrain, Stones River National Battlefield can

FEATURES

cure the craving. Stones River National Battlefield offers paved, gravel and dirt trails. The 1.75-mile unpaved trail snakes through the woods, and paved and gravel trails run along the tree lines and field sides. Deer, turkey and other wildlife can be spotted from any of the pathways.

John McKay, park ranger of the Battlefield nine years and counting, has worked at 13 national parks. He's no stranger to understanding the importance of outdoor recreation areas.

"It's a release valve more than anything else," McKay said. McKay pointed out that people not only improve their health by visiting but can also get a healthy dose of Tennessee Civil War history. While hitting the trails, plaques dot the pathways describing historical significance of the area. He said the Battlefield is an excellent site for reflection and contemplation.

Though Barfield Park is slightly farther, the grounds are laden with superb areas for outdoor recreation.

With both paved and unpaved trails, dog owners, runners and walkers are commonly seen at Barfield Park. The five-mile unpaved trail offers a rough terrain, at times like a nature-made obstacle course with rocks, roots and a few forages running rampant.

For most of the year, creek beds are near or along the dirt trails. The paved trail leads to a river overlook, and one can walk down the

dirt path to the water.

Niki Jordan, the outdoor recreation coordinator for Barfield Park, thinks outdoor recreation is vital to everyone.

"Just to get outside, for people to spend as much time outdoors as possible in a world where we're indoors all the time," Jordan said. Jordan said the main attraction for students is the park's disc golf course.

Four boys that were crossing a parking lot after finishing a round of disc golf proved her statement.

Morgan Allen, 22, said he goes to Barfield Park four to five times a week, and he's done this for about two-and-a-half years. The junior said going to the park provides a relief from schoolwork.

"You don't have to think about anything, and come out, and you're just free," said Allen, shoving discs into his bag.

Fellow disc golfer, Taylor Cason, an MTSU student, said he tries to fit as much time in at Barfield Park as school and work permit.

"Disc golf is an amazing sport, and it's a ton of fun," said Cason, a Brentwood native. "I think it's good for people to have a place to release and let go, especially if you're living in a dorm or something."

If you want to feel even more engaged in nature's raw beauty, the dense woods of Cedars of Lebanon State Park are where you belong. Perhaps the farthest of these parks, the 20-30 minute drive from Murfreesboro is

hardly a price to pay for the recreation at your fingertips, or rather, foot steps.

The five-mile Hidden Springs trail holds a true back-woosy feel. The short Cedar Glade Trail and two-mile Cedar Forest trail aren't as extensive and taxing as the five-miler, but they still provide a feel of recreational freedom.

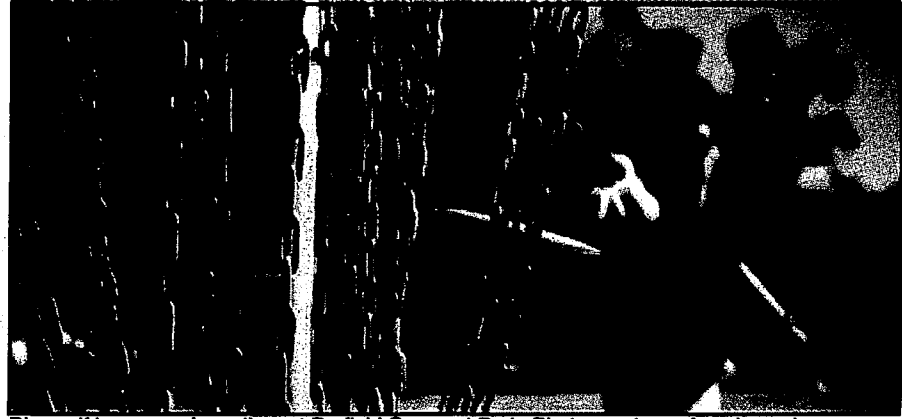
Cedars of Lebanon also has a disc golf course, which is perfect for group recreation.

Kenny Daniel, park manager of Cedars of Lebanon for almost 30 years, said that everybody needs a place to recreate.


"Parks were built for people kind of as a respite, for a place to get away and relax and think," said Daniel. "Outdoor recreation combines everything from exercise to de-stressing the mind." Daniel said there are plant species at Cedars of Lebanon endemic only to cedar glades, so while out running or hiking these unique pieces of nature can be seen.

"We have preserved the glades, the cedars, and provided a place where people can go out and relax and enjoy nature," said Daniel.

Unlike our friends up North, Middle Tennesseans are still without ice and snow. So now may be the perfect time to check out Murfreesboro's recreation areas. ■



Disc golf is a popular pastime at Barfield Crescent Park. Photo courtesy of appleseed.org



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COVER STORY

An adjusted normal: Finding the new American dream

By Becca Andrews
Editor-in-chief

From the outside looking in, the Buchanan family is living what should have been the American dream.

Their tiny house sits along Highway 53 in Woodbury, Tenn., one in a never-ending string of identical abodes that pepper the countryside. The quintessential Southern small town has an elementary school, a drive-in theater, a grocery store and a couple gas stations. There are a little more than 2,500 people who call the town home, and everyone goes to church with someone else's kindergarten teacher's mother-in-law's sister and can trace the relationships easily.

The Buchanan family's home is warm, and Saturday mornings are strictly for relaxation and quality time, including – but not limited to – omelets, cartoons, superhero pajamas and smiles. The floor is littered with toys belonging to a tow-headed 19-month-old crawling around the living room, giggling and gurgling.

Lacey Buchanan, a 24-year-old MTSU graduate, sits cross-legged on the couch in sweatpants and a Superman T-shirt, tossing her hair back to avoid the cheese omelet her husband, Chris, just brought to her. She watches her son, Christopher, play in a pool of sunlight on the hardwood floor.

"He's so spoiled," Lacey drawls. "Say,



Newborn Christian Taylor Buchanan pre-surgery. Photo courtesy of the Buchanan family.

"Mama, I know I'm spoiled."

Christian turns his head toward the sound of his mother's voice and lifts his face. Where two perfectly formed baby-blue eyes should be there are only disfigured sockets and a barely there right eyelid with a few eyelashes clinging to it. His smile is painfully twisted, but genuine nonetheless, and he has the toothy look typical of any toddler.

The pride on Lacey's face shines – she adores her son.

* * *
Christian Taylor Buchanan was born Feb. 18, 2011, at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville.

The Buchanans knew something wasn't right with their unborn son during Lacey's unplanned pregnancy, but they were unaware of the extent of what their son would face.

Doctors told the couple their son was suffering from amniotic band syndrome. A band had formed in Lacey's womb and wrapped itself around Christian's face, causing severe disfigurement. The issue was not genetic, they told her, nor did it reflect any fault of hers.

The couple was told their son would never lead a normal life – if he survived at all.

"His cleft was so big when he was born,

his cleft basically went from the corners of his mouth up into his eyes," Lacey recalls. "One side was big enough that I could have fit my hand through it."

The classification of Tessier cleft that Christian suffers from is one of only 57 cases in the world. The cleft of his eyes is what makes it so rare.

"We knew about the cleft, [but] we didn't know how severe it was going to be, because the

right side of his face was stuck to her because of the amniotic bands," Christopher said. "We were expecting it to be bad, but we didn't know he was going to be blind until he was born."

After his birth, Christian stayed in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and underwent multiple surgeries.

At four days old, a team filled in a missing part of Christian's skull and put a gastric feeding

continued on page 9

COVER STORY

continued from page 8

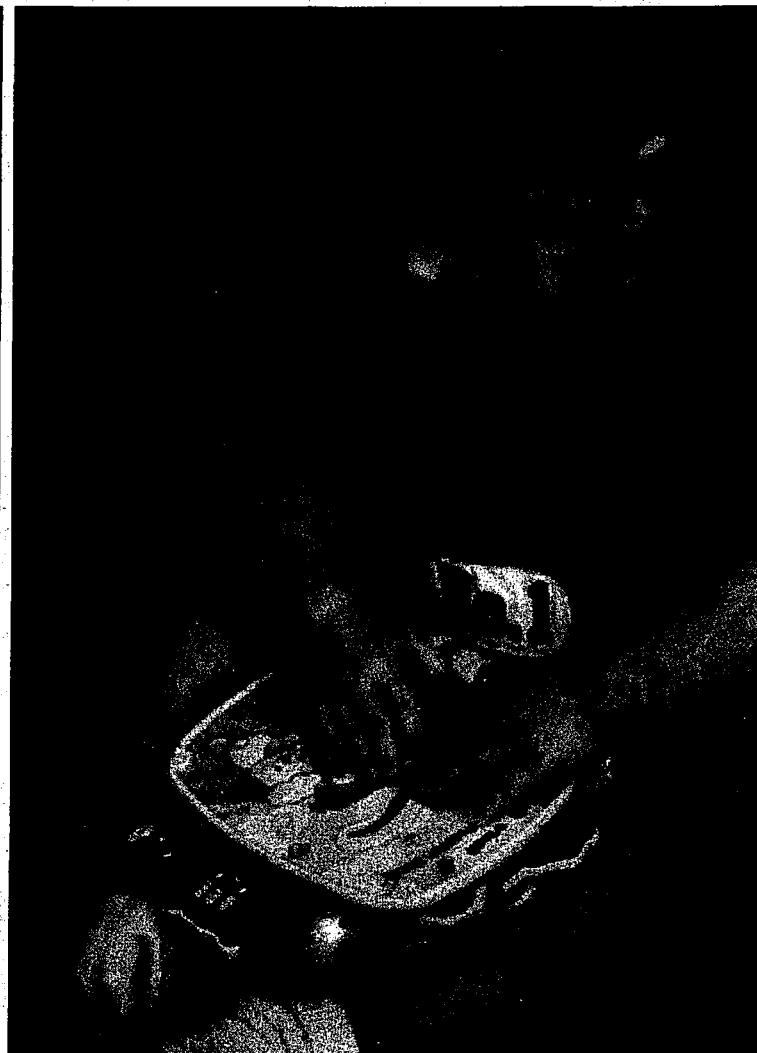
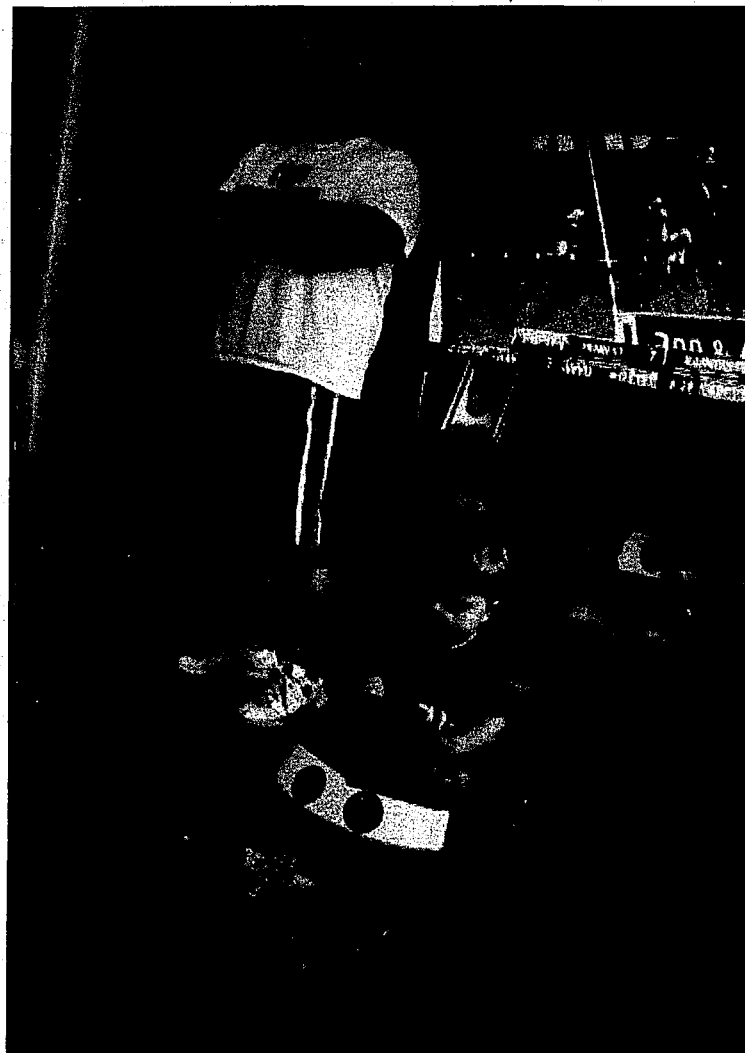
tube into his stomach so Christian could feed, known as the "Mickey button." Lacey and Chris were initially overwhelmed by the extra care Christian required but have since adjusted.

"I don't know what I'm gonna do when I have a kid that doesn't have one of these, though, because it's so simple. When he was really little, and he was gassy, you would just open it up and air would come out," Lacey says, laughing.

More surgeries were scheduled for his cleft lip, requiring doctors to break a bone in his nose to adjust. Ear tubes were also inserted to ward off infection. Because Christian was blind, his hearing capabilities were crucial for him to thrive. Medical professionals advised the Buchanans their son's life would be a constant struggle and he would likely be mentally impaired.

The first several weeks of parenting were hectic — especially for Lacey, who went back and forth from her classes at Nashville School of Law to the NICU at Vanderbilt Medical Center. All her learning now centers around Christian. She is studying to be a legal advocate for disabled rights and learning to be a mother and primary caretaker of her special needs son.

Her passion for advocacy began as she and her husband began settling into their new life with their son. Every time the couple



Left: Christian plays in his toy car, a gift from his grandparents, as his father watches. Right: Christian enjoys anything with sound stimulation. Photos by Emily West.

appeared in public with their son, they found themselves pelted with questions. Even the most mundane errands suddenly became a battle.

"People would stare and whisper, 'Look at that baby' behind my back," Lacey said.

Lacey said Christian's missing eyes garner the most attention from passersby.

"People don't even notice the scars — they notice his eyes," Lacey explains. "Everybody is always, 'Doesn't it hurt that he can't blink?' and I'm like, 'Of course it doesn't hurt, he doesn't

have eyeballs.' They're like, 'How does he sleep if he can't close his eyes?' And I'm like, 'He doesn't have eyes to close; it's okay, he sleeps just fine.'"

One day Lacey stood in line at the grocery store when a girl told her she was a "horrible person" for not aborting Christian and for forcing him to live the life he had ahead of him.

"I was miserable," she said.

Lacey had heard enough.

She was learning how to deal with the constant questions and insensitive comments,

but her story left people feeling sad, even when she had the time to tell the complete tale. She saw a video on YouTube about a girl with a severe disfigurement who told her story using notecards against a musical backdrop and inspiration hit.

"I thought, 'Well, we have a story to tell, too.'"

Lacey quickly put together her own cards and went home that night to film her story and give inquiring minds a place to go for answers. While Fernando Ortego's "Give Me Jesus" played,

Lacey went through the events that brought her to where she is now — completely in love with a perfectly happy baby boy. The video ends with her turning Christian to face the camera as she smiles, with tears in her eyes.

I would tell people about Christian, and they would walk away feeling sad and depressed, and that isn't how it should be, Lacey said.

This video aimed to fix that.

It went viral. Lacey saw around 60,000 hits through her YouTube account, and then a

friend posted it on GodTube, a Christian video hosting site, on Mother's Day. Within 24 hours, the video had skyrocketed to 1 million views. Over the next month, it would plateau around 11 million.

The story grew beyond the tiny town, and Christian's existence was soon part of something much bigger than his parents ever imagined.

Check back Nov. 28 for part two of 'An Adjusted Normal.'

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Spend Thanksgiving in style with seasonal trend tips

By Jane Horne
Arts & Entertainment
editor

Picking an outfit for Thanksgiving can be one of the most complicated, special-event outfits to plan of the year. Like all fashionistas, the need to be both stylish and fall-appropriate is of high importance.

The Fancy Thanksgiving Dinner

If it's just family, there's no need to impress. Dress for you and to have fun. But if you happen to have a photographer in the family, keeping that in mind while picking out an outfit can't hurt. Remain classy — with a little extra sassy — with a metallic or sequin piece. A shimmering gold, A-line dress is the perfect option for this.

You'll feel beautiful, and the grandparents will think you look amazing, too. The shape of the dress flatters your waist. Pair it with burgundy or wine-colored heels to combine the two popular, fall color trends.

Thanksgiving with the Boyfriend

You and your significant other have been dating for a while, so spending Thanksgiving together is the next logical step. Make sure you leave his family with the best possible impression. To avoid going over-the-top, effortlessly chic is the way to go in this situation. Colored denim is a great option since they're a step up from your basic pair of skinny jeans. Pair

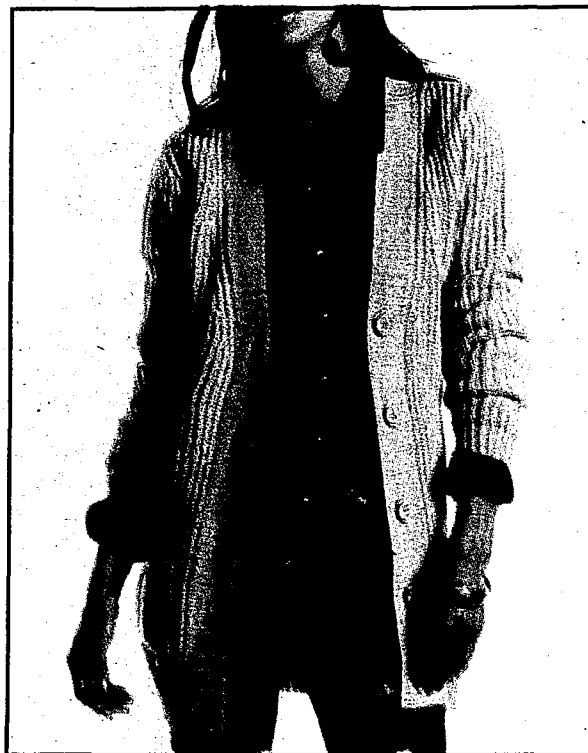
your favorite color with a peplum top and fun heels or flats, which ever suits your fancy. Other options could also include a little black dress, but be mindful of the pair of tights you plan on wearing with it. If his family has unique bonding experiences happening all day, jeans and a fun top will most likely be the more logical choice.

Thanksgiving Potluck

You come from one of those families where trying to count how many first cousins you have gives you a headache; don't even think about trying to count great aunts, uncles, second cousins and beyond. Needless to say, Thanksgiving includes a lot of people and food.

Comfort is key. Throw on your most reliable pair of skinny jeans. Make sure these sit up a bit higher on your waist. A comfortable button-down shirt paired with one of this season's popular jewel-colored cardigans and a printed scarf is all you need. Your favorite pair of boots or flats is going to be the most efficient option for footwear. Maybe even throw on some holiday-themed socks if whoever is hosting the potluck is the take-your-shoes-off-at-the-door types.

Remember to keep things fun. Thanksgiving is for spending time with family and being thankful for everything you've been blessed with — like that great sense of fashion. ■



A colorful cardigan can add pop to your Thanksgiving outfit. Photo courtesy of Forever21.com.

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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

A college kid's guide to a perfect potluck Thanksgiving

By Jessica Kryza
Food critic

Everyone knows that the traditional Thanksgiving meal takes days to prepare and plan. And no college student has time— or budget— for that. If you are eager and determined to have a Thanksgiving meal, host a potluck party. Potlucks are not only affordable for everyone involved, but they are also a fun way to create your favorite holiday dish for your friends. Create categories for each person to contribute to: appetizers, entrées, side dishes, desserts, drinks (wine for those old enough), etc. Don't forget to include a paper plate and plastic utensils category; no one loves to clean, especially the host. Another category that may be added to your potluck is a vegetarian category.

Having a potluck will also allow your friends to cook on their own budget. If one of your friends wants to be fancy and make prosciutto wrapped figs stuffed with goat cheese for an appetizer, then let them. Others may want to do something less costly, like the classic green bean casserole topped with French's fried onions or roasted vegetables.

Also, friends who aren't so great in the kitchen have the option to spend how much they would like to on something already made or prepared: fruit or veggie tray, cake, cheese tray, pumpkin pie, etc.

As long as each person contributes to the party, it will be a fun

and memorable Thanksgiving. Here are some inexpensive crowd pleasers to try at your potluck:

Appetizers

Dips – Example: Spinach and artichoke. You can find a variety of dips already prepared, or feel free to make it yourself. For kicks, serve the dip in a hollowed bread bowl.

Stuffed mushrooms – Stuff cream cheese mixed with herbs, top with breadcrumbs and bake.

Cherry tomato and bocconcini (baby mozzarella cheese balls) on a skewer – For an elegant touch, alternate whole basil leaves as much or as little as you like.

Pigs in a blanket – This popular finger food makes a great holiday appetizer. Smokies and canned biscuit or crescent rolls is all you need.

Side dishes

Garlic mashed potatoes – Mashed, creamed or smashed, this is a dish that is cheap and loved by many.

Macaroni and cheese – Homemade or boxed, everyone loves it. Make sure that you make enough.

Dressing – No matter what you call it, dressing or stuffing, make it in a muffin tin for individual portions. Plus, it will cook a lot faster.

Roasted broccoli – Don't knock it before you try it; broccoli, olive oil, salt and pepper, Parmesan cheese. Roast and enjoy.

Rolls or biscuits.

Entrées

Chicken and rice casserole – All you need for this one is cooked chicken breast, chicken flavored Rice-A-Roni and cream of chicken soup. Vegetables are optional.

Herb-roasted turkey breast – If you are entertaining a smaller crowd, turkey breasts may work better. Whole turkey or not, purchase whichever is more economical.

Eggplant casserole – Eggplant is inexpensive and great as a main dish for vegetarians. There are countless recipes for this dish. Research to find one to your liking.

Dessert

Pumpkin chocolate chip cookies – One can of pumpkin, spiced cake mix, chocolate chips, cinnamon and bake.

Banana pudding – Instant vanilla or banana pudding, vanilla wafers, banana slices and whipped cream equals a holiday classic.

Cherry cheese pie – Combine graham cracker pie crust, can of Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk, cream cheese, lemon juice, cherry pie filling and refrigerate for four to five hours.

For recipes, check out Food Network's website and other websites to find budget friendly meals. Also, search through Pinterest to find new and interesting Thanksgiving dishes. ■



Thanksgiving is the perfect opportunity to experiment in the kitchen. Photo courtesy of WBUR.org

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College Night Every Wednesday

RANTS AND RAVES

Thursday, Nov. 15

Zoroaster w/ Laser
Flames on the Great
Big News, Tiwana Goat
Ride, Battlestar Caligvla
The End
2219 Elliston Place
Nashville
\$10, 9 p.m.
18+



If there's anyone out there who still likes to headbang and get sweaty in a mosh pit, then this is a show that could be your chance to brush off those old pumas and camo cargo shorts, strap on your massive collection of keys (guys, really, keys?) and hit the pit.

Your ears are sure to ring for three days after the show, and you may wind up with a few loose teeth from an elbow in your face. But if you need your metal fix, here you go. There may or may not be creepy vocals and ear-piercing guttural vocals, but rest assured, heavy

guitars, double bass and breakdowns will accompany the pointed stench of prepubescent outcasts who haven't showered in days.

Thursday, Nov. 15

Paper Route, Canon
Blue, The Last Bison,
Neulore,
Steve Delopoulos
3rd and Lindsley
\$10
8 p.m.
18+



Besides the fact that Paper Route is playing a hometown show. Besides the fact that the line up includes, like, five acts for \$10. Besides the fact that it's a show with really good bands with really good music, all proceeds go to the Wedgewood Circle Artist

Fund. So you know (from their website): "Wedgewood Circle facilitates angel investments in companies and deals that have the potential to return both broad social/cultural return as well as economic return." It's a cool concept and excellent bands for cheap.

Paper Route has been on tour the past few months in support of their new record *The Peace of the Wild Things*. The other bands are hard-working indie acts as well, but bottom line: come hear good music and support an organization that helps support bands like these.

Friday, Nov. 16

Yelowolf Slumerican
Tour w/ Ritz & DJ
Vajra
Cannery Ballroom
\$22
9 p.m.
18+



Don't laugh: white guy from Alabama, covered in tattoos, signed to Ghet-O-Vision, real name: Michael. Still, restrain yourself; this rapper is playing a show at the Cannery Ballroom. Done laughing? Good, because this rapper ain't no joke (and, yes, that was a ter-

rible one). He's getting a lot of attention in the hip-hop world. His record label, Ghet-O-Vision, sounds funny, but they have a partnership with Shady records, founded by none other than the Slim Shady himself. So if his music isn't convincing enough, the fact the

Eminem thinks he has promise might make him an act worth seeing. Yelowolf is a fresh voice in the rap scene, and if rap is your thing, you should head to Cannery and put yo' (or yer?) hands up.

Friday, Nov. 16

Space Capone w/
Magnolia Sons
Mercy Lounge
\$10
9:30 p.m.
18+



Space Capone is one of those acts that leaves you wondering, "What just happened?" It'll be cool music, sure. Cool show, yeah. But be warned, Space Capone is just plain weird. And Magnolia Sons is massive. I don't mean they're super famous. I mean, they're

12 folks deep. They have that throwback sound that's oh-so-common today, and they put on a show with horns and suits (it's the little things, you know). This one should be a cool show with a feel that would take you straight back to the proverbial '80s (like any of

us REALLY know what that was like) and hopefully leave you with a feel good attitude on your way home. Or to the next show. Or a party even. Knock yourself out.

Saturday, Nov. 17

Dr. Dog, Cotton Jones
Marathon Music Works
\$20-\$22
8 p.m.
18+



Lightning 100 seems to like Marathon Music Works. They also like killer music, and Dr. Dog is killer. If you know who they are and have heard their music, then you know what I'm talking about. They have multiple part harmonies that feel eerily similar to

the 50's British invasion. They mix a cool contrast of modern indie guitar parts and a sweet classic rhythm section with the vocal feel of another decade long ago. And to pre-game the show, opener Cotton Jones is a singer/songwriter band that's pretty much

a Southern dude-Feist, even though there is a chick in the band that sounds like Feist (finger a gut string guitar, stack smooth vocals and it sounds like Feist, right?). Good luck finding parking and try not to get towed. That nonsense is expensive.

RANTS AND RAVES

Saturday, Nov. 17
 Kansas Bible Company
 Grimey's
 1604 8th Ave S
 Nashville
 Free
 5 p.m.



Hailing from Indiana, but now calling Nashville home, Kansas Bible Company is a neat band that's kind of been making a splash around town lately. They're known to have a sound that fuses and reaches across many different sounds – surf, soul, hip-hop, prog rock

and pep. Their songs feature horn sections and a groovy rhythm section. Check out their music on Noisetrade if you haven't heard of them, and while you're at it throw them a few bucks and let them know you support local music. Grimey's is one of the few record stores in

Nashville that sells new and pre-loved music. If you want to make a day of it, go early and buy some old vinyl. But, the best part? It's a free show.

Sunday, Nov. 18
 The Welcome Table
 feat. Lee Camp, Dailey
 & Vincent, The McCrary
 Sisters, Vince Gill, and
 friends
 The Ryman
 7:30 p.m.
 \$24.50-34.50

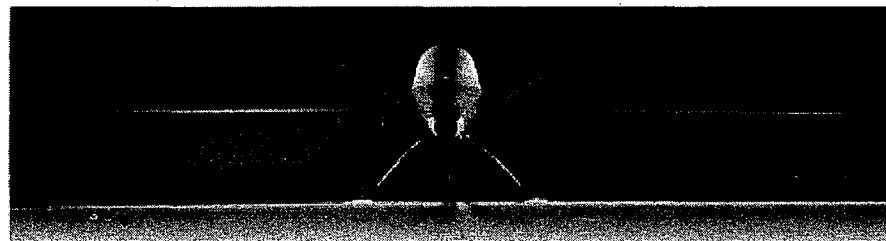


We live in one of the most talented population concentrations in the country. Whether you love country music, it's undeniable that the greatest of the greats live here. Sunday's line up is loaded with incredible talent. Let's face it – most of us are college students

(or faculty), and most of us are probably on a limited budget. Maybe you have the funds (at least 25 bucks), or maybe you don't, but that last name on the list over there before the "...and friends" part, is probably one of the best guitar slingers in country music. He is

worth the price of the ticket alone. Not to mention the impeccable picking of everyone on the ticket. And who knows, since it's being filmed for national public television distribution, maybe one of you can do something stupid and immortalize yourself on TV.

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U.S. needs to change its approach to education

By Torrie Tovar
Contributing
Columnist

The 2012 ACT readiness results confirmed 60 percent of high school seniors are not prepared for college, which leaves one wondering what is being done about the failings of our education system. This nation used to be number one in education. The Founding Fathers were extremely well-educated men, and because of their education, they were able to make a constitution that was profound, and gave America all of the freedoms it has now.

Many of those who succeeded them also knew that a way to a great nation was to have a great education system. For example, individuals such as Horace Mann, who fought for more public schools in the U.S. so that all children could get an education.

Mann believed that education also taught discipline and self-control, which would build character in the people of the U.S.

However, at the present time our education system is a laughing-stock around the world.

Some of the best education systems in the world have children learning at least one other language, if not more, throughout their education. But here in the U.S., children are only required to take two years of a foreign language.

Learning a foreign language can be important because it requires discipline and dedica-



Torrie Tovar

tion, which promotes a learned study habit.

Many other countries have more of a focus on science and technology than other subjects, which helps to promote more new innovations.

However, the sad

grade's required learning levels.

Parents should be encouraged to send their kids to preschool, and more public preschools need to be offered so they are able to do so.

Additionally, they should begin raising the standards in preschools and then carry on raising the standards for every grade. Have our students actually learn foreign languages, and concentrate more on science, math and writing skills. Bring innovations to reading so more students enjoy it.

But all of the blame doesn't fall on the education system.

Parents have to get

Our nation will lose all of its respectability, and the end of our nation's well-respected global status will come.

To remain the top nation, we need educated people and new innovations, both of which require a strong public education system.

This nation was once competitive in education; nations around the world looked to our education system for ideas, but now their education systems are superior to ours.

Because of this — if this nation does not fix its education system — most top-paying jobs will go to immigrants, as they will be the only

ones who will have the necessary education to perform the required tasks.

The other nations' education systems have become better than ours because they continued to improve on what they saw, while we still believe that our traditional education system is enough.

Unfortunately, the Tennessee legislature passed a law in the spring of 2012 that limits the amount of non-citizen staff members that charter schools can hire to 3 percent, partially in the name of creating jobs for Tennesseans.

However, if Tennessee teachers do not possess the skills necessary to improve math and science education, this is just another way American education is hamstrung by pointless regulations.

The people of this nation seem to be indomitably against immigration. Complaints that immigrants are taking

the jobs that belong to U.S. citizens reign supreme in the reasons to restrict immigration. Yet many seem fine with a less-than-mediocre education system, which allows immigrants to "take" the jobs from less-educated Americans.

Instead of making education the top priority, the public always speaks about our immigration "problem." They should place less of a focus on restricting immigration and more of a focus on a drastic change to our education system so that the country can become No. 1 in education again.

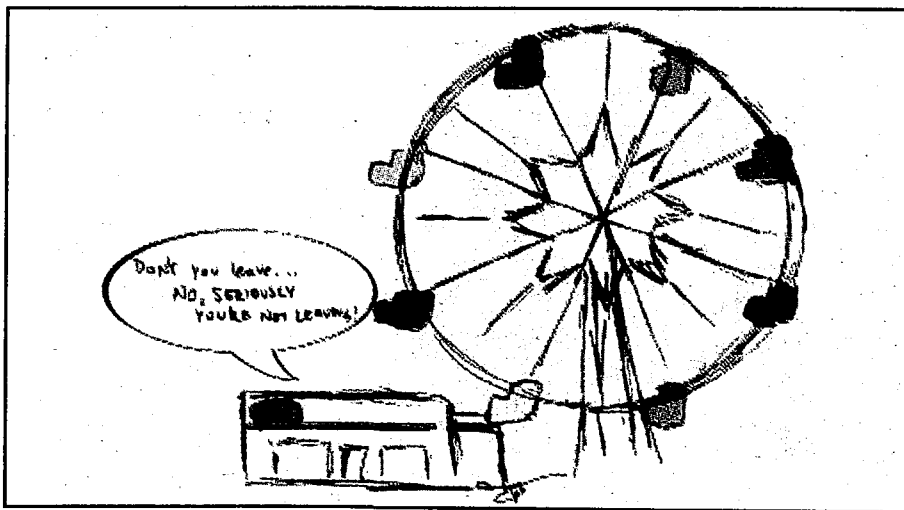
This decline is an epic failure on the part of our government and all of its citizens. Because of the fact that 60 percent of our high school graduates are unable to excel in college, and our less-than-adequate public school system, our nation will continue to suffer. ■

“ If our nation doesn't do something to change the steady decline its education system is on, it have a major impact on the country as a whole.”

truth is that American education doesn't focus on anything. If our nation doesn't do something to change the steady decline its education system is on, it will have a major impact on the country as a whole.

The U.S. needs to focus on improving the quality of its education system. The nation needs to be concerned about the effects that poor education is going to have on future generations. Teaching standards need to be raised, as well as each

involved. They have to want a superior education for their kids and take time to work on it with them. No matter if the education system revised its standards, if the parents are unwilling to support a higher quality of education in the home, it won't make an overall difference. If this problem is not fixed, our nation will no longer be a place for bright minds and intellectuals to come. We will no longer have a strong government without corruption.



Comic by Matt Masters

SPORTS

Blue Raiders' work far from over as bowl season approaches

By Jordan Mayton
Contributing writer

Middle Tennessee football may have become bowl eligible for the third time in four years, but the team's work is far from over with yet another pre-season goal still within reach.

After last Thursday's upset of rival Western Kentucky University, the Blue Raiders have set themselves at second in the conference standings behind Gus Malzahn's Arkansas State Red Wolves with hopes of the team's first outright Sun Belt Championship within sight.

While MT has the six wins required to play in a bowl game, they are not guaranteed a spot due to the Sun Belt having only two automatic bowl tie-ins, the R&L Carriers New Orleans Bowl and Godaddy.com Bowl. There is potential for more Sun Belt teams to play in the Little Caesar's Bowl and the BBVA Compass Bowl, as well as other non-traditional destinations for the Blue Raiders if other conferences are unable to fulfill their bowl obligations.

"Well, we know the logistics of it; a six-win team isn't even guaranteed a bowl," quarterback Logan Kilgore said about the bowl situation. "We have so many good teams in the Sun Belt this year; we'll probably have four or five bowl-eligible teams."

Senior Omar McLendon is one of the players that have played in the two prior bowls, but the Temple, Ga. native is

staying focused on the task at hand.

"We're staying focused on the next game is really what's getting us to where we want to be and being successful. We're not worried about the future; we're worried about what's in the present. So we're just focusing on the task at hand instead of getting ahead of ourselves," McLendon said.

The Blue Raiders will do what they can on the field to force bowl committees' hands this winter, but the Blue Raiders' bowl destination may rest in part on the shoulders of Athletic Director Chris Massaro. Massaro and the athletic department will now lobby for which bowl he thinks is most suited for the Blue Raiders. Since his arrival in 2005, he has put MT in three bowls.

"When you go to a bowl game or you become bowl eligible, there's more to it than just your win-loss record," said Head Coach Rick Stockstill. "You have to show a commitment from your entire athletic department, and they've done that. Chris Massaro - I've been in this business a long time, and he's by far the best athletic director I've ever been with."

A bowl appearance is just one of the goals of the team this season. Even more important to the team is the likelihood of winning a second Sun Belt Championship. The last time the Blue Raiders received that honor was four years ago with star quarterback Dwight

Dasher at the helm of the offense.

Few of the current players were on that roster; only the likes of running back Benny Cunningham, receiver Tavarres Jefferson and defensive end Omar McLendon saw any significant playing time that year.

"It's a preseason goal, so we always have that in mind," McLendon said of being selected to a bowl game. "Like I said, it's in the back of our minds, but we're more focused about our next game, which is South Alabama. We're not even thinking about Arkansas State. We'll think about that one when it gets here. So, we're just taking it day-by-day, practice-by-practice."

Kilgore echoed a similar attitude, "We definitely want to win the conference, but right now, we just want to beat South Alabama. That's really what we're focused on."

MT has three pivotal games left including rival Troy, Sun Belt-newcomer South Alabama and Arkansas State. Due to the Red Wolves' blowout over ULM, the Blue Raiders now control their own destiny and will be conference champions, should they win out.

"[We're] just doing what we've been doing, keep working hard off the field," Kilgore said. "Coming into practice every day and just be ready to make a run. We've put ourselves in a good position, but there's still a lot of work to be done."



The Blue Raiders find themselves at 4-1 and second in the Sun Belt standings after an emotional win in Bowling Green, Ky. Photo courtesy of MT Athletic Communications.

After playing the Hilltoppers last Thursday, the Blue Raiders have a much deserved bye week, giving many of the players time to rest up. It also gives the coaching staff time to regroup and make adjustments after playing two games in five days.

"We've done a good job of healing up," Kilgore said of the bye week. "I think it's good for those guys to just get rid of those bumps and bruises because we've got three more games either way, but it's not

bad to have an open day this late in the season." With all the hype surrounding the Blue Raiders, it is easy for players to buy into local hype and growing attention.

However, Coach Stockstill is attempting to remedy that situation.

"It's a daily message," Stockstill said. "They're going to hear it on campus. We understand that, but, when we get here, it's a daily message that we haven't done anything yet. We haven't been invited to a bowl yet. We haven't

won the conference championship yet. We just have to take care of our business. We competed hard this week. It's just a daily message that I relay to them every day."

MT will begin the season's final three-game stretch when it travels to Mobile, Ala., next. This will be the first time the Blue Raiders and the Jaguars have met as conference-mates. The game will take place Saturday, Nov. 17, at 2:30 p.m. at Ladd Peebles Stadium. ■

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