

SIDELINES

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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EDITORIALLY INDEPENDENT

Suspect apprehended in shooting



Antonio Alexander is taken into custody on Wednesday on charges of first-degree murder and aggravated robbery.

By Daniel Potter

Community News Editor

Murfreesboro Police have arrested a suspect in Saturday's fatal shooting of a manager at O'Charley's restaurant.

Police arrested Antonio Alexander on Wednesday for first-degree murder and aggravated robbery in the shooting of Nader Bahmanziari, who was the husband of MTSU professor Tammy Bahmanziari.

Alexander was arrested without incident at his place of work, International Paper in Murfreesboro, *The Daily News Journal* reported. He was being held without bond Wednesday night, said an official with the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office.

"Murfreesboro streets are a safer place with this guy behind bars," said Kyle Evans, public information officer for Murfreesboro Police Department.

Evans said the arrest came as the result of an extensive investigation in which "officers and detectives [were] working literally around the clock."

Hopefully now that police have made an arrest, Evans said, the family "can begin the healing process."

"Our officers and detectives are personally touched by this case," Evans said.

Tammy Bahmanziari is an assistant professor of accounting here.

Her department stated Wednesday morning that "the faculty and staff of the Department of Accounting extend our deepest sympathies to a respected member of our department and her family in the death of her husband."

"Dr. Bahmanziari and her family wish to express their appreciation for every concern and each prayer on their behalf," it stated.

Jeffrey L. Hamm, chair of the accounting department, said it is not yet clear how Bahmanziari will proceed with the semester. "Nothing official has been decided yet," he said Tuesday.

"We're covering her classes until the end of this week," and beyond that Hamm couldn't say what would happen.

Memorial services for Mr. Bahmanziari will be Thursday at 2 p.m. at the Murfreesboro Funeral Home, 145 Innsbrooke Blvd.

Donations can be made payable to the Nader Bahmanziari Fund and taken to any Pinnacle Bank, or mailed to Pinnacle Bank, 1745 Memorial Blvd., Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

INSIDE

Death Cab guitarist goes solo

Chris Walla's first solo project was released on Jan. 31

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Freedom is Slavery

The FBI's new biometric ID system will catalogue all citizens and usher in the American police state.

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Signing Day brings new faces to MT



Sidelines brings a quick guide of the recruiting results for Middle Tennessee and how they compare to the competition.

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Local Forecast

Thursday



HI: 48
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Friday



HI: 50
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HI: 50
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HI: 50
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Community News



Volunteer fireman, Adrian DeBruin, sits with Carrie DeBruin, amongst the damage in Lafayette, Tenn. on Wednesday.

Storms devastate many in surrounding counties

By Ryan Lenz

Associated Press

LAFAYETTE, Tenn. (AP) — At least 54 people were killed and hundreds injured Tuesday and Wednesday by dozens of tornadoes that plowed across Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama. It was the nation's deadliest barrage of twisters in almost 23 years.

"We had a beautiful neighborhood. Now it's hell," said Bonnie Brawner, 80, who lives in Hartsville, a community about an hour from Nashville where a natural gas plant that was struck by a twister erupted in spectacular flames up to 400 feet high.

"It looks like the Lord took a Brillo pad and scrubbed the ground," said Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen, who surveyed the damage from a helicopter.

Hundreds of houses were damaged or destroyed. Authorities had no immediate cost estimate of the damage.

President Bush gave assurances his administration stood ready to help. Teams from the Federal Emergency Management Agency were sent to the region and activated an emergency center in Georgia.

"Loss of life, loss of property; prayers can help, and so can the government," Bush said. "I do want the people in those states to

know the American people are standing with them."

Students took cover in dormitory bathrooms as the storms closed in on Union University in Jackson, Tenn. More than 20 students at the Southern Baptist school were trapped behind wreckage and jammed doors after the dormitories came down around them.

Danny Song was pinned for an hour and a half until rescuers dug him from the rubble.

"We looked up and saw the funnel coming in. We started running and then glass just exploded," he said. "I hit the floor and a couch was shoved up against me, which may have saved my life because the roof fell on top of it."

Most of the fatalities had no warning that the storms were coming. Forecasters had warned for days severe weather was possible. The National Weather Service issued more than 1,000 tornado warnings from 3 p.m. Tuesday to 6 a.m. Wednesday in the 11-state area where the weather was heading.

The conditions for bad weather had lined up so perfectly that the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., put out an alert six days in advance.

Thirty people were killed in Tennessee, 13 in Arkansas, seven in Kentucky and four in Alabama, emergency officials said. It was one of the 15 worst tornado death tolls since 1950, and the nation's deadliest barrage of tornadoes since 76 people were killed in Pennsylvania and Ohio on May 31, 1985.

Former prof. Grammy nominee

By Tiffany Gibson
Assistant News Editor

Bruce Nemerov, audio specialist and former MTSU professor, has been nominated for a Grammy in the Best Album Notes category for John Work III: Recording Black Culture.

The nominees for the 50th annual Grammy ceremony were announced in December 2007. The actual award ceremony is scheduled to take place Sunday, Feb. 10 at 8 p.m.

Even though Nemerov will not be attending the event, his competition in this category is David Sager and The Complete 1923 Jazz Band Recordings, Loren Schoenberg for Classis Chu Berry Columbia and Victor Sessions, Indecent Phonograph Recordings from the 1890s by Patrick Feaster and David Giovannoni and Ricky Jay for Ricky Jay Plays Poker.

According to co-producer and Spring Fed Records employee, Evan Hatch, Nemerov has been working on this project for 15 years and brought it to Spring Fed Records because he knew he could trust their work.

In addition to co-producing Recording Black Culture, Nemerov has also established himself at Spring Fed Records by contributing to 25 CDs within the five year time period of the record label's founding.

"This [CD release] was to help spread the word of John Work III," said Hatch. "A Grammy nomination is just icing on the cake for Bruce Nemerov if it helps get a wider audience to understand [his] contribution to folklore."

Work's roots of music date back to his grandfather's musical experiences in the New Orleans Opera House before moving to Nashville to buy himself out of slavery. John Wesley Work Jr., his father, also became familiar with music as the director of Fisk University Jubilee singers.

"John Work III exceeded his father's footsteps by collecting more degrees and organizing a mix choir of the Fisk Jubilee singers," said Dr. Philip Autry, associate professor and chair of the Fisk University Music Department.

In order to contribute to the album, Nemerov reported that once he became aware of Work's folklore collection activities he began reading Work's lecture notes, articles and papers on microfilm at Fisk University.

"With the permission of his family, I deposited his field recordings at MTSU for safekeeping," said Nemerov.



PHOTO COURTESY CAROL REED - ARTS CENTER OF CANNON COUNTY
Bruce Nemerov received a Grammy nomination for album notes on "John Work III: Recording Black Culture."

All of the records collected by Nemerov are on the CD, "Recording Black Culture," which was released in Aug. of 2007. Alongside Hatch, Nemerov helped co-produce the album as well as write 30 pages of album notes based on Work's original recordings.

The project cost was around \$50,000; however, to help complete the CD, Spring Fed Records, in correlation with the Arts Center of Cannon County received two grants from the Tennessee Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

"The NEA granted us with \$20,000 we had to match, but Dr. Robert Cogswell of the Tennessee Arts Commission gave us \$10,000 we did not have to match," Hatch said.

Hatch also went on to say that Cogswell, director of folk life for the TAC, helped fund the project because he believed in Work and Spring Fed Records for producing this project.

"Dr. Work was unique as a folk song collector, and his recordings and writings go to the heart of African-American culture of the pre-World War II era," said Nemerov.

CORRECTION

On Monday, Feb. 4, the story "Bible Park USA to unveil plans" contained a number of errors that need clarification. Plans for Bible Park USA will be filed at the same time public meetings are held, not after.

In the Exodus Experience, the "walls of water" will function as a screen to show a movie about the Exodus, and this will occur before the flame mentioned in the story.

Terri Sterling is a spokeswoman for the park. The name of the lighting consultant is the O'Hanlon Group. Sterling said: "We are not working on the Dark Skies project with them. The set of beliefs underlying the Dark Skies project will be applied to the Bible Park USA."

Sidelines regrets these errors.

A haiku for those seeking employment:

Student apathy
Can you cure us of this plague?
Come write for Sidelines.

Mondays at 6 p.m. in Mass Comm 269.

Flu hits MTSU

By Johnathon Schleicher
Staff Writer

Influenza has stricken MTSU students and faculty in record-breaking numbers this past week.

Richard Chapman, director of student health services, said that the flu is affecting student health. "We are definitely seeing it," said Chapman. "We saw 885 students just last week. Our busiest day was Monday where we saw 227 students. That is our record high for the last 10 years."

In the midst of the spreading infection, some students have endured the flu multiple times.

"I had the flu for three days and it is the second time I have had it. I have about ten fraternity brothers who have it," said Shane Vachunek, junior, electronic media journalism.

When asked how he handled influenza, Vachunek said, "My mom is a doctor, and I could not even get out of bed. I had to call my mom to help me. It ruined the Super Bowl."

Influenza is caused by viral infections that attack the respiratory tract in the body. The Tennessee Department of Health's Web site states that some symptoms of influenza include fever, cough, sore throat, headaches, muscle aches and fatigue. Nausea and vomiting may also occur, but it is considered abnormal.

See FLU, 3

Collage

Like to write? Enjoy art or photography? Have something to say? *Collage: a journal of creative expression* is currently accepting original literature and visual art for its Spring 2008 issue. Collage accepts all types and mediums of art, including: prose, poetry, drama, photography, drawing, painting, sculpture, fashion design, and graphic design. Selected pieces will be published in a professional and aesthetically appealing format that will make a wonderful centerpiece for any portfolio. Hurry, the deadline for submissions is Friday, Feb. 8 by 4:30 p.m.

Submissions forms and guidelines can be found at www.mtsu.edu/~collage or outside room 224 of the Honors Building. In addition, to being published in the magazine, one outstanding piece will receive the Martha Hixon Creative Expression Award along with \$100. For questions, please e-mail collage@mtsu.edu or call 898-5789.

MTSU junior killed in crash

"You never saw her mad - she was a very good Christian."

By Daniel Potter
Community News Editor

A 20-year-old MTSU student was killed in a car wreck Monday in West Tennessee.

Ashley Birtcil, junior, education and behavioral sciences, died at Henderson County Community Hospital in Lexington, near Jackson, after her Acura RSX hydroplaned into a tree on Interstate 40, *The Daily News Journal* reported.

"She was very open. She was concerned toward everybody," said Brittany Skelley, a friend of Birtcil's who went with her to the Church of Christ on East Main Street for the last year.

"You never saw her mad," Skelley said. "She was a very good Christian."

Birtcil graduated from La Vergne High School in 2005, where she was captain of the cheerleading squad. *The Murfreesboro Post* reported.

Birtcil enjoyed working with children at Lancaster Early Learning Center, said Skelley, who studies nursing at Motlow State Community College.

"I know everything happens for a reason," Skelley said. "I know she's in heaven."

A celebration of life service will take place at 11 a.m. Thursday at the Murfreesboro Funeral Home, 145 Innsbrooke Blvd.

Memorial donations can be sent to Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, Gift Records, VU Station B 357727, Nashville, TN 37235-7727.

Condolences can be sent online at www.murfreesborofuneralhome.com.

MTSU Evening Extended School Program

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\$20.00 registration fee
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Participants will be compensated up to \$150.00 for their time and effort. This study is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. Study conducted by Dr. Ronald Cowan.

For more information,
call Vanderbilt at
615-936-1013

Classifieds

Marketplace of MTSU

Employment

Lifeguard needed: Campus Recreation needs a qualified lifeguard for the Tuesday/Thursday 7:30 - 9 a.m. shift. American Red Cross certification with updates implemented after Dec. 2006 is required. Candidates must be able to pass skills test administered on site. Fill

out an application at the Campus Recreation office, 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday-Friday or call 898-2255 for more information.

PT WORK Good pay, flex scheds, sales/svc, no exp nec- we train, all ages 18+, condition apply, 832-8448 Collegelncome.com

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Silver 2003 Honda Civic EX Coupe, 58,000 miles, 35 mpg, almost new. Asking \$10,900, bring all seri-

ous offers. Call Jacob at 619-602-5350 or jacob.bendersd@hotmail.com.

Roommates

Opportunities

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maPartyCruise, PanamaCity, Acapulco, Cancun and more. Low prices guaranteed. Group discounts for 8+. Book 20 people, get 3 free trips! Campus reps needed. www.StudentCity.com or 800-293-1445.

Get Paid to do Research! Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative

Activity Committee (UR-SCA) Proposal Deadline March 18, 2008. For more info visit: http://www.mtsu.edu/urc/urc_sca_urc.shtml.

SERVICES

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dning packages starting at \$650. Servicing the Greater Nashville Area, contact us at (615) 799-9618 or julie.lampley@gmail.com and see galleries at www.pbase.com/jlampley

Policies

Sidelines will be re-

sponsible only for the first incorrect insertion of any classified advertisement. No refunds will be made for partial cancellations. Sidelines reserves the right to refuse any advertisement it deems objectionable for any reason. Classifieds will only be accepted on a prepaid basis. Ads may be placed in the Sidelines

office in Mass Comm, Rm 269. For more information, call the business office at 615-898-5111. Ads are not accepted over the phone. Ads are free for students and faculty for the first two weeks.

FLU: Vaccination worth investment

Continued from page 2

The flu may seem to be a minor setback, but it can be the catalyst of potentially life threatening illnesses. Though most recover in a couple of weeks, conditions such as pneumonia can develop from the flu.

Each year the flu hospitalizes 114,000 people and kills 36,000 more, the Tennessee Department of Health reported.

There are ways to prevent catching the flu. Chapman said that frequent hand washing and taking vitamin C would help prevent the flu from spreading. "Basically, do what your mom said to do as a kid," Chapman said.

Another means of defense from the flu is vaccination. The immunization shot is made from dead influenza viruses and helps the body fight the flu.

Flu vaccinations could prevent 70 to 90 percent of flu cases, TDH reported. The vaccination takes about two weeks to become effective

and lasts four to six months. The vaccination comes in two forms – a shot or nasal spray.

The flu immunization can protect not only the vaccinated, but the community around them as well.

People who are considered at high risk for flu are: pregnant women, people over 50 years of age, children who are six months to five years of age, those with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes and anyone caring for a young infant.

"We certainly encourage students to get a flu shot. In a 14-week semester, losing a week of school can be pretty taxing. The flu shot is a good investment," Chapman said.

With so much of the campus ill, it is important to practice good hygiene.

These precautions can protect against the flu and other illnesses.



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New Restaurant Opening in Murfreesboro

Just as great food and fine wine complement each other so well, our entire team caters to our guests with *Hospitaliano*! This means 100% guest delight, taking pride in doing it right, valuing everyone as family and friends. And you can be a part of it at our brand new location in Murfreesboro.

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Please apply in person Monday through Saturday, 9am - 6pm at:

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HOUSING REAPPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR FALL 2008 / SPRING 2009

The Housing and Residential Life Office is now accepting housing reapplication forms from returning students for the Fall 2008/Spring 2009 academic year. Students are encouraged to reapply for housing as early as possible, particularly if they are requesting to move to a different location on campus next year, as new assignments are made by application date.

Students requesting to remain in their same location on campus next year will be given first priority to do so as long as their reapplication and \$300 prepaid rent deposit are received by the deadline. The reapplication deadline with priority for the 2008/2009 academic year is **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2008 at 4:00 PM.**

Students need to complete a reapplication form available in the Housing and Residential Life Office, pay the \$300 prepaid rent at the business office cashier windows in the Cope Administration Building, 1st floor, and return the reapplication form stamped "paid" to the Housing and Residential Life office in the Keathley University Center, Room 300, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Students also have the option of reapplying for housing with priority online at www.mtsu.edu. The \$300 prepaid rent is paid by using a credit card, MasterCard or Visa, or by completing an online check. There is an additional \$18 nonrefundable service fee charged by the third party for processing the payment online.

To obtain a **HOUSING REAPPLICATION FORM**, please come by the Housing and Residential Life office during office hours, 8AM to 4:30PM, Monday through Friday, in the Keathley University Center, Room 300.

****Summer '08 Housing Applications** are also available in the Housing Office. Reserve your summer space now by completing the housing application and submitting it with the \$125.00 prepaid rent deposit. It is not too early!!

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY**

For additional information or questions, please contact Housing and Residential Life during office hours at 898-2971.

CRIME BRIEFS

Jan. 30, 11:53 a.m.

Traffic

Recreation Center Parking

The subject came in claiming that someone hit his vehicle on campus yesterday.

Jan. 30, 1:37 p.m.

Assistance

Womack Lane Apartment K

An officer was requested in reference to some possible drugs in a room. When the officer arrived paraphernalia was picked up to hold for Judicial Affairs review.

Jan. 30, 5:06 p.m.

Assistance

Recreation Center

A 911 call was received from the Recreation Center advising an unconscious female on an ab machine. The female regained consciousness while dispatched was on the line. The subject was transported.

Jan. 31, 9:28 a.m.

Miscellaneous

Womack Lane Apartment Lot

Someone called advising the fire alarm was going off in the clubhouse. An officer believed the subjects turned on the heater and that's what caused the alarm to go off. Terry Logan was notified.

Feb. 1, 1:47 a.m.

Traffic

Blue Raider Drive

A report was filed of a reckless driver in the area of library, Mass Communications building and Ezell Hall. The reckless vehicle was seen crashing into parked cars and driving on the grass in the area. The Murfreesboro Police Department was notified.

Feb. 1, 1:47 a.m.

Traffic

Blue Raider Drive

Bryce Brentz obtained warrants for leaving the scene of an accident and consuming alcohol under age of 21.

Feb. 1, 11:35 a.m.

Theft

Woodmore Cafeteria

A subject called to report a theft of books that occurred the night before.

Feb. 3, 1:31 a.m.

Vandalism

Gore Hall

Bradley E. East was arrested for vandalism under \$500 and public intoxication.

Feb. 3, 10:19 a.m.

Traffic

Old Main Circle

Raymond Leon Dennis was issued a state citation for driving the wrong way in a one way.

Feb. 3, 1:19 p.m.

Theft

James E. Walker Library

The subject called and requested to file a report on his cell phone that was stolen.

Feb. 3, 2:45 p.m.

Traffic

Alma Matter Drive

David Frederick Franklin was arrested for driving on a suspended license. This is his first offense.

CAMPUS ALERT!

A black 2003 Suzuki GSXR 1000 motorcycle with chrome wheels was stolen from the Reynolds Hall parking lot between 6 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 20 and 10 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 22. The motorcycle has a Florida license plate with the number 69421N. A reward of \$1000 is being offered to anyone with information on the person or persons responsible.

A cash reward up to \$300 is being offered to any information about two missing women's wallets and a silver 7 mega pixel Sony digital camera from the food services kitchen on the second floor of the James Union Building. The items were stolen sometime between 9 a.m. and 3:50 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 19. One of the wallets is a blue and black Vera Bradley wallet with a floral pattern on it. The other wallet is a pink Fossil with green and orange circles on the front cover.

Sometime after 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 17, a black leather Timberland book bag was stolen from room #101 of the Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building. A reward of \$300 for any information is being offered.

If anyone has any information regarding these missing items contact Crime Stoppers at 893-7867 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. All callers will remain anonymous and if information leads to an arrest a cash reward of \$1000 will be given.

Tennessee voters cast their ballots

Huckabee, Clinton take Tennessee Tuesday

By Brian Estes

Staff Writer

With the polls closed and the votes tallied, the clamor surrounding the Tennessee Primary had many members of MTSU's political clubs voicing their opinions on the results.

Zack Marshall, state coordinator of Students for Barack Obama, said Tuesday's primary results were about what he expected.

"It's going to be a highly contested battle," Marshall said. "But we've had some big wins. We've won states all across the country from the East Coast to the West Coast and everything in between."

Hillary Clinton has amassed 811 delegates to Obama's 720, according to CNN.com. Clinton proved she could take Southern states with her triumph in Tennessee, but many of her wins were also in Northern states like New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts. Obama was able to pick up several key wins, some of which include victories in Georgia, Illinois and Alabama.

Marshall said the Obama campaign is in good shape.

"This isn't something that's going to be over this week," Marshall said. "We go on to Ohio and Texas in March. It's going to be pretty evenly split."

As the primary season continues, Marshall said the key will be for Obama supporters to keep going out and spreading the message.

"The more people get to see him, the more they love him," Marshall said.

MTSU College Democrats President Lani Lester said that she didn't think anything unexpected arose from Tuesday's primaries.

"We have two strong candidates, and I think most people would be happy seeing either one

winning the nomination," Lester said.

In the Republican primary, former minister Mike Huckabee took the victory in Tennessee, edging out Republican front-runner John McCain.

Edward Phillips, president of MTSU's College Republicans, said he thought Huckabee's religious background gave him a big boost.

"I think one thing that helped him was that he was a Baptist preacher," Phillips said. "I think it was a big part of why he did so well in the Southern states."

Huckabee also picked up wins in Georgia, Alabama and Arkansas, but was shut out in the rest of the nation with the exception of his win in West Virginia.

McCain and Mitt Romney divided the rest of the states among themselves.

McCain is in the lead with 616 delegates, while Romney has 269, Huckabee has 170, and Ron Paul has 16.

Phillips said the strength of a Republican president would lie in his ability to balance the budget and to tackle the issue of Social Security.

"We've seen that when Republicans act like Republicans, we balance the budget and people succeed in their own way," Phillips said. "I think one thing we need to take a look at with the Democratic candidates is that they seem to be supporting the European model of democratic socialism. That is not what America is about."

However, the close vote in Tennessee suggested to Phillips that not everyone is certain of which Republican candidate they want to see in the White House.

"I don't think the Republican Party has been able to identify their standard bearer," Phillips said.

FEATURES

Did you know anyone affected by the tornados?

- No, I'm lucky.
- Too many.
- Yes, but they're OK.

Go to mtsusidelines.com to answer

Entertainment



Death Cab for Cutie guitarist Chris Walla has released his first solo album, "Field Manual."

PHOTO BY AUTUM DE WILDE - BARSUK.COM

Chris Walla flies solo

By Tom Melchoir
Contributing Writer

As if Death Cab for Cutie wasn't enough for guitarist Chris Walla, he has decided to create a solo project.

"Field Manual," Chris Walla's first solo album, was released on Jan. 31, very near to the Seattle hailing band's eighth studio release *Narrow Stairs* set to hit stores in May. Walla takes the same direction on *Field Manual* as he does with the rest of Death Cab's albums. Death Cab for Cutie's sweet melodies and commanding

drums are definitely not absent from *Field Manual* as the album takes on a vision of Death Cab without front man and songwriter Ben Gibbard.

The main differential that Walla has from Gibbard in songwriting is that he takes his lyrics to a more controversial level. Passing by common topics of old breakups and childhood memories, many of Walla's songs could be interpreted as political ballads towards some important, contentious issues of today.

In "The Score" Walla croons, "We've found the bear, or are we both fighting, why do we prance our little flag around as

if he's not biting?"

The album has commanding dynamics, as do most Death Cab for Cutie albums. It takes a loud, fast pace route in the track "Archer V. Light," then follows with the light and lovely sounds of "A Bird is A Song," an acoustic ballad.

Walla's voice may not be as recognizable or vibrant as Gibbard's, but he defiantly carries his weight and creates an excellent indie pop album.

If you enjoy Death Cab for Cutie's music and would like a quick alternative, look no further than Chris Walla's *Field Manual*.

Video game review 'No More Heroes'

By Jamie Lovett
Staff Writer

While the Nintendo Wii is currently leading the new generation of gaming systems in sales, many older, more "hard-core" Wii gamers have been disappointed to find themselves awash in a sea of casual mini-game compilations.

Enter "No More Heroes," the newest release from director Suda-51 and his Grasshopper Game Manufacturing studio, best known for creating the first-person shooter "Killer 7."

In "No More Heroes," players take up

the role of Travis Touchdown living in the city of Santa Destroy. Travis is the 11th best assassin in the city and is ready to start working his way up the ladder. To do this, he'll need to eliminate the 10 assassins ranked in front of him, but it's not as easy as simply hunting them down and taking them out. In order to enter a ranking match, Travis needs to pay a sizable entry fee. That means Travis needs to take on a variety of side jobs, some violent "assassination gigs" and some mini-game like part-time jobs, until he can raise the cash he needs to fight.

Travis' arsenal is comprised of a lower-tech, cyberpunk version of a lightsaber

called a "beam katana," and an array of professional wrestling maneuvers learned by watching old wrestling tapes bought from the local video store. The battles consist of a fair amount of button mashing, followed by bloody finishing moves performed by gesturing with the Wii remote. In practice, it combines the stylish and cool feel of "Devil May Cry" combat with the bloody fatal blows of "God of War."

The violence isn't gory or sickeningly realistic as in "Manhunt" or "Resident Evil 4," but comically ridiculous and over the top.

See FEATURES, 5

Entertainment briefs

Ledger's death ruled an accidental overdose

NEW YORK (AP)—Heath Ledger died of an accidental overdose of painkillers, sleeping pills, anti-anxiety medication and other prescription drugs, the New York City medical examiner said Wednesday.

The cause of death was "acute intoxication by the combined effects of oxycodone, hydrocodone, diazepam, temazepam, alprazolam and doxylamine," spokeswoman Ellen Borakove said in a statement.

The drugs are the generic names for the painkiller OxyContin, the anti-anxiety drugs Valium and Xanax, and the sleep aids Restoril and Unisom. Hydrocodone is a prescription painkiller.

The ruling comes two weeks after the 28-year-old Australian-born actor was found dead in the bed of his rented SoHo apartment. Police found bottles of six types of prescription drugs in his bedroom and bathroom, and a rolled-up \$20 bill near the bed.

Ledger's family returned to the actor's hometown of Perth, Australia, on Tuesday to prepare for his funeral. Arrangements were private.

In a statement released through Ledger's publicist, the actor's father, Kim, said Wednesday: "While no medications were taken in excess, we learned today the combination of doctor-prescribed drugs proved lethal for our boy. Heath's accidental death serves as a caution to the hidden dangers of combining prescription medication, even at low dosage."

Heath Ledger was discovered by his masseuse Jan. 22 after she arrived for an appointment that afternoon. She entered his bedroom to set up for the massage and found him unresponsive, and called Mary-Kate Olsen three times over the next nine minutes before dialing 911. Ledger had been dead for some time, and police say no foul play occurred.

WGA Strike take steps toward resolution

Members of the striking Writers Guild of America will gather Saturday in Los Angeles and New York to be briefed on a possible contract with Hollywood studios.

If writers are pleased with what they hear, the meetings could be a major step toward a resolution of the three-month-old strike.

Guild leaders remained cautious about a settlement while a proposed contract was being drafted based on last week's breakthrough talks with studio executives.

In an e-mail sent late Monday to guild members, negotiations committee chief John Bowman said important progress had been made but significant points remained to be settled.

The guild won't make a formal decision on the proposed contract until the informational membership meetings are held Saturday, Bowman said.

The sessions will be closed to the media.

In his e-mail, Bowman urged members to "remain on the picket lines, united and strong."

Meanwhile, Vanity Fair magazine said it was canceling its annual Academy Awards party, typically the hottest party in town on Oscar night.

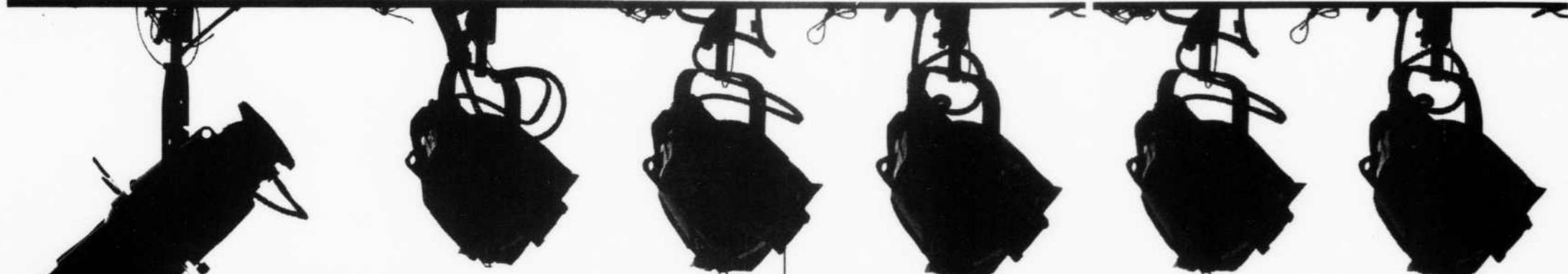
"After much consideration, and in support of the writers and everyone else affected by this strike, we have decided that this is not the appropriate year to hold our annual Oscar party," said a statement posted on VanityFair.com.

The writers strike, which began Nov. 5 and has brought the entertainment industry to a standstill, centers on the issue of new-media compensation.

Last month, studios reached a tentative deal with the Directors Guild of America that included increased residuals for paid Internet downloads of movies and TV programs and established residual rates for ad-supported streaming of programs.

Specifics of the writers guild negotiations have not been disclosed, but it could improve on the directors agreement for some Internet residuals, according to a person close to the talks who was not authorized to publicly comment and requested anonymity.

Movie review



'No Country For Old Men' worthy of hype ★★★★★

(out of five)

By Dale Maxfield
Contributing Writer

The Oscars are not far off, and 2007's most talked about movie has to be Ethan and Joel Coen's "No Country for Old Men." It is nominated in eight categories including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Screenplay, and Best Supporting Actor for Javier Bardem. It is likely to win many of these awards and is my bet for Best Picture winner. This is not only because I think that the academy will vote this way, but I also love this movie very much myself.

In the movie, Llewelyn Moss (Josh Brolin) stumbles upon a few dead bodies, a bunch of dope, \$2 million, and yes, a dead dog. Moss takes the money, but while returning to the scene of the

crime to give a dying man a drink of water, he is discovered by more drug dealers, and it isn't long before Anton Chigurh (Javier Bardem) is on his tail. Bardem creates the most interesting, yet frightening, movie villain this decade. Tommy Lee Jones also stars as Sheriff Ed Tom Bell who is in the midst of it all trying to figure out what exactly is going on.

So, what exactly is going on? This will be a movie that most folks will enjoy, but it will alienate a few. These few will be much pleased by the several suspenseful scenes in the movie, but I'm sure that they will miss the point. The Coen Brothers had the perfect opportunity to turn this into a typical Hollywood (although still masterfully shot) plotline complete with a *Reservoir Dogs* ending and an obtuse message for the audience (don't get mixed up with drug money). They didn't, and I

bow before them.

Not only is the story and direction unimaginably astounding, every other small detail of the film is equally as brilliant. The cinematography is some of the best I have ever seen. Recently, I watched a movie, *Existo*, with some friends. After I told them that I did not enjoy the movie, they asked me why. One of my first responses was that the lighting was bad. While I was ridiculed for this remark, I stand by it. I do not think that good lighting can be fully appreciated until one sees it executed so masterfully in films like *No Country for Old Men*. After seeing this movie, poorly lit scenes in other films become very noticeable. The silence is another strong attribute of this movie. The dialogue in this movie is sparse, especially considering that it's the Coens we're discussing here. The music is almost completely absent

throughout. Silence can be just as frightening as sound, and the Coens have proved it here.

The smallest compliment one can give this movie is to call it a masterpiece. The word "masterpiece" is often thrown around by movie-goers when referencing their favorite movie of the month. This movie truly is a masterpiece. Go see it. It's not only worth the admission price; it's worth buying the entire movie theater.

Go see it at...

Premiere 6 Theater
810 N.W. Broad Street

2:30 p.m. | 5:30 p.m. | 7:50 p.m.



Bonnaroo 2008 Lineup

MUSIC			
Against Me!	Pat Green	Aimee Mann	The Sword
The Allman Brothers Band	Levon Helm & The Ramble on the Road	Mastodon	Tegan & Sara
Nicole Atkins	Ghostland Observatory	Metallica	Derek Trucks & Susan Tedeschi's Soul Stew Re- vival
The Avett Brothers	Gogol Bordello	M.I.A.	Two Gallants
Back Door Slam	Jose Gonzalez	Minus The Bear	Umphrey's McGee
Battles	Grupo Fantasma	My Morning Jacket	Vampire Weekend
Black Kids	Iron & Wine	Willie Nelson	Abigail Washburn & The Sparrow Quartet fea- turing Bela Fleck
The Bluegrass Allstars featuring Luke Bulla, Sam Bush, Jerry Douglas, Bela Fleck and Edgar Meyer	Israel Vibration	O.A.R.	Kanye West
Broken Social Scene	Mason Jennings	Orchestra Baobab	Yonder Mountain String Band
Solomon Burke	Jack Johnson	Ozomatli	
Dark Star Orchestra	Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings	Pearl Jam	
Death Cab For Cutie	B.B. King	Robert Plant & Alison Krauss	COMEDY
Drive-By Truckers	Talib Kweli	The Raconteurs	Mike Birbiglia
Jakob Dylan	Ladytron	Robert Randolph's Revival	Michelle Buteau
The Felice Brothers	The Lee Boys	Rilo Kiley	David Cross
The Fiery Furnaces	Phil Lesh & Friends	Serena Ryder	Zach Galifianakis
Ben Folds	Lez Zeppelin	Sigur Ros	Janeane Garofolo
Donavon Frankenreiter	Little Feat	State Radio	John Mulaney
	Lupe Fiasco	Steel Train	Jim Norton
	MGMT	Swell Season	Brian Posehn

FEATURES: 'No More Heroes'

Continued from page 4

Playing through "No More Heroes" feels like playing through a video game version of the movie "Kill Bill." Decapitating an opponent causes a fountain of blood (and money) to burst forth from their body, and if you kill too many enemies at once, the sheer amount of blood on screen will actually cause the game to suffer a drop in frame rate.

The game's visual and audio style is uniquely retro. The character designs are purposefully jagged, the icons and menus are extremely pixelated,

and the sound effects sound like they were lifted from an old 1970s arcade game. All of this combines to create an ultra cool, retro-punk atmosphere that fits the game, its world and its characters perfectly.

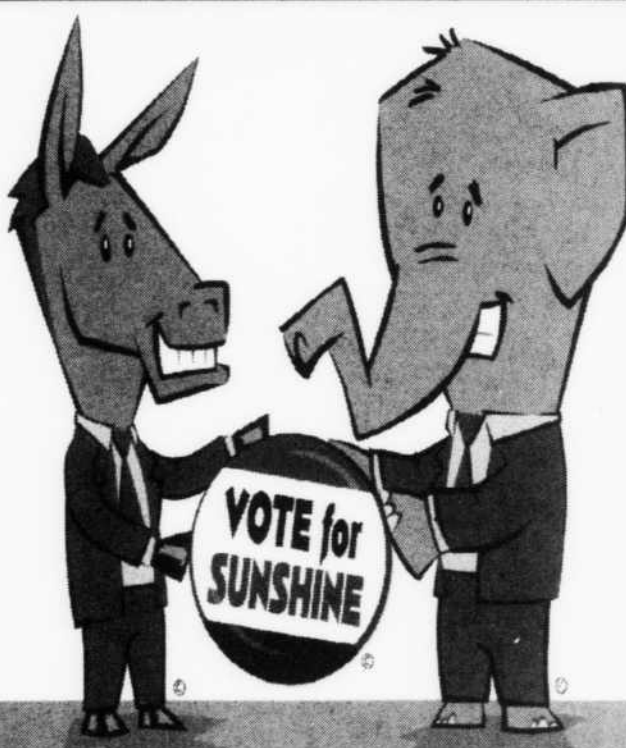
In between ranking matches, Travis is free to explore the city of Santa Destroy on his oversized motorcycle. Occasionally a "free fight" mission will pop up on the map, or Travis can visit one of the city's landmarks. Players can customize Travis' appearance by buying new clothes from

the Area 51 clothing shop, or they can increase Travis' stats by buying wrestling videos from the video store, upgrading his beam katana at Naomi's lab, or training at Thunder Ryu's gym. While the various places to visit in Santa Destroy are entertaining enough, the city itself is rather dull. Riding on Travis' motorcycle is fun at first, but it isn't long before getting from point A to point B becomes more of a hassle than an enjoyable part of the game.

Qualms about the unnecessary sandbox el-

ements aside, "No More Heroes" is a unique and fun "beat 'em up" that makes effective and satisfying use of the Wii's motion controls. Beyond that, the game simply bleeds charisma and personality. Children and casual gamers should probably pass, but for older Wii owners looking to satisfy their bloodlust, Santa Destroy is the place to be.

Government Access Is For Everyone




At the core of our system of government is the unwavering belief that democracy can succeed only with an informed, participatory electorate — truly a government of, by and for the people.

Sunshine Week engages people in conversations about open government and why it must be nurtured and protected to preserve our rights and liberties.

Reminding candidates that access to information is important to people makes the issue vital not just during election season, but hopefully during the administrations of those elected.

Whether it's a general statement of principle, or a more specific query about something in your community, find out what the people who want to represent you think about your right to know what they're doing.



SUNSHINE WEEK
YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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We need YOUR Help!!


Special Census Underway!

Watch for a simple form to arrive in the mail.

The City of Murfreesboro is conducting a special census to determine how much its population has grown since the last special census in 2005.

Off-campus students will receive a simple form in the mail requires only an address and listing of persons living at that address.

Full-time students who reside in Murfreesboro count as city residents.



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Please fill out the simple form you receive in the mail or we will take your information over the phone 615.849.2021 or on the city's web site at www.murfreesboro.tn.gov.

Help us keep your streets paved and your trash packed up!

Help us keep more of those sales tax dollars at home!

OPINIONS

Letters Policy:

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

Sidelines is the editorially independent, non-profit student-produced newspaper of Middle Tennessee State University. Sidelines publishes Monday and Thursday during the fall and spring semesters and Wednesday during June and July. The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual writers and not necessarily Sidelines or MTSU.

From the Editorial Board:

Don't punish students because of absences due to illness

With the recent outbreak of flu on campus, many students and staff have had to stay home. When professors are sick, it's quite a simple process. They call their office, have a sign made up to alert students that class is canceled, and that's it. We don't require them to document it, and are even willing to overlook the fact that many don't bother to e-mail us to let us know that they are ill.

When a student is sick, we are oftentimes given no opportunity to make up work, in addition to having to "prove" our sickness in the form of a doctor's note or other official documentation.

At a university such as MTSU, many students live far away, making a trip to a primary care physician very inconvenient. So, a student either has to make a trek to their hometown, or deal with it.

While it's understandable that teachers want to make sure that their students are using their absences wisely, it seems that many are far too strict with their attendance policies, not willing to budge and give people a break in light of this epidemic.

It seems that a more effective and positive way of handling absences due to sickness would be to give students an opportunity to make up the work and not count the absences against them. After all, it should be quality of work that determines a student's success in a class—not the amount of absences they've accrued over the course of the semester.

Many people use the excuse that "in the real world" employers wouldn't be forgiving about an employee missing work. Really? We don't know of many employers that like their employees to show up to work on their deathbed and infect the rest of the office, let alone any employers that would just say, "Sorry, you were sick. We are not allowing you to do your work anymore." Furthermore, not many people work in an office surrounded by 20,000 plus people on a daily basis. Obviously, in the "real world" of MTSU, employees are allowed to skip class.

So while some professors think that going to class is the responsible thing, we think that the responsible thing is taking care of your health and not exposing everyone else around you to illness.

As students, we need to do our part to communicate with our professors, and in turn, we hope our professors will also do their part in understanding that we get sick, too. Sickness is not a reason to lower our grade or force us to "prove" that our illness was indeed worthy of an absence.

Can't we all be adults here?

Faces in the Crowd

What do you think about the rare surge of tornadoes that swept through recently?



Neff

"I think that it's awful of course. I wish there were better methods to keep people safe in a storm."

-Kate Neff, senior electronic media communication



Brooks

"It's crazy. It's odd that it's happening in February. It's sad and my heart goes out to the people who were affected."

-Tammie Brooks, sophomore business finance



Leavitt

"With tornado scares and springtime temperatures, I personally find it difficult to deny that the climate is getting warmer."

-Joshua Leavitt, junior journalism



Dill

"I think it's really sad that the second a disaster hits, people start looting. It's also unusual to have a mass amount of tornadoes."

-Kim Dill, sophomore media design



"And Friends"

frankhasenmueller@gmail.com

Frank Hasenmueller

The rise of the police state

Biometric surveillance database signals the end of our civil liberties

"When the government's boot is on your throat, whether it is a left boot or a right boot is of no consequence."

Gary Lloyd

In the beginning, the goal was simple. An infant nation with a radical policy of respect for individuals, their religion, and their political values. Save for a few dark days, it is a policy to which America has clung dearly.

Sadly, one of these dark days is at hand. The FBI has announced its creation of a massive database of physical information to track every man, woman and child in the country. They call it "Next Generation Identification," and it involves combining handprints, eye scans, fingerprints and tattoo mapping to create a finger to identify virtually anybody, anytime, anywhere.

Supposedly, this is going to protect us from terrorists, but how it does this has yet to be revealed. Sources suggest that the FBI intends to use the process of elimination on everyone inside the country. Voila!

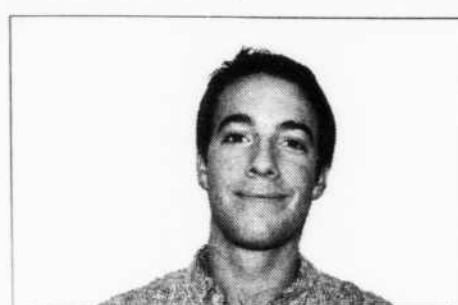
The really scary part of this is that it's not even in the "should we do this?" stage, but rather in the "how soon can we get it up and running?" stage. The Bureau is expected to announce the billion-dollar contract any day now, realizing George Orwell's nightmares, except you can no longer simply close the book.

It begs the question: which enormous, multi-national corporation with close ties to the White House and Congress will win the contract, and what will they do with our data, besides creating a hacker-friendly, identity-theft-to-order database?

Nationwide identification has largely been the stuff of science fiction, until now. One need only watch "Minority Report" to get a feel for what life would be like under a system like this.

Imagine a nationwide network of computers and identity checkpoints. By monitoring everyone's motions and interactions, whoever runs the system can essentially track the actions of an entire population. By using computer programming (of the kind which already exists) to correlate these motions and interactions, it wouldn't be hard at all to pinpoint dissenters. We've seen the movies.

This is not farfetched. FBI surveillance



The Pen is Mightier

By Evan Barker

Staff Columnist

of American citizens extends as far back as World War I, during which a young J. Edgar Hoover coordinated raids on suspected communists, ending in beatings, arrests and deportations.

In 1950, Hoover, then head of the FBI, presented a plan to President Harry Truman in which the constitutional right of habeas corpus would be suspended for 'dissidents' on Hoover's watchlist. The list in question contained approximately 12,000 names, of which fully 97 percent were American citizens. There is no evidence that Truman accepted the plan, but that didn't stop Hoover. Search "COINTELPRO."

Why the paranoia? As in generations past, using some vague outside threat as a justification, the current Administration has dramatically consolidated power of surveillance, a la "1984."

The question is: which is the greater evil? Is it the vague threat of 'Terror' with a capital T, or the totalitarian police state ostensibly designed to combat it?

Being able to play 'The Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon' with 300 million citizens will not instantly mitigate the threat of terrorism. To assert that is a slap at our collective intelligence.

Do people really think that their odds of being mugged in an alley will be lessened because the FBI knows where they ate lunch? Hardly.

The only purpose that a system like this serves is to stifle dissent. It will not reduce crime; only Thoughtcrime. Our government is good only as far as it does not infringe upon our human rights. A government that tracks your every move for no good reason is in clear violation of your rights. How is that any better than the jack-

booted rule of the British monarchy?

It is an affront to human dignity that we are denied the choice of our own poison, totalitarianism or terrorism. It is a logical fallacy that without Big Brother, radical Muslims will kill us all.

There is much evidence that the Bush Administration had warnings from multiple sources prior to Sept. 11, 2001. Before the PATRIOT Act, before the No Fly Lists, and before this intrusive "Next Generation Identification." The government had all the power it needed before it became convenient to threaten us with "terrorismism."

Don't count on the ability of revolt to restore your rights, however. If Big Brother knows where you go and with whom you meet, a popular uprising is already dead in the water.

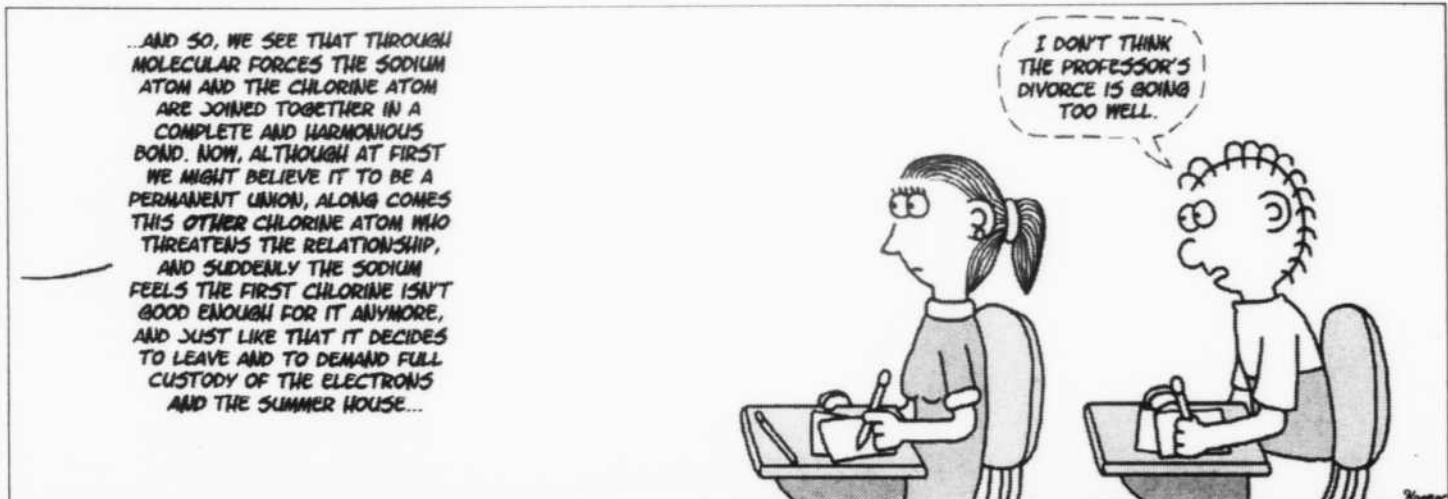
A freedom-loving nation would not stand for this. Many people already 'drank the Kool-Aid' of the police state, whereby the government gains unlimited power in return for the promise of protection. We seem to be voluntarily embracing the surveillance society. The United States used to be a country that valued its personal freedoms very highly. Only since the McCarthy era have we allowed the government to erode our personal privacy and liberty, ostensibly to 'take one for the team.'

If we allow it, our government will become worse than our enemies. We must not give up our God-given, constitutional freedoms to forestall loss of life from terrorism, because that is the true goal of extremists.

If our country is to regain its position as a beacon of democracy and freedom in the face of adversity, such as extremist terrorism, it must function as a democracy to retain its validity. Our Constitution will be null and void if the government permanently suspends its protections in order to fight "Terror," whatever that is. Wouldn't the terrorists win if our government turned fascist without any more of their help?

The victims of Sept. 11 will be martyrs for no reason if we capitulate to these increasing attacks on our rights. They will have died not to remind us of our freedoms, but as an excuse to take them from us.

Evan Barker is a senior viola performance major and can be reached at ehb2d@mtsu.edu.



"Last-Ditch Effort"

kroes@lde-online.com

John Kroes

Sidelinesneedsacopyeditorthatcancatchrunonsentencescometoourofficeinmasscomm269ifyouwanttodothat.

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MBB vs. Arkansas - Little Rock Tonight 7 p.m. WGNS
1450-AM
Indoor T&F MT Valentine Invitational Sat. Murphy Center

National Signing Day 2008



PHOTO BY RYAN DEBOY - PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
MT head coach Rick Stockstill talks about his recruiting class at Wednesday's Press Conference.

MTSU lands top class in the Sun Belt

By Chris Martin

Assistant Sports Editor

When Middle Tennessee hired head coach Rick Stockstill, he was touted as a great recruiter.

In his third year, Stockstill has proven his recruiting acumen.

According to rivals.com, Stockstill put together the top recruiting class in the Sun Belt Conference. He was able to land six prospects that received a three-star rating or better. Included in the bunch is Miami, Fla. quarterback Sancho McDonald, the No. 15 dual-threat quarterback in the nation, and Northeast Mississippi Junior College-transfer wideout Anthony Jones, who is ranked as the No. 39 junior college player.

"[Jones] has a chance to contribute early because he has been in junior college and he is an older kid," Stockstill said. "We have a need at wide receiver and we need immediate help there. With him being an older player it

kind of gives him a leg up. He's going to be more mature than a true freshmen coming in and if Anthony takes care of his responsibilities he has a chance to be a really good player for us."

One focus of this year's class is speed. Ten players in the group have run a 4.6 or better in the 40-yard dash.

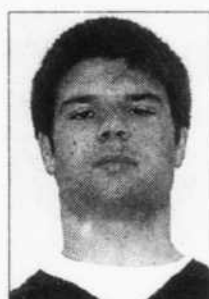
"It's a very athletic class as you can tell by the number of track athletes we signed," Stockstill said.

The fastest of the group is athlete Malcolm Beyah. The athlete from Covington, Ga. runs a 4.32 40.

Overall, MT was able to get 24 commitments. The class features 19 high school signees, four junior college transfers and a transfer from Baylor.



Malcolm Beyah
Athlete
Covington, GA



Brent Burnette
Quarterback
Maryville, TN



Jawan Carson
Running back
Newark, NJ



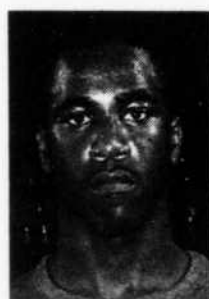
Immanuel Chu
Defensive line
Woodstock, GA



Derrick Crumpton
Safety
Miami, FL



Kendall Dangerfield
Defensive line
Pulaski, TN



Lavonte David
Linebacker
Miami, FL



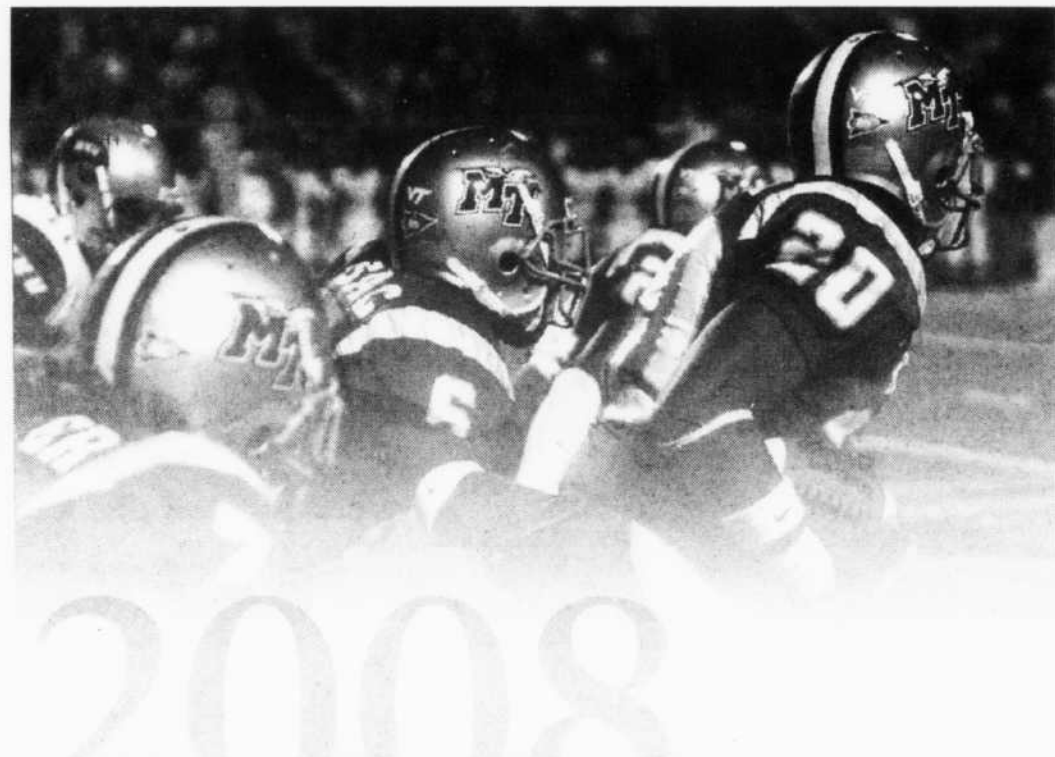
Darin Davis
Linebacker
Ft. Lauderdale, FL



Alan Gendreau
Kicker
Maitland, FL



Rogerio Govan
Offensive line
Little Rock, AR



Blue Raider Recruits

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOBLUE RAIDERS.COM AND GOMIDDLE.COM



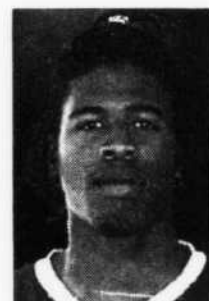
Denzell Guerra
Safety
Loganville, GA



Hakeem Johnson
Cornerback
Jacksonville, FL



Anthony Jones
Wide receiver
Tallahassee, FL



Jamari Lattimore
Linebacker
Miami, FL



Travis Lilienthal
Offensive line
Murfreesboro, TN



Gorby Loreus
Linebacker
Tampa, FL



Sancho McDonald
Quarterback
Miami, FL



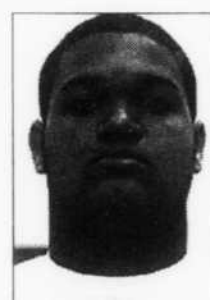
Brandon McLeroy
Offensive line
Spring City, TN



Jeremy Michel
Offensive line
Brandenton, FL



Tony Smith
Running back
Bushnell, FL



Alex Stuart
Offensive line
Oak Ridge, TN



Marcus Thurmond
Wide receiver
North Augusta, SC



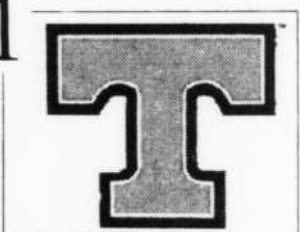
Phillip Tinsley
Defensive end
Dexter, GA



Marcus Udell
Cornerback
Tallahassee, FL

TENNESSEE RECRUITING RANKINGS

#1



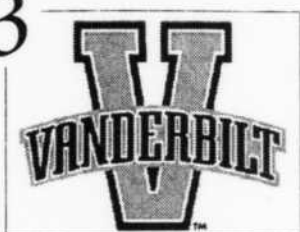
University of Tennessee - 36

#2



Middle Tennessee - 65

#3



Vanderbilt University - 89(t)

#4



University of Memphis - 95

RANKINGS ACCORDING TO RIVALS.COM

SUN BELT RECRUITING RANKINGS

#1



Middle Tennessee - 65

#2



Troy University - 70(t)

#3



University of North Texas - 86

#4



Florida International University - 89(t)

#5



University of Louisiana Monroe - 96(t)

#6



Florida Atlantic University 101(t)

#7



Arkansas State University - 106(t)

#8



University of Louisiana Lafayette - 108

RANKINGS ACCORDING TO RIVALS.COM

Lady Raiders struggle shooting the ball in loss

Four Trojans score in double figures as UALR snaps MT's 35-game home conference-winning streak

By Richard Lowe
Sports Editor

Amber Holt returned to her hot scoring ways but it was no match for the Trojans of Arkansas-Little Rock. Twenty-nine percent shooting ended the 35-game home conference-winning streak for the Blue Raiders as they fell to UALR 66-53.

"We did a very poor job up front," MT head coach Rick Insell said after the game. "We did a very poor job at the center. When you allow people to get the ball, they will break you down. We didn't make good decisions offensively and we didn't execute our offense."

"When you miss five [easy shots] at the beginning of the game, that sets the tempo."

UALR showed the 3,166 in attendance at the Murphy Center Wednesday night why they are sitting in first place in the Sun Belt Conference's West Division. The Trojans hit 25 of their 39 field goal attempts while holding the Lady Raiders to

their lowest offensive output of the season.

"It's disappointing because we were on this winning streak and we hit a road block," sophomore Chelsia Lymon said after the defeat.

Senior Amber Holt, the top scorer in the nation, led all players with 26 points in the contest. Lymon, who scored 11 points in the game, was the only other Lady Raider to score in double figures. Many of the shots that were thrown up by the team were near the basket but most did not count for scores.

"It does get frustrating sometimes when balls roll in and out and we shoot over the rim," Holt said. "It's very frustrating. But we will come in [to practice] and work on that."

UALR took control at the beginning of the second half, going on a 10-5 run heading into the

first media timeout. The Blue Raiders didn't fair much better later in the game as UALR built a 10-point lead with a three-pointer at the 9:57 mark by Kim Sitzmann, making the score 48-38. MT never held the lead in the second half.

The first half started out on a positive note as sophomore Brandi Brown, who had missed three weeks of action due to a broken bone in her hand, made the first points of the game, a three-pointer. However, because of foul trouble, she was only able to play six minutes in the half.

UALR and MT kept it close throughout the first half, with neither team getting a lead larger than four points. Part of the reason of the game being so close was poor shooting by MT. They were only able to turn nine of the 31 field goal

attempts into scores.

UALR, on the other hand, was more successful on the offensive end in the first half. They had 10-of-16 shooting with Nikya Hughes scoring 11 points for the Trojans.

The main negative for the Trojans in the first half was the fact that they turned the ball over 10 times.

Even with the 29 percent shooting performance, Holt was able to keep her team afloat with 15 points scored in the first half.

With the loss, the Lady Raiders are 14-9 (9-3 SBC) heading into Saturday's game against Florida International University. In their first contest against the Golden Panthers, MT was able to defeat FIU 77-64.

The Lady Raiders return home next Thursday when they face off against the University of South Alabama.



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The sports gods speak



I am Sportacus

By J. Owen Shipley
Staff Columnist

A year ago, right around this time, I wrote a column in which I thanked the football gods for ending two of the most worn out storylines in the history of professional sports.

Super Bowl XLI saw Peyton victorious, his Red Sox-esque curse finally lifted from the announcer's booth and the horrible comparisons of every Chicago team that can kick a field goal to the '85 Bears on ice for at least five years.

Little did I know that last year was only the beginning; this year featured two even more obnoxious story lines and other than the plight of the Chargers, little else.

Now, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the football gods yet again for refusing to let the likes of Dan Dierdorf or Al Michaels ruin America's pastime.

You see, New England is not now, nor have they ever been even close to being the greatest team of all time. For a year we had it pounded into our skulls that a team full of aging linebackers with no run defense was the second coming of both Jesus and Mohammad riding a unicorn across a rainbow. Ironically, that fairy tale story turned out to be every bit as believable as "Jack and the Bean Stalk."

Even worse than the constant highlight reel of the Patriots first ten games was the never-ending soap opera that the media tried to create in New York. Coughlin won't survive the season. Eli isn't fit to shine his brother's shoes. Tiki was right!

And just as the football gods punish coaches who punt in their opponent's territory and quarterbacks who won't sell a play action fake, the media banter was laid to rest by cold hard facts on Feb. 3.

Eli Manning, four years into his "embarrassing career" has four more wins than Peyton the elder had at the same point in his career and, by the way, an appointment for a ring sizing. He also has the most famous

play in Super Bowl history and is now being praised for the "patience" that was once labeled "indecision."

What a difference a Super Sunday makes.

And as for the Patriots, they stink. It doesn't take a lowly college columnist to point out that the stench surrounding New England is in danger of spreading throughout the entire NFL.

With The Boston Globe reporting that the Patriots first Super Bowl win may have been the result of the secret taping of the 2002 Rams final walk through before the big game and the honorable Arlen Specter (R-PA) investigating other claims of possible espionage, it looks like the Patriots claims to "America's Team" are about as credible as character witnesses from the KGB.

The Patriots didn't put the image of the entire NFL on the line just to hedge their bets. They cheated because they just weren't as good as the hype. The Super Bowl era has produced precious few championship games decided by three points or less, and around 75 percent of those close games involved the current Patriots "dynasty." Had a handful of plays gone differently, slick Billy and the Pats would be 0-4 and tied with the early 90s Buffalo Bills for the worst Super Bowl team in history.

I'm sure none of this seems relevant to you because, yes, they did win three of those games. But let me ask you this: Could you say that about the 70s Steelers? The 80s 49ers? 90s Cowboys? What about the late 90s Rams, the dynasty that time forgot?

No, you couldn't. Because these Patriots aren't a dynasty, and a team that rolled over some awful competition for ten weeks and then got lucky for 8 more isn't the greatest of all time. It's the most fortuitous. They should thank the heavens they even made it that far.

If I had been given the choice a year ago between the Peyton Curse and visions of the '85 Bears versus Eli Sucks and visions of the '72 Dolphins, I would have asked for more of the same. Luckily, karma is alive and well in the NFL. Enjoy 18-1 cheaters, because you know Manning the younger will enjoy Disney Land.

J. Owen Shipley is a senior English major and can be reached at myspace.com/iamsportacus

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