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SIDELINES

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Sidelines Lens



Ryan Rehnberg, a senior at MTSU, is currently creating a documentary on Fable Cry, a brother-sister duo. Rehnberg is doing a series of documentaries on several local artists. Photo by Kati Baird.

Cover photo by Briana Mailey.

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Grad students seek to address SGA involvement limitations

By Daniel Jansouzian
Staff writer

Only one graduate student ran for Student Government Association for the 2013-2014 school year, which raises concerns about graduate involvement in campus politics.

Mychal Bowling, science and health masters candidate, will serve as SGA senator on one seat out of seven available for the College of Graduate Studies.

Hunter Barry, business masters student, said one reason graduates are not running for SGA is because all promotion for elections are directed toward undergraduates.

"There is no online push for registering for elections," Barry said. "Registering should be equal in importance to voting."

Time is a concern for most graduate students, and the Thursday afternoon meetings are inconvenient because most graduate classes are held in the late afternoon and at night. The graduate program also only lasts four semesters, which limits advancement opportunities.

"When I joined [SGA] I wanted to be the bridge," said Katie Stringer, president of Graduate Students Association. "But it was disheartening when they were inflexible with hours."

One of the hardest requirements for graduate students is to make the required number of

12 service hours a semester. David O'Brien, a science masters candidate and future GSA president, said graduate students have more responsibilities than undergraduates because of the larger course load. Many graduates are also teacher assistants and work in their future career field.

During the spring semester, O'Brien brought a resolution to the floor in SGA to decrease the amount of senate hours graduate students are required to serve. The resolution never made it to forum. Bowling plans to bring the resolution to SGA again next term from a financial approach. Graduate students receive virtually no financial assistance and then must work as teacher assistants or at other low-paying jobs.

"We're not trying to get out of work," Stringer said. "It's just hard to get people to join because of the time commitment."

Lauren Price, an English masters candidate and vice president of GSA, served on SGA in the past. She said graduate school is a different mentality, and it is hard to understand until students are enrolled.

"SGA represents all students," Price said. "When they don't make allowances for graduates, then they are saying they don't count them."

James Lee, a business senator and incoming SGA president, said he believes people



David O'Brien is a graduate student senator this semester. During his term, he proposed several bills concerning student activity fees to the senate floor. Photos by Emily West.

are not even aware the position exists.

"I didn't know there was an opportunity for graduates in senate before," Lee said. "I think there needs to be more awareness."

Bowling said she heard about SGA through teacher assistant meetings. She also said she plans to get more people appointed to the position. O'Brien said the GSA would also put forth recruiting

efforts.

"If there's a reason why they're not getting involved then we need to accommodate them," Lee said.

Coby Sherlock, current president of SGA, said the future president and executive board should meet with the GSA and try to understand what it's like to be a graduate student.

"Future executive boards and future stu-

dents should reconsider their stance," Sherlock said. "We should even the odds a little bit."

The GSA plans to have a new orientation in the fall for graduate students to raise awareness of the government associations they can get involved in on campus.

"It is the hope of GSA to reach everybody," Stringer said.

CRIME BRIEFS

BURGLARY

Womack Lane Apt. K
April 19, 12:26 p.m.
Complainants reported a break-in at their apartment that left belongings missing.

THEFT

Todd Hall
April 19, 11:28 a.m.
Complainant reported some artwork was stolen.

THEFT

Peck Hall
April 17, 12:01 p.m.
Complainant reported that money was stolen from her purse when she left it unattended in the restroom.

THEFT

James E. Walker
Library
April 16, 7:37 p.m.
A complainant reported a backpack stolen.

ASSAULT

Gracy Hall
April 16, 12:09 p.m.
Authorities arrested Alexis Crane, 18, for domestic assault.

TRAFFIC

Greenhouse lot
April 15, 6:06 p.m.
Victim reported that his parked vehicle was struck.

THEFT

Warehouse - Shipping and Receiving lot
April 15, 1:49 p.m.
Complainant reported the theft of an aluminum recycling sign.

University considers upgrading popular minors to majors

By Rachel George
and Mamie Nash
News team

Students are offered a wider variety of study as MTSU expands the religious studies department and explores the possibility of creating a African American studies major.

Religious Studies

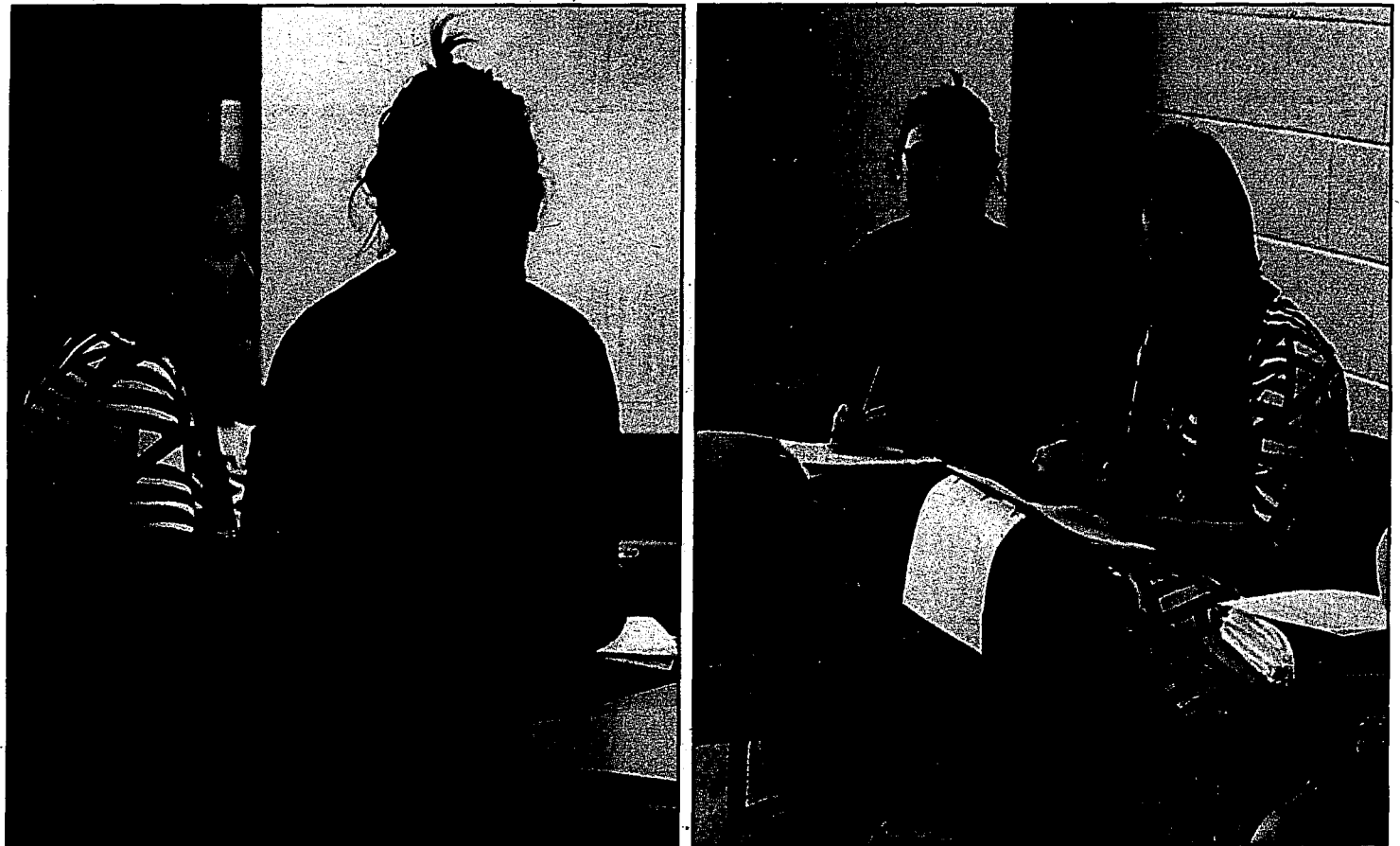
"A lot of the religious studies minors have been interested in pursuing the subject as a major. There is real student interest," said Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, associate professor of religious studies.

The religious studies classes offered in the past have been taught by adjuncts. Gray-Hildenbrand, who earned her Ph.D. in religious studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, is the first full-time religious studies professor at the university.

"It's a great minor that complements any major, from journalism to nursing. Having the basic understanding of why people believe what they believe is invaluable for any field," Gray-Hildenbrand said. "Knowing about other culture's religions is so useful in our multicultural workplace."

Although the university is studying the potential for developing a major program in religious studies, it is still in the earliest stages of research, according to Ron Bombardi, chair of the philosophy department.

"We are significantly expanding our curricular offerings in this



Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, the philosophy department's first full-time religious studies professor, teaches Readings in Religious Studies: Women and Religion, a course that focuses on feminism and how it fits into world religions. Madeline Bombardi, a senior philosophy major, listens to the discussion. Photos by Kati Baird.

area," Bombardi said. "Once we've assembled enough data to assess student interest, cost, placement options and staffing, we'll have much better sense for how viable such a major might be."

Gray-Hildenbrand explained the difference between teaching about religion at a public institution versus a private institution.

"At a public institution administered by the state, religious studies cannot endorse a religion," Gray-Hildenbrand said. "We're not trying to prove the truth or falsity of religions; we are focused on understanding and analyzing the world's

religions."

Gray-Hildenbrand and recent departmental hire Rebekka King will initially work to fine tune the current religious studies minor, adding courses and monitoring student needs.

"Cultural literacy is really invaluable; no matter what job you're in, you're

going to work with people who are different than you," Gray-Hildenbrand said. "We will be talking to stu-

dents about what they would be interested in as far as expanding it."

African American Studies

The African American studies minor is also under consideration for a major and

in Tennessee offer African American studies programs.

"My goal is to get black students to know more about themselves and their heritage, not only for academic development, but also

personal development," said Thomas Bynum, director of the African American studies program.

Dwight Brooks, director of the School of Journalism, said that sev-

eral courses which are already in place would fit the course design for this major, such as the course Race, Class and

Gender in Media.

Adding a major in this field would give students the opportunity to continue to graduate school and possibly obtain a Ph. D. in African American studies, according to Bynum.

"I feel that this would be a great addition to our curriculum for those future generations of Blue Raiders," said Gavin Mosley, a senior political science major with a minor in African American studies. "I would have definitely double majored in political science and African American studies had it been offered before." ■

"Having the basic understanding of why people believe what they believe is invaluable for any field."

may be combined with African studies.

Approximately 20 percent of the 54 colleges and universities

Campaign demonstrates against professor's hotels

By Quint Qualls
News editor

An activist campaign returned April 14 after going public in February when several workers filed a federal complaint alleging that their employer, an MTSU professor, was underpaying them.

Demonstrators organized through Workers' Dignity, a worker-led activist group, marched outside of the Comfort Inn Downtown and the Best Western Music Row, both owned by Rajesh Aggarwal, computer information systems professor. This marked the first protest in two months.

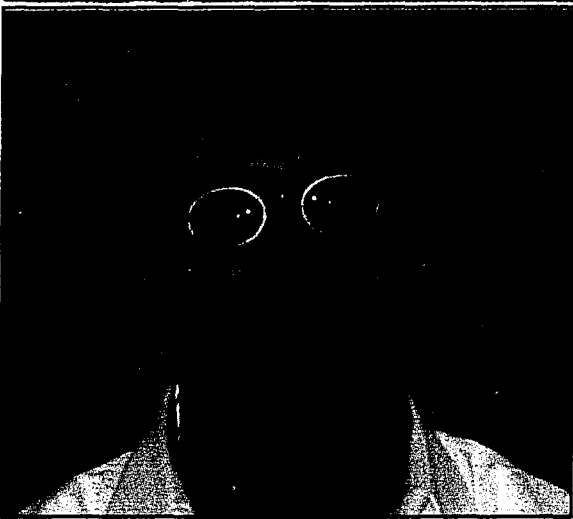
"We're going to continue with our public action, and we've gotten a lot of support from faith organizations and other community organizations. It's just growing," said Brenda Perez, Workers' Dignity organizer.

In the federal complaint filed Feb. 15, workers alleged mistreatment and intimidation on the part of hotel management and consistent below-minimum-wage pay.

"It [the case] is in the infant stages of litigation," said James Johnson, Aggarwal's attorney. "There has been a complaint filed and an answer has been filed ... I can tell you that it has been scheduled for trial August 2014."

The plaintiffs in the case, all immigrant workers, were employed in housekeeping or cleaning positions at the hotels.

"There was a man-



Top: Workers rally against Aggarwal. Photo by Quint Qualls.
Bottom: Aggarwal is a computer information systems professor. Photo courtesy of MTSU Campus Directory.

ager who caused a lot of problems there for me," said Juanita Avila, a plaintiff and former employee of the Best Western Music Row, speaking through an interpreter. "She abuses her workers verbally. As a hotel owner, he [Aggarwal] should know what kind of employees he brings in and what kind of business he's running."

According to Karla Campbell, the workers' attorney, three "opt-in" plaintiffs have joined the suit since the complaint was first filed, but their names won't appear on the case file itself.

"I worked at Best

Western for six months," said Karen Palacios, a plaintiff who spoke through an interpreter. "They just don't treat housekeepers well. I was paid \$50 a day, and sometimes I would work between 10 and 12 hours. I want a better future and for there to be changes."

Aggarwal declined to comment.

"The accusations that the protesters are making do not exist," Johnson said. "Dr. Aggarwal and the hotels are in compliance with the law, and the Workers' Dignity protesting is meritless and is not justified."

Mariana Lopez, a

member and organizer of Workers' Dignity, said she came to the organization because she had her own wage claim.

"My own campaign lasted seven months, and it was for the same thing," Lopez said. "I wasn't getting paid fairly, and my boss was

just kind of abusive to the employees. After a seven month long campaign, I was able to reclaim triple of what he owed me." ■

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Stopped in her tracks: Professor runs despite bombings

By Kayla Moore
Staff writer

Paula Thomas and her daughter said they felt the excitement running the 26.2 mile Boston Marathon April 15 and the atmosphere that embodies Boston, Mass., on Patriot's Day, the city's most celebrated holiday.

Thomas, an accounting professor, had just crested Heartbreak Hill, the last hill of the marathon and four miles from the finish line, with her oldest daughter. Thomas thought nothing of the unmarked police vehicles that passed her by.

"Probably extra security," she thought. Then someone announced that there was a bomb at the finish line, and there were fatalities.

Thomas stopped running. As she realized what was happening, she cried and grabbed her daughter by the shoulders.

"This is not OK," she said.

Unlike the previous three times she attended, Thomas was a participant instead of a volunteer, a charity runner for the American Medical Athletic Association. It was her goal to participate in one of the biggest and oldest races in the world.

Thomas has run since she was in graduate school, beginning with three miles, three days per week. After receiving a postcard from a close friend

and some encouragement from her teenage son, she participated in her first half-marathon in 2002 and ran on a team for children with special needs in the Country Music Half Marathon in Nashville.

A few years later, Thomas found herself in Phoenix, Ariz., taking her daughter to softball camp at Arizona State University. She continued to notice signs for the Rock 'n Roll Marathon Series, which at the time only offered races in four locations nationwide. She thought to herself, "I'd like to do that." So, she did.

Despite being considered the non-athletic member in her family, Thomas continued to run in half-marathons across the country, typically with her oldest daughter. Once she had run races in about 20 different states, Thomas made a goal to run a half marathon in every state. She is four states short of completing 50, a goal she intends to complete by this September.

After the news of the bombings had been publicized, the remaining runners were encouraged to finish the race at an alternate finish line. When Thomas reached 24.5 miles, the race was officially canceled, and the police shut down the roads. However, Thomas refused to be deterred from her goal of finishing.

Because her son attended school in Boston, Thomas knew



Thomas took on the Bermuda Triangle Challenge in January 2012 in Bermuda. Photo courtesy of Paula Thomas.

the area well enough to find her way back to her hotel. Although the police closed down the streets, no one could stop her from running the remaining 1.7 miles to complete the marathon.

"I remember my minister saying after 9/11 that if you let the terrorists alter your life, they have won. It wasn't about me, but I thought, 'I will finish

this,'" Thomas said. "I didn't cross any official line. There is no official record of any of this, but it's OK. I lived to try another day - or not."

Displaced runners, such as Thomas and her daughter, never reached the finish line, so they did not receive any food or water once the race was officially canceled. Instead, the spectators who lived

nearby brought baskets full of food and drinks, or whatever they had. Others offered runners the use of showers and clothing.

"It was nothing fancy, but it was just what they had," Thomas says. "I'll never forget that."

In the aftermath of the explosions, many runners could not gain access to their hotel rooms. The hotels had

either been sealed off, or as in Thomas' case, refused to admit anyone without proper identification. As a result, Boston University and other places in the area opened dorms to offer free lodging.

"I love young people, I teach for goodness' sake," Thomas says with tears in her eyes. "Most of the people out there doing those things were young people,

largely because of so-
cial media. Those kinds
of gestures just make
you feel good about the
world.”

Overall, Thomas
was grateful that her
husband had decided
against coming to
Boston to
wait for her
at the finish
line.

How-
ever, the
looming
question
for many
partici-
pants, espe-
cially those
who were
injured or

lost a loved one in the
explosions, is whether
they will return to the
Boston Marathon next
year.

“There were a lot of
runners on my flight

back, and everyone
seemed to have a de-
finitive answer: always
‘yes,’” Thomas said. “It
will certainly not stop
my running, there’s no
doubt about that. But
I’ll have to ponder the
emotionalness of going

“I didn’t cross any official
line. There is no official
record of any of this, but it’s
OK. I lived to try another day
— or not.”

back to where I was
Monday.”

Running is a large
part of Thomas’ life as
documented by the pic-
tures in her office that
mark her experiences

in Tennessee, Disney
World and others. A
picture of Thomas from
her first race carries the
inscription, “each race
[is] a drama, each race
a challenge, each race
[stretches you] one way
or another, and each

race
[tells
you]
more
about
[your-
self]
and oth-
ers.”

Yet,
no pic-
tures are
neces-
sary for

her to remember the
impact of running in
the Boston Marathon
and the acts of kind-
ness she witnessed in
the midst of tragedy. ■



Thomas grins at the starting point of Boston Marathon. Photo courtesy of Paula Thomas.

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COVER STORY

Alumni run film company from different corners of the country

By Claire Osburn
Assistant Arts &
Entertainment editor

The story of Villa House Pictures can be told in elements of three — three cities, three guys and three interviews.

The “tri-city film company” extends to Los Angeles, New York and Nashville and came into being when founding members Henry Reed and Ben Hickson met while attending Belmont.

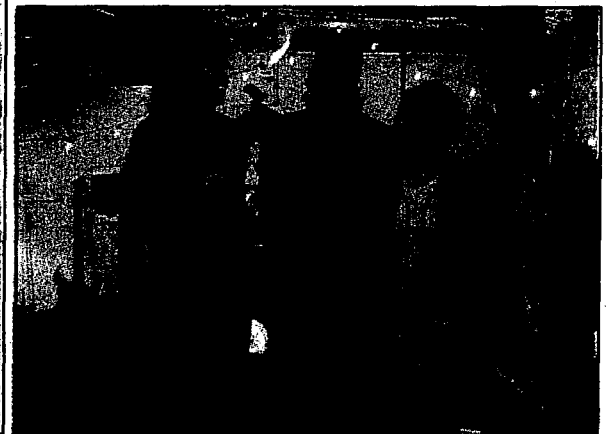
“We were basically just killing time in the summer at our friend’s apartment. We were couch crashing,” Reed said. “We started doing music stuff together. Ben’s a really good engineer, and I’m a musician, and so we kind of started collaborating that way, and we really didn’t think that much about it honestly. We just started making movies, and things kind of progressively got bigger, more serious, more professional, and we decided we both love doing it, and we should really go for it.”

So they embarked on a part-professional, part-personal relationship that drastically altered their lives.

They decided to name their company after the street they lived on in Nashville at the time, Villa Place, which is down the street from trendy Edgehill Cafe. They commonly referred to their creative collaboration site as “the Villa House,” thus the cohesive title Villa House Pictures was born.



Left: Henry Reed (far right) stands with Isabella Spain (middle) and Josh Huggins (left) on the set of Rebecca Roubian’s music video for her single, “Love You Now.” Photo by Brianna Mailey. Top right: Reed and Hickson on set. Bottom right: The cast of “Critter’s Galaxy” shoots a new webisode. Photo by Hayden Mason.



Reed was a percussion major at Belmont before he and Hickson, a double major in music business and corporate finance, transferred to MTSU. Reed changed his major to liberal studies, concentrating on theater, English, music and business, while Hickson stuck with corporate finance.

Their decision to transfer was largely due to the resources MTSU offered, such as the Film Guild, a nonprofit organization that brings creative individuals together to collaborate on film projects. All the VHP founders were members, and Reed served as president from 2011-2012.

Reed met third VHP member Jimmy Sudekum when they both worked at Carrabba’s in Murfreesboro.

Sudekum holds a bachelor of science in audio production from MTSU and uses his skills to compose music and score projects for the company.

Having access to the student pool from two creatively inclined schools as Belmont and MTSU benefitted to VHP, as they often use their networks to acquire new business.

One of their latest projects was a music video for Nashville-based Rebecca Roubian’s sweet tune, “Love Me Now.”

The guys first

worked with Roubian on her electronic press kit for her Kickstarter campaign last year after meeting the artist through her album producer, fellow audio production graduate Taylor Bray of Maple Studios.

“It was 1,500 frames per second,” Reed said about filming the love story in slow motion. “It was very precise and technical, but it turned out to be a really kind of beautiful representation of a feeling.”

“That’s why music videos are such great art forms, because they allow you to take a song that already exists and interpret it in a way

where it gives it new life, and you can still tell a story,” Sudekum added.

Local director Marshall Burnette served as the idea creator behind the music video and director. Since then, he’s recruited Reed to produce his own Southern Gothic short film, “Devil’s Damned To Try.” They plan to submit the finished product to the Cannes, Toronto, Berlin, Sundance and Nashville film festivals.

Another prominent collaborator of VHP is MTSU electronic media production graduate Hayden Mason. Not only did he direct Sol Cat’s music video “Fishin With John” for

the company last year, but he also worked on projects like Roubian’s music video, and the business’s weekly YouTube show “Critter’s Galaxy.”

The “Between Two Ferns”-esque web series takes place in the “galaxy” (i.e., a garage) and has host Critter — Chris Boatright, former Belmont student and MTSU audio production grad — interview local Nashville musicians. Episode one featured groovy rock ‘n’ rollers Sol Cat, while episode two’s guest was indie rock band Ravello and episode three hosted eclectic singer/songwriter Gavin Shea.

“They’ve really

COVER STORY

given me a lot of the education I've had," Sudekum said about collaborating with Reed and Hickson. "Ben is a really good cinematographer. He's really analytical and pretty knowledgeable of the whole technical side of the process. Henry's main focus is producing; he's more organizing all the people, so that's why their dynamic was so great ... I'm a bit in between, I have the audio influence from being in school for that, and my main focus is music, and we actually have all started in music so there's a lot of commonalities between us."

Their passion for their careers, for example. They were even willing to take their love across



Jimmy Sudekum lives in Los Angeles and composes scores for Villa House Pictures' projects. Photo by Madison Fuller.

the country — a notion that has since become the premise of their business. Sudekum lives in L.A., Hickson lives in New York and Reed lives at home base in Nashville. In addition to VHP, they all freelance their various skills in their individual loca-

tions — Reed works on the popular TV drama "Nashville," and Hickson works for film company Lonely Leap in New York — and firmly believe the distance between them is an asset to their growing company.

"What's really cool, and what I tell people

when they ask about it, is when you're investing in us, you're investing in these three different locales, and the ideas that are coming from each one," Reed said. "That's a powerful thing."

Their decisions to separate had as much to do with their indi-

vidual career goals as it did their collaborative ones. But the men have benefitted from modern technology's bridge of communication to keep the company cohesive.

"We communicate telepathically," Hickson joked. "Also via late night video chats. And a group text message.

And a group Facebook message. The Facebook three-way-message gets most of our professional communication to each other. The group text message is mostly just jokes and funny screenshots. We only conference call when someone needs to be shouted at."

As far as the future of the company is concerned, VHP remains sweet, down-to-earth, and humble.

"We think very much that our story is ahead of us," Hickson said. "We think our past work is no indication of future work. We feel very strongly about that, because we put everything into what we're about to do."

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RANTS AND RAVES

April 24
 Snarky Puppy
 3rd and Lindsley
 818 3rd Ave. S.,
 Nashville
 7 p.m.
 \$15



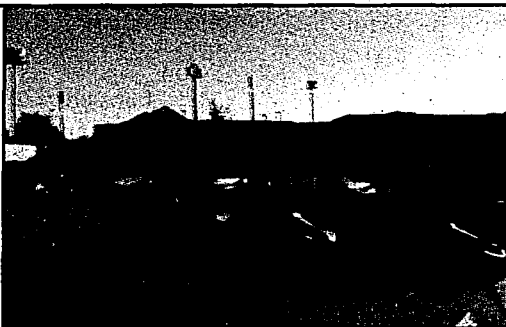
While everyone has a favorite band and genre of music, it is also important that we appreciate all music beyond personal taste. A great way to broaden those horizons is by going to see the gifted, high-energy funk/jazz band Snarky Puppy perform at 3rd and Lindsley. Snarky Puppy originated

in Texas but is now based in New York. The group features more than 25 musicians on regular rotation, and their music is a refreshing blend of composition and improvisation. Needless to say, boredom is impossible at a Snarky Puppy show.

The group's newest album *groundUP* is a perfect

example of the musicians' talent, and showcases their ability to combine piano, saxophone, electric bass, guitar, synthesizers and a loaded string section. Their sound is upbeat and energizing.

April 25
 MTSU After Dark:
 GO USA
 2270 Armory Drive,
 Murfreesboro
 10 p.m. to 1 a.m.
 Free with Blue
 Raider ID



There are a few things in life we'll never outgrow: real Disney movies — not the atrocities Disney Channel is throwing up these days — macaroni-shaped SpongeBob, Halloween candy and late night adventures at fun parks.

It doesn't matter if you're 10 years old or a college

senior majoring in physics, when the opportunity to race go karts and play arcade games presents itself, you take it. This Thursday, MTSU is taking a group of students to GO USA Fun Park for free. In college, free is good.

At GO USA you will have the option of go kart racing,

playing minigolf and working on your swing in the batting cages. To sweeten the deal, MTSU is providing transportation for those who need a ride. Be sure to be outside at the Student Union bus stop or the James Union Building at 9:30 p.m.

April 25
 Joshua Paige
 12th and Porter
 114 12th Ave. N.,
 Nashville
 8 p.m.
 \$5



Country artists are a dime a dozen in Nashville. Some are really talented and worth seeing. The majority of them, however, simply want to make it big in Music City. This is the group Joshua Paige was plucked from.

Paige sings with a typical Southern drawl that is not groundbreaking. His songs

follow the traditional recipe for a generic country tune, starting by whining about a girl who stole your money and ran away with another man. He does this in his song "She Got Everything."

Next, add a little bit of backstory where you sing about swimming in "the crick," the evils of shopping

malls and how you'll always be a country boy. This ingredient is found in the song creatively titled "Country Boy."

Finally, finish it off by splashing each song with a cheesy, overdone steel guitar riff. Please, don't go to this show.

April 26
 "The Lion King"
 Student Union
 Video Theater
 (208)
 8 to 10 p.m.
 Free



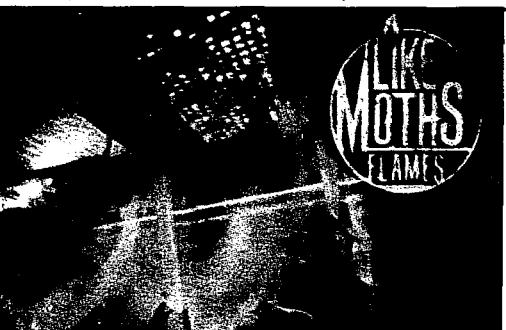
This weekend, how about watching one of the most beloved '90s animations ever made on campus for free? While most of us probably know the story of "The Lion King," as it is one of Disney's greatest achievements, a select few of us may not.

If you are one of these few and your parents deprived

you of this joy as a child, here's a summary. A lion named Mufasa reigns over all of the other animals in the Pride Lands of Africa. Mufasa and Queen Sarabi have a son called Simba. After Simba's birth, Mufasa's brother Scar loses his place as heir to the throne, making Simba next in line to be king.

You can find out what happens from there when you go see the movie. Bring tissues. Everyone loves "The Lion King." Don't be the only one missing out.

April 27
 Like Moths to
 Flames
 Rockettown
 601 4th Ave. S.,
 Nashville
 6 p.m.
 \$13 online/ \$15 at
 the door



How anyone can listen to yelling and call it music will always remain a mystery to me. If the ability to get angry and holler about stuff is all it takes to be a hardcore musician, we could all be looking at a new career opportunity.

If you enjoy being screamed at, you should know the metalcore band

Like Moths to Flames is coming to Rockettown. Like Moths to Flames was formed by lead vocalist Chris Roetter. In 2010, the band signed with Rise Records. Apparently the label wanted to give someone a record deal, only to have them scream loudly into a microphone.

The band also released

two studio albums, *Sweet Talker* and *When We Don't Exist*, which are two more than they should have. In 2012 Like Moths to Flames performed on the S.I.N. tour with the group D.R.U.G.S. Clearly, the tour was loads of good, clean fun.

'Injustice' wins over comic book lovers with storyline

By Logan Barnes
Contributing Critic

"Injustice: Gods Among Us" is not NetherRealm Studio's first foray into the world of DC superheroes — many members of the studio worked on the crossover title "Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe," which was famous for being horrible.

"Injustice" is not horrible.

NetherRealm took cues from their 2011 "Mortal Kombat" release for "Injustice" — the gameplay is similar.

Those familiar with "Mortal Kombat" will find the combat smooth with few minor changes. Instead of a block button, "Street Fighter"-style directional blocking is in place. The power meter

has returned, allowing players to enhance attacks or execute "super moves" for massive damage.

With these new elements come a couple that feel awkward.

Typical combo breakers were removed in favor of a "Clash System." A "clash" can be activated once per match and instantly ends any combo chain the player may be stuck in. However, this leads to a cinematic sequence in which players bet portions of their power meter, and the person who bets gets a small benefit. The "once per match" stipulation allows you to break from one combo but immediately be picked up into another with no chance of escape.

Another new aspect is the interactive objects and stage transi-

tions within each arena.

The hero can smash or explode the interactive objects — such as cars, explosives or statues — on one another for additional unblockable damage. This may sound cool and cinematic, but some of the objects don't stay destroyed, leading to players relying on or repeatedly using the objects for a victory.

Stage transitions are executed when a special move is performed at arena edges. The player will hurl the opponent through buildings, walls and glass for extra damage, and the sequence ends with the fighters in a new location.

Both elements add to superhero-esque feel, but the extra damage can be unbalancing. Balance issues don't end there, but character differences lead to

imbalance.

Even if the balance is slightly off, "Injustice" offers several modes of gameplay that are fun. There's a full-fledged story mode, a typical arcade ladder fight, a "challenge mission" mode known as S.T.A.R. Labs and various multiplayer aspects.

The story mode follows the world after Superman decides to take it over to keep peace. It is a typical comic book story, short and sweet at four hours, but it's intriguing, witty and allows you to get a feel for many different characters. The only problem is the story is occasionally broken up by monotonous quick-time event mini-games.

If the story doesn't slake your thirst for narrative, the ladder mode offers short epilogues for each character upon



"Injustice" pulls off comic book theme, gets an 8/10.
Photo courtesy of Facebook.

completion.

S.T.A.R. Labs consist of fights with special stipulations, much like the challenge tower from "Mortal Kombat." Online gameplay modes include "King of the Hill," "Survivor" and standard "1 vs. 1." "King of the Hill" seems the most exciting — one player fends off multiple players in a row while others watch, make bets and wait to take on the "King."

The fighting mechan-

ics are easy to learn for inexperienced gamers, and the story is well written and interesting.

Negatively, the game features aspects that pull it down, such as the "clash system" and potential to abuse interactive objects.

Still, the game is fun, the replay value is high and it's always fun to watch the "Super Friends" beat the snot out of each other. "Injustice" saves the day with an 8/10. ■

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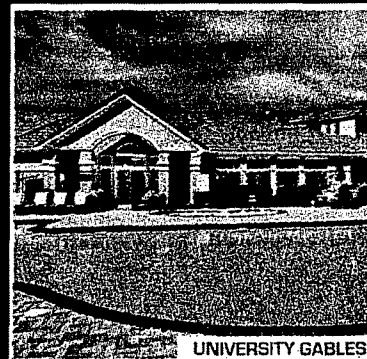
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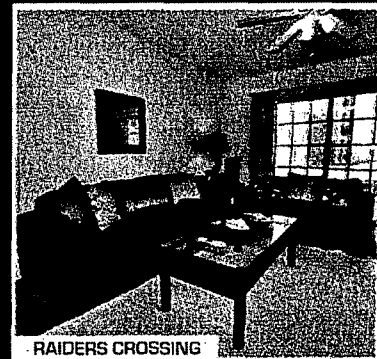


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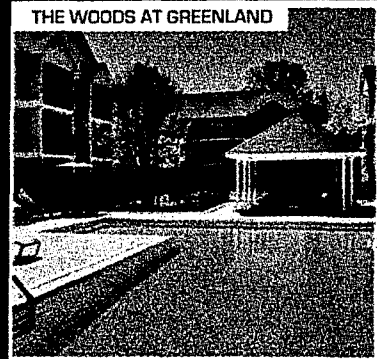
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THE WOODS AT GREENLAND

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Spring brings a new crop of albums from old artists

By Will Carrington
Critic

Ten years have passed since New York punk/electronic/garage rock act Yeah Yeah Yeahs released their first album, *Fever to Tell*.

Throughout the decade, they've left the lo-fi aesthetic of their first two records behind for a glossier electronic sound. *It's Blitz!* was almost a dance album –

vocalist Karen O even ordered her listeners to “dance ‘til you’re dead” on album highlight “Heads Will Roll.” This year’s *Mosquito* expands on the electronic sound, but not with the same success.

Mosquito isn’t a bad album, but it’s pointless and maddeningly lazy in places. “Area 52” is probably their worst song and should have been relegated to a b-side or charity compila-

Yeah Yeah Yeahs



Photo courtesy of Facebook.

tion rather than a prime placement halfway through the album.

More so, Karen O’s vocals finally get annoying on the title

track where she shrieks “they’ll suck your blood” what feels like 1,000 times.

Only a few bright spots exist. Opener and lead single “Sacrilege” is a good time, ending with a raucous gospel choir breakdown.

The other best tracks on *Mosquito* barely sound like the Yeah Yeah Yeahs. Closers “Wedding Song,” “Despair” and “Under the Earth” are slower songs

the group isn’t known for, but these forays into different territory are successful.

Mosquito is a frustrating listen. Too many songs sound like the band didn’t care how the final product would sound, and the few stellar tracks make these sound even worse.

Give this album a listen if you’re a fan, and hope they can rebound for their fifth album. ■

By Meredith Galyon
Critic

Paramore recently released their self-titled album after a four-year hiatus and the loss of two band members.

Brothers Josh and Zac Farro left the band in 2010 due to unhappiness with hectic touring schedules, and now Paramore remains as a trio. The newest album reflects how they dealt with the loss and their overall growth as a band and individuals.

Paramore opens with

the uptempo track “Fast In My Car,” which describes the process of reinventing the band. Hayley Williams chants, “Hollowed out and filled up with hate, all we want is for you to give us a break,” letting listeners know they want to let go of the past and move forward.

“Grow Up” is one of my favorites – it carries a message that hits close to home for students on the verge of graduation.

Harsh lyrics like, “Some of us have to

Paramore



Photo courtesy of Facebook.

grow up sometime, and if I have to, I’m gonna leave you behind,” are set to an upbeat tempo

that makes it hard to resist chiming in, despite the slightly despressing tone.

“Daydreaming” also starts with a powerful guitar intro that showcases Williams’ voice in a beautiful, soft manner.

“Part II” is an extension of “Let The Flames Begin” from *Riot!* – my favorite Paramore album. The new sound is similar to the old – heavy and intense, with wailing guitars and powerful vocals from Williams.

“Ain’t It Fun” takes a completely different musical tone and is arguably the best song

on the album. It starts out with a xylophone and ends with a choir echoing Williams with a standout soulful vibe.

“Now” and “Still Into You” would be at the top of my list if not for Williams’ vocal technique. The tracks sound great musically, but her vocals are choppy and overenunciated, which is annoying.

“(One of Those) Crazy Girls” also had the potential for greatness but resulted in disappointment. The

PARAMORE cont. on p. 13

By Jay Powell
Features editor

When Fall Out Boy announced its hiatus in 2009, rock fans rejoiced that the emo kings were hanging up their eyeliner and ridding the world of their polished, corporate radio rock.

To the band, it was a much-needed time off. Their previous album, *Folie a Deux*, was an obscure effort to expand on the band’s sound that turned many fans off. The new generation of young heart-

breakers was evolving into different sounds, and the “emo” craze was on its way out.

Fall Out Boy played its final show at Madison Square Garden Oct. 4, 2009. Blink-182’s Mark Hoppus came out onstage and shaved Pete Wentz’s head, symbolizing shedding the past and leaving a clean canvas in its place.

In the band’s return, Fall Out Boy’s managed a renaissance with their music. The new album went No. 1 on

Fall Out Boy



Photo courtesy of Facebook.

iTunes last week, and the band is set for an upcoming arena tour.

With the new album,

the four members are now older. Wentz’s stint in the tabloids as Ashlee Simpson’s short-term

hubby has died down, and the band reached a point where they could tolerate each other long enough to churn out another album in the studio.

The resulting effort, *Save Rock and Roll*, shows the band in a state of evolution. Synonymous with outlandish, ironic titles and tongue-in-cheek lyrics, *Save Rock and Roll* is no different, but the music is more pop-oriented. Despite the title, the album is anything but rock and

roll.

It’s chock full of catchy choruses that harken back to English football chants that will get any crowd in a frenzy, and undoubtedly some of the songs will be radio hits.

The slick production and emphasis on poppy melodies keeps *Save Rock and Roll* from becoming a classic album. It is one of those albums that self-proclaimed “experts” will write off as just another turd in the sea of cor-

FALL OUT BOY cont. on p. 13

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

PARAMORE continued...

lyrics about being a crazy ex-girlfriend were intended to be humorous but turned creepy instead.

The album ends with "Future," an almost eight-minute-long song that starts slowly and steadily crescendos into a steady, powerful whirring of guitars. The inspirational lyrics that advise listeners to think of their future to get through the day is the perfect note to end on. If you are a diehard Paramore fan, I definitely recommend purchasing the album. It has already earned the No. 1 spot on the Billboard 200.

Despite a few subpar songs on the 17-track album, they are clearly doing something right. ■

FALL OUT BOY continued...

porate rock. But then again, Fall Out Boy is one of those groups that will always face harsh criticism.

In fact, many of the songs don't sound like a band is playing them organically. "Rat A Tat" is close to rock and roll, but when a band needs Courtney Love to pump up the rock in its music, something is wrong.

Others off the album's guest spots include Foxes ("Just One Yesterday"), Big Sean ("The Mighty Fall") and surprisingly Sir Elton John, who lends his voice and piano skills to the epic title song finale.

To Fall Out Boy fans who pined for new music from the group for the past four years, you won't be disappointed. The first single, "My

Songs Know What You Did In The Dark (Light Em Up)" is a perfect example of the new Fall Out Boy sound, bolstering a muscular chanting chorus, albeit a bit too much at times.

Singer Patrick Stump's vocals are loud and don't stretch much farther than that of a yelping teenager, but it works for the music.

To all of the Fall Out Boy naysayers out there, *Save Rock and Roll* probably won't be the big wake up call that turns them into fans, but to those true believers who have been waiting for their favorite emo kings to return, it's a welcome addition to their catalog. ■



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The Daily News Journal dnj.com

Racial divisions in pro sports needs broader discussion

By Alex Hubbard
Staff writer

We've been hearing a lot about Jackie Robinson lately.

This is thanks to Hollywood, which adapted the story of the first African American baseball player in the major leagues for the big screen. The film, titled "42" after the number Robinson wore, was released April 12.

Robinson's legacy and hall-of-fame career is largely a celebratory note now, but in 1946 — the season before Robinson broke into the majors — things weren't so happy.

We know that Brooklyn Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey considered Robinson and at least one other player as possible candidates to break baseball's self-imposed color barrier based on the strength of his character and his skill on the diamond. Rickey was a baseball man, yes, but he knew what he was doing.

He wanted a man who could endure the inevitable indignities.

Indignities like that first spring training in 1946, down in what was still a segregated Florida. Robinson wasn't allowed to stay with the rest of the team, and the gates of some fields remained shut in resolute defiance of Rickey's mission to integrate his team and the major leagues.



Alex Hubbard

Robinson didn't make the team that year. Instead he went to non-segregated Montreal, where he was cheered as the team's

ment in New Hampshire.

It was a sign of the closeness where those realities of 1946 Florida still reside, yet surely it was also a sign of progress. No one would have lost a job for heckling Robinson back then.

This progress is fickle. In fact, some people see regression in baseball these days.

That is why days before the opening of "42," Major League Baseball announced the formation of a committee to study the decline of black players in the

black players made a living in the "Negro Leagues," but now the implication is that, after Robinson's fight and so many others, there exists not enough black players to staff an all-star team.

While this is certainly disturbing, some difficult realities need to be recognized.

In 1947, what would eventually become the National Basketball Association was a year old. Even by the 1960s, the NBA was a relative backwater of sports.

The National Football League paled in

landscape remains this way is something most people would rather not talk about. The obvious fact is that, to a significant degree, sports in this country still deal with segregation.

But it isn't simple.

No one is actively denying black athletes the right to play baseball.

Baseball is struggling with its own image.

Meanwhile, on several occasions since the 1970s, the NBA has pushed to prove that it is not a playground for gangsters and unseemly

neighborhoods, compared to a noticeable lack of the same in majority-black neighborhoods, are on to something. But the solution, as is too often the case with modern societal issues, is to throw money on it.

Some have called for an organization for baseball similar to the Amateur Athletic Union in basketball, which seems to want to groom children from almost premature ages to be a lottery pick in the NBA.

But baseball already has a rigid enough system, from Little League, to travel teams, up to high school. It doesn't make sense to fix a problem by adding parts of the same problem.

Nor does it make sense to assume that money and old thinking can fix a problem that is decades old. The MLB and NBA didn't become stratospherically separated overnight.

Precisely how baseball should reverse its racial fortunes is difficult to say. It is good the topic is more openly discussed, but the discussion needs to be broader.

It is time to look harder into what is driving baseball and basketball and to decide whether that is healthy for athletes, fans and society.

It isn't much different from what Rickey did in 1946. ■

"Why the sporting landscape remains this way is something most people would rather not talk about. The obvious fact is that, to a significant degree, sports in this country still deal with segregation."

star player.

However, he succeeded in 1947, and baseball changed. Of course, it moved in fits and starts.

Just last year, a Leominster, Mass., policeman was fired after hurling a racial insult at the Boston Red Sox's Carl Crawford while he was on a rehab assign-

game.

The *New York Times* pointed out that the population of black players in MLB has fallen to 8.5 percent of all players, and that some teams, including 2012 World Series champions San Francisco Giants, have none on the roster.

Before the desegregation of baseball,

popularity to its college sibling and lacked the mass marketing of television that it would use in the 1950s to bring about a national fan base.

In short, baseball had professional sports to itself.

Today, the NBA is 80 percent black, and the NFL is also majority black. Why the sporting

characters.

Chatter surrounding MLB's announcement of the study committee has focused largely on what is caused the problem, not that there hasn't been some meaningful thinking.

Those who point out the well-supported youth baseball culture in affluent — and largely white — neigh-

Longtime starters anchor Blue Raiders infield

By Mark Mize
Sports editor

In May 2010, Middle Tennessee baseball hosted the University of New Orleans for a three-game series, one the Blue Raiders swept at Reese Smith Jr. Field in Murfreesboro.

The series was the last meeting between the two Sun Belt foes after UNO stepped down from Division I play the following year, but those weekend games featured a pair of freshman shortstops between the two teams that became one of the most prolific double-play combos in Sun Belt history.

Those two players were MT freshman Ryan Ford and the Privateers' "John" Thomas, as his name appeared in the lineup that weekend.

Fast forward to 2013, and the two have now started 142 consecutive games side-by-side in the Blue Raider infield, although John now plays second base and prefers to be called "Johnny."

"They're seniors now, but they've played together for the last three years," said Jim McGuire, MT head coach. "They're as good of a combination as we may have ever had here defensively. They can make plays. They can turn the double play, the slow-roller play. There's not a play defensively that the two of them don't do well."

Thomas, a native of Kenner, La., was granted immediate transfer in 2010 due to his home-

state program's move to Division II, and after a call from the Blue Raider coaching staff, he found himself in Murfreesboro alongside his former conference opponents.

"It was a shock at first because I wasn't expecting [UNO] to switch divisions when I went in there," Thomas said. "I knew it was a possibility, but I didn't think it was a very good chance. MTSU just called me up one day after we had a series versus them ... I'm very pleased with my decision."

The 2011 season proved difficult for the MT baseball program, which had set multiple offensive records one season earlier but suffered losses from graduation and the Major League Baseball draft. The team struggled to an 18-37 record, but the combination of Ford and Thomas solidified the middle of the infield defensively and helped the team lead the Sun Belt in double plays.

"Double-play balls are something we love to do," said Ford, a Knoxville native. "We're always wanting to get them. I know if I can get him a good feed, he'll turn it a lot better than a lot of the guys I've played with over the summer."

The pair of middle infielders became close friends during the last three seasons and are roommates on the road. Thomas and Ford have often shared a spot at the top of the lineup this



Johnny Thomas (154) and Ryan Ford (142) rank 5th and 11th respectively in the nation in consecutive games started. Photo by Mark Mize.

season, and each have developed into offensive catalysts for their team. Both boast batting averages above the .300 mark in 2013.

"I think they're both having very good senior years," McGuire said. "They're both hitting at the top of the lineup. They can both steal bases. They've added to their game offensively, both of them have."

Thomas is referred to by teammates and coaches as the best two-strike hitter on the team. He has shown his plate discipline in 2013 with a team-high 22 walks compared to 14 strikeouts, a team low among starters.

Ford is known as more of a free swinger and ranks sixth in the Sun Belt with 49 hits

this season. Despite struggling at the plate in his first year on campus, the senior has accumulated 181 hits throughout his career.

McGuire also noted the differences in the two players' personalities and leadership qualities.

"Johnny's a little more carefree, I guess would be the way to put it, a little looser when he plays. He kind of keeps everybody going that way, whereas Ryan is a lot quieter, more of a quiet leader to try to lead by example," McGuire said.

Thomas embodies the carefree attitude, and the senior has become known for walk-up music that echoes the phrase, "My name's Johnny" whenever

he steps to the plate. He also has a general disdain for typical baseball apparel and equipment, much to the chagrin of the conference's umpires.

"I am not a big fan of hats or helmets," Thomas said. "If you watch me in the field, I'm constantly messing with my hat. It is very uncomfortable ... I try to keep my pretty hair, try to keep it looking good."

The more reserved Ford described he and his teammate's relationship as great, despite some ribbing that goes on between the two.

"We might get into it a little bit," Ford said with a laugh. "Johnny likes to mess with people and get under your skin. Sometimes,

you can get a little mad about it and get in little punching fights, but nothing serious."

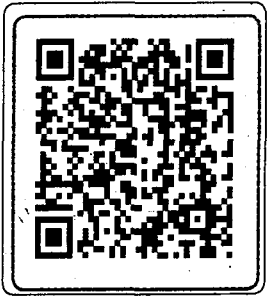
The last time the pair did not start opposite each other in the middle of the infield was March 6, 2011. McGuire, in his first year as head coach, has yet to coach a game without his starting second baseman and shortstop, a trend he hopes to continue for the rest of 2013.

"It's a great feeling to have, I know that, to be able to write their names in the lineup each and every game and know that you feel good about what's going on ... you know you're going to get that consistency and that effort every time you go out there," McGuire said. ■

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