

THURSDAY
January 22, 2004

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Partly Cloudy



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In [flash], inside



The university's
editorially independent
student newspaper

Middle Tennessee State University SIDELINES

Volume 79 No. 53

Office space



Photo by Micah Miller | Photo Editor

Several professors whose offices have been moved to Ezell Hall are upset with the building's condition.

Faculty upset with Ezell

By Kristin Hall
News Editor

After a long history of structural problems with Ezell Hall before the dormitory was closed in 1999, the renovated building is still the subject of conflict now as faculty office space.

Several professors complained to the administration about moving into the first floor of Ezell Hall, where dorm rooms were reconstructed to house 20 new faculty offices.

Thirteen professors from the College of Mass Communication and 10 from the College of Liberal Arts now have offices in Ezell.

The offices opened at the beginning of last semester and the administration had to deal with a flurry of problems from the faculty ranging from persistent odors in the offices to construction problems to the general appearance of the building.

Alexander Nagy, professor of journalism, said his office smells so bad he hardly ever goes in there anymore. "It smells like something stale," Nagy said. "It smells like a garbage can."

The administration bought the office a de-humidifier to battle the smell, but

FOR THE FULL BACKSTORY

Read this story
on *Sidelines* online,
then follow the links
to the "Wreck the Halls"
three-part series, originally
published in 1999.
www.mtsusidelines.com

Nagy has noticed only a small difference.

"I told the dean that if that's the best they can do, I'm taking my stuff home," Nagy said.

As construction workers continue to renovate the rest of Ezell to make room for two new production studios for the recording industry program, professors have to put up with noise and other inconveniences.

"There's ongoing construction and they'll turn off the power from time to time," explained Paul Fischer, associate professor of recording industry.

Jim Dougan, assistant professor of recording industry, was working on a book draft when the power was cut out twice in a period of three hours.

After years of construction and reno-

vation, the grounds around Ezell are muddy and much of the building is still blocked off.

"I don't care how many shrubs and plants they put out there, it's still an ugly building," Dougan said.

However the biggest complaint about the move is amount of notice that the professors were given.

"We found out about this during week two of the second summer session," Fischer said. "I pretty much had to start boxing up my office immediately."

Many of the recording industry professors who are now in Ezell previously had offices in the Business and Aerospace Building.

However, at the beginning of the move, the university started a new organization program which placed the deans of each college in the domain of the buildings within their domain.

"The understanding was that the deans would move their faculty out of others' domains and into their own domains," explained Watson Hannah, director of academic technology planning and projects.

Still, Hannah said that the recording industry professors were not forced to

See Ezell, 2

Birth control pill now costs more

Health Services offers options for women

By Lindsey Turner
News Editor

Women wanting to purchase the birth control pill Ortho-Tricyclen from Health Services will face a slight price increase effective immediately.

Richard Chapman, Health Services director, said that the pill's previous price of \$11 a month at Health Services will be raised to \$25 a month. Ortho-McNeil, the company that has the exclusive rights to the drug, offered a discount to state agencies and college health clinics as a marketing tactic, Chapman said. But the drug's patent is now up, and Ortho-McNeil will no longer be extending the discount.

"They wanted to get patients on their products at a young age so they would hopefully continue it once they get out of college," Chapman said.

Chapman said generic versions of the pill still offer the same protections of the more

expensive name-brand version, though Health Services does not offer generic versions.

"Assuming the quality assurance is the same, and the production is the same, it should be the exact same product," Chapman said.

He said Health Services can still get the name-brand version of the pill more cheaply than the generic versions.

Ortho-Tricyclen-Lo, a newer version of the pill, contains lower dosages of hormones that may result in less side effects than the original Ortho-Tricyclen. Chapman said some women experience spotting during the first three months, but that other side effects, such as irritability and cramping, tend to be lessened.

"Ortho-Lo is still a name brand, it's just a different version of the same product," Chapman said. This version of the pill is available at Health Services for \$11.

"We're finding that most patients are switching to the Ortho-Lo with no difficulty," Chapman said.

Chapman said that there are

See Birth control, 2



Photo by Steve Cross | Chief Photographer

Junior Crystal Armbruster utilizes a new laptop and set of headphones that will help make fund-raising easier.

Updated equipment brings phone-a-thon to campus again

By Juanita Thouin
Staff Writer

Administrators within MTSU's Office of Development hope to establish a better rapport with alumni by bringing the annual phone-a-thon back on campus.

Six years ago, fund-raising via telephone was outsourced to a fund-raising contractor.

But what the Office of Development soon learned was that alumni missed the opportunity to talk to students currently attending MTSU.

Alumni "want to know if so-and-so professor is still there," said Kippy Todd, assistant director of annual giving. "Is Dr. Bob still in the education department? The staples of the university, how are they doing?"

To better facilitate bringing the annual fund-raising event back in-house, the university has set up a sophisticated system using laptops, rented software and headphones.

The rented software, provided by Moonfire and IP Blue, has several advantages over the old system of setting up a databank. Todd said that the last in-

house event took place in the faculty/staff dining hall in the basement of the James Union Building, required 30 telephones and necessitated keeping track of 35,000 sheets of paper.

The new system allows the Development Office to load alumni phone numbers into a database and subsequent calls to be made with the touch of one button.

According to Todd, this eliminates the need for callers to look up phone numbers and also avoids human error, which results in dialing the wrong number. All of which, she said, speeds up the process and allows more calls to be made with less resources.

"We are approaching 70,000 alumni in our database," Todd said. "And with a limited staff, this is our personal visit to alumni."

The system is also portable because it works off of a wireless system, using laptops.

Because space on campus is at such a premium these days, the portability of the system makes it attractive, officials say.

See Fund-raising, 2

Campaigns, activism heating up

Student groups push for their favorite hopefuls

By Juanita Thouin
Staff Writer

Tony Ford and Jacob Holt, along with other residents of the community, threw an overnight bag into their cars and headed for Iowa this past Friday. Their destination: the Iowa caucuses.

Ford, a senior social work major at MTSU, and Holt, an MTSU student majoring in political science and philosophy, are just two of the growing number of college students who see political activism as not only a right, but an obligation.

"My mantra is if they don't vote, they can't complain," senior interior design major Lydia Melton said of her passion for involving other students in the political process.

Melton and Ford are volunteers for the Howard Dean campaign. Holt has thrown his support toward John Edwards.

At the start of 2004, there were nine Democrats and one Republican vying for



Photo by Micah Miller | Photo Editor

(Above) A student sports a button in support of Howard Dean's run for the Democratic presidential nod.

Photo by Seth Holland | Staff Photographer

(Right) College Republicans member Lizzie Miller tries to recruit Jon Sehlischer yesterday afternoon in Keathley University Center.

the chance to be elected president of the United States this fall. As of yesterday, that roster had winnowed down to seven and one, respectively.

Five of the candidates have active campaigns and dedicated supporters on the campus of MTSU.

George W. Bush, Republican

President Bush has been in office since



January 2001 and is seeking re-election. With no challengers from within his party, he's just now getting his Tennessee office up and running.

On campus, the Raider Republicans are currently holding strategy meetings. The groups is led by Tyler Smith, a junior digital

See Campaigns, 2

Campaigns: Some candidates not represented on campus

Continued from 1

communication major; Justin Owen, a junior political science major; Sidney Schaad, a freshman undeclared major; Elizabeth Miller, a freshman criminal justice major; Jason Eaves, a freshman political science major; and Kasey Talbott, a sophomore mass communication major.

"We're trying to get a Republican voice on campus active again," Smith said.

The group is also learning the ins and outs of campaigning by helping local Republican zoning commissioner candidates with their campaigns. They are making phone calls to registered voters and going door-to-door.

Smith said he is supporting President Bush in his re-election bid because he believes in the Republican anti-abortion stance.

He also believes citizens should be allowed to keep more of their own money and invest or spend it in ways they see fit rather than having the government to decide where it should go.

"I like Bush because he seems to connect with a lot of people," Smith said. "He seems to actually care."

Wesley Clark, Democrat

Clark recently retired from military service with the rank of general. He served as Supreme Allied Commander for NATO forces during the war in Kosovo.

Clark's leading voice on campus is Antwon Bailey, a senior political science major.

Bailey, a nontraditional student, is not new to politics. He worked as paid staff for Gov. Phil Bredesen's inaugural committee and the Tennessee Democratic Party.

Bailey said he's always been civic-minded.

A couple of years ago he attended a Democratic summer academy sponsored by former Vice President Al Gore. There he was taught the theory of how to run an effective campaign.

From that experience he was able to network into paid political positions. His current work for Clark is also as paid staff.

Bailey said he doesn't support Clark just because he's getting paid.

"Clark is the best solution to the George Bush debacle," Bailey said.

He's also quick to point out that Clark is the candidate who seems most interested in winning the votes of Tennesseans.

Clark has 16 paid staffers throughout the state while the other campaigns have only one or two.

Although Bailey admitted that he, personally, hasn't worked through all the intricacies of Clark's platform, he appreciates the retired general's stance on the economy, his desire to protect and promote jobs, his prescription drug plan and his plan for tax reform.

"Clark has a world-renowned reputation as a consensus-builder," Bailey said.

Howard Dean, Democrat

Dean is a physician-turned-politician. He spent 12 years as the governor of Vermont.

Dean has a large base of support on campus: more than 50 students regularly attend the Dean campaign meetings.

The MTSU for Dean leadership is in the hands of Ford and Melton.

Ford, a nontraditional student who spent 15 years in the military and is a disabled Gulf War veteran, was never really into politics before signing on to the Dean campaign.

"I was irritated with President Bush and what he's done to veteran's benefits," Ford said.

Ford blamed President Bush for the increased co-pay veterans must pay for prescription drugs.

In 2001 the co-payment for medications to treat non-service related illness or injury went from \$2 per prescription to \$7.

As a former military man, Ford said he also likes Clark as a presidential candidate, but believes Clark will have a more difficult time beating Bush. His belief stems from Clark's decision not to opt out of the federal matching funds program.

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

MTSU has six campus groups supporting presidential hopefuls. Here's how to contact them, as well as a listing of all the candidates' Web sites.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Phone Tyler Smith, 893-5152
Web sites www.georgebush.com
www.raiderrepublicans.com
Upcoming events Bush campaign meeting Feb. 3 at 7 p.m. in the Business and Aerospace Building's Suntrust Room

JOHN KERRY

Phone Brad Ward, 849-7856
Web site www.johnkerry.com
Upcoming events To be announced

WESLEY CLARK

Phone Antwon Bailey, 244-5404
E-mail abailey@clark04.com
Web site www.clark04.com
Upcoming events To be announced

JOHN EDWARDS

Phone Kim Sasser or John Winston, 329-3977
Web site www.johnedwards2004.com
Upcoming events To be announced

HOWARD DEAN

Phone Tony Ford, 308-8064
E-mail mtsufordean@yahoo-groups.com
Web site www.deanforamerica.com
Upcoming events Dean campaign meeting Feb. 4, 7 p.m., at Patterson Community Center, Suite A, located at 521 Mercury Blvd.

DENNIS KUCINICH

Web site www.kucinich.us

JOE LIEBERMAN

Web site www.joe2004.com

AL SHARPTON

Web site www.sharpton2004.org

LYNDON LAROCHE

Web site www.larouchein2004.net

Candidates who take matching funds can only spend \$44.6 million during the primary season. Once selected as the nominee, they can receive \$76 million in public funds.

Ford said comparing that amount to the \$200 million Bush expects to raise leaves him wondering if Clark can be a viable opponent.

Nonetheless, Ford said he will support whoever wins the nomination.

"All of us [Democrats], in the end, want Bush out of office," he said.

Melton, also a nontraditional student, said she has been a lifelong Democrat, having participated in the Young Democrats club in high school.

She also volunteered at the 1992 Clinton-Gore headquarters in Memphis.

"One of my main issues is women's rights," Melton said. "I'm staunchly pro-choice."

"What drew me to Dean in the first place was that he came out right away against the war," she added. "I was very anti-war."

Melton also likes Dean because he isn't afraid to take an unpopular position on issues. "And at that time it was a very unpopular position."

Melton has been busy putting up fliers around campus and attending Dean supporter meetings.

She has also written letters to senators asking them to endorse Dean and plans to

work the polls on Feb. 10, the day Tennesseans cast their primary votes.

"I wish that more students would get involved [in the political process] but when I try talk to my classmates they don't even know who Howard Dean is," Melton said.

John Edwards, Democrat

Edwards is an attorney who began his political career in 1998 as an U.S. senator from North Carolina.

Edwards' bid to be the Democratic candidate for president has the support of Holt, the founding president of the MTSU College Democrats and former volunteer for Andy Womack's and Bredesen's campaigns for governor.

"I'm a committed Democrat and believe he has the best chance of winning," Holt said of his support for Edwards.

Holt based that belief on his own careful analysis of past elections.

Holt said the last non-southern Democrat to win the White House was President John F. Kennedy. According to Holt, Edwards is the only candidate who has won a statewide Southern race.

Holt said evidence shows Southern Democrats are more likely to back a Southern Democrat than one from the North and he believes any candidate needs to win the South in order to win the election.

Holt also likes Edwards' style and his College for Everyone plan.

This plan proposes to pay for the first year of college for anyone who is academically prepared and works 10 hours a week. The work can be work study or in the private sector.

In addition to making phone calls and going door to door for the candidate, Holt speaks at meetings on behalf of the Edwards message.

"Senator Edwards is the most pragmatic of them all," Holt said. "In health care for instance, his plan has the best shot at getting passed in Congress."

John Kerry, Democrat

Kerry is a decorated Vietnam war veteran and a U.S. senator from Massachusetts.

The Kerry for president campaign is actively represented on campus and coordinated by Kayla Henry.

Henry is a junior elementary education major whose introduction into politics began when she was elected as class president her freshman year of high school, and for each year thereafter. This past fall she joined the MTSU Democrats.

Her interest in Kerry was sparked when spokespersons for the various candidates spoke at a Democrat-sponsored meeting.

"When they got up and spoke about John Kerry you could hear their passion," Henry said. "I was so impressed with them."

After learning more about the candidate she decided to lend her support to his campaign.

Henry likes Kerry's emphasis on education. She especially likes his desire to make college more affordable and his desire to provide after-school care for younger children.

"A lot of kids go home to an empty house and that's when they start to get in trouble," Henry said.

Like others who work for the different candidates, she's done phone calling and been involved in strategy planning.

Henry says one of the most satisfying activities she participated in is registering students to vote. She believes every eligible American should vote.

Henry really wants to see Kerry's campaign pay attention to high-school students who will be of legal age to vote in the fall.

"The young people can swing the vote," Henry said. "The high schools are key. We need to get them right out of high school."

While Henry really wants to see Kerry run for president, she said she'll support any Democrat who runs.

"I don't care what Democrat gets the nomination, I'm going to be behind that person," she said. "I've always believed the Democrats are more for the working people." ♦

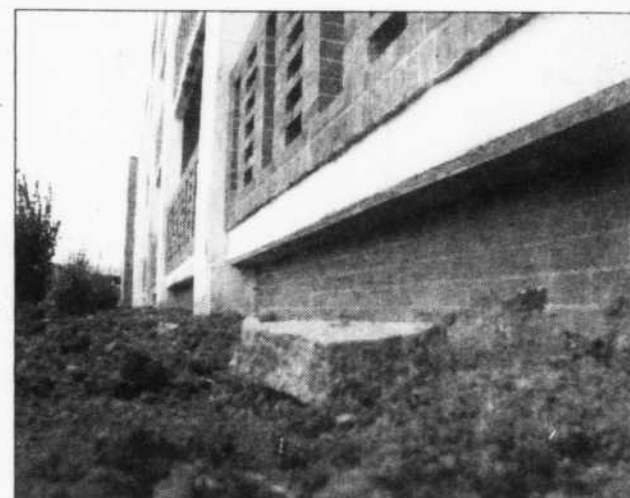


Photo by Micah Miller | Photo Editor

A stray chunk of concrete rests in the dirt outside Ezell and Abernathy halls.

Ezell: Professors trying to make 'adjustments'

Continued from 1

move and did so by their own choice.

However, Fischer said he felt very different about the move.

"I never really believed that if I dug my heels in and said, 'I'm not moving,' that I'd be protected," Fischer said.

"The faculty could have been treated better and more prepared for the move," Dougan said.

Last semester, some of the faculty in Ezell went to the Faculty Senate to have these issues resolved.

"The last I knew, the issues were being addressed, but how well they've been addressed, I am not aware," said Dan Pfeifer, president of the Faculty Senate.

Anantha Babbili, dean of Mass Communication, said that the problems that plagued Ezell Hall have all been corrected as best as possible.

"Once we went to the extra length to accommodate their special needs in their new offices, it was all taken care of," Babbili said.

Hannah said that the problems with Ezell are all a matter of perception and that the complaints stemmed from "bad feelings" about the move.

"They thought they were going into substandard housing, I guess,"

Hannah said. "But the College of Liberal Arts is happy to go over there because they reside in Reynolds Hall and Peck Hall and some of our worst buildings."

After students were evacuated in 1999 from Ezell after serious problems with mold, mildew and falling chunks of concrete, Hannah said she assured the professors that the building is now safe for professors.

"We've had all the tests done," Hannah said. "The Tennessee Board of Regents and the state building commission approved all the drawings. We've had experts come in and check the air quality and we've checked for asbestos and mold."

Despite the university's attempts to resolve the problems with Ezell, some faculty are still disappointed with the new offices.

"They shouldn't have moved anybody in here. It isn't ready," Fischer said. "And now this is where I am going to have to exist probably for the rest of my academic career at MTSU."

Other professors have accepted the move and are now trying to settle into the offices.

"This is the hand we've been dealt and I think all of us are just trying to make the adjustments necessary," Dougan said. ♦

Birth control: Health Services offers more than pill

Continued from 1

alternatives to OrthoTricyclen and Ortho-Lo, but that their formulations might be slightly different.

Health Services also offers alternatives to a daily pill.

"The biggest problem with the pill is that people forget to take it," said Jonna Whitman, the university's physician.

Whitman said Health Services currently offers Depo-Provera, Nuva Ring and the Ortho Evra patch – three methods of contraception that don't require daily attention.

"The Nuva Ring is probably the most recent advance in contraception," Whitman said, "and it stems from the desire to get away from women having to do something every single day."

The Nuva Ring is an intra-vaginal ring that is left in for three weeks, and taken out on the fourth week so the woman will have a period. The ring, like the pill, contains progesterin and

estrogen.

The ring, according to Whitman, has fewer estrogen-related side effects – breast tenderness, nausea, mood swings – because it deposits the lowest amount of hormones.

"They think that's because the hormone delivery is right there where you need it," Whitman said. "It's not a systemic sort of thing."

The Ortho Evra patch is worn for a week at a time, and left off for a fourth week so the woman can have her period. It deposits continuous levels of progesterin and estrogen into the bloodstream.

Depo-Provera is an injection received every three months that suppresses ovulation to prevent pregnancy.

All four methods of birth control – the pill, injection, patch and ring – offer similar protection against pregnancy.

For more information, contact Health Services at 898-2988. ♦

Fund-raising: New technology used to update database

Continued from 1

The cost of the system hardware was \$12,000. To rent the software costs around \$5,000 per year. An additional expense is for the long distance service provided by Appia Communication. They charge 2.5 cents per minute in six second increments.

Todd said the last year MTSU outsourced its annual fund, the university paid the contractor upward of \$90,000.

Therefore, in addition to the benefit of personal contact with alumni, the development office hopes the new system will generate additional revenue.

According to Karen Daniel, coordinator for the annual fund, students just finished making all of their calls to College of Business alumni.

During a four week period,

12,000 contacts were made and \$33,807 in pledges was promised.

"It's important to differentiate," Daniel said. "Just because we say we called 12,000 doesn't mean we actually spoke to 12,000."

Daniel explained that some of those contacts were to answering machines or other persons in the home. She said the system does not allow her to track how many of those contacts actually resulted in conversations with alumni.

She also said that it often takes more than eight tries before the caller actually gets someone on the phone.

She did note that 692 people made pledges.

So far 45 percent of those making pledges have sent in their money. Todd and Daniel say this is very good news; most

universities only expect to receive a return of 75 percent on pledges within a 90-day period.

Asking for donations isn't the only task of callers. The university is also updating its database.

"Most people are not hesitant to give MTSU updated information," Daniel said.

Daniel sees the project as a great success. She said her student workers enjoy calling the alumni and most don't have a problem asking for donations.

"Once they learn what we raise money for and how it benefits the campus, they start get-

ting really pumped," Daniel said.

Daniel said the money raised by the annual fund goes either into the dean's discretionary fund – the unrestricted fund that supports scholarships and faculty gifts or anywhere else an alumnus wants it to go.

She said one recent giver stipulated that he wanted his donation to go to Parking Services.

This week, the annual fund will begin calling the 7,000 alumni of the College of Mass Communication. ♦

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Office KUC 326 S. For more information,
contact Greek Life
@ 898-5996 or greeks@mtsu.edu

Murfreesboro crime down from last year

By Jason Cox
State and Local News Editor

Statistics released by the Murfreesboro Police Department show a slight decrease in reported crimes from 2002 to 2003.

A press release issued last week shows that crimes included in the U.S. Justice Department's seven part crime index decreased exactly 1 percent from two years ago to last year.

Reports of rape showed the most dramatic decrease, from 40 to 29 — representing a 28 percent decline. Maj. Clyde Adkison of the MPD said this trend could be partly attributed to rape defense classes such as the ones offered at MTSU and a heightened awareness on the part of women.

"I think women are much more aware of their surroundings now," he said. "I think women don't go out by themselves as much."

The city did see a relatively dramatic increase in homicides — from zero in 2001 and 2002 to two in 2003.

"We had no homicides in 2001 and 2002, and that in and of itself is extremely unusual," Adkison said.

"I think what is the most noticeable there is of those two homicides, we've made arrests in both those cases," he continued. "At least the alleged perpet-

uators of those crimes have been arrested and are in jail."

Adkison added that most homicides are committed by someone the victim knows and the incidents come about as either drug-related or as crimes of passion.

"The victim knows the perpetrator," he said.

A significant rise occurred in incidents of motor vehicle theft, going from 200 in 2002 to 267 in 2003. Reports of assault decreased, from 1,611 to 1,495, but robberies rose from 69 to 83. Burglaries remained stagnant, with 471 reports coming in to MPD in 2003 versus 470 in 2002. Reported incidents of larceny also remained relatively unchanged, from 2,603 to 2,598. Arson incidents went from seven in 2002 to 11 in 2003.

Adkison said a lean fiscal budget did not allow for more officers to be added in 2002, but that a new recruit class of 12 people is currently training.

"They have in-house recruit class for three weeks, then they are put on the [field training officer] program for 18 weeks total," Adkison said.

"2003 was just a lean fiscal budget year, and please understand that was citywide," he continued, "and the reason that was done was to avoid a tax increase."

See Crime, 4

Cause unknown in Maryville fire

By Duncan Mansfield
Associated Press Writer

MARYVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Investigators searched for clues Wednesday to a fire that killed three residents and injured six others as it swept through a rural retirement home that lacked sprinklers or access to a hydrant.

A former employee said there had been problems previously with residents smoking inside the privately owned Home Away from Home Inc., but investigators were withholding comment Wednesday about what started the blaze at about 9 p.m. EST Tuesday.

"Nothing is ruled out," said Bob Pollard, a Nashville-based special agent with the state fire marshal's office leading the investigation.

The home's management issued a statement saying it was "fully cooperating" with investigators and expressed sympathy to the victims.

"Due to our sorrow at losing three friends so suddenly, we are still grieving and we have very little that we can say at this time to the public," administrator Curtis Sorrells said.

"I loved working there. I loved all the residents. They

See Fire, 4

Cat owner may face additional charges

By Nona Kempton
Staff Writer

A Murfreesboro man who kept 120 dead animals in freezers at his Indian Hills condo may face additional charges when all of the live cats at his Christiana trailer can be rounded up, according to animal control authorities.

Rutherford County Animal Services officials removed 27 cats from a trailer on farmland owned by William "Terry" Davis, 72, of 331 Calumet Trace in Murfreesboro. Authorities were able to catch 11 more cats in a fenced-in barn on the property and estimate that there may be as many as 35 more cats there that they were unable to catch.

"Hopefully we can get custody of the rest of them and get them back here," Loreen Darley, an animal control supervisor, said.

Davis was arrested Dec. 28 and charged with 10 counts of animal cruelty after Murfreesboro police responded to a complaint of a loose dog roaming the streets of the upscale neighborhood at the Indian Hills golf course.

According to the police report, the officer followed the dog to the Davis home and found the door open and "piles of dog feces ... and the home being in disarray." Fearing that the resident may be ill or deceased, police entered the home and found nine live cats and the dog and "feces from both animals covering the carpet, litter boxes overflowing with cat feces and no water for the animals to drink."

Police contacted animal control investigators, who removed all the cats and the dog from the home. According to the police report, it was the animal control officers who found a dead cat in the refrigerator. Upon further investigation of the house, the other deceased animals were found in the freezer in the house and in two freezers in the garage.

Davis is currently free on \$1,500 bail and has a preliminary court date set for Feb. 17. Lance Selva, a Murfreesboro attorney who also teaches classes in criminal justice at MTSU, is representing Davis.

Selva declined to comment on the record to *Sidelines* about



Photo by Jason Cox | Staff photographer

This house on Tennessee Boulevard, owned by Sharon and Ted Petty, will be moved to Old Barfield Road.

Tennessee Boulevard changing

By Maura Satchell
Staff Writer

Drivers heading to campus from South Tennessee Boulevard can't help but notice the odd sight of homes on wheels on the west side of the street these days. That roadway is about to become a four-lane thoroughfare, complete with a landscaped median.

The road-widening project of Tennessee Boulevard between Main and Broad Streets has been discussed since the preliminary engineering contract was approved in August 1997.

The project has two different sections, covering 1.2 miles. It required the buying of homes on the west side of Tennessee Boulevard between Main Street and Mercury Boulevard, according to Murfreesboro city engineer Chris Griffith. The section from Mercury Boulevard to Broad Street is more commercial and the existing properties there will remain. Also in that section, the street will be widened to five lanes rather than four.

Griffith is in his second year as head of city road projects. He said that in a town meeting discussing the construction of the residential section held last June, there were very few objections from the 16 attendees present. There were no transcripts of that meeting or formal notes taken, which is, Griffith said, typical procedure for the city-planning department.

"Pretty much all the homeowners were positive," Griffith said. The attendees, he said, expressed interest in the likelihood that their property values would increase, with the attractive landscaping along the raised median.

The city will maintain ownership of the vacant land on the west side of the street and Griffith said there are no plans now to develop it into anything usable, despite one resident's suggestion that it be turned into a small park.

Griffith doesn't expect the construction on that portion of the road to tie up traffic significantly.

"The residential section isn't going to be bad at all," he said. The contractor will construct the road on the side of Tennessee Boulevard that is now the vacant land first, leaving the existing roadway intact. It will then turn its attention on the other side and the median, redirecting traffic to the newly constructed road section. Throughout the process, the plans call for the normal two-lane traffic to remain.

Rita Bowen is the daughter-in-law of John R. Bowen, who owns one of the homes that is to remain along Tennessee Boulevard. She said that the process has been highly emotional.

"They've lived there for over 40 years," she said.

Bowen worries that the project will take much longer than the anticipated 14 months.

"I know how the city of Murfreesboro works. It is gonna be a long process," she said, citing construction on Northfield Boulevard's delayed construction as an example.

"If other streets are an example, it will take a million years," she continued.

The length of road between Mercury and Broad Street will be more problematic, Griffith said, and the public meeting held in July of last year hinted at some of the property owner's concerns. That meeting drew 28 attendees, most of whom own businesses that operate along the Boulevard between Mercury and Broad.

Griffith said that the city is highly sensitive to the needs of the businesses there, and recognizes that a significant loss of revenue could cause a company to close its doors permanently.

"We're taking extra care during the construction there to minimize distur-

bances," he said.

The widening project from Main to Broad will be paid for out of the city's coffers, and is budgeted to cost \$6 million. The project is being sent out for bid in March and construction is slated to begin in April, pending acquisition of utility easements. Griffith said that the plan calls for the utilities to be relocated first, and then the actual construction will commence.

It is not known at this point whether the utilities will be placed underground in the residential area, or aboveground. Also not determined is whether they will be located in the median, alongside the occupied portion of Tennessee Boulevard, or on the side of the Boulevard that is now vacant. Calls placed to a spokesman for Murfreesboro Electric Company were not returned. A cost-benefit study is currently under way to determine whether the utilities can be placed underground.

The project is scheduled to be completed by August 2005.

In addition to the widening of Tennessee Boulevard between Main and Broad, the roadway will be expanded between Main and Greenland Drive.

That plan began to take form when the initial engineering plans were approved by the city in October of 1995.

Griffith said that project would be much smaller in scope, with the boulevard widened by one lane with a median. It is also a shorter distance at 4,100 feet. The cost of that project is expected to be about \$2.5 million, of which the city is budgeting \$350,000, and the remainder is expected to be paid by the federal government thanks to the efforts of Sen. Lamar Alexander.

Construction on the widening of Tennessee Boulevard from Main to Greenland is slated to begin in July of this year, with anticipated completion by October 2005. ♦



Predatory lending legislation discussed

By Karin Miller
Associated Press Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — If Tennessee creates a new law to regulate predatory lending, it will have little impact because of federal rules that go into effect next month, lawmakers were told Tuesday.

So Kevin Lavender, the commissioner of Tennessee's Financial Institutions Department, told the Senate Commerce Committee he will attack the problem administratively and promised details later this week.

Gov. Phil Bredesen's administration has spent months working with consumer advocates and banking lobbyists on legislation to prevent lenders from duping homeowners into taking new loans packed with steep fees and high interest rates.

But federal Comptroller of the Currency John D. Hawke Jr. issued rules earlier this month essentially pre-empting all state regulation of federally regulated banks.

State regulators and attorneys general throughout the nation are united against the new federal rules, saying consumers will be the losers.

Tennessee Deputy Attorney General Andy Bennett called them "a classic example of bad public policy" and said Hawke's office "abused its regulatory mandate by exempting national banks from consumer laws every other business in Tennessee must follow."

Tennessee has 60 national banks and 160 state-chartered banks. Approving a law affecting only the state banks would create an "uneven playing field," said Lavender, who added that many of those banks and other state-regulated entities such as mortgage lenders also likely would affiliate with national banking institutions to avoid state regulation.

"This is a huge issue, and there's a clouded horizon. It makes me uncomfortable to pass legislation we may not be able to enforce," he said.

the case. Davis could not be reached for comment.

Davis has been quoted in *The Tennessean* that none of the dead animals were stored alongside food, but Darley has a photo of a dead kitten in the vegetable crisper drawer inside the home.

Darley said that none of the deceased animals could be autopsied to determine the cause of death.

"After more than 48 hours in the freezer, the blood and tissue begin to crystallize and the

See Cat, 4

See Loan, 4

Fire: Facility passed 2003 inspection

Continued from 3

were like grandmothers and grandfathers to you," said Julie Ray, who was a caregiver at the home about two years ago and remembers problems with residents smoking in their rooms — a potential code violation.

Smoking is permitted in designated areas "but it is prohibited in the resident's room totally and the staff has to ensure that doesn't happen," said Katy Gammon, director of the Tennessee Department of Health's Health Care Facilities section.

Gammon said the facility passed its annual fire safety inspection last year and was due to be reviewed again Jan. 27. Gammon's inspectors made a surprise visit to the home Tuesday to do an annual health survey, finding minor problems with routine assessments of dementia patients.

The ranch-style, brick facility, a former private residence, was licensed since 1988 as one of the state's 155 homes for the aged. Gammon said it did not have a sprinkler system but was not required to under state rules.

State law exempts older retirement homes from having sprinklers if they haven't been renovated since 1994.

Fifteen residents, a caregiver and a guest were in the retirement home when it caught fire. Seven were treated and released Tuesday night and six remained hospitalized Wednesday.

Authorities identified two of the fatalities as residents Lucille Law, 87, and Molly Wright, 84. Both were dead on arrival at Blount Memorial Hospital. One other person died but the identity was not released.

Three burn victims were taken to Vanderbilt University Medical Center's burn unit in Nashville, about 160 miles west of Maryville, where they were in critical condition, hospital spokeswoman Jessica Pasley said.

Three others were listed in stable condition Wednesday at

Blount Memorial, spokeswoman Gina Stafford said.

One of the residents died after being trapped in the building, said sheriff's spokeswoman Marian O'Brian. The injured were treated for smoke inhalation and burns, and one victim suffered a hip fracture.

Pollard said investigators began work at daybreak interviewing residents who are able to talk and going through the debris at the site about 15 miles south of Knoxville.

Authorities were investigating reports that residents smoking outside the building heard a popping sound and then saw fire.

"We have not found anything to indicate a large explosion," Pollard said. "Often aerosol cans will lead people to believe an explosion has occurred."

The two-lane country road leading to Home Away from Home was jammed Tuesday night as a dozen ambulances responded when the facility caught fire.

"I don't think it should be here and that proved it last night," said Jack Wilson, who lives about 100 feet away next door. "It was chaotic. I just hope they don't build it back."

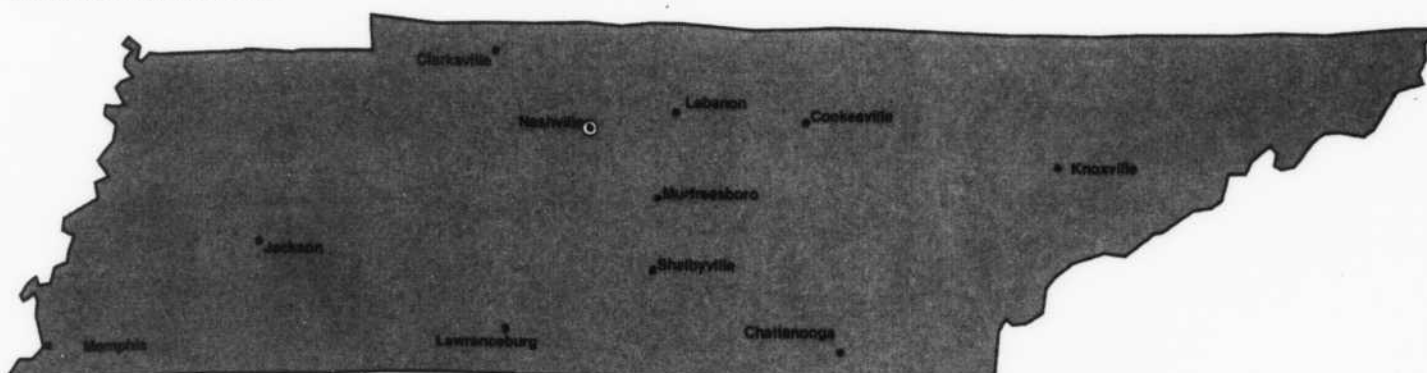
Wilson described seeing residents wheeled down the lane on stretchers to an intersection to be loaded into ambulances that couldn't drive all the way to the facility.

Since there was no hydrant on the rural road, firefighters fashioned a makeshift pool by dumping truckloads of water into a low spot on the ground and using that to supply the hoses. Temperatures in the mid-20s forced firefighters to put salt in the water to keep it from freezing.

The fire comes four months after a blaze at a four-story nursing home in Nashville killed 15 residents, about half of whom died in the months following the blaze. That center also did not have a sprinkler system. ♦

Middle Tennessee Weather – Five Day Forecast

From the Associated Press



Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
42° ▲ 30° ▼	50° ▲ 37° ▼	52° ▲ 36° ▼	55° ▲ 37° ▼	50° ▲ 27° ▼

Cat: Stray dog tipped off police officer

Continued from 3

results are distorted," Darley said.

Three days after his arrest, Rutherford County sheriff deputies executed a search and seizure warrant on Davis' Christiana farm, where animal control officials found cats living in a trailer and in a barn surrounded by a fence.

Darley said that 31 of the cats from the Christiana trailer and one of the cats from the condo in Murfreesboro had to be euthanized due to poor health and stress. She said the 15 remaining cats are being treated for upper respiratory infections.

"Four of them are still very sick, but the other 11 are doing OK," Darley said. She said the dog, a doberman named Misty, is in good condition. Veterinarian Traci Helton of Mobile Veterinary Services in Franklin County is treating the animals. Helton assisted in removing the cats from the Christiana farm.

"Most of the cats couldn't be handled or treated," Helton said. "They were so stressed from captivity and lack of human contact. They were suffering at the trailer and they would have suffered at the shelter."

Helton said that tests on the surviving cats were negative for feline leukemia and feline immune virus.

"So hopefully they can be adopted out eventually," Helton said.

Darley said that she was unsure how many cats still remain at the farm.

"You really can't even see them all," Darley said. "We have stepped on them hiding in the grass of the enclosure. It's like walking through a dove field; you never know what's going to pop out."

The cats and the dog are being housed at the animal shelter until the court case is resolved. Darley said that Davis has not called to check on his pets in the last week and a half and has not been allowed to visit them at the shelter.

"He did want us to send the cats we

euthanized to a state lab to be tested to determine why they died," Darley said.

Davis and his late wife, Mary Reeves Davis, lived in east Nashville until 1996

when Mrs. Davis, the widow of the late country music singer "Gentleman" Jim Reeves, was removed from the home by Adult Protective Services and placed in a Murfreesboro nursing home. She died four years ago.

— Loreen Darley
Rutherford County Animal
Control Supervisor

Darley said that Davis told her that he and his wife had been trying to breed bob-tailed cats and that he continued to try to breed the cats. Helton confirmed that many of the cats did

have short tails. Darley said that she hoped that the court will not return the animals to Davis. "We'd like him not to own any more animals in the future," Darley said. "unless he gets them spayed or neutered." ♦

Crime: Presence important

Continued from 3

"The county took a tax increase, the city didn't."

Adkison said that increased vigilance among members of the community as well as maintaining police presence throughout the city have been the primary factors in keeping the crime rate relatively the same while the population is growing rapidly.

"We find that people are much more willing to get involved [since Sept. 11, 2001]," he said. "They don't mind calling us and they don't mind giving us information."

He said that even something as simple as an officer stopping to eat at a restaurant can be a deterrent.

"Police presence is a prime deterrent," he said.

Murfreesboro Crime Trends

	2002	2003
Homicide	0	2
Rape	40	29
Robbery	69	83
Assault	1611	1495
Burglary	470	471
Larceny	2603	2598
MVT	200	267
Arson	7	11
Total	5000	4956

The seven part crime index is a uniform statistics system established by the FBI and the Justice Department. The MPD is mandated by federal law to submit statistics on homicide,

rape, assault, robbery, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson to the Justice Department each year. ♦

Loan: Rules in effect Feb. 12

Continued from 3

He declined to say what state rules and regulations he will change, but had said earlier that he would require individual brokers to register with the state and that mortgage broker companies would be held responsible for the actions of individuals.

Tim Amos of the Tennessee Banking Association said he didn't see the new federal rules as a threat to the nation's dual banking system and said banks simply are trying to avoid the current patchwork of state regulations.

Sen. Larry Trail, D-Murfreesboro, asked where an elderly black woman with a ninth-grade education should

turn for help after the federal rules take effect Feb. 12.

There is a 1-800 number she could call, but she likely wouldn't hear back, said Montrice Yakimov of the Conference of State Bank Supervisors, which opposes the federal regulations.

Lavender said if his office learned of an unresolved complaint, it could use the power of the media and the bully pulpit of the governor's office but acknowledged he would have no legal recourse.

Sen. Roy Herron, who chaired a committee that worked on legislation to protect people from such abuse, said "a lot of people are making fortunes ripping people off. I'm deeply concerned all we've got is a pulpit."

"As a former preacher, I know that sometimes you need a lawyer. ... You need laws the commissioner can enforce."

Last week, New York's attorney general filed suit challenging the federal regulations.

The case involves a man who got a home loan that was paid off 25 years later, but the bank continued collecting his automatic payments — taking in nearly \$10,000 before he realized what had happened. Then the bank threatened to foreclose on the property when he refused to pay any more.

The loan had been sold several times until it was owned by a Texas subsidiary of Memphis-based First Tennessee Bank. ♦

Sidelines needs a crime reporter for Murfreesboro.

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5 DAYS

From the Editorial Board

Primary ahead, time to pay attention

Few of us were in college in spring 2000, the last time a presidential primary rolled around. Consequently, this is one of the first opportunities many college students have to take part in this quadrennial underappreciated civic duty.

The powers that be in the Tennessee Democratic Party made a wonderful decision to move up our state's primary from the second Tuesday in March to the second Tuesday in February. With so many candidates still in the hunt for the Dems' nod, for the first time in a generation, Tennessean voters will have a relevant say in who will be the donkey's standard-bearer after the convention in August.

It's a charge none of us should take lightly. If President Bush is to be soundly thumped come Nov. 2, the Democratic nominee must be one who can withstand the intense national scrutiny (hopefully without releasing ridiculous, banshee-like screams of frustration after political rallies, Howard Dean).

Whichever side of the aisle you support, it's worthwhile for American democracy to witness an invigorating, issue-driven campaign this summer and fall.

The Iowa Democratic caucus proved that, if nothing else, Dean is not going to win the Democratic nomination without a fight. Kerry and Edwards are also in the running for the highly-anticipated nod, and only time and primaries will tell who eventually gets to face off with Bush in November.

Tennessee's Democratic primary is set for Feb. 10, which leaves our citizens approximately two weeks to enlighten themselves as to which candidate deserves the nomination and a chance to end George W. Bush's presidency.

As we witnessed in 2000's controversial election, it's important that all eligible Americans vote. Mark your calendars for Nov. 2, and if you're not already registered to vote, you must register at least 30 days before any election you wish to vote in. If you are unable to vote in the election, early voting is available 20 to five days before the election.

On Feb. 10, Tennesseans will have a voice in which candidate gets the Democratic nod. Whichever candidate you support, vote, be it on Nov. 2, early voting or absentee voting.

The citizens of this state and country have a duty to fulfill, one that many take for granted. ♦

From the Opinions Editor

Year of the Monkey

Break out the champagne, it's time to ring in the new year.

The Chinese Lunar New Year, that is. According to the Chinese Calendar, today is the first day of 4701, the Year of the Monkey.

The Chinese New Year has been celebrated since 2600 B.C., the longest and oldest tradition of its kind.

Now, thousands of years later, people across the world celebrate the long-standing tradition.

Like the Classic Zodiac we're accustomed to, the Chinese Zodiac has 12 signs. Each sign is an animal. However, signs are determined by the year in which one is born, not the time of year.

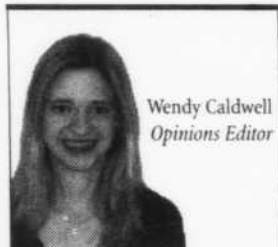
Unlike the calendar system we use, the Chinese calendar does not have a leap day once every four years. Instead, a leap month is added.

While this seems like an incredibly bizarre thing to do, it is quite convenient for anyone who gets paid monthly, though I imagine an extra month of bills balances that out.

Monkeys are, by nature, intelligent, generous and successful.

Still not convinced? George Lucas is a monkey, as are Jimmy Page and Bill Smith.

Since 2004 is an election year, I can't help but



Wendy Caldwell
Opinions Editor

wonder if the Chinese year is any indication of what's to come for the United States in 2004.

With the race for the Democratic presidential nomination heading in newspapers lately, maybe it's time to admit defeat.

The Democrats have strong candidates, but the surprising results from the Iowa caucus show the party isn't as united as the members think.

If the Democrats want to win back the White House, and I'd love nothing more than to see that happen, they have to choose the strongest candidate, the one who can defeat our current fearless leader, who is currently focusing way too much attention on the moon and Mars.

The Democrats do have a chance against George W. Bush, but it's going to take more than proper word pronunciation and impeccable grammar – he's offering tax cuts.

After all, it is the Year of the Monkey, and Bush bears a striking resemblance to one. ♦

Edwards runs fair campaign

When U.S. Sen. John Edwards began campaigning as a Democratic primary candidate for president, he wasn't considered a sure-win or even one of the main contenders. However, he continues to have one main distinction that sets him apart from his fellow candidates: Edwards is playing the nice guy. Running what he calls an "upbeat campaign," Edwards seeks to revitalize Americans and bring new hope to the country, and American voters are listening.

Edwards' second-place finish in the Iowa Democratic caucuses showed that voters preferred his message of hope. Voters are clearly responding to Edwards' positive focus versus the back-and-forth criticism of his fellow Democratic nomination seekers.

"What I've been doing is I've been in people's homes, on Main Street, in cafes – not only talking but listening. Giving speeches does not teach you what the problems are that people are facing in their



Wit and Wonder
Callie Elizabeth Butler
Staff Columnist

lives," Edwards said on CNN's *American Morning*.

Edwards has chosen instead to center his campaign on the good elements of American life while pledging to work hand-in-hand with Americans to create change. You won't hear Edwards highlighting the wrongdoings of his competition. That's not his idea of a successful campaign.

"Not only does this message work with independents and caucus-goers, this is a message that will go across the country and across party lines," Edwards said.

Criticizing opponents has

always been a part of American presidential elections. Each candidate always takes a minute or two to note certain wrongdoings – a bad vote here, a bad taxation decision there – in an attempt to highlight his own abilities. Edwards has chosen to remain focused on his vision of change and the role of citizens within this vision.

Iowa voters sent a message to politicians that, yes, they like what Edwards supports. With a war waging, terrorist threat seemingly around every corner and a roller-coaster economy, voters seem to respond to a campaign that returns power to the hands of the people.

"I know over the last couple of months there's been a lot of – both in debates and newspaper stories, to some extent in television advertising – there's been a lot of sniping and attacks from one Democratic presidential candidate to another," Edwards said. "I have not been involved in that for a very

simple reason: Because I believe this election is bigger than that; I think it's more important than that."

But will this strategy get him into the main ring for the battle against George W. Bush? Will Edwards' speeches laced with phrases such as "together you and I" win him the nomination? Or will he be viewed as soft on the issues and lack serious consideration outside of Iowa?

Edwards has proven to be a contender, and perhaps his words of hope will touch a country still carrying doubts and fears. His campaign marks change and innovation, both of which America could use more of in the White House and beyond. ♦

Callie Elizabeth Butler is a senior mass communications major and can be reached via e-mail at ceb2k@mtsu.edu.

North Carolinian brings hope for Dems

Could 2004 be the year of the Dark Horse?

Iowa surprised everyone, and while jaws are gaping all over the left, no one needs to be that shocked.

Dean had been running his mouth and stamping his foot long enough, and Iowa called him on it. John Kerry had been running a tight campaign, and Iowa rewarded him for it.

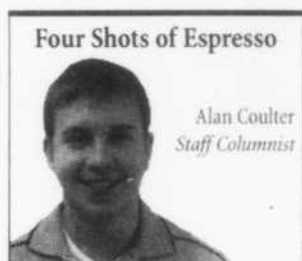
However, it's the second place position that catches my eye – John Edwards.

I personally hadn't paid much attention to this candidate, but apparently Iowa saw something I didn't in this man.

Let's face it. It's going to take someone of great charisma and caliber to even begin to run a successful campaign against George W. Bush. Bush is popular, he's successful, and he's favored to win against anyone who remotely associates with the left.

Perhaps Dean came across too bold. (I nominate that sentence as the understatement of the year.) But Kerry just looks it to lead the nation four years from now.

Edwards appears energetic, young and excited. He brings a balanced campaign, one that doesn't outright point fingers at the Bush administration, but offers to change the



Four Shots of Espresso
Alan Coulter
Staff Columnist

nation with values even the right has a hard time competing against.

As of now (and this view could change in two weeks), Edwards seems to be the only candidate who could possibly beat Bush. He can definitely out-talk the President, but then again, so could most of us.

However, he seems to have experience in almost every area that will be attacked in the race for the White House.

While he has been a senator, Edwards has supported bills to help provide healthcare and fight terrorism. There go two of Bush's main platforms. Not only did Edwards give a speech about eliminating terrorism, he wrote the bill that helped make it happen.

Edwards and his wife have also opened an after-school learning lab in memory of their late son to address the learning needs of children. That just screams voter support.

I'm not certain how I feel about this election yet, and I'm sure I'm not the only one. Too many Americans just don't know

the Democrats who are running for the nomination.

Many Americans don't even know Bush's position, let alone those of the other candidates.

Depending on your political affiliation, John Edwards could be your saving grace or your worst nightmare. He's the only one who can soundly defeat Bush in November.

Why? No one expects it. He's the Democrat Lite candidate, and that's the only hope for the Democratic Party to retake the White House.

If you hate Bush, vote for Edwards in the Democratic primary.

If you love Bush, register as a Democrat and vote for Dean.

As a sidebar, I'd like to make a little pre-election prediction. John Kerry will probably get the nod to run, but Bush will win handily and finish out his eight years as President.

However, 2008 promises to be the most exciting election year with a race between the familiar name of Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida and the familiar face of Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York. ♦

Alan Coulter is a senior English major and can be reached via e-mail at ajc2h@mtsu.edu.

Bush's Mars goal not top priority

Last week President George W. Bush announced he wants to have manned missions to the moon and Mars.

The plan is to have men on the moon between 2015 and 2020. There is currently not a deadline for a human landing on Mars.

Bush believes that the United States could use the moon as a launching pad for Mars missions in addition to further space exploration to expand the reach of humankind, according to a report by *The Tennessean*.

Space and knowing what is outside of the Earth's atmosphere is intriguing to many people. I'd be dishonest if I said that it didn't make me wonder, but there is so much that needs to be done on Earth.

The scientific discoveries that could be made are enough to make it exciting, not to mention the idea of knowing what is, or was once, out there. But is it worth the cost?

There is currently a deficit. There is no way to know the amount it will cost to send people back to the moon and then to Mars.

The cost will most likely be more than anyone could guess.

When Ronald Reagan wanted a space station, the estimated budget was \$8 billion, but in the end it cost between \$30 and \$100 billion, according to *The Tennessean*.

Former President George Bush also wanted to set up a station on the moon and go to Mars. That plan was forgotten after the estimated costs reached \$400 billion, also according to *The Tennessean*.

The current Bush



Sandi's Logic
Sandi Van Orden
Staff Columnist

hasn't made a final cost estimate. With the expenses of previous space endeavors, we know the price will be high. There is no way to know how much it will cost and how affordable it will be until the project is finished.

Can we afford to spend whatever it takes, and put everything else that needs to be done in the back seat?

Think for just a minute. How many things can you think of that need to be improved right now? Education, healthcare and the environment are just a few. On top of everything that needs improvement, Bush has also committed money to rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan.

Is it just me, or are the tax dollars being spread thin?

The benefits from space missions could be limitless. There are many things that could be discovered and improved upon.

A program this large and costly should be put on hold until the deficit is under control or, better yet, non-existent.

We cannot afford to continue to spend money that isn't there.

There are too many other problems that need to be worked out before we return to the moon. ♦

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MT tennis squads open seasons this week

By Colby Sledge
Assistant Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee men's and women's tennis teams resume play this week as they start their spring seasons in Murfreesboro.

Both head coaches have high expectations for their squads, but neither want to put too much emphasis on the beginning of a four-month schedule.

"Everybody had a pretty good fall, which means nobody really had a bad fall," MT women's head coach Randy Holden said in a telephone interview. "We confirmed a lot of our doubles teams."

The fall season is primarily used as a tune-up for the spring season, when competition against specific schools takes place. Tournaments make up most of the spring season, allowing coaches to tinker with their lineups and judge how strong

their team will be.

Manon Kruse, a senior from Hamm, Germany, leads the Lady Raiders into her final season at MT. Kruse finished the 2002-2003 season with a 21-6 singles record and became the first Lady Raider to attend the NCAA Singles and Doubles Championships in 2002 with former doubles partner Stacy Varnell. The duo returned to tournament in 2003 and fell in the first round.

Kruse also qualified for the singles championships in 2002 and 2003, losing in the first round both times. She finished 2002 ranked No. 42 in the nation in singles and No. 19 in doubles, the highest such rankings in school history.

"We're trying not to put too many expectations on Manon [this spring]," Holden said. "She's already done so much."

Two other seniors join Kruse in finishing their collegiate careers this spring. Laura McNamara finished the fall with a 7-4 record in singles and

an 8-3 record in doubles, including the Flight A doubles title with Jennifer Klaschka at the MT Fall Invitational. Carlen Venter, Kruse's doubles partner this season, finished with a 6-3 singles record and a 7-3 doubles record this fall and advanced with Kruse to the semifinals of the ITA Regionals.

The Lady Raiders will begin their 2004 season at home against Austin Peay State University Thursday.

"We've handled them [APSU] easily in the past, but that doesn't mean anything this time," Holden said. "This obviously is our first match, and we're a little nervous too. It's our first time out, and for a few of them it's their first match period."

While the women's team can rely on its senior leadership, the men's team faces what many would consider a rebuilding season. Seniors Trevor Short and Kirk Jackson lead a squad that

could feature as many as four freshmen playing regularly.

"This year I have at least nine players I could consider all being starters and not have much of a dropoff," MT men's head coach Dale Short said. "If I've got someone sick or injured, we've got enough depth now that there's not going to be a significant difference."

The Blue Raiders' depth was tested in the fall when Trevor suffered a knee injury that plagued him throughout the season. Trevor still finished 7-4 and is expected to play Saturday when the team faces Indiana University.

Jackson saw limited action in the fall, posting a 4-5 record. He and Trevor posted six doubles victories and will go into the season as the top doubles pair for MT.

Although his squad may be young, Dale sees

See Tennis, 7

Winter X Games go live

Sports commentary



David Hunter
Senior Staff
Columnist

It is about time that Winter X goes live and under the lights.

For the first time in the eight-year history of the event, ESPN and ABC will have live coverage for each telecast Jan. 24-Jan. 27 from Aspen, Colo. ESPN will have nightly coverage from 8-10 p.m. SportsCenter will be on-site Jan. 26 and Jan. 27.

In the past, the coverage would be on tape delay a few days after the actual event happened. ESPN did a very good job of making WXXG a not to miss sporting event. However, with most of the events being live and at night, I think the television viewers will see the excitement and the progression that WXXG is all about.

There are four different sports that make up WXXG: snowboarding, skiing, Moto X and snowmobile racing, with 14 different medal events and three non-medal ones.

The Summer X Games are exciting, but I'm more of a WXXG fan. Part of the reason is all the racing events that take place. There are seven in all, snowboarding X (men's and women's), skier X (men's and women's), ultracross, snocross and hillcross. In snowboarding and skier X, six competitors race down a course with bumps, tabletops and high-speed turns. Ultracross is a tag-team event with a skier and snowboarder in a two-man relay race on the same course.

One of my favorite WXXG competitors, Shaun Palmer will be coming out of retirement to race in both Skier and Snowboarder X. Palmer is the all time leading WXXG gold medalist, with six.

My personal favorite is snocross, in which drivers race around a track with huge jumps and tight turns for a certain number of laps on high-powered and super fast snowmobiles. Blair Morgan will be trying for a four-peat in the event. Hillcross is also on snowmobiles, but the first one up a hill wins.

WXXG is also known for the evolution of tricks. I have watched every WXXG since the first one in 1997. The moves are more advanced today than the ones performed at past WXXGs. Some athletes to watch include Tanner Hall (skiing), Shaun White (snowboarding) and Nate Adams (moto X). Hall and White won two golds each at WXXG VII last year.

Some ladies to watch include Tara Dakides, Kelly Clark (snowboarding) and

See X Games, 8

Blue Raiders hit road after first home loss

By Katy Hamlett
Staff Writer

After Saturday's 76-73 loss to the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, the Blue Raiders will have to recover quickly for the upcoming road games against Sun Belt Conference defensive powerhouses University of South Alabama and the University of New Orleans.

USA leads the SBC Western Division with a 3-1 conference record, including a victory over defending conference champion Western Kentucky University. USA senior forward Malerick Badden was named SBC Player of the Week after leading his team to two conference road victories, scoring a combined 33 points. USA also boasts two top 10 three-point shooters in senior guard Chris Young and sophomore forward Richard Law.

"Right now South Alabama is probably the hottest team in our league," MT head coach Kermit Davis said. "They play a real up-tempo offense and lead the conference in defense, but hopefully we'll be able to play in the open floor so we can make some threes and drive the ball."

Still tasting the victories from road wins over University of Louisiana-Lafayette and New Mexico State, the Jaguars will undoubtedly be thirsty for more in front of their home crowd on Thursday night.

Saturday the Raiders venture down to New Orleans on the brink of Mardi Gras. UNO's defense is ranked second in the Western Division largely due to two guards, senior Johnell Smith and freshman Bo McCaleb. McCaleb led the Privateers to victory against USA at UNO's first conference game of the season three weeks ago in Mobile, Ala.

Over the weekend UNO suffered an 85-64 loss to the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. The Privateers face WKU Thursday before playing MT at Lakefront Arena. The Privateers' recovery from playing two divisional leaders will be a determining factor in how well the UNO defense can hold up against MT's offense this weekend.

"Both of those teams are the top two teams in the Western Division, so we'll definitely have our hands full Thursday and Saturday," Davis said. "But we're pretty good at shooting too and we're fairly quick in transition."

MT is tops in the Eastern Division in three-point shooting, due in part to senior guard Tommy Gunn, who is currently third in scoring in the SBC. Junior guard Michael Cuffee scored a career-high 17 points in Saturday's home loss to UALR, the first loss for the Blue Raiders in Murphy Center.

Both games tip off at 7 p.m. The Blue Raiders will return home next week to face New Mexico State University on Jan. 29. ♦

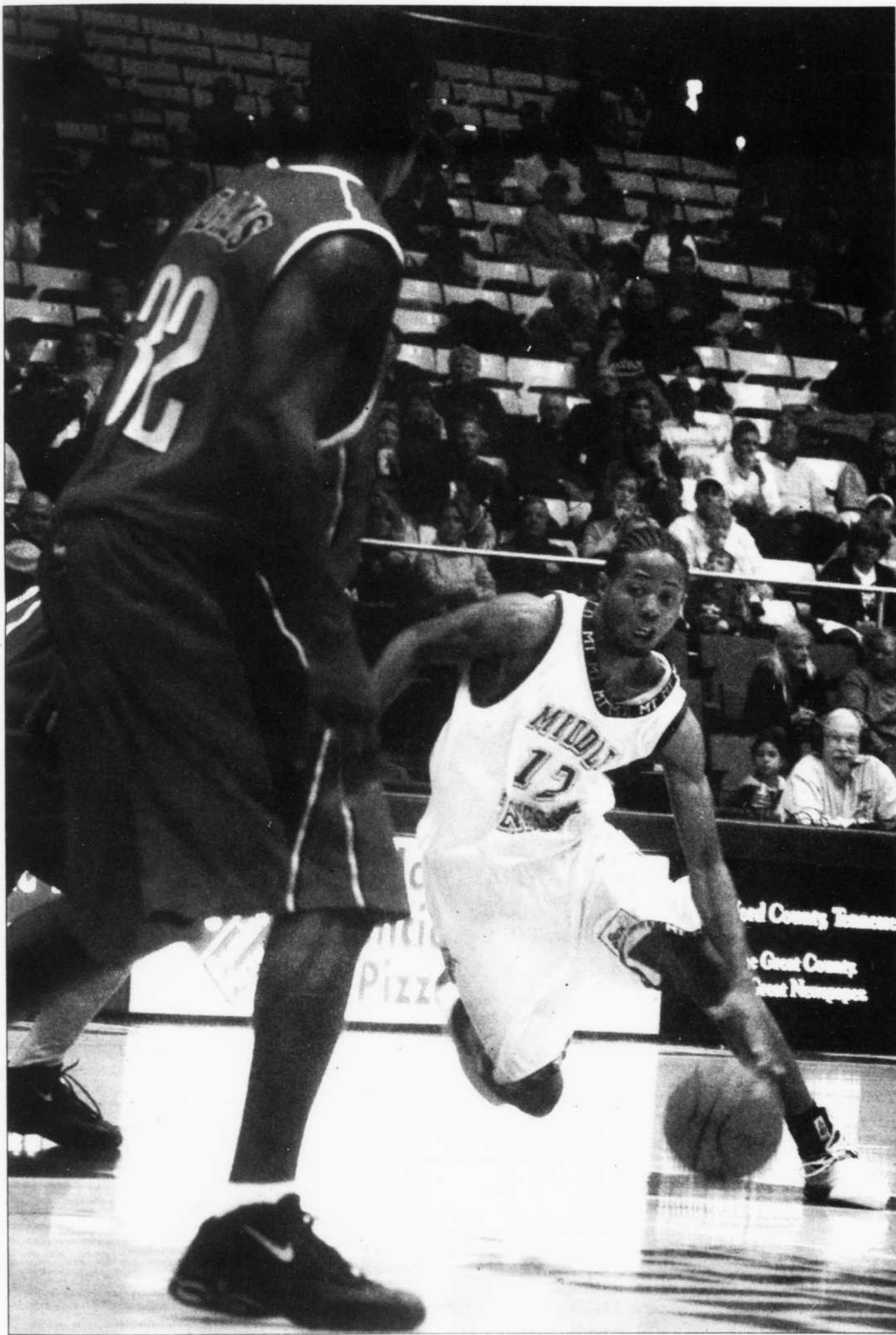


Photo by Megan Vaughn | Staff Photographer

MT guard Marcus Robinson drives around two ASU defenders in the 92-86 overtime victory Jan. 15.

Women's team looks for first SBC win

By David Hunter
Senior Staff Writer

The Lady Raider basketball team will be looking to bounce back in Sun Belt Conference action with two home games this week.

Last week, Middle Tennessee (10-5, 0-2 SBC) dropped their first two SBC games of the season to Arkansas State University (69-62) and University of Arkansas-Little Rock (68-54). The losses put the Lady Raiders in last place in the SBC Eastern Division.

MT has lost their first two SBC games in two of the past three seasons.

On Thursday night, SBC West leader the University of South Alabama (14-1, 3-0) will take a trip to the Murphy Center to face MT. The Lady Jaguars have received votes in both the Associated Press Poll and the ESPN/USA Today poll.

Last week, USA extended their winning streak to five with two narrow wins over conference foes and one blowout victory. On Jan. 12, the Lady Jaguars pulled out a 66-65 win over the University of New Orleans. On Jan. 15, USA had a three-point win over University of Louisiana-

Lafayette, 57-54. USA finished the weekend with a 69-35 win against New Mexico State University.

Freshman Whitney Woodard played a key role in both victories with 21 points and 15 rebounds in the win over UNO. It was her first double-double. Woodard almost had another one against ULL with 19 points and nine rebounds. Woodard finished the weekend with 15 points in 22 minutes against NMSU, including 3 for 3 from downtown.

The performances earned Woodard SBC Player of the Week.

In last season's only meeting, USA defeated the Lady Raiders 72-58 Jan. 16.

Besides hosting USA, the University of New Orleans (6-8, 1-2) will be making the trip to Murfreesboro Saturday night. The Lady Privateers went 1-2 last week with their loss to USA Jan. 12. Then UNO picked up a 76-54 win over NMSU Jan. 15 and lost 68-49 to ULL Jan. 17.

Right now, UNO is No. 5 in the SBC West.

Both teams met twice last season with UNO winning the first matchup 65-59 Jan. 18.

See Women, 8



Photo by Micah Miller | Photo Editor

Lady Raider Patrice Holmes pulls up for the jumper against Alabama. MT beat the Tide Jan. 8, 65-61 OT.

Tennis: Season starts

Continued from 6

the potential for greatness as early as this season.

"I think we've got enough talent to be a top 30 team," he said. "But I don't know if we're quite seasoned yet. If we could come out and win four of our first five matches, we're on our way to being a top 25 team."

As for IU, Dale expects a tight match, even though the final score may not indicate one.

"Indiana is a solid team," he said. "They're very similar to most of the teams we're going to play this year. I know some of the kids they brought in, and they're good players. They're tough players who would play for us as well."

Both the men's and women's matches will take place at the Racquet Club of Murfreesboro, where the teams will play their home matches during inclement weather. The women's matches against APSU begin Thursday at 7 p.m., and the men's matches against IU take place Saturday at noon. ♦

No Strange Photos This Time.

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Freshman point guard contributing early

By Jon Leffew
Staff Writer

The success of many college programs across the nation often depends on the contributions of freshmen.

This is no different for the Middle Tennessee men's basketball team, as several newcomers have contributed to the program this year.

One of these freshmen, Bryan Smithson, has skipped any time for freshman jitters and already made a huge impact on the team since his arrival in the fall.

While playing younger guys would be a problem in most situations, head coach Kermit Davis has embraced playing the talented freshmen on his team this season.

"Right now, we are starting a freshman point guard in Bryan Smithson, as well as another freshman in Kyle Young," Davis stated. "Those guys are growing up and playing really well for us."

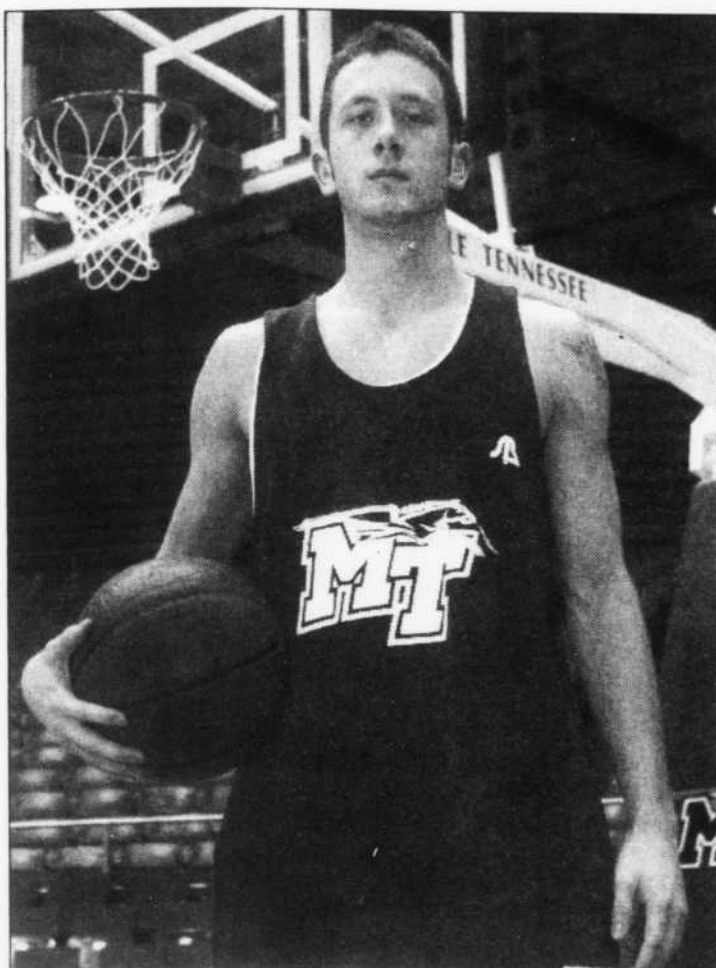
"It's a lot different at first, being out on your own and everything," Smithson said. "But with the guys on this team, there is always someone there to help you out when you need it."

While the camaraderie of the team is an aspect that Smithson appreciates, the decision to come to Middle Tennessee was due to other factors.

"I was really impressed with Coach (Kermit) Davis and the rest of the coaching staff," Smithson said.

"Also, I wanted to be able to play right away," Smithson emphatically said. "I was recruited by some ACC (Atlantic Coast Conference) teams and some Big 10 teams, but I knew I could come to MT and make an immediate impact."

Starting at perhaps the most important position on the floor (point guard) for most of the season,



MT point guard Bryan Smithson has stood tall this year.

Smithson has made a huge impact thus far.

Hailing from North Cobb High School in Kennesaw, Ga., Smithson led Georgia's class 5-A in scoring as a

senior, while also setting several school records, such as most points in a career and most points in a game.

After averaging 23 points per game as a senior in high school, Smithson has had to adapt his game to suit the players around him at MT. With scorers like Tommy Gunn and Michael Cuffee, Smithson is expected to create opportunities for them rather than score himself on most occasions.

This transition, for the most part, has been an easy one.

"Those guys have put their time in here (at MT), and I understand their role on the team," Smithson said. "I also know that playing with these guys will definitely benefit me in the future."

Playing with these individuals has paid off so far this season, as Smithson is leading the Blue Raiders in assists with 4.7 per game, while also averaging 10.3 points per game and two steals per game.

In addition to the changes made to his game, Smithson has also had to mature physically.

"I think the biggest difference in high school and college is physically," the 5-foot 11-inch, 165 pound Smithson said. "You have to work so much harder in the weight room while in college or it will show."

While Smithson's future in basketball at MT appears to be a bright one, his life after college is yet to be determined.

After planning to attend law school upon entering college, Smithson is now an undeclared major but hopes to major in business if a career in basketball does not present itself.

Right now, this freshman plays include continuing a stellar first season as a Blue Raider, as well as leading the Blue Raiders to the Sun Belt title in March. ♦

Photo by Micah Miller | Photo Editor

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Career

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Internships

Do you need to prepare for graduate school? To qualify, student has to be a low-income/first generation or underrepresented student with a desire to achieve earning a PhD. Have a 2.8 GPA and 60 earned credit hours by May 2004. For more information, contact the **MTSU McNair Scholars Program** located in Midgett 103 or call 904-8462 for more information.

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Opportunities

LOCAL BANDS Murfreesboro Official Music Website is seeking jazz bands. All other bands are welcome to post their calendars for free advertisement of shows. Contact: Shane Leach. Email boronightlife@bellsouth.net <http://clik.to/bnl>

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Winter X: Live this year

Continued from 6

Sarah Burke (skiing). Aleisha Cline has won three golds in Skier X.

Coverage begins this Saturday at noon on ABC. ♦

Women: Lost two straight

Continued from 6

However, the Lady Raiders got revenge with a 69-55 win in the quarterfinals of the SBC tournament.

The Lady Raiders have a talented freshman of their own in Krystle Horton. Horton had her

fourth double-double of the year with 14 points and 10 rebounds in the loss to UALR.

Tipoff is for 7 p.m. on Thursday night, while Saturday's game starts at 2 p.m. Both games are at the Murphy Center. ♦



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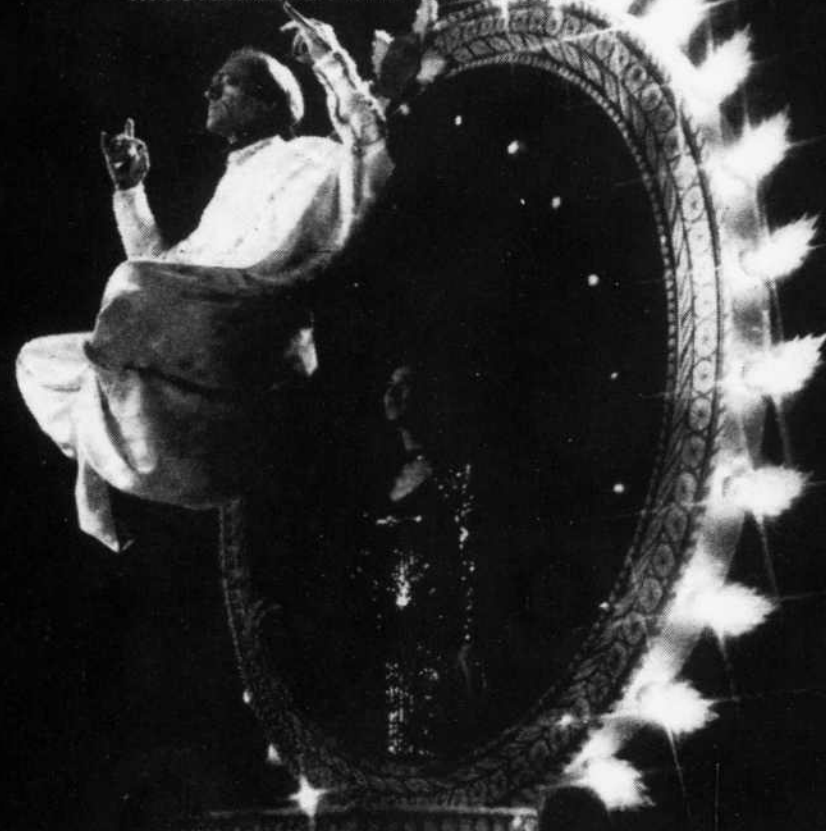
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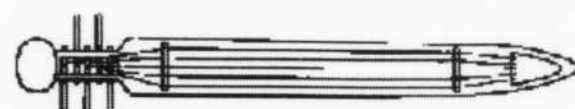
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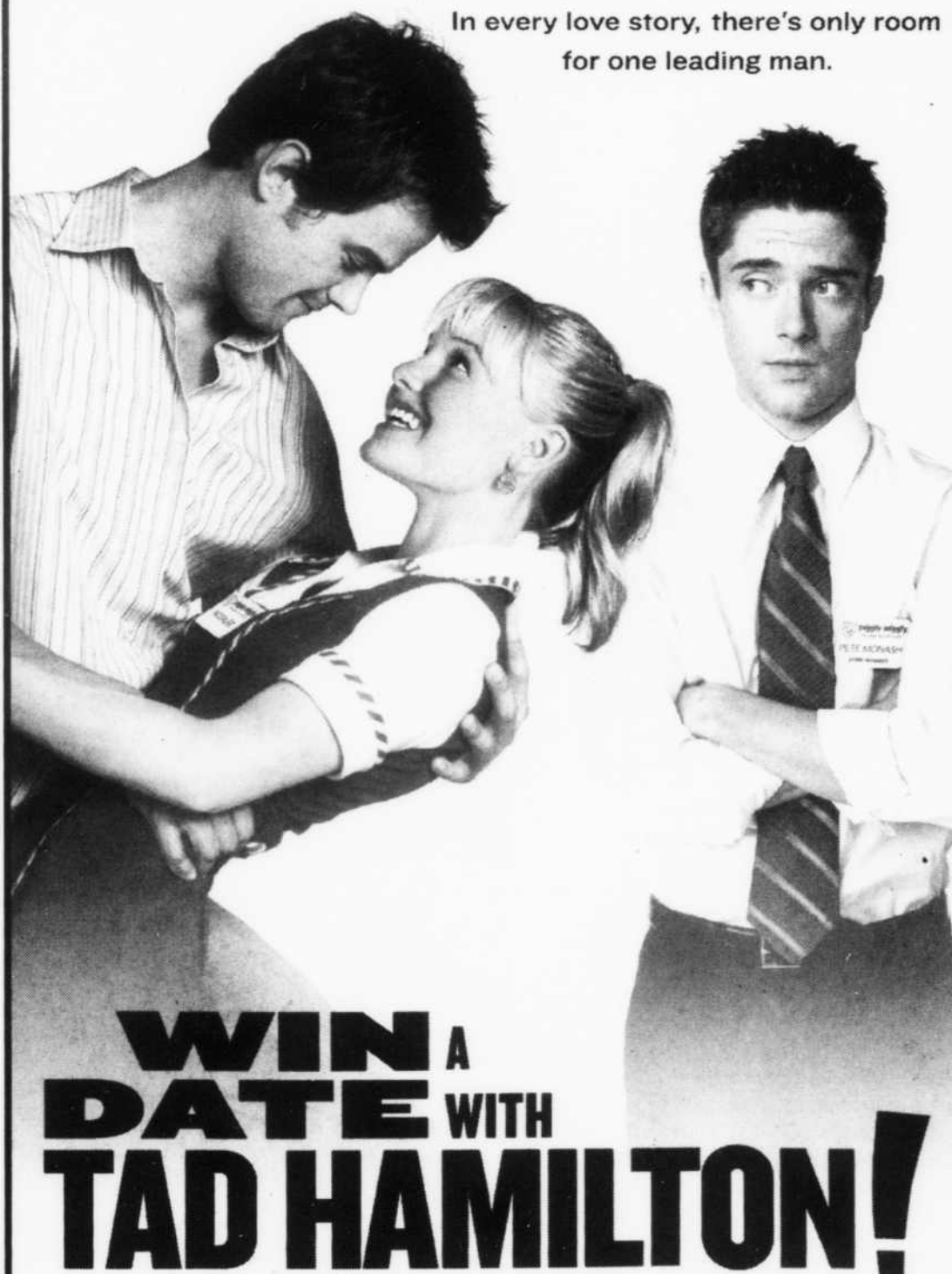
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