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Middle Tennessee State University

An editorially independent newspaper

SIDELINES

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

Volume 77 No. 11

Campus Briefs

Listen to the gospel

The men of Kappa Alpha Pi Fraternity, Inc., and the ladies of Open Generation are co-sponsoring the Middle Tennessee State University African American History Month Gospel Extravaganza Feb. 9 at 6:30 p.m.

The concert will be held in Tucker Theatre, and national recording artist Virtue will be giving a special performance along with many local artists.

For more information, contact Joshua Conway at 977-2745 or Aileen Vaughn at 898-3960. You may also e-mail inquiries to jlc2n@yahoo.com.

Give blood next week

The American Red Cross Heart of Tennessee chapter will be holding a blood drive Feb. 11 in the Keathley University Center.

The drive will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for one day only. The Red Cross is looking to collect up to 75 units of blood.

For more information, contact Madeline Methvin at 893-4272.

'Amistad' at KUC

The movie *Amistad* will be shown Feb. 11-15 at the Keathley University Center at 11 a.m.

Following the movie and brief intermission on Feb. 15, Howard Jones will deliver a free lecture on the actual slave revolt.

Jones is a research professor for the University of Alabama.

For more information, contact News and Public Affairs at 898-2919.

Jazz virtuoso to perform

Four-time Grammy nominee and an acknowledged jazz and blues virtuoso Ernestine Anderson will perform during the second half of this year's three-part MTSU Jazz Artists Series.

She will play along with the Middle Tennessee Jazz Orchestra at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 14 in Tucker Theatre.

During Anderson's 15-year career she made nearly 20 albums, two of which received Grammy nominations. Her two most recent CDs received nominations as well.

Dana Landry, assistant professor of music and coordinator of jazz studies, will be leading the players during the performance.

Admission is free for MTSU students, faculty and staff with university ID. General admission tickets are \$12 and will be available at the door or by phone by calling 898-2724.

For more information, contact the School of Music at MTSU at 898-2493.

SEA meeting today

The Students for Environmental Action will be meeting today in the Business and Aerospace Building, Room S325.

The meeting will be held at 4 p.m.

For more information, contact James Tardy at 960-8793. ♦

MTTV to show McPhee forum

Any and all questions to be answered

By Jason Cox
News Editor

Student radio and television will simulcast a question and answer series with university President Sidney McPhee.

"Open Line with President McPhee" will be a one-hour

program broadcast on MTTV-Channel 10, the student television channel, and WMTS-FM, the student radio station. The series will air live March 12, April 16 and May 7.

McPhee said he is looking forward to the opportunity to interact with the campus and community.

"I've always said I wanted to keep an open line between the president's office and the campus," McPhee said.

McPhee said he would answer any and all questions

posed to him during the program, adding that if he did not have an answer then, he would find the answer.

Terra Grant, executive director for MTTV, said she was "excited that McPhee has the opportunity to reach out to Rutherford County and the student body."

She said that, due to McPhee's schedule, it is difficult for individuals to make appointments to speak with him and that this show would provide an opportunity for stu-

dents, staff and local citizens to interact with him.

Grant said the show would not be merely a public relations boost for McPhee. She said the purpose of the program was to answer questions and get ideas to the public.

MTTV Channel 10 reaches more than 40,000 subscribers in southern Nashville and Rutherford County on Comcast Cable. WMTS broadcasts from Murfreesboro and reaches Rutherford County and parts of Nashville. ♦

Sax fest brings Grammy winner



By Shane Gallo
Staff Writer

Grammy-winning Bela Fleck and the Flecktones' saxophonist joined the second annual MTSU Saxophone Festival this Saturday at Wright Music Building.

Jeff Coffin, an in-demand session player and music educator, along with several other prominent musicians, led free daylong workshops for aspiring saxophonists, concentrating on several musical aspects, such as preparing

solo pieces and basic jazz phrasing and interpretation, to name a few.

"It's really good. It really helps to expose people to the school here," Coffin said, "but it also allows us, as professionals, to interact with younger students who have questions about things like tone or technique. We talked about improvisations and a lot of ways to teach yourself."

Don Aliquo, an MTSU assistant professor of music and recording artist, has coordinated the event for the

past two years and was very pleased with this year's festival.

"It went just the way I wanted it to," he said. "We wanted to give area saxophonists who were not associated with this school a chance to come and meet some great players and to learn something new that maybe they haven't thought of."

Students of all ages from surrounding areas came to participate in the festival, which was free and tailored

for saxophonists at all levels and explored different levels of playing, from jazz to classical styles.

"A lot of young students came just to kind of interact with everybody," Coffin said. "It seems like all ages and students of all levels are here, which is really cool."

David Moore, a Tennessee State University student, traveled all the way from Knoxville to take advantage of the event and also was

See Sax, 2



Photos by Amy Jones | Photo Editor
(Left) The Tennessee Technological University saxophone quartet performs.
(Above) Saxophonist Jeff Coffin improvises on a tune backed by music faculty.

Audition for 'Open Line' host position

By Amanda Maynard
Assistant News Editor

MTSU's MTTV Channel 10 is holding auditions to host "Open Line with President McPhee." The position is open to any student, graduate or undergraduate, who is willing to put in the time to make the show a success.

Terra Grant, executive director for Channel 10, and Director Matt Pessoni welcome all students to apply and are hoping to hire new talent for the news station.

"Because this is a truly new show, we wanted to open the auditions to the entire student body to see what talent was out there," Grant said in a press release.

"We felt that would help create interest in the show, and we felt there might be some interesting students who can compete with the people already at the station."

Grant is looking for a host who is articulate and likes to carry on a conversation.

She also wants applicants who are familiar with MTSU history or are willing to take the time to learn.

"We feel this job is an excellent opportunity for a student to spend time with the president, gain valuable experience and have some fun also," Grant said.

McPhee said he would not be involved in the selection process.

Interested candidates can pick up applications in the Channel 10 office in the Learning Resources Center, Room 176, or in the College of Mass Communication office, Room 244, from February 4 to Feb. 15 until 4 p.m.

Applications also will be available online at www.mttv10.com. A list of audition dates and times will be attached to the application.

For more information, call 260-6551. ♦

State of the State addresses budget, education

By Tom Sharp
Associated Press Writer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — In his final State of the State address Monday night, Gov. Don Sundquist urged the Legislature to set "the politics of procrastination" aside to help the state fulfill its promise "in one of our toughest hours."

Much of his prepared address continued the tone of conciliation that marked the redistricting debate earlier this session, in contrast to the progressively bitter budget fights of the past three years.

He pointed to successes in state government that have been overshadowed by the budget debates, such as the increase in child immunization rates, and praised the efforts of Tennesseans both home and abroad since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

"We thank you for putting your lives on the line to protect

ours," he told firefighters, police officers, state National Guard troops and Fort Campbell soldiers who were in the audience.

It was not until near the end of his prepared remarks that Sundquist mentioned the budget, and then in no great detail. He then set aside the speech and made an emotional call for tax reform.

"I appeal to us as fathers and grandfathers, mothers and grandmothers, on behalf of the children of Tennessee. Let's pass long-term tax reform that will last a generation," he said to extended applause. "Let's dig deep in our hearts. Let's lead Tennessee."

Linda McCarty, director of the Tennessee State Employees Association, said the governor was best when he "talked from his heart and said what all of us feel about our families."

"If the future of the people of this state cannot change those minds, then they have no

compassion and no passion for the citizens and what's right for this state," she said.

Tax reform Sen. Marsha Blackburn, R-Brentwood, said she agreed with many of the governor's points, but not with his assessment of "the road we should travel in order to get there."

"We all want our state to be the best it can be, ... but increasing the tax burden on Tennesseans at this point in time is not the way to get there," she said.

Sundquist said the spending plan he will present later this week will include the reading initiative and pre-kindergarten programs he first proposed last year, which were approved by the General Assembly but never funded. The plan is expected to be reduced slightly to a first-year cost of about \$70 million.

He also called on lawmakers to resist the urge to raid the state's \$650 million road build-

ing fund to offset a \$350 million deficit in this year's budget and help fund \$1.2 billion in new revenue needed next year.

Last year the governor proposed extending the state's sales tax to all services and businesses now exempt, but the plan was never seriously pursued.

The state constitution requires a balanced budget and in Sundquist's proposal, if it requires new revenue, he must submit a plan to raise it.

"Make no mistake. We are facing one of our toughest hours in Tennessee," Sundquist said.

"We must find the courage to put political gain aside and put the future of Tennessee first. My challenge to everyone here this evening is to find the courage to make a difference in the lives of Tennessee's children. That's a pledge we can all sign."

He was referring to the no-income-tax pledges signed by many lawmakers before the

2000 elections; lawmakers are being encouraged to sign them again before elections this year.

In addition to the education programs he proposed last year, Sundquist said his budget will include "a well-deserved raise" for state employees, but he didn't specify how much.

Sundquist said his budget also will include a new Tennessee Means Technology program "to leverage Tennessee's abundant science and technology resources" and a New Economy Strategy to "turn the ideas coming out of our high-tech institutions into more Tennessee jobs."

He said the New Economy Strategy "will train the next generation of Tennesseans to take full advantage of the emerging industries in our state."

"Our biggest challenge,

See State, 2

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Faces' Music

Something for Everyone

Faces is rapidly becoming a hot spot for local acts by offering live music three nights a week. Each night is formatted differently to better provide a variety of music.

Tuesday nights offer the newer local acts a chance to debut. The Tuesday night theme is "2Bands for 2Bucks." Bands have a night to play for an audience and get their name out. The audience's incentive lies in the cheap \$2 cover, the drink special and the opportunity to support local music.

Thursday nights cater more to the college party crowd. Groove, funk and cover bands typically jam out on Thursdays.

Saturday nights offer a release for many students as metal bands such as Derailed, Kahil's Ego and Ricket's Madcore fill the bill.

Even when the music is not live, Faces' digital jukebox plays the hits, ranging from classic to progressive rock, from 80's glam to 80's dance, with a little Top 40 thrown in for good measure.

This Month, Faces hosts Splif's Mardi Gras Fat Tuesday bash, offering free beads and favors, as well as drink deals. DJ Mickey Qool-Aid returns to Faces on Valentine's Day to play a set full of sultry grooves.



CRIME LOG

Compiled By Scott Laming – Staff Writer

The following is a partial list of incidents responded to by MTSU Public Safety between Jan. 30, and Feb. 3. This log was compiled from actual police reports.

Wednesday, Jan. 30, 7:05 p.m.

At Judd Hall, a student reported a Sony Play Station and several games missing from his room. After police investigated the scene, there appeared to be no forced entry, but the

bathroom door and the windows were unlocked.

Thursday, Jan. 31, 12:18 a.m.

Police received a call from the Keathley University Center, saying that the men's restroom on the second floor was vandalized. Upon arriving, police discovered that a paper towel holder had been knocked off the wall.

There are no suspects at this time.

Friday, Feb. 1, 4:18 a.m.

Jerry Edsell of Murfreesboro was arrested Friday morning after police found him stumbling down the sidewalk at the corner of Tennessee Boulevard and Faulkberry Drive. When police patted Edsell down, they discovered a small wooden box that contained marijuana. Edsell was charged with public intoxication, simple possession and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Friday, Feb. 1, 7:02 p.m.

Police received a phone call from parking services that a person had taken a parking boot from their vehicle.

Sunday, Feb. 3, 7:59 p.m.

A female from Warren County had been receiving calls from a soon to be ex-husband, despite an order of protection. She is filing charges in Warren County to solve the problem. ♦

Sax: Area musicians featured

Continued from 1

impressed by the talent he was surrounded by.

"He's real approachable and down to earth," Moore said of Coffin after attending his workshops.

"You'd think that [with] him being a celebrity, it would be hard to talk to him, but he allows you to talk freely about music and the fundamentals," he said.

Following the workshops, Coffin, Aliquo and other area musicians, along with MTSU students, gave performances for those who attended the event.

"I wanted my students here

at the university to do performance and for them to participate in this," Aliquo said. "If they get something out of it, it's like a win-win for everybody."

Denis Solee, an acclaimed Nashville jazz musician, and Brian Horner, a saxophonist for the Arbor Quartet, also participated in the event, teaching workshops and performing for attendees afterwards.

Following the performances, the guest artists held a question and answer session for students and a jazz jam session, lead by Coffin.

"It was a great experience," Moore said, "and I'll be back next year." ♦

State: Education a priority

Continued from 1

however, lies in education," he said.

Sundquist said too few Tennesseans have high school diplomas or college degrees.

In addition to the reading initiative, he again proposed pre-kindergarten programs for at-risk 4-year-olds, with a goal of extending it to every 4-year-old within four years.

He said his budget also will

propose more money for higher education.

"For the last three years we have engaged in a historic debate about what kind of state we want to be and what we must do, as a government, and as a people, to achieve that vision," Sundquist said.

"The politics of procrastination have held us back too long already," he said. "For the next few months let's put partisan-slash aside." ♦

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Editorial

'Sidelines' hoping for end to technical difficulties

You may have noticed that *Sidelines* has looked a little strange lately – fragmented headlines, inconsistent jumps (story continuations), missing words, etc.

Then our African American History Month special edition came out a day late. It was supposed to be inserted in Monday's paper, but it was instead delivered Tuesday morning.

We felt it was necessary to explain to our readers the reasons behind the newspaper's recent problems – whether or not the average non-journalism major noticed them.

Murfreesboro's *Daily News Journal*, which prints *Sidelines*, recently encountered a computer virus that completely wiped out all our fonts from their computer's hard drive. This resulted in our headlines being in different fonts, and thus the wrong sizes, Thursday of last week and Monday. So headlines that fit perfectly in their designated spot when we designed them no longer were the right size.

The same problem plagued the text of the stories. So when stories continued to different pages, it repeated several lines of text that had been in the first part.

While we know this in no way constitutes a major problem to most people, we wanted to let everyone know what was going on.

The problem supposedly was fixed Sunday night, so we would like to say that this should be the end of the mix-ups, but just one look at Monday's paper tells us differently. We're not sure why the problem has continued, but we hope we have seen the last of it. ♦

Corrections

In Monday's *Sidelines*, we incorrectly stated that the state comptroller is suing the White House. It is actually the comptroller general of the United States.

In Thursday's *Sidelines*, Phi Sigma Beta was listed as a co-sponsor of the Up 'Til Dawn step show. The fraternity's correct name is Phi Beta Sigma.

Sidelines regrets the errors.

From the News Editor

Super Bowl ads manipulative



If you, like most of the country, watched the Super Bowl on Sunday, I doubt you've yet shaken the images of the My Anti-Drug commercials.

These went beyond people sharing personal experiences about what their 'anti-drug' is, be it football, friends, a sibling or various other motivators.

The advertisements declared that, if you purchase or use drugs, you may be supporting terrorism.

The adolescents in the commercial seemed shocked. All of a sudden, their drug use contradicts their newfound patriotism.

You may be wondering what a dime sack has to do with terrorism. The truth is, it doesn't have anything to do with it.

By using the generic term 'drugs,' it leaves wide room for interpretation.

What they might have said (if they were interested in dispensing factual information) is "if you purchase cocaine, crack or heroin, there's a small chance that what you have bought was grown within the borders of a nation that either condones or supports terrorism."

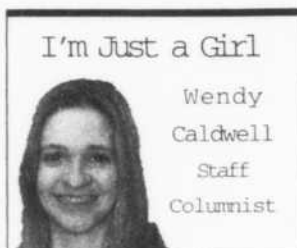
Even with these drugs, it's more likely that someone in Smyrna is laden with Osama bin Laden or any terrorist you should be concerned with.

Afghanistan has had a long tradition of growing much of the world's heroin. When the Taliban took over, they took great steps to eliminate the trade. Their effort was partially financed by the United States.

As do many organizations trying to do the 'right' thing, the anti-drug people have taken a sliver of truth and expanded it to laughable proportions.

If we continue to fill the minds of youth with half-truths and outright lies, drug abuse is going to continue in the pattern that it has. ♦

Punxsutawney Phil leads to new events



I'm Just a Girl
Wendy Caldwell
Staff Columnist

For more than 100 years, this country has participated in the most meaningless tradition of all time: Groundhog Day. Every Feb. 2, Punxsutawney Phil joins the ranks of the meteorologists, determining how long winter will last. Fascinating.

This year he saw his shadow. Why shouldn't he? He emerges from complete darkness and is greeted with bright lights and cameras.

We're doomed to "six more weeks of winter" until there's a power outage or energy crisis of some sort. Or nuclear winter – that would keep his shadow away.

What does this groundhog do the rest of the year? Absolutely nothing. Surely a groundhog that can predict the weather has other talents.

He would make a great general. Here's a novel idea: every other Wednesday, let him come out of that tree trunk Hilton he lives in. If he sees his shadow, we bomb Afghanistan.

If he doesn't, we lie and say he saw it. Then we bomb Afghanistan. How could anyone protest? It's Punxsutawney Phil, the

psychic groundhog (and close personal friend of Miss Cleo).

Personally, I'm surprised the animal rights activists have allowed this tradition to continue. I suppose groundhogs are OK to use for our own amusement. Why a groundhog?

It seems as though, I don't know, a weatherman might be a bit more qualified to make this decision.

Next year, let's try something different. Let's dig a really big hole. On Feb. 1, push Al Roker into the hole. The next morning (now Al Roker Day), lure him out of the hole with a cheeseburger on a string.

If he sees his shadow, six more weeks of winter

(and we bomb Afghanistan). Does Al Roker ever not see his shadow?

There are probably some very unintelligent, or very nearsighted, people who follow him around all day mistakenly thinking he's an elm tree.

This is probably a big problem on those days when he wears brown pants and a green shirt.

This tradition also would prove useful in foreign affairs. I am now proposing my plan for destroying Osama bin Laden: Punxsutawney Kill. He's already in a cave, which is quite convenient.

We'll have to lure him out of the cave somehow, perhaps with a "Free Explosives" gimmick. I

realize this sounds elementary, but we're dealing with a man who is living in a cave in the middle of the desert.

Once he falls for the brilliantly disguised "free explosives," the real fun begins. If he sees his shadow, we shoot him.

If, for some reason, he does not see his shadow, we severely and creatively maim him, then we shoot him and blow up the cave (that's the "free explosives" part of the deal). It's fun for the whole family.

I know it is unlikely that such a brilliant plan as this could be put into action so quickly, but I can dream.

In the meantime, we'll just have to rely on that loveable rodent. While bombing Afghanistan. ♦

Women should control their media representations

While sitting in a dorm lobby during the early hours one Saturday morning, two friends of mine began debating about the subject of exploitation of women within the media.



Wit and Wonder
Callie Elizabeth Butler
Staff

"The media exploit women!" cried out one, as she rhythmically pushed the buttons of the remote.

"No, they don't," protested the other. I gazed over toward the television and watched a bit of the music video that had sparked this dialogue. Then, I began thinking.

Do women allow themselves to be exploited within the media?

Anytime I open various magazines or on the rare occasion that my television feels the zing of electricity, I see countless examples of women being misrepresented through the media.

The beauty within each of them is displayed

often only through their bodies. They are each transformed from a person to a sexual object. Why is this allowed?

Women should be able to represent themselves in any way they so choose. Historically, women have been so incredibly restricted in the public sphere that such things were simply unheard of. Within many spheres, women express themselves with immeasurable freedom.

Yet, as these freedoms of expression continue to grow, the media are still generally controlled by men as are the images of women on television, film and print. This leaves women with less influence in their representations.

A woman involved in the media often must trade in intellectualism for sexuality. And while sexuality should be more widely expressed and less stigmatized, should this be the most widely expressed view of women?

While many television programs, films and articles show women in a different light, they remain a minority in the face of those which are selling women's sexuality versus their wisdom, intelligence and talent.

We also must consider American youth. In a

time when younger generations of girls are looking toward media representations for role models, shouldn't those in control of media projections be more conscious of the messages that lie beneath the surfaces of office videos, commercials, the latest box office hit or a nightly television show? Thought should be given to the effects of these displays.

An excellent example would be Britney Spears. While Britney should always maintain the freedom of expression, should she not consider the messages she sends as she proclaims herself a role model for young girls?

The messages she radiates are not ones that emphasize the potential, the inner beauty and the capabilities of young women.

Women should stand up and say no to their dehumanization. Women are essential to the media, and if more people, women as well as men, began to acknowledge this sad reality, change would erupt. While women should be able to be sexually expressive within various media, this should not be the mostly widely seen theme or be expressed in a way that transforms a woman from a feeling person to a plastic blow-up doll. ♦

Truth seen by drain pipe means

By Alicia Pickett
Staff Columnist

Heaven is only a beautiful pothole away. By looking at this world, fears come to mind, gripping us as the human whole. Every day seems cloudier than the next. Whether rainy afternoons or sunny Saturdays, it does not seem that joy and humor can survive in this gloomy world of ours. True-to-life greetings are lost as we individually find our own familiar lifestyle in this "Hollywood Frame."

"This is the end of the world as we know it..." The lyrics bring home truth to each of us at some point in our lives, but I can say that as I'm "turning mole hills into mountains, bearing gifts as if they're burdens" as jazzy Christian artist Ginny Owens brilliantly sings, "I am free." How? I'm free to wake up as you do and possibly write an opinion piece now and again for *Sidelines* and then rest in knowing that I am free to be "who I be," the real honest, laughing Alicia.

From physical to spiritual baggage, we become weighed down. When we converse to one another as we carry our packages from here to there each day, sometimes for a split second we get the chance to stop short in our human tracks to take in a bit of the beauty that has been blocked by monotonous routine.

"Sometimes I feel God in the middle of the day, in the cool of the day..." DC Talk's rap lyricist Toby Mac writes of the simple pleasure of seeing that joy, a beauty that can drown out dullness. In wanting

to expand your mind from your everyday toils and snares, you are invited to see perfection even by the rusty world around you.

A drip of water from a leaky drain pipe on the side of a small town Cee Bee Foods Store can open us up to goodness and real bliss, none of that phony stuff – real truth.

So when I am consumed by what the world will say as Owens points out, I can shout joyfully that I am free from this tiresome life at times. Free to meet and to greet, even though worry creeps up behind me as I ponder what I coulda, shoulda, woulda done on my last test. Fear to never succeed again does not have to be your end.

Freedom rescues me right now as my eyes glance at lighted electricity from above. From my chair positioned straight into the computer screen, to my sudden glance at the light bulb fixtures attached to the ceiling, I am free to type on and to move and to...

"You're free to dance, forget about your two left feet, free to sing even a joyful noise is music to me and free to love 'cuz I've given you my love and it's made you free... I have set you free."

Isn't it amazing what a second glance at a drain pipe, a small bit of oil in a flooded cement pot hole and/or a sincere smile of a passerby can do for the human spirit? Be free today.

Staring at these things will not get you the perfect satisfaction that I'm talking about, but giving them a second look might help get the ball rolling. ♦

Letter to the Editor

A higher education is not owed to anyone

To the Editor:

Well *Sidelines* is 2 for 2 on the days I visited campus and decided to read the paper. Erich Heinlein's article on his "socialist" plan to fund education (*Sidelines* Jan. 31) was once again ignorance and liberalism run amuck. Aptly, the article was placed next to another article titled "What A Schmuck!"

Heinlein said he felt that it was unfair for the state of Georgia to raise the GPA requirements for the HOPE scholarships because they were based on standardized test scores and that it was also a shame that anyone should have to pay even \$100 for textbooks.

Once again, the journalism at MTSU is breeding ignorant and liberal views in the minds of our future leaders (God help us). His "proposal" that businesses pay a portion of their earnings to fund education is absolutely ludicrous. The goal of a business is to make money, and if any business owner tells you differently, they will not be in business very long.

It is neither my responsibility nor my business clients' to fund your education, Erich Heinlein. It is your and yours alone. If your parents were smart enough to plan ahead, then funding your education would be a snap. Simply putting away \$100 per month from the time you were born until you graduated from high school would net you around \$76,543.92 on average.

If for some reason they were not able to save, you still have many options to pay for your education. You could work (not a typo), use the military, actually get scholarship, which should be the only form of free educational aid anyway, or even get hired (which means you would have to work for a living) and get the company to pay your educational costs (FedEx does this for all its part-time workers).

David Ridings

Do you support the use of gophers to capture and maim/kill bin Laden?
Contact slopinio@mtsu.edu.

SIDELINES

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Hip-hop style explodes at The Boro



Fam Trajik consists of (from left to right) Cash Villin, Baxter, Paul Point, Joe Gates and 187-Blitz and will perform at The Boro Saturday at 9:30 p.m.

By Stephanie Saujon
Staff Writer

Because MTSU boasts one of the nation's top recording

industry programs, it is no surprise that Murfreesboro has an abundance of local bands and musical acts. Almost every night of the week, The Boro, Bongo

Johnny's, Wall Street and Faces host various local musical acts of all genres. As students, we're normally left with several choices when deciding where to go

listen to music, as long as our preference is not hip hop.

The most popular genre of music that gets played in local venues is normally rock 'n' roll.

There's not much to choose from for those of us who appreciate live hip hop, unless we drive to Nashville. Even in Nashville the choice is not favorable. Every once in a while, there might be a local disc jockey competition and occasionally you hear of an open mic night, but in Murfreesboro, open-mic probably ends up being a poetry reading rather than a heated lyrical battle.

"The local hip hop community is about to be hit with a lyrical brick," said Cash Villin, member of Equinaux and Fam-Trajik. Fam-Trajik consists of four separate acts — the duo Equinaux, the two solo emcees Joe Gates and 187-Blitz and DJ Paul Point. Their first live collaboration show is set for Saturday at The Boro. Although their 2002 debut albums are yet to be released, these hip hop innovators are itching to create a local following before they go to conquer the often-fickle rap industry.

"Performing live is the most sure-fire method to form a fan base," said Baxter, the other half

of Equinaux. "I really get a rush when people show that they enjoy [my music]."

DJ Paul Point tends to notice "when heads are bobbing," while 187-Blitz feels that "the energy of the crowd" is the best part about being on stage.

All of the Fam-Trajik musicians recognize that a live hip hop show is not a regular occurrence in Middle Tennessee, which makes their style and presentation even more marketable to local hip hop fans.

By performing regularly in the Murfreesboro/Nashville area, the members of Fam-Trajik want to encourage other local hip hop to get their sound out and start up a solid local scene. Joe Gates, who used to be a member of the Del Giovanni Clique, opened for his former band on New Year's Eve at Wall Street, a show that proved to be a large success for the him.

Most of the Fam-Trajik crew is not from Middle Tennessee, with the exception of Cash Villin and DJ Paul Point.

Washington from as far as Hawaii state and Indiana, some of the members are bringing a different regional vibe to the scene that contrasts with the influence of the southern broth-

ers, like Baxter, who's from Chattanooga.

Their influences are wildly different, from Joe Gates' appreciation for music by Brian McKnight and Lauryn Hill to 187-Blitz's preference for books by Anne Rice and Stephen King. Baxter claims that his "major musical influence is [his] family, mostly mom and pop." DJ Paul Point admires the crew Digg'in in the Crates "for their ill style of production," and Cash Villin admits that one of his earliest influences was Dr. Suess.

Regardless of their various influences, the crew intends on forming a musical style that will, according to Cash Villin, provide hope for those [hip hop fans] lost in the pools of jewels, girls and bling-bling singing.

Their style, which is described by DJ Paul Point as "underground" and "spiritual" by Joe Gates, should definitely captivate the local crowd at The Boro this Saturday.

If you've been waiting your entire undergraduate life for some real hip hop entertainment, check out Fam-Trajik's first collaborative live show. Admission is \$3, and the show starts at 9:30 p.m. ♦

Movie Review

'The Count of Monte Cristo' embraces French film genre



Edmund Dantes with his fiancée Mercedes in *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

By Jennifer Cathey
Staff Writer

If Alexander Dumas were alive today, he would be making big bucks as a screenwriter.

Like *The Man in the Iron Mask* and *The Musketeer*, *The Count of Monte Cristo* was originally a novel penned by the 19th century French writer.

Dumas' swashbuckling stories, complete with adventures by the dozen, have as much appeal to readers now as they ever did. It's no wonder so many of his novels are being made into movies. Let's face it — it's hard to deny the potency and appeal of a story that can endure for nearly 200 years.

Although Dumas was successful during his life, he would probably be surprised that his stories, which were called romances in his time, would be turned into adventure films starring a cavalcade of pirates, heroes and villains. It really is incredible that Dumas' novels work on so many levels.

The plot of *The Count of Monte Cristo* is one of the best known stories of revenge and betrayal in the world.

Edmund Dantes is a man who has it all: a new post as captain of his ship, a bright future and a beautiful fiancée named Mercedes.

However, a shadow hangs over him in the form of a letter he agreed to take from France's Emperor Napoleon, who is exiled on the island of Elba, to an informant in Marseilles. Dantes is illiterate. He is completely unaware of the letter's contents.

His agreement to deliver the

letter unwittingly ends up costing him his freedom when his conniving "friend" Fernand Mondego turns him over to a corrupt civil servant, who burns the letter and sends Dantes to the Chateau D'If.

After 13 years in a French prison, Dantes finally finds his way to freedom and discovers a vast treasure, giving him wealth beyond his wildest dreams. Despite his new-found wealth, the count still vows that he will have his revenge and journeys to Paris to find it.

Director Kevin Reynolds is a Hollywood veteran of films such as *187* and *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*. His next effort with Kevin Costner, however, was a little bomb called *Waterworld*. Despite his last failure, Reynolds can expect success with this film — it's great.

Reynolds has created a very witty and beautiful film, thanks in large part to freshman writer Jay Wolpert's sharp dialogue. Wolpert has a knack for inserting his own brand of dry wit into this classic story of intrigue, which adds another flavor to Dumas' already complex story.

There are so many elements to this story that it would be hard to imagine adding anything, let alone humor. Yet somehow, Wolpert and Reynolds are able to pull it off, and the witty one-liners make the film more entertaining.

There are a few discrepancies between this rendition and the original text. Some characters that are more prominent in the book barely, if at all, appear in

the movie. This can be overlooked, though, especially because it would have taken many more hours than most of us care to sit to follow the book to the letter.

Considering the quality of the script, it is hard to imagine the actors being anything less than superb.

Overall, they didn't disappoint this expectation. Although Guy Pearce's Fernand Mondego is flat at times, his performance does exactly what it is supposed to do. By the end, the viewer absolutely despises the villain. Richard Harris and James Frain give solid performances. Jim Caviezel lacked the intensity needed to pull off his role as the count, but his overall performance was convincing, especially during the prison scenes.

Costume designer Tom Rand and art director Connor Devlin should not be discounted, either. *The Count of Monte Cristo* has the look and feel of France during the years following Napoleon's reign. Rand's clothing designs are rich and colorful and, along with Devlin's aesthetically pleasing sets, help make the film a feast for the eyes.

All things considered, it's time we forgive Kevin Reynolds for the *Waterworld* fiasco and accept the fact that he really is a talented director. *The Count of Monte Cristo* is not your average retelling of a Dumas novel.

Considering the previous two attempts, that's something to be thankful for. ♦



In a French prison for 13 years, Dantes finally escapes to freedom and discovers a vast amount of treasures.

Local band turns heads during show at Sebastian's



Page 80, made up of Brandon Dempsey (left), Ryan Hauschild (middle) and Harlan Smith (right), performed last week at Sebastian's.

By Jessie Miraldi
Staff Writer

The high piercing squeal of an electric guitar mixed with the thundering of a bass and the pounding of drums filled Sebastian's Thursday night as Page 80 played their first number, "Where's the Pickles." All of these sounds came together successfully, and the audience was hungry for more.

The band went on to play many other songs with interesting titles such as "Jerry was a Race Car Driver," "Woolly Mammoth" and "Funk 84."

Page 80 is a local Murfreesboro band that has become increasingly popular over the past two years. The members laughingly call the band the most serious relationship they've ever had.

Page 80's music has a large audience appeal because of their uniqueness and mix of different kinds of music. They have a wide variety of influences, from Primus and the Red Hot Chili Peppers to Led Zeppelin and Victor Wooten.

Guitar player Harlan Smith says the band's music is speed/metal bluegrass, while drummer Brandon Dempsey thinks they fit more into the jazz-fusion genre. Bass player Ryan Hauschild, however, just likes to think of their music as "eclectic happiness."

When asked what the meaning of the name Page 80 is, the band replies that it can mean different things to different people.

"You make your own meaning," Smith said.

All three of Page 80's members have had years of musical experience, and this shows in their music. Smith, who has been playing the guitar for 20 years, now plays a seven-string guitar with an arsenal of foot pedals attached to it, giving off a variety of different sounds. Hauschild finger taps his five-string bass that he has been playing for eight years, and Dempsey, who has been drumming for eight years, plays a five-piece Pearl drum set.

Page 80 played their first gig at MTSU's Cyber Café about two years ago. This performance was the first time the three had ever played together.

"The chemistry was amazing," Hauschild said. "We all just clicked."

"And that hasn't faded an inch," Smith said proudly.

When the band began, their songs were entirely music with no lyrics, but now two years later, they have added words to some of their songs.

"After playing became second nature, we just felt like we needed something more," Hauschild said. "We tried to audition some singers, but it

just didn't work. The bond between the three of us is just too close."

Instead, Hauschild and Smith take turns singing themselves.

When the band isn't playing music, they find plenty of ways to keep themselves busy. Dempsey, 22, and Hauschild, 20, are recording industry majors at MTSU. Although Smith, 21, is not enrolled in school right now, he plans to be back at MTSU soon. He also will be pursuing a recording industry major.

In the rest of his free time, Hauschild enjoys building speakers and working with electronics, and Dempsey spends his time outdoors, mountain biking, hiking and skiing. Smith busies himself restoring old Volkswagens and with his extensive *Dukes of Hazard* memorabilia collection.

Page 80 does not have another gig scheduled at this time, but they might be playing Buzzfest this September.

After already two years together, Page 80 is anticipating many more.

"Laughter is the key," Dempsey said. "It helps keep us together."

"We hope to be around for a long time," Smith said. "We still wanna be in Page 80 when we're at age 80." ♦

Movie Review

Mothman phenomenon haunts big screen



Photo provided

Sgt. Connie Parker is called to the home of Denise and Gordon Smallwood to question a mysterious stranger.

By Stephanie Saujon
Staff Writer

The *Mothman Prophecies* is yet another movie that attracts viewers because it's based on true events. Hmmm, that's only one of many released in the past couple of months, including *Black Hawk Down* and *A Beautiful Mind*.

Of course, many viewers enjoy a good reality-based movie, just look at all the reality TV shows that clog up the airwaves.

This particular film was taken from a book of the same name. The real guy who investi-

gated the Mothman incidents more than 35 years ago and wrote the book *The Mothman Prophecies* is John Keel. This "Mothman phenomenon" still hasn't been explained, which is what probably attracted the production/direction team to the story.

The name John Keel is almost identical to the name of the main character played by Richard Gere, John Kline. In the movie version, John Kline gets caught up in an investigation of a moth-shaped humanoid that has been plaguing the small mountain town of Point Pleasant, W.Va. Although Kline

cannot explain how he ended up in this town (his road trip was interrupted by an unexplainable time warp re-routing), he knows the weird occurrences in Point Pleasant have something to do with the sudden and tragic death of his young wife, Mary (Debra Messing), who died more than two years earlier under mysterious circumstances.

While helping the local sergeant of the police department (Laura Linney) investigate the unusual appearances, Kline uncovers a supernatural mystery. The main characters of the movie are haunted by the superhuman abilities of the Mothman, who taunts them with hallucinations, psychic predictions and creepy phone calls with a dramatic screeching noise on the other end of the line.

Why the creature gives psychic predictions about tragic cataclysms never becomes clear in the movie, except to tie in the last action sequence, which isn't very believable. As a matter of fact, there are many loose ends that are never quite pulled back together, which leaves the watcher wondering what the point of the movie was, other than to scare people.

I'll give it that; it sure was

scary. The entire audience jumped and screamed at one point.

The suspenseful scenes are accompanied by an eerie bass-heavy noise that's supposed to trigger tension in the audience. I found it rather annoying and pretentious.

Gere and Linney give average performances. It seems that Gere acts the same in every movie, no matter what type of role it is. He's suave, professional and perfectly tussled the entire time. Linney does her best with what she's given, which isn't much because the script is lacking. The screenwriter, Richard Hatem, is also known for *Under Siege 2: Dark Territory*.

The cinematography is rather impressive. Difficult camera shots and tricky mirror effects add a certain zest to the movie that makes it more watchable.

Although the studio, Sony Pictures, is trying to sell this movie as "based on a true story," much of the film seems like dramatization. Psychic moth-like creatures from another realm that haunt West Virginians with crank phone calls? I don't know — sounds more like Hollywood than a true story. ♦

What's going

Compiled by Justin Ward
Staff Writer

Wednesday, Feb. 6

- *The Nationals at The Boro Bar and Grill at 9:30 p.m.
- *Cashmere Love Crash at Sebastian's at 9:30 p.m.
- *Karaoke at Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub at 7:30 p.m.
- Hip Hop Night starts at 10 p.m.
- *Ladies Night at Bongo Johnny's — Ladies free before 11 p.m. \$7 admission.

Thursday, Feb. 7

- *Ocelots at The Boro Bar and Grill at 4 p.m. Baby Stout and Gold Room at 9:30 p.m.
- *Chris Scruggs at the Red Rose Café. Show starts at 9 p.m.
- *Groovium at Sebastian's at 9:30 p.m.
- *College Night at Bongo Johnny's — \$3 with college ID; \$2 pitcher of beers
- *Mouse at Faces Restaurant and Lounge at 9:30 p.m.
- *Cliff and the Cliff Notes at Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub at 8 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 8

- *Rosewater Foundation, Snow Globe and ventriloquist Carla Rhodes at the Red Rose Café at 9:30 p.m.
- *Sourpuss at Sebastian's at 9:30 p.m.
- *Fiesta Fridays at Bongo Johnny's at 9:30 p.m.
- *Laura Swingle and Friends at The Boro Bar and Grill at 4 p.m. Big Jim Slade and Ejecta at 9:30 p.m.
- *John Jackson's "All Good" with O.J. Terry Grant at Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub at 9 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 9

- *Michael Acree, Moses Mays and Andi Camp at the Red Rose Café at 9 p.m.
- *Metalhead and Bellicose at Sebastian's at 9:30 p.m.
- *Joe Gates, 187 Blitz, Equinox and Paul Point at The Boro Bar and Grill at 9:30 p.m.
- *Dry Jack at Faces Restaurant and Lounge at 9:30 p.m.
- *Abraid and Goldfinger at Bongo Johnny's at 9:30 p.m.
- *John Jackson's "Soul Satisfaction" at Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub at 9 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 10

- *Mates of State and Glossary at the Red Rose Café at 9:30 p.m.
- *Mics Open Mic at The Boro Bar and Grill at 4 p.m. and Roland Gresham Jazz at 8 p.m.
- *Phat Sundays at Bongo Johnny's at 9:30 p.m.
- *Louis Brown's Fire House Jazz Band 5-8 p.m. at the Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub.
- D.J. Viper at 10 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 11

- *Blind Draw Doubles Pool Tournament at the Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub at 9 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 12

- *Fat Tuesday-Utopia State at The Boro Bar and Grill at 9:30 p.m.
- *Fat Tuesday-SPLIF at Faces Restaurant and Lounge
- *Ski and Snowboard flicks 6-8 p.m. at the Cantina Restaurant and Nightclub sponsored by Neptune ski shop. Open Mic Comedy at 9 p.m.

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Colleen Cox



Universities should not give athletes more money

An interesting proposal has come from Ohio State University President William Kirwan. Kirwan proposes that student athletes receive extra money for incidental expenses as part of their scholarship money.

This money would come in the form of a stipend, estimated at about \$2,000 per scholarship depending upon the university area's cost of living. At one point in college athletics history, individual schools decided whether to give a stipend to student athletes. The NCAA abolished the rule, saying it made recruiting unfair.

"(Athletes) need to have some real money to walk around with that they can live off of," Ohio State men's basketball coach Jim O'Brien told *The Lantern*, the Ohio State University newspaper.

There are two major flaws to the plan. The first is that, because some universities use tuition to fund athletic scholarships, tuition would rise as the scholarship amount rose. Regular, everyday students should not be forced to pay for an athlete to have a little extra money.

The second problem with the plan is that walk-ons wouldn't receive any stipend. These athletes put in just as much time as scholarship athletes and already have to pay their tuition. They would therefore need the stipend as much if not more than the scholarship athlete.

The whole idea seems pretty ridiculous to me anyway. Athletes not in their first year at a university or college are allowed to work. There are restrictions placed on how much money a student athlete can make, but I haven't seen a starving athlete yet.

Maybe OSU just wants to keep its players from going to the pros early. This is the same university that proposed having football as a major, so football players wouldn't have to actually study or anything. With a football major, players could focus on their future career in the pros. Make that two crazy ideas OSU has come up with.

It seems pretty obvious to me that OSU is more worried about its "student athletes" than the students themselves. That is truly sad. No university is solely made up of an athletics program.

There is a bit of good news from OSU, however. Men's gymnastic coach Mike Avery says he is opposed to paying student athletes because it would be the end of collegiate sports.

"Pay for play is a nonstarter," Kirwan told *The Lantern*. "The university is not in the business of hiring people to carry our extracurricular activities."

Excuse me. What would you call this stipend your university is proposing? The last time I checked, \$2,000 above and beyond a student's expenses would qualify as paying an athlete.

Have college sports really gotten this bad? Sure they have. Eighteen- and 19-year-old kids leave college every year to play professionally. Colleges can't hold on to their athletes for anything. I guess an education isn't too important until you blow out a knee. So I guess this is what it has come to. Pay the athletes, and they might get a degree. Let's hope our university isn't quite that stupid. ♦

Call from the Press Box appears every Wednesday. You can contact Colleen Cox at 898-2816 or slsports@mtsu.edu.

Godfrey fast winner

By Angelica Journagin
Staff Writer

When senior track star Godfrey Herring talks about running the 400-meter relay, it's easy to tell which event in track is his favorite.

It's not that the soft-spoken Herring talks louder or faster. But you can tell by looking at his body. He leans forward and starts to fidget. Herring's eyes get larger, and it's as if he gets an adrenaline rush from just speaking about running in an event that, on average, lasts less than three and a half minutes.

"I used to run 4-by-400 relay at NCAA," Herring said. "Indoor or outdoor, it doesn't make a difference. When I first got to college, that was what I wanted to do. I can't describe it. I just got this feeling every time the 4-by-400 comes around. I've got to race. Even if I have to get someone from the side to run, I am still going to perform. No one is going to stop

my drive for this relay."

Herring, along with D.J. Spann, Mardy Scales and Tanko Braimah, came very close last spring to achieving his dream of running in the 400-meter relay at the NCAA's Track and Field Championships. After qualifying for the tournament with the third fastest time in the nation that season, they failed to qualify for the race.

However, that wasn't Herring's only chance to run at last year's NCAA Championships. He also qualified for the 400-meter race, placing fifth. That marked the third time that Herring has earned the honor of All-American and the third time that he finished in the top nine in the nation. For Herring, qualifying for the race wasn't the issue.

"I knew I could qualify," Herring said. "That wasn't the problem. The thing is, each year I want to be able to beat me. The person from this year should be able to

beat the Godfrey from last year."

While Herring said what he enjoys most about running is the opportunity to improve each year, he admits that he hasn't always felt this way.

Herring began running his freshman year in high school because his older brother Gavin ran track, and he wanted to run with Gavin before graduating.

Even then, Herring wasn't going to run until Gavin caught up with Herring and a friend one day after school.

"Gavin was like 'Come on. You're supposed to be at practice,'" Herring recalled. "... And he threw us in the car and took us to practice. And that started it right there."

Herring describes his freshman year at MT as one of those years when he "fell off." Problems with his hamstring during the season kept him from his best.

The next year was better

See Herring, 8

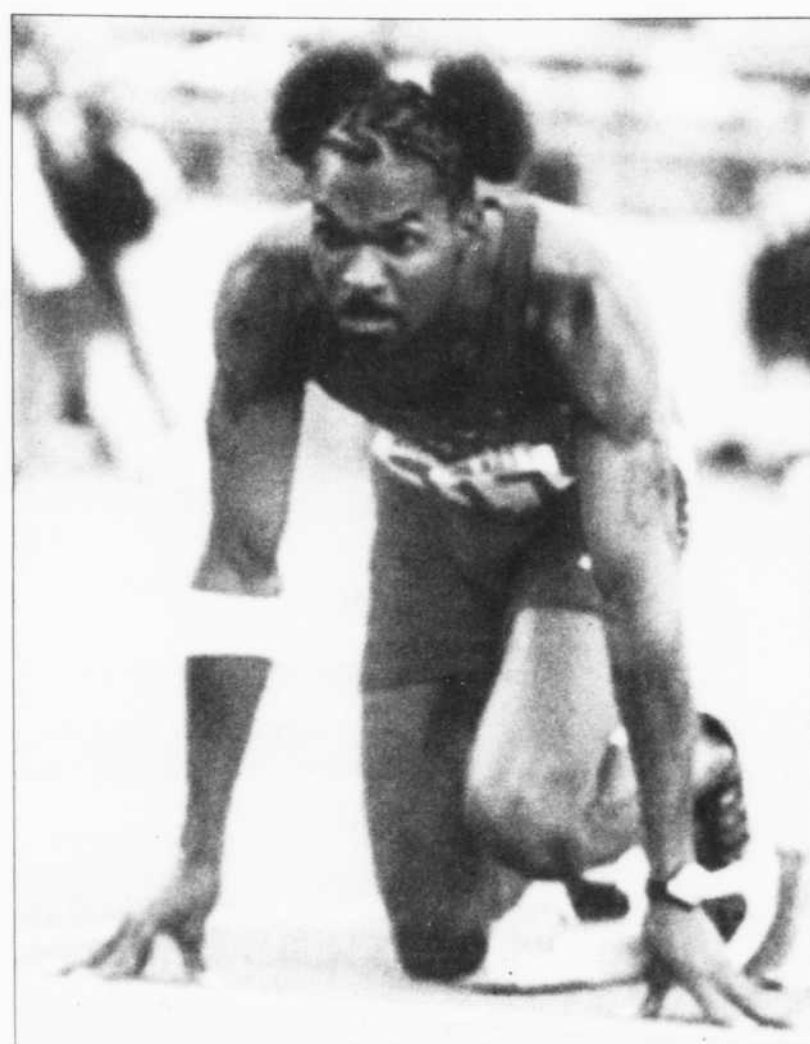


Photo provided

Godfrey Herring prepares to take off during the 400-meter relay. He is returning after missing two weeks with an injury.

Raiders slam Texas Pan-Am

By Justin Ward
Staff Writer

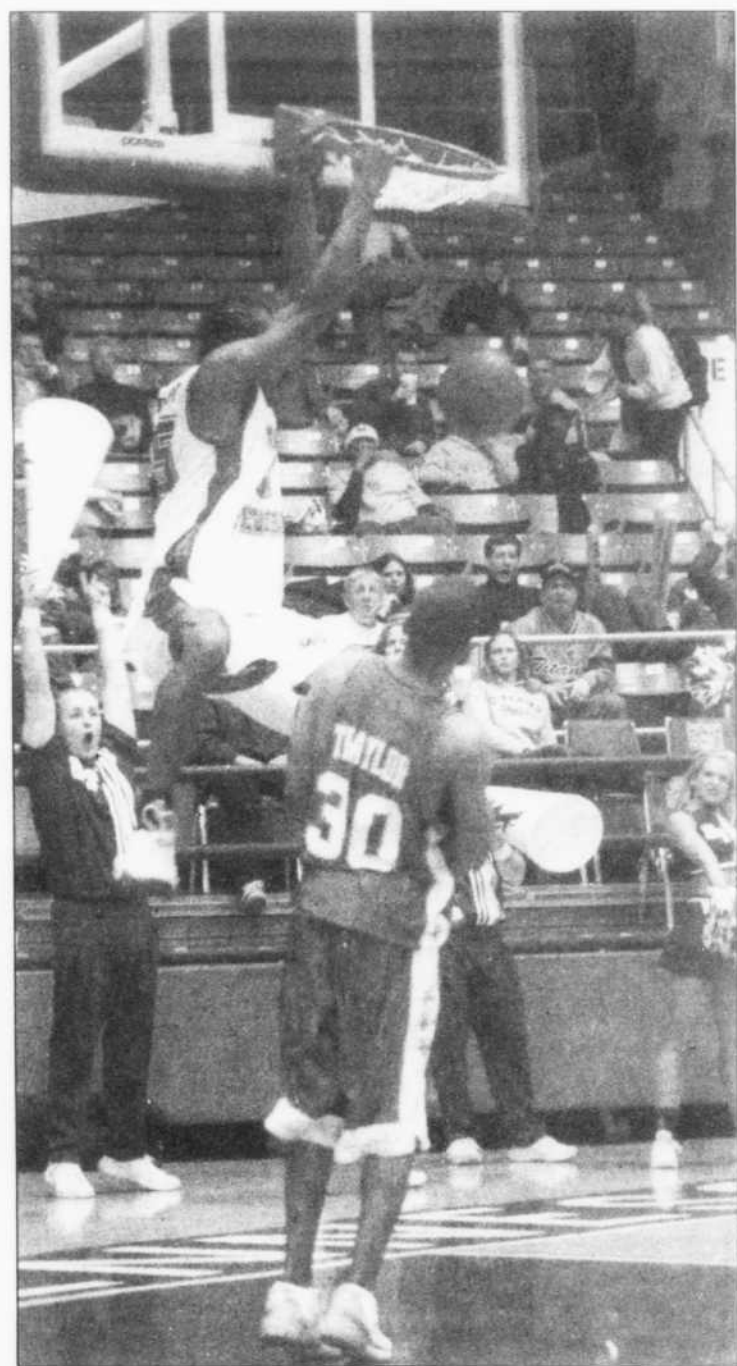


Photo by Amy Jones | Chief Photographer

Tommy Gunn received a technical for hanging on the rim too long in one of his numerous slam dunks.

game strong, winning 70-52.

Nosse passed the 1,000-point mark in the game, tying his season-best scoring output and posting his fifth double-double with 25 points and 12 rebounds. Nosse is the 26th player in MT history to pass the 1,000-point mark in his collegiate career. Pippen backed Nosse with 15 points and 5 rebounds.

"It's good to finally get off my back," Nosse said. "It's been talked about for the past three or four games. Other than that, I didn't think about it very much. I just came out and played. The ball just fell for me tonight."

The Broncos missed their star player, Mire Chatman, Monday. Chatman was very instrumental in the Dec. 15 win against the Blue Raiders. Marcus Quinn led the scoring for the Broncos tonight with 23 points and 6 rebounds in the 52-point effort. He was the only player to score in double digits.

"We played our hearts out tonight," Pippen said. "We just came out with the energy that they had at their place. We just wanted to get some revenge and let them know that the game down there was a fluke."

The Blue Raiders travel to Arkansas later this week for two conference games riding a five-game winning streak. They play Arkansas State Thursday and Arkansas-Little Rock Saturday. MT beat both teams in their previous meetings in late January.

"The next two games for us are must wins," Nosse said. "We have two big games coming up this weekend to help boost us into second place. Everything is must win from here on out because they are all conference games. We just have to come out and take care of business."

The Blue Raiders will try to continue their winning streak and rise in the Sun Belt Conference rankings Thursday at ASU. Tip-off is 7:05 p.m. ♦

Blue Raider Results

Tennessee Temple	Win: 81-68	New Orleans	Win: 69-64
West Florida	Win: 70-55	Florida International	Loss: 60-67
Bryan College	Win: 115-59	New Mexico State	Loss: 88-94
IUPUI	Win: 76-72	Louisiana-Lafayette	Win: 69-64
UNC-Greensboro	Win: 74-58	Western Kentucky	Loss: 45-55
Belmont	Loss: 59-65	North Texas	Loss: 63-85
Radford	Loss: 53-72	Tennessee	Loss: 56-74
Rice	Win: 65-52	Arkansas State	Win: 83-64
UT Martin	Loss: 71-76	Arkansas-Little Rock	Win: 68-65
Tennessee State	Win: 88-79	IP-Fort Wayne	Win: 90-80
Texas Pan-American	Loss: 64-66	Florida International	Win: 71-69
East Carolina	Loss: 71-81	Texas Pan-American	Win: 70-52
South Alabama	Loss: 51-59		



Basketball Notebook

By Shane Marquardt
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee men's basketball team carried a four-game winning streak into the happy confines of the Murphy Center Monday night for one of their last home games of the season.

The Blue Raiders have four games remaining, and three of those confrontations are on the road against conference opponents. The battle for Sun Belt Conference seedings is on.

So Goes Humphrey:

Guard John Humphrey has been the man to see when the Raiders need points. Humphrey had 13 points in the 71-69 victory over Florida International and is hitting nearly half his shots from long range over the Raiders four-game winning streak. This is a perfect time to get hot with the Sun Belt tournament looming in March.

'Tis the Time to Give:

Though not object to shooting the ball, point guard Eric Parham is best qualified to share. Parham had 11 assists in the victory

over FIU, matching well with his 8 points. His 28 minutes played comes second only to Lee Nosse.

23 Down:

The Blue Raiders have four games remaining on the 2001-2002 schedule, and only Denver dares come to the Murphy Center with reports of the MT four-game winning streak swirling. And with good reason. The Blue Raiders are 9-2 at home this season and are sitting precariously in third place in the east division of the Sun Belt Conference. This is not the time for anyone to be crossing Nosse's Posse.

Lady Raiders:

The Middle Tennessee women's team was thwarted in their opportunity of a four-game winning streak by Florida International last Saturday but return home to reassert their dominance in a three-game home odyssey beginning Thursday.

In Our House:

Though the Lady Raiders are a dismal 1-3 in home conference play, they have the

opportunity to bolster those stats with three consecutive Murphy Center victims all sporting Sun Belt Conference uniforms. The Lady Raiders should have ample confidence considering they already have dismantled two of these opponents — Arkansas State and Arkansas-Little Rock. Sun Belt action tips off in Murfreesboro Thursday at 7 p.m.

Trading Places:

It is not unusual for the Lady Raiders to be on a run, but it is strange that they would be on the other side of a 20-6 run as was the case in their loss to Florida International University. One key note in the loss to FIU is that the Lady Raiders were out rebounded 48-24. With five games left on the 2001-2002 schedule, all of them being Sun Belt Conference opponents, the Lady Raiders can ill afford to get beat on the boards.

Take Your Shot:

The Lady Raiders fell 71-55 to FIU last Saturday. Only two Lady Raider representatives scored in double figures — Jamie Thomatis and Patrice Holmes. Both led in rebounds as well with five apiece. ♦

Madden and Summerall comments stupefy viewers

Commentary by Erich Heinlein
Staff Writer

For years, there have been many "analysts" in just about every sport this country has televised.

John Madden has done it for years, but it turns out that even after many decades of announcing, he still makes dumb comments. Here is one particular example from the Super Bowl this Sunday: "Marshall Faulk ran, followed the blocks and then got a first down."

Tell me something I didn't know. Anybody who knows anything about football should be able to figure that out. Madden was involved in football at this level when Super

Bowl I was played, and you're telling me this is the best he can come up with?

Another thing Madden loves to do is tell what he would do if he were the coach. He stated at the conclusion of Super Bowl Sunday that if he were Bill Belichick, he would have put the game into overtime.

What makes him think that anybody actually cares what he would have done? It almost seems like he thinks the viewer cannot think for himself.

There is a reason why, when things like the pregame show and the halftime show come on, it is time for viewers to flip the channel or go find some other activity so they won't have to listen to Madden or any of these other sports commentators

scream and yell at each other during halftime about their opinions of the game.

Madden has even taken it upon himself to make his own video games for Play Station and Play Station 2 and come up with idiotic sayings that the user can listen to while playing.

Here are some examples that come to mind: "He just put too much mustard on it." "If he threw it any harder, the pigskin might come off." "He's got those big ole paws." "He got hit so hard his head was put on backwards."

Here are a couple by Pat Summerall: "He saw the coverage, but he threw it anyway." "He must have thought his man had position."

I realize that this is just a

video game, but all of these are statements that sound like statements they would make on television.

I am giving you these quotes to make two points. 1. If the viewer saw this and knew anything about football, then they should be able to figure this out for themselves. 2. It definitely proves that announcers are nothing but a bunch of guys that have nothing else better to say and have to say the obvious.

A great way to boost ratings, let me tell ya. I almost wonder how much of the 59.6 percent of the country that did not watch the Super Bowl decided not to watch it because of the announcers.

I'm sure some just didn't care about football, but I

wouldn't be surprised if this had anything to do with it.

Although I do have great respect for the knowledge of the game by Summerall and Madden and I am just a measly journalism student, I really have to question the need for the "analysts."

Most sports fans can draw their own conclusions about what's happening on the field or the court. When the analysts are talking, this is all they are really talking about. For the people who don't care about football or whatever sport it is that they might be watching, they won't know what the heck the analysts are talking about anyway.

Earlier in the season, the NFL decided to hire the comedian Dennis Miller in hopes

that he would draw ratings.

What the heck were these people thinking? How many people do you know that actually want a good laugh while they are watching football?

If you want a good laugh while watching football, then my suggestion is to go down to Blockbuster's and buy a half-hour's worth of football bloopers. It is much funnier than Dennis Miller ever was, and you can actually laugh at funny plays and not stupid jokes – without the commercials.

So sports "analysts," for the sake of the average American, I have to say this: Quit criticizing our intelligence. Either say something worthwhile or get off the air. ♦

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Herring: Cuts hair on side

Continued from 6

for Herring, at least during the indoor season. During the outdoor, he once again suffered from an injury that hurt his performance.

Finally, last year Herring felt he did better than ever before, but not as good as he could have been.

"I had to try to graduate on time so that was kind of a fall-off period too," Herring said. "I did all the hard work in the classroom but suffered out on the track."

Just recently, Herring sprained his hamstring, and that kept him out for two weeks. When he did start running again this weekend, he picked up right where he left off, winning the 400-meter race at the Indiana relays.

Head coach Dean Hayes feels Herring will be one of the standouts this year on the track team. He also said the men's relay team, which has Herring on it, is "pretty solid" on indoor and outdoor tracks.

When he isn't running, Herring takes advantage of his training to cut hair. During his

senior year of high school, Herring went to barber school before dropping out to go to college. Herring said he might one day cut hair again on a more serious basis, but he hopes to use his major in physical education to teach children.

That's if he doesn't run track professionally like his girlfriend, Latasha Jenkins, who won the silver medal in the 200-meter at the World Indoor Championships.

"If the opportunity came for me to run track professionally, I would take it."

— Godfrey Herring, MT senior

"If the opportunity came for me to run track professionally, I would take it," he said.

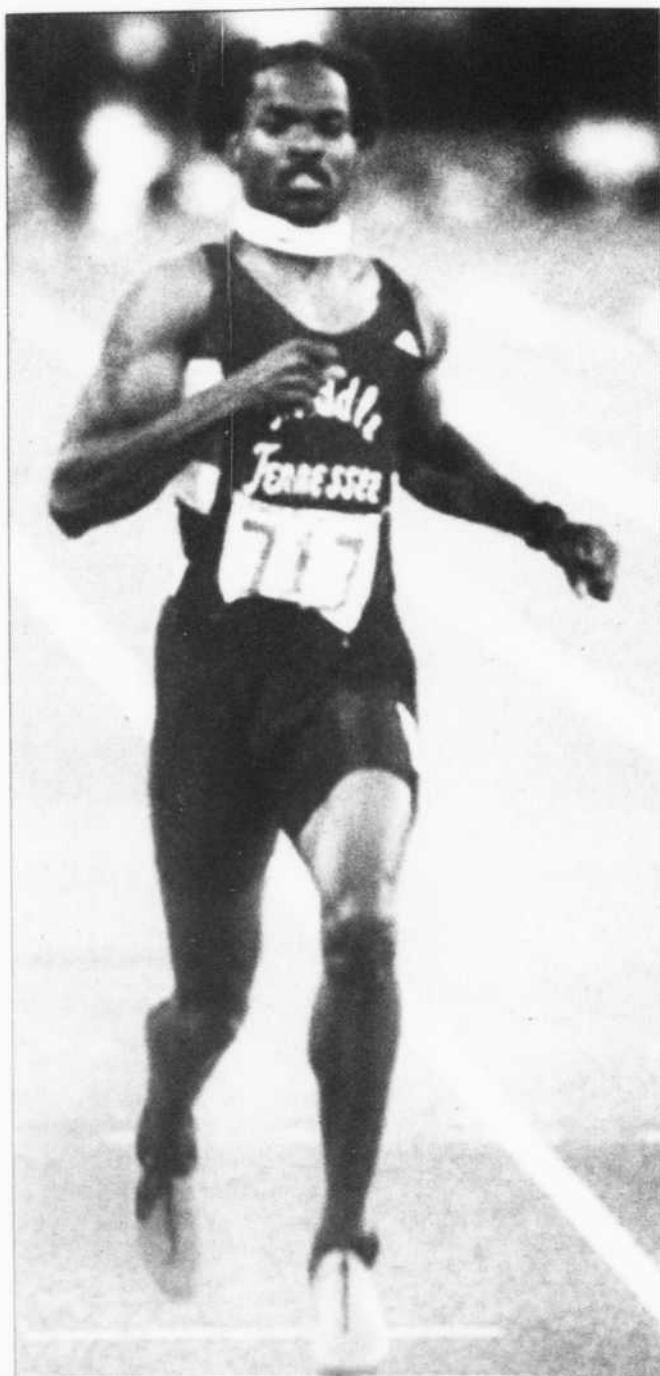
In the meantime, Herring will bask in the joy of being a recognized name in the track world.

"I'm just happy that they know I'm there," Herring said. "I hate it when people just count me out."

Herring has gotten all the recognition he could want after being ranked No. 4 in the Trackwire NCAA Ratings. He will get a chance to prove he doesn't have to sneak into the Sun Belt Indoor Championships Feb. 23-24 in the Murphy Center ♦

Photo provided

Herring coasts along during his 400-meter win Saturday.



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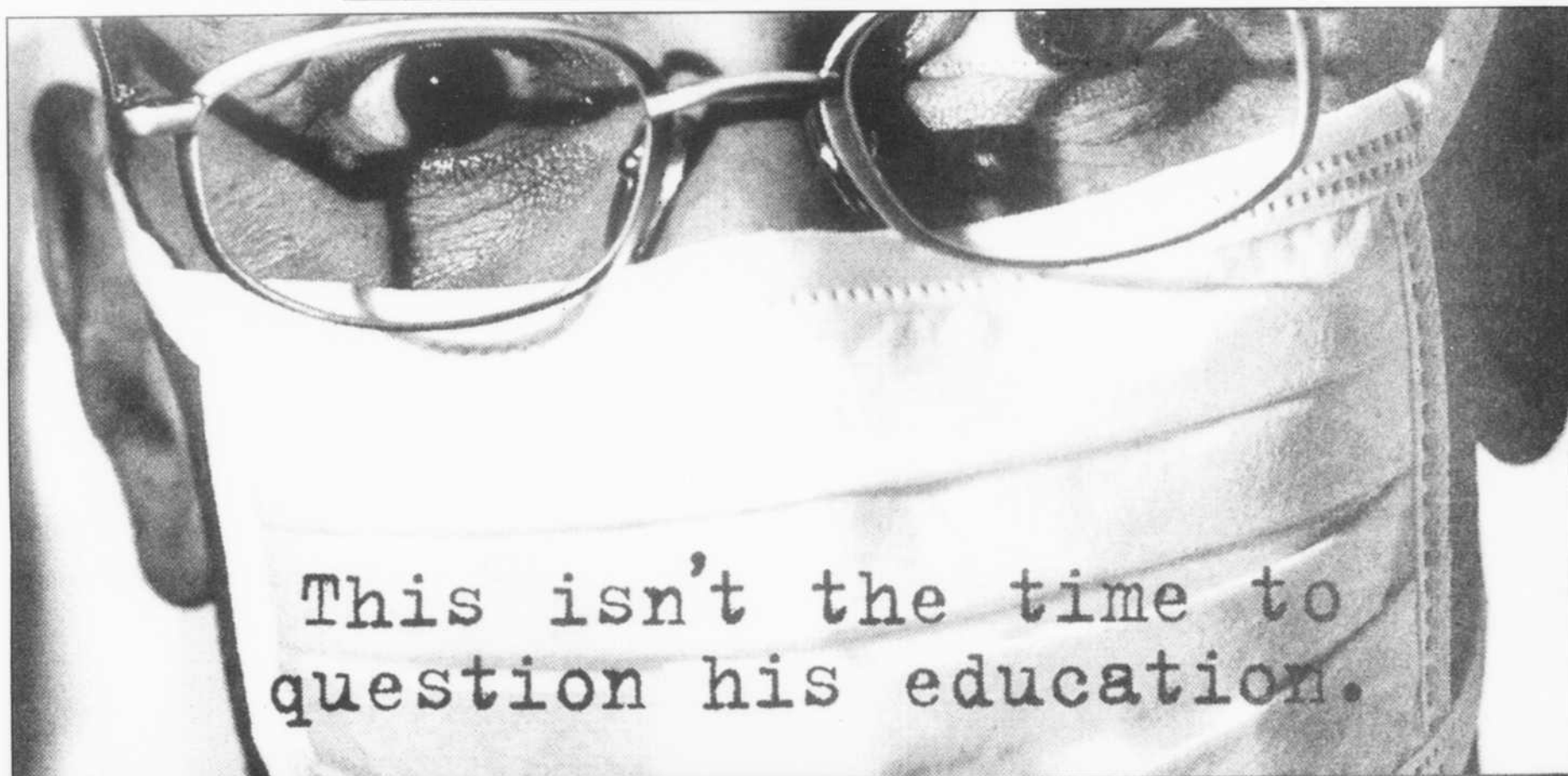
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