



THURSDAY, APR. 8, 1999

# SIDELINES



Volume 74, No. 50

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Murfreesboro, TN

## UEC protests refusal to change discrimination policy

Chris Crockett  
Staff Reporter

The Uniform Equality Committee held protest in front of MTSU president James Walker's home on Tuesday, April 6, in response to the university's refusal to add sexual orientation to the university's non-discrimination policy.

The Uniform Equality Committee was formed under the Lambda Association for the purpose of ensuring equal protections for students, faculty and staff regardless of sexual orientation. The UEC has campaigned for the term "sexual orientation" to be added to the university's non-discrimination policies.

Lambda vice-president and UEC chairperson Talia Elwell said, "It is president Walker's duty to make MTSU a place where professors can teach and students can learn without fear."

According to Elwell, the UEC has the support of the Student Government Association, Faculty Senate, University Rules Committee and numerous other campus organizations, but Dr. Walker still refuses to agree to their request. The organization requested that president Walker respond to their demands by April 5, a deadline on which they would take action upon his refusal to comply.

That action was in the form of a protest held on the sidewalk near president Walker's home.

From early Tuesday morning to late that afternoon, UEC members and their supporters met in front of the president's home to make their demands known.

However, MTSU still has no plans to change their non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation.

"This issue is already adequately covered by MTSU policy," said Tom Tozer of News and Public Affairs.

Tozer added that the university would not tolerate the harassment or discrimination against any student or faculty member in regard to his or her sexual orientation.

The university's harassment policies, including cases involving sexual orientation, can be found in the MTSU Policies and Procedures Manual.

The manual states, "Fair and prompt consideration shall be given to all charges of such harassment in accordance with the procedures set forth."

The manual adds that any employee, applicant or student who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment; or harassment based on other protected class status, i.e. race, age,



Photo by Derrick Wilson

Members of the Uniform Equality Committee protest near the President's Lawn Tuesday. The UEC is protesting the decision to not include "sexual orientation" in MTSU's anti-discrimination policy.

See PROTEST, page 2

## Financial aid prepares to move to newly renovated Cope office

Becky Curtis  
Staff Reporter

It's almost time to go back home. Renovations of the financial aid space in the Cope Administration Building are complete, and the staff will spend Monday and Tuesday moving.

The financial aid department had been using space in the Todd Library building.

The space has been opened up with the removal of a wall, and the ceiling, lighting fixtures, flooring and carpeting have been replaced.

David Hutton, acting director of

financial aid, is enthusiastic about the renovations.

"The lights are designed for computer use, and the floor will be clean because it's new," Hutton said. "The waiting area will be bigger, so the students won't be jammed together."

There will be three terminals at the counter, which will be partitioned to offer students more privacy.

The four computers for student use have been ordered and should arrive in about a month.

The terminals will let students conduct online searches for financial aid and check on the status of loans being processed.

Forms and information on student

loans, studying abroad and fee costs, will be available to students inside and outside the office.

More seating is available to students waiting to be helped.

"The chairs were so dirty in the former waiting area that they couldn't be cleaned. All of this is new, so we're excited about it," said Hutton.

Hutton hopes the new office will help financial aid workers get next semester's student loan process completed before the summer.

Federal award letters will be sent to student post office boxes in about two weeks.

The letters will be sent out in the order which they were received. ■

## Continuing studies department offers educational summer youth camps

Dwayne Douglas  
Staff Reporter

Outside the classroom, MTSU has something to offer everyone this summer.

The university will be offering several educational summer camps through the continuing studies program. Several departments at MTSU have combined resources to provide children in the community with fun, educational camps to fill their summer days.

MTSU is holding an on-campus Summer Camp Fair on April 10 from 9 a.m. to noon. Fair attendees will receive camp information and be able to register for upcoming Continuing Studies and Campus Recreation summer camps.

The fair will take place at the

university's Recreation Center.

This allows for people to have fun while they learn about the great summer camps that are offered. Games, face painting, balloons and a children's art exhibit are a few of the activities planned for this event.

Children will make their own fossils and learn about dinosaurs in the new Dynamite Dinosaur Camp.

They will learn the dinosaurs' names, watch videos and hear guest speakers.

Children can get a creative start with Art Camp for Youth where they will be introduced to the creative world of drawing, painting and pottery.

This camp will introduce youth to the fundamentals of art. Kids will learn the basic elements and principals of art through hands-on exercises.

Each element will be reinforced by various projects, for which materials

will be provided.

There's also a theater camp, which has been very successful in past years.

Those participating in the Third Annual Theater School for Youth will be taking parts in acting workshops, building sets, design workshops, rehearsals, scriptwriting and making costumes.

The objectives of theater school are to produce a play where students are active participants, to develop self-esteem, to improve communication skills and to expose children to classical literature in a fun, learning environment.

The theme for this year's theater school is Shakespeare. A final performance is open to the public at the end of each session.

Other camps for the youth will

See CAMPS, page 5

## Serbs keep Kosovars from leaving, Cypriot works to free soldiers

George Jahn  
Associated Press

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Yugoslav authorities sealed off Kosovo's main border crossings Wednesday, preventing ethnic Albanians from leaving as the wave of refugees approached the half-million mark. As NATO stepped up its airstrikes, a Cypriot mediator sought freedom for three captured U.S. soldiers.

Two loud explosions could be heard shortly before midnight Wednesday in the center of Belgrade, and smoke could be seen rising in the direction of the army headquarters. A local resident, reached by telephone, said an army building near the headquarters was hit.

The area is a densely populated part of the capital with numerous apartment houses nearby. Elsewhere, Studio B television also reported that six missiles struck the town of Cuprija, 55 miles south of Belgrade, early Thursday.

Yugoslav media reported explosions late Wednesday in Pancevo, an industrial town just north of Belgrade that has been repeatedly targeted during the 15-day NATO campaign.

Serbian television early Thursday reported an attack on Kraljevo, 75 miles south of Belgrade. The missiles struck "mostly on civilian targets," the report said, but no other details were available and it was not possible to independently confirm the reports.

Earlier Wednesday, Albania's parliament approved NATO plans to allow 24 U.S. Apache attack helicopters onto their territory — a move that should bolster the alliance's firepower against the Yugoslav tanks and armor that have driven ethnic Albanians from their homes in Kosovo.

After forcing more than 400,000 refugees out to neighboring countries, Yugoslav authorities closed the main exit route on Wednesday without explanation, forcing

tens of thousands of people back toward the burned villages they had been escaping from.

German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping warned that the Yugoslavs may be planning to use the civilians in Kosovo as "human shields" against NATO attack.

In Morini, the crossing point for Kosovo refugees into Albania, the flow of cars and tractors suddenly stopped at 3 a.m., witnesses said. Yugoslav border guards could be seen laying what appeared to be mines and digging fortifications just inside their territory.

"The refugees ... were told to return to their places of residence — whatever is left of those places," said Doran Vienneau of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which has been monitoring the border.

Scharping said Yugoslav forces had begun forcing ethnic Albanians back from the border areas into the province. He showed aerial photos that he said showed Serb tanks surrounding a Kosovo village, separating the men and women, and then opening fire on houses.

The former president of Cyprus, Spyros Kyprianou, began a mission to win the release of three American soldiers seized along the Yugoslav border with Macedonia on March 31. Cyprus, which is not a NATO member, has historically had close ties with Yugoslavia.

Kyprianou flew to Athens, where he said he was "waiting for the green light from Belgrade" before going to Yugoslavia on Thursday.

He said he believed the release of the soldiers was imminent.

Sandy Berger, President Clinton's national security adviser, was cautious about the mission but said "we certainly would welcome any release."

State Department spokesman James P. Rubin said nine Serb commanders have

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### INSIDE

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### SPORTS

How sweet it is. The men's rugby team is headed for the conference championship. See page 8.

### FEATURES

All aboard. The commute from Nashville to Murfreesboro will soon be possible by train. See page 6.

### WEATHER FORECAST



THURSDAY  
PARTLY  
CLOUDY,  
HIGH 87, LOW 57



FRIDAY  
SUNNY,  
HIGH 81,  
LOW 58



SATURDAY  
SHOWERS,  
HIGH 80,  
LOW 58



# ON CAMPUS

## LOOKING AHEAD

**APRIL 10**  
The Baha'i Faith Association will have a lecture by theologist Robert Carpenter, Sr. He will be speaking on how religious and racial unity are the foundations for world unity. The lecture lasts from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the BAS 118. For more information call Alessandra Presley at 896-9759.

**APRIL 13**  
The June Anderson Women's Center is having a support group for women to talk about problems with body and eating. The meetings will be in CKNB room 109 at 3 p.m. to 3:50 p.m. For more information call Mary Glantz at 898-5725.

PRSSA is having a Public Relations night at 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Mass Comm lobby. Registration is at 5:45 p.m. There will be a guest speaker, Craig Campbell, from Sony Music for a resume critique session. For more information call Rachel Bomar at 867-1754.

**APRIL 14**  
The fourth annual Golden Goggles Invitational lecture "Immortalizing Human Cells: How and Why" at 6 p.m. in Davis Science building 100. It will be preceded by refreshments and poster displays of student research in the Chemistry department open house, 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**APRIL 15**  
The Raider Assistance Project will have a meeting in KUC 324 for those interested in community service projects. For more information call Maggie Prugh at 904-8418.

**ON GOING**  
Presbyterian Student Fellowship will host dinner and discussion on Wed at 6:30 p.m. located at the Fellowship House on 615 N. Tennessee Blvd following the study there will be wallyball at 9 p.m. at the Rec Center. For more information call Rich Zeigler at 893-1787 or Andrew Lee at 867-7370.

Raider Victory Fellowship will have

weekly meetings and Bible sessions on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at Corlew Hall room 719. They will meet on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at Cummings Hall lobby and at 8 p.m. at Felder Hall room 208. Contact Ricky Walters at 317-4541.

MTSU Fencing Club will have practices every Monday at 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. in the Aerobics Room located in the Rec Center. The practices are geared to students of all skill levels. Contact Michael "Hunter" Jones at 896-4596 or e-mail at shadowh@bellsouth.net.

The Kingwood Heights Church of Christ College Class will host monthly devotions every second Thursday at 6:30. Kingwood Heights Church is located at 115 East MTCS Road. Contact Chuck Mullins at 898-1086 or Alan Welker at 890-0940 for more information.

The Student Pagan Organization will have meetings Monday at 8 p.m. The meetings will take place on the 2nd floor of the KUC in the lounge area. For more info contact John Bryan at 898-3734.

The MTSU women's rugby team will have practices on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The practices will be held at the Rec Center or the intramural fields if the weather is permitting. Contact Shannon Bustillos at 867-3592 or e-mail at sib2a@mtsu.edu.

Raider Victory Fellowship will hold Sunday services at 10 a.m. in the Murphy Center. Contact Ricky Walters at 907-4079 for more information.

Lambda Organization meetings will be on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in room S316 of the Business Aerospace building. For more information go to [www.mtsu.edu/~mtLambda](http://www.mtsu.edu/~mtLambda).

Campus Crusade for Christ will meet on SGA president Andrae Crismon invites all students interested in being a part of student government to call and get information. Students can call either Andrae Crismon at 898-3827 or call Shonda Black, press secretary, at 867-0166.

## PROTEST

continued from page 1

religion, disability; or harassment based on sexual orientation can utilize the university's procedures regarding such harassment.

Tozer also said, "There are currently no state or federal guidelines in place that would include sexual orientation as a recognized protected class."

The university's equal opportunity, affirmative action, discrimination and nepotism policy states that it is the university's intent to comply fully with federal and state laws regarding discrimination and equal opportunity.

Because there are no laws in place recognizing sexual orientation as a defined protection, which would therefore be subject to inclusion in this particular policy, it is MTSU's stand that it is unnecessary to include sexual orientation in the non-discrimination policy.

Tozer said that it is the

position of the university that this issue is already covered by its current policies and there is no need for changes.

Despite the university's current position, the UEC still plans to continue its campaign to have sexual orientation added to the non-discrimination policy.

It is their belief that this change is necessary to protect the rights of student and faculty members because of their sexual orientation, and that MTSU's current policies do not go far enough in protecting individuals from harassment because of their sexual orientation.

"Recent attacks on gay persons," Ewell said, "leading to the deaths of Matthew Shepherd in Wyoming and Billy Jack Gaither in Alabama or the vicious beating of Bryan Smith on the Greenway in Murfreesboro illustrate the need for an explicit policy protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered persons at MTSU."

To submit an announcement for On Campus, submit information in person at James Union Building Room 310, mail information to campus box 42 or fax information to 904-8487. Due to space constraints, priority will be given to submissions with earlier deadlines.

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## NATIONAL NEWS

## President pushes legislation to correct wage inequity

**Washington (AP)**— President Clinton renewed his call Wednesday for equal pay for working women, saying the country has "the opportunity of a generation" to correct the inequity during good economic times.

The president, along with first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, played host to a roundtable discussion with four women who related their battles to address salary disputes with lawsuits as well as on-the-job diplomacy. The event was held to commemorate Equal Pay Day on Thursday.

"There are still those who claim that this is a made-up problem, that any wage gap between men and women can be explained away by the choices women make," Mrs. Clinton said.

Clinton — who counted himself among "a small but vocal radical caucus" of husbands whose wives have outearned them — said Congress should take advantage of the nation's low unemployment and booming economy and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act introduced last month.

The legislation would allow women to sue their employers for unlimited compensatory and punitive damages, in addition to the limited damages and back-pay awards now available under federal law to remedy pay violations. That would bring women on par with other minorities in wage discrimination matters. ■

## Two former cellmates may hold the key to atheist's disappearance

**Dallas (AP)**— The 1995 disappearance of atheist leader Madalyn Murray O'Hair is looking increasingly like a murder case, and the arrests of two former cellmates on firearms charges may unlock the mystery.

One of the men is David Waters, a convicted murderer who was the office manager for Mrs. O'Hair's organization, American Atheists, before she, her son and granddaughter vanished along with \$500,000 in gold coins.

The other man, Gary Karr, has told investigators that he helped dispose of four bodies in Texas. One may be that of a man who disappeared after heading off to meet with Waters and discuss a deal with a lot of money.

The FBI and prosecutors have not publicly linked either Karr or Waters to the O'Hair case.

But Waters' lawyer, Patrick Ganne, said Waters has been accused of being involved somehow in the disappearance, something Waters denies.

Mrs. O'Hair gained fame in the 1960s, when she helped wage a Supreme Court battle that removed the Bible and prayer from public schools. She later tried to remove the phrase "In God We Trust" from U.S. currency and stop potential jurors from saying "so help me God." ■

## Former Oak Ridge worker wins \$600,000 in malpractice suit

**Oak Ridge (AP)**— A jury has awarded \$600,000 to an Oak Ridge woman who lost her nuclear weapons plant job after a government-hired psychiatrist diagnosed her as delusional and paranoid.

Sherrie Farver, who has spent years voicing concerns about health problems in Oak Ridge, won the judgment against Dr. Kenneth B. Carpenter.

She lost her security clearance and her job in 1997 after the diagnosis by Carpenter.

Farver, who began working as a technician at the Department of Energy's former uranium enrichment site in 1987, said in her malpractice lawsuit that the psychiatric review was ordered by her bosses after she said she believed her medical problems resulted from toxic exposure at her work place.

She suffers from fatigue, numbness, depression and a litany of other ailments she blames on the toxic waste incinerator at the DOE facility, managed by Lockheed Martin Energy Systems. ■



## WORLD NEWS

## Nearly 24,000 Russians died last year of alcohol poisoning

**Moscow (AP)**— Alcohol poisoning killed 23,986 Russians last year, the highest figure in a decade, a news report said Wednesday.

The chief epidemiological inspectorate of the Health Ministry compiled the numbers of deaths from alcohol poisoning, or drinking a lethal amount in one sitting.

The inspectorate said the figure was the highest in 10 years, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported. The report did not speculate on reasons for the rise or give specific figures from previous years.

The Health Ministry estimates up to 10 million of Russia's 148 million people are alcoholics.

Vodka is hugely popular and sold cheaply on most street corners, affordable even for impoverished Russians. Russians also often resort to brewing cheap but often lethal alcoholic concoctions, and many die every year from drinking the mixtures. ■

## Libya resumes legal flights abroad

**Cairo, Egypt (AP)**— Libyan Airlines celebrated the suspension of a U.N. air embargo by bringing home Muslim pilgrims from Saudi Arabia on Wednesday, while British Airways prepared to start up service to the Libyan capital.

The Libyan national carrier made its first international flight since Monday's suspension of the U.N. air embargo by flying to Malta and back, state-run Libyan Television said in a broadcast monitored in Cairo.

A later flight brought back 159 pilgrims who had finished the hajj in Saudi Arabia. Libya had been violating the embargo every year since 1994 to fly its citizens to the annual pilgrimage in Mecca — most recently with a March 18 flight.

The U.N. Security Council, which imposed the sanctions in 1991, suspended them Monday when Libya handed over two suspects charged in the 1988 bombing of an American airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland. The bombing killed 270 people.

British Airways announced Wednesday it would start flying three Boeing 737 flights a week from London to Tripoli later this month. The airline has never flown to the Libyan capital before.

An EgyptAir plane was scheduled to fly to Tripoli on Thursday, according to an official of Egypt's national carrier. Tunisia, Jordan, Syria and Malta have also announced their intention to resume regular flights to Libya. ■

## Venezuela's president clamors for power to rule by decree

**Caracas, Venezuela (AP)**— President Hugo Chavez has warned Congress may be dissolved and rejected a law giving him sweeping new powers, saying it doesn't go far enough. At the same time, his secret police chief arrested the son of a key opposition leader.

The former coup plotter turned president denies any political repression, but critics say Venezuela is descending into old-style Latin American authoritarianism.

Chavez, 44, called reporters to the presidential palace late Tuesday to announce he was vetoing a law that would have given him broad powers to revive Venezuela's flagging economy.

He warned that Congress would be "as good as dissolved" if it tries to "sabotage" his efforts to get the economy back on track. A constituent assembly rewriting the constitution would dissolve it, he added.

As the president spoke, Congress convened an extraordinary session just blocks away to denounce the arrest this week of the son of Lewis Perez, secretary general of the Democratic Action Party.

"We are living with a government of persecution, of intimidation," Perez said a few hours before his 24-year-old son, Daniel, was released while authorities investigate what Chavez opponents say are trumped-up charges of illegal arms trafficking. ■

## Kappa Delta hosts fifth annual Shamrock Charity Softball Classic

## Staff Reports

One MTSU sorority's teaming up to help ground out child abuse.

The Delta Pi Chapter of Kappa Delta Sorority will host its Fifth Annual Shamrock Charity Softball Classic on Saturday at the Murfreesboro Exchange Club in Smyrna.

The event is to help with the prevention of child abuse.

Participating in this all-day

event will be the Nashville Metro Softball teams and MTSU fraternity and sorority teams.

Kappa Delta chapters across the country will be participating in this fund-raiser to benefit local affiliates and chapters of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse (NCPCA), the sorority's national philanthropy.

The Rutherford County child abuse prevention programs will receive 80 percent of the funds, while the NCPCA will receive the

remainder of the funds that will go towards public awareness programs.

Kappa Delta was founded in 1897 and began supporting the NCPCA in 1981. They began the annual nationwide Shamrock Project in 1984. More than \$3.7 million has been raised through the Shamrock Project to benefit the prevention of child abuse across the country.

For more information, please contact Kelly Guy at 890-4155. ■

## KOSOVO

continued from page 1

been linked to atrocities in Kosovo and could face war crime prosecutions.

Another nightmare was brewing for the tens of thousands of Kosovo refugees who had made it across into neighboring Macedonia only to be trapped for days in squalid conditions.

With frightening efficiency, Macedonian officials emptied the border city of Blace before dawn Wednesday, hustling thousands of refugees onto buses so quickly that some were separated from their families. Aid workers accused the Macedonians of using force to move the refugees.

Macedonia, which has been criticized for conditions at the makeshift camp, said it shipped 10,000 refugees to Albania and moved 25,000 others to NATO tent camps further in-country.

Macedonia has been flooded with more than 130,000 refugees since NATO airstrikes began

March 24, and it has castigated the United States and its NATO allies for failing to stem the tide.

At NATO headquarters, Air Commodore David Wilby said alliance aircraft struck before dawn Wednesday at dozens of military targets and Yugoslav forces in and around Kosovo.

He announced NATO's "first major breakthrough against armored forces in the field," saying "we were able to locate and attack several units." In one attack, he said, allied planes dropped weapons on a column of seven to 12 vehicles.

In Washington, Air Force Maj. Gen. Charles Wald, vice director for strategic plans and policy for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the low-flying "tank killer" A-10 aircraft hit Serb forces in Kosovo overnight.

The Pentagon also confirmed the loss of a twin-engine unmanned reconnaissance plane, known as a Hunter. The aircraft was used as a surveillance aid that can transmit video images to battlefield commanders. ■

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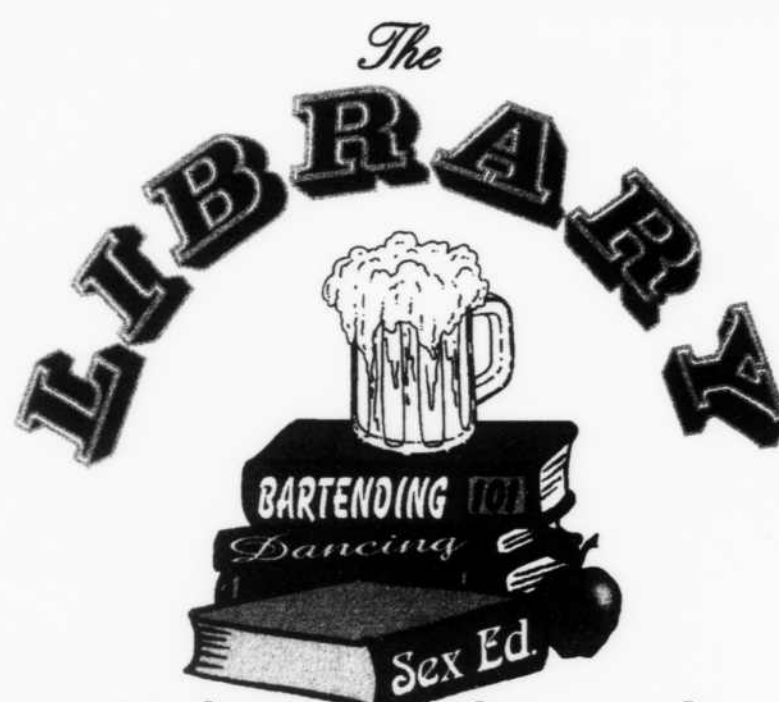
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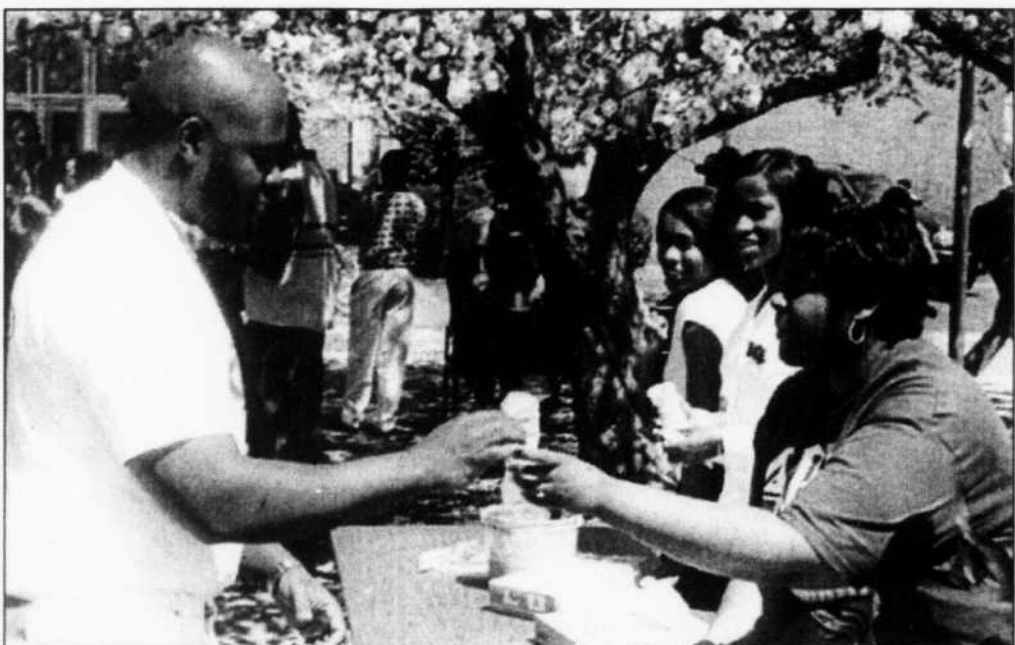
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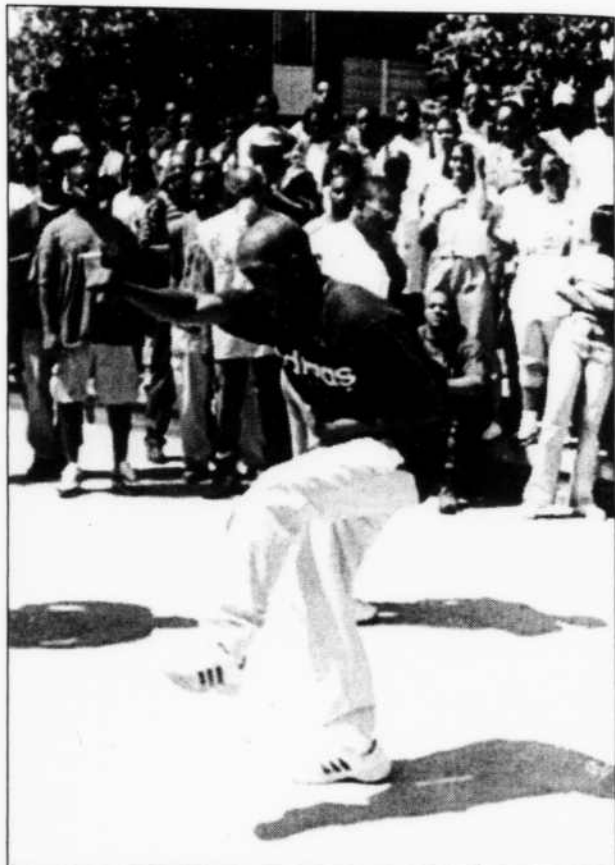
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## SKEE!!!!

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., celebrates Skee Week this week. The sorority sponsored several events such as a slam dunk contest, a three-point shoot out, a basketball game, a business fair and a poetry slam. The women also served free ice cream and sponsored a mini step show in front of the KUC Tuesday. The women will sponsor the Mr. Esquire Pageant, which will be followed by an after party on Thursday.



Susan Bailey serves Joseph Watts ice cream.



Staff photos by Shawn Whitsell

Phi Beta Sigma performs for students in the mini step show. Other performers included Omega Psi Phi, Alpha Phi Alpha and Alpha Kappa Alpha.

**Reach for the Pinnacle**

**Student Success Workshops**

**Five-Day Study Plan**

**Wed, April 14**  
12:15 - 1:15 OR 1:30 - 2:30

**Thurs, April 15**  
12:30 - 1:30 OR 2:00 - 3:00

This seminar will prepare students to use a specific study plan to study for final exams. This technique can help students avoid using cramming as their only study technique.

Call 898-5989 to reserve a place at a session of your choice. The workshops will be held in KUC 320.

**OUTDOOR**

**RAFT/KAYAK LOCUST FORK RIVER**

**DATE: April 10, 11 and 25**  
(each one day trips) • **Cost: \$18.00**  
includes all gear and transportation  
• Sign-ups: Campus Recreation Office • **Limit: 12 people**

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# CAMPS

continued from page 1

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Camp instructors are the faculty members from the university, teachers, and community experts. It is asked that you register early, because space is limited to ensure a low student/teacher ratio and the overall quality of the camp.

The camps will also feature activities such as swimming, scuba diving, sports camps and outdoor activities. MTSU also offers Senior Studies for anyone age 55 and older. Registration fees are held to a minimum and enrollments are taken on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The goal of this program is to provide quality, low-cost academic opportunities that will encourage and challenge older adults to remain mentally and physically alert as productive citizens.

For information about these courses and programs, contact

Nancy Bragg at (615) 898-2179.

The Division of Continuing Studies received several comments from parents and students that participated in the camps last year.

"My daughter loved the class and looked forward to going to camp everyday," said Amelia Miller, whose child attended theater camp last year.

"She definitely wants to go again

next year."

Jonathan McGowen, a former participant of the computer camp for grades 5-8, said, "I loved this camp and learned tons of info about home pages and computers."

Call (615) 898-2462 for information on the camps and this week's fair. A web page is available for more information at [www.mtsu.edu-constud](http://www.mtsu.edu-constud).

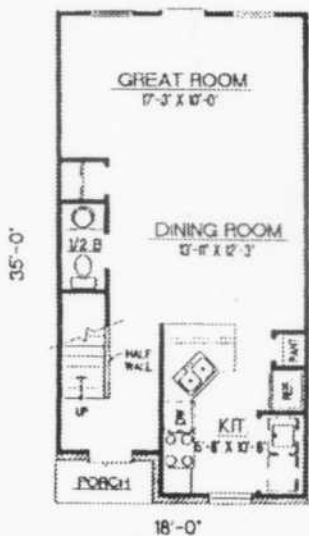
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6 ■ SIDELINES

THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 1999

# OPINIONS

"Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

—Thomas Jefferson  
Murfreesboro, TN

## Editorial

### Everyone deserves equal rights, period

Last Tuesday students gathered in protest on a street corner close to President Walker's home.

Their request was the same as it has been for years now: to add the simple phrase "sexual orientation" to MTSU's anti-discrimination policy. Once again the university promptly refused.

The fact that this university insists upon refusing such a reasonable request proves what a closed-minded judgmental place the "Bible belt" continues to be, even as we dawn upon the 21st century.

MTSU's excuse for not bothering to meet the request is that there is no state or federal law that requires them to do so. In other words only when forced to do so by a court of law will this university acknowledge the fact that everyone, even a homosexual, is entitled to equal rights.

Unfortunately, the fight to be recognized for deserving equal rights is not a new one. Women had to do it, as did minorities. And now homosexuals have the same fight ahead of them. Only they have an extra burden to jump: religious-minded judgment.

To most people holding back women and minorities was not done because the Bible told them so.

But it's an all new ballgame when it comes to homosexuality. Far too many people use their "moral" judgment to punish gay people, a power that not even their "god" has given to them.

The opinions of morons do not change. That has been proven extensively throughout the centuries. However, allowing these opinions to matter can.

This is a state university. It has no official religious standing. Therefore religious judgment should have no bearing on decisions made about policy. While the university's decision isn't officially a religious one, it is obviously based on "old-fashioned ideals."

Why else would it refuse such a simple request?

This would in no way harm the university. The anti-discrimination clause is intended to allow everyone the same opportunities. What possible damage could be done by allowing homosexuals the inalienable rights to which they are entitled?

The only thing that can be done now is what has always been done when oppression reigns. We all must fight for equal protection.

You did not have to be homosexual to have stood on that corner last Tuesday. Everyone who believes in equality for all can help in this cause.

Don't allow the closed-minded biggots to win another battle. Stand up for what you believe in. Despite your sex, ethnicity or sexual orientation, your voice matters. ■

### BURNT TOAST BY CURT MANN



## Student death touches prof

Stephanie Moran  
Guest columnist

Our community has lost another precious one of you. Jamie Higdon, beautiful in body and spirit, died on March 6 in a car wreck on Highway 96.

She was driving to work on the rain-slick road and lost control of her car. They say that she died instantly. They say that she was not wearing her seatbelt.

Jamie makes the third student of mine who has died in the last 15 months.

Matt Jones died in early December 1997 driving back to MTSU in the early morning hours with a friend; both were thrown from the truck they were traveling in.

Matthew was a gentle soul in the RIM program who loved John Lennon and doodled incessantly on his compositions drafted in class.

The last essay assignment he completed instructed him to write about a person, place or thing that he loved and knew well.

Matt wrote about a place he called the farm, a homestead where he hunted in the fall with his family with his family and hoped one day to live, build a home and raise a family.

Now he is buried near his beloved farm.

Matt's parents and brother were consoled somewhat by the fact a Bible was found in the vehicle and that a trucker from the Christian-based Covenant Company found the young men.

Joe D. Bell died late last autumn. In my 211 class, he was always cheerful, courteous, and glad to be of service. Although he tussled with the literature sometimes, he always strove to do his best, and that is all one can do in this life, as Virginia Woolf points out in her famous essay about the exertions of a small moth that symbolizes our human struggles.

Jamie Higdon, on the other hand, was an AP student in high school and did sterling work in my class. She understood and appreciated literature in all its challenging yet satisfying complexity. She grasped the great truth that literature speaks for those whose own words are lacking or locked up for mental or emotional or political reasons. She especially felt that literature builds

lasting bridges between people of varying cultures, faiths, classes and all of the other distinctions that some people make in the human family. Most of all, she loved its simple beauty and hard truths.

Jamie, Matt, Joe — I loved them all for their mere presence and the little gifts that they brought to my life and the life of a classroom. I may be unusual in my sentiment, but I like to think that I speak for many teachers on this campus. We love our students — for your energy (and even for the verbal gymnastics you formulate to explain those absences on days that you lack it); for your boundless capacity for seeming to miss or reject the point in class only to make a profound, original one in your essay; for your sheer physical radiance — "so various, so beautiful, so new" (to quote Matthew Arnold). We love you for caring enough about yourselves to learn more — to be present and to persevere through the long days and nights of classes, work, children, study and the hundred other things you must accomplish in any given day. We know that most people do not attempt college or give it up well before graduating. We love that you stay to expand your vision, to drop your prejudices, to pick up new ideas, activities and friends, examine them and reject most but keep those rare few that mark the beginnings of a life philosophy and a set of values that belong to you truly rather than your parents, friends, or famous heroes.

I particularly love that although you often find my unwavering passion for literature alternately odd, old-fashioned, tedious or inscrutable (like Bartleby), you indulge me if only because it gives you hope or a smile to see someone much older than you who wears her passion gladly rather than half-heartedly in our iron-drenched age.

Jamie Higdon recognized irony with the best of them, but she never laid claim to it as her badge of identification. Rather, she reveled in her enjoyment of life's plethora of experiences — a cornucopia full of fruits ripe, fragrant and erotic. Off to the Mardi Gras in the dark days of late winter, she spent her summers counseling troubled children at a camp in Philadelphia. She planned a semester in Spain and was considering

majors in international relations and foreign languages, because the entire world interested her roving eye and mind. With her glossy dark curls and brilliant smile, all of us felt her incredible life force and pure joie de vivre.

When Jamie first entered my class, her name was not listed on the roll. We let it go until the second roll and then discovered that she actually belonged next door in another 211 class.

"But please, Ms. Moran, I'd rather stay here! I like you and this class!"

How could I say no to her winsome, infectious grin and her vibrancy? I now know that she was with us as a reminder of how special each one of you is in your undeniable perfection: perfect because you live and seek your path. Please remember to buckle your seatbelt, but definitely and by all means make the journey. Be as the Indian poet Tagore, who said, "Although I leave no trace of wings in the air/ I am glad I have had my flight."

Find those people, places and experiences that draw you into passion, into depth, into commitment, into the best as-yet untapped pieces of yourself.

Pull them out whether they come easily or must be coaxed, shape them simply or sculpt them fantastically and give them back to the world with love — a wind chime echoing with your own tune, a boat to float along the Green River, an elegant formula that solves the riddle of breast cancer, notes to the song played at the next Inaugural Ball, the words of the first great American novel of the coming epoch. Do something — something worthwhile with the talents you were given by God, your parents or an accident of fate.

Sadly, many of you already have a Jamie in your young lives, a life too quickly snuffed out on our ferocious highways.

Let your Jamie's life be a touchstone, a reminder that time's winged chariot flames across the sky each morning and it is up to each of us to find our place on it before the setting sun.

Donations may be made in Jamie's name to the camp where she worked with at-risk children. Send a check or money order to: College Settlement of Philadelphia, 600 Witmer Rd., Harsham, Penn. 19044-1832. ■



## From the Mailbox

### Freedom of religion means all religions

There have been some recent letters regarding current events in the legal world that bear on religious freedoms. As an alum of MTSU, and a former opinions columnist for Sidelines, I still feel a connection and occasionally read up just for fun.

As a Wiccan priestess and an active teacher and spiritual director, I find that most of my counseling work is with MTSU students. Generally these are young people who are exploring their spirituality and searching for something new and different and meaningful in their lives. I work with the "unchurched," to coin an evangelical term, and I encourage each person I work with to find their own path to God (and/or Goddess) in their own way.

If that is a spiritual path, then Blessed be! And if it's not? That's cool, too. I teach and believe that every path to Deity is valid, and only the person walking a particular path can judge whether or not it's right for him or her. I teach respect, and I teach tolerance.

I sincerely apologize for the behavior of those who cannot and will not tolerate someone who is different from themselves. We were created "in the image of God," and if we take that seriously and really look at ourselves, we will see that that image contains a great deal of variety and room for lots of differences—be they gender-oriented, cultural, religious or

personal. Tolerance is not a religious necessity, I agree. But it is a social and political one. We must all bear in mind that we have to live together and that we live in a constitutionally protected state of religious tolerance.

"Freedom of Religion means All Religions" isn't just a slogan. It's a key part of being an American citizen and a defender of the constitution. If parents don't want their children to be exposed to differences of race, religion, personal belief, personality, lifestyles and/or cultures, then they need to send their kids to privately funded schools.

Our public schools have to be open and equitable to everybody — not just the mainstream middle class. And the only way that's going to work is through tolerance.

Lucy Mogensen a.k.a.  
LadyHawke of SerpentStone

### Pagan organization is not an exclusive group

In response to the letter that Mr. Billingham wrote in the March 25 Sidelines, I would like to say that my opinions and the opinions expressed in my previous letter do not refer exclusively to the tolerance issue. I only wished to point out that Western culture is highly influenced by Pagan culture and that many of the things that were perceived as Pagan in the White Plains lawsuit were not Pagan at all or not taught in order to convert

students to Pagan religions. Proselytization is not a trait of most Pagan religions.

In the past, when SPO membership was larger, we had several Christian members who were there for their own reasons and were welcomed into the group. The Student Pagan Organization is not an exclusive group. The SPO constitution has a non-discrimination policy that exceeds that which is required by MTSU and state, local and federal law. We include this policy not only to comply with these laws, but also to create a welcome environment for Pagans, Christians and persons of all different paths.

According to the principles of Wiccan Belief set by the Council of American Witches in 1974, "Our only animosity towards Christianity, or any other religion or philosophy of life is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be 'the only way' and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practice and belief." I would like to emphasize the second part of that statement. It is not important to me whether or not Christians or others claim to be the only path to deity, but that assertion must not infringe upon the civil rights of others.

I do not believe that all Christians are intolerant of other religions and ways of life. I have met many Christians who follow the teachings of Jesus by being loving people, showing love and compassion, and

See LETTERS, page 7

## FROM THE HEART

by Kevin Neal Fisher  
Tennessee Right to Life President

First of all, let me state unequivocally and for the record:

I love white people. Sure, a lot of you laugh, thinking this is meant in jest. I assure you it is not. My fellow students, society can be viewed with rose-colored glasses. We need to be concentrating on eliminating the boundaries which separate us and work towards bettering America. Sadly, there are so many!

I began school in 1971 (Head Start). Our district was one of the few remaining areas dragging their feet as far as ending segregation. My grandmother had held us out of school that first week of school, citing concerns for our safety and well being. I remember thinking, as I got on that bus at age 4 1/2, that I must be going to hell. (Hey, I was four, there was a lot of yelling, it all made sense to me.) I'll never forget the angry faces carrying the signs hoping I would go away, as if I wasn't good enough to play with their kids. What had I done?

Well, it turned out great, better than anyone in my family expected. My grandmother was the opposition leader to the integration movement in our area. She was born in 1911, when lynching black people was a national pastime. (Really! Ty Cobb, the famous "Georgia peach" whose record Pete Rose broke for all-time career hits, used to wear a rope he claimed he got when his daddy took him to a lynching.) It isn't that she hated white folks, because Nana (as all my friends would call her, black and white) loved everyone. She wasn't big on the idea of sending young children across town to a hostile neighborhood. But it turned out okay. I saw all the little white kids and, if anything, I was tickled. They looked just like they did on TV! Cool!

Twenty-eight years later, some things have changed. Most of my friends are white; I attend a predominately white school. I don't fear walking across this campus or anywhere in this area. I believe for the most part that my teachers evaluate my work without misconceptions or doubts about my abilities due to race.

My employers worry more about the color going into their pockets than the color of the hands reaching for the paycheck. Does this mean racism has been defeated? Can we as a community in particular — as a society in general — finally put to rest this sad nightmare which has continued to evolve and regenerate for close to 400 years?

No. Segregation still exists. Maybe not as deeply institutionalized as in the 1960s, when segregation was the law (albeit, a foul law). We, America, (even you, too, MTSU) still divide ourselves socially. Blacks sit in one corner of the KUC at lunch, whites everywhere else. Today, I took a white lunch break and counted all the tables where people of diverse backgrounds gathered to eat.

Not one. I figured maybe today was an off day so I went from the KUC to the Murphy Center. I figured at least I would probably find some example of interaction between the races.

Again, no one. What is wrong? Are we resegregating ourselves? So many people of both white and black backgrounds fought tooth and nail to help us in the socialization process of learning to live together. Yet, everywhere I turned, I see small reminders of a time I had hoped had long passed.

My mother taught me early on and quite forcefully that people are the same, regardless of race. Yes, there are people of both races who claim they are in some way superior, but those are usually the ones on the lower end of the intellectual scale. Rational, clear thinking individuals believe in judging people on their merits and their actions, not the color of their skin. This was the goal of leaders like John Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. Nothing less.

So what's the problem? During the next week, I'd like to issue a challenge to each student here at MTSU. It's very simple: Introduce yourself to someone of another ethnicity. Let's make a concerted effort to stop this dangerous path America is heading down. We can all be friends. We can all get along. We can live in peace and harmony, if we try. There are so many issues we need to resolve: poverty in America, homelessness, AIDS, abortion, the complete disintegration of the family unit. We can resolve each and every one of these, but only if we work together not as blacks or whites but humans. Until we learn to do so, life will be difficult for all of us.

Til next time! Let's get out there and make things happen! ■

## SIDELINES

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"Sidelines" is the non-profit, editorially independent student newspaper of Middle Tennessee State University and is published every Wednesday during June and July and on Monday and Tuesday during the fall and spring semesters. FLASH!, the entertainment magazine, is published every Wednesday during the Fall & Spring semester. The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual writers and not necessarily "Sidelines" or the university.



## LETTERS

continued from page 6

by doing acts of love and kindness, but who still accept me as I am a loving, caring, moral individual. I recognize fully the validity and authority of Christian beliefs, but I do not choose that path. Just as different denominations of Christianity exist in peace in spite of differences in creed, code, community, and cult (a pentacle) Christians, Pagans and all others may live in similar peace.

I apologize to Mr. Billingham if he had a bad experience with one of the SPO members. While it is policy not make negative references to Christianity, it is sometimes not practice. I hope that Mr. Billingham's experience was only a misunderstanding, but I will personally see to it that all members of the SPO are thoroughly familiar with and practice our non-discrimination policy, ESPECIALLY when they are representing the group.

I believe that deity created many different kinds of people for a reason. I also believe that each of us contains a tiny bit of deity. We are all sons and daughters of God/dess. I believe that Jesus was the son of deity and was a wise

teacher. Christians may disagree with me, other Pagans may disagree with me, but I would only like to agree to disagree. Just because I don't believe what someone else believes doesn't mean that I am not willing to learn.

Knowledge is power. To know about other people and how they believe is to understand them a little better. To refuse to learn is ignorance and can lead to events such as the holocaust of WWII, which resulted in more than six million deaths, and the burning times, which some estimates claim up to nine million deaths. But not one person should have to die or be prevented from practicing his or her faith.

I attempt with every cell in my body to practice as I preach because as when I began to walk the Wiccan way, I was representative of Wicca

to all who had never before met a Wiccan. When I assumed the office of president of the SPO, I became representative of Pagans to those who did not know what a Pagan is. I try to walk the Wiccan way in both word and deed. I am proud to be a Wiccan and a Pagan.

If anyone wishes to discuss paganism, tolerance, or any other subject, please talk to me. I cannot begin to attempt to explain everything, but I am more than happy to answer any questions you may have. Please contact me at 331-4432, pagan@frank.mtsu.edu, campus box 675 or mtsuspo@yahoo.com. You may also speak to secretary/treasurer John Bryan at ext. 3734 or jwb2d@frank.mtsu.edu.

Jessica Scarbrough  
President, Student Pagan Organization ■

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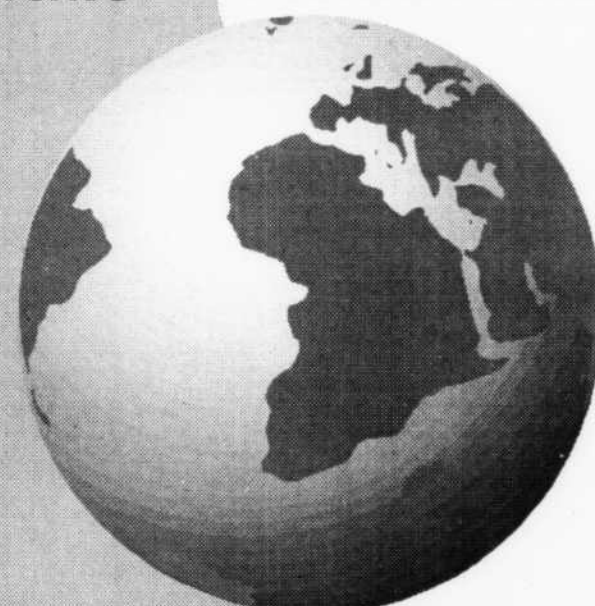
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## April 8: Thursday

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## April 9: Friday

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Organization** (with  
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Band Cherokee, Inc.)KUC Courtyard  
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FREE An exhibition  
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music and dance.

## April 10: Saturday

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James Union Building, Tennessee Room.  
Exhibits open at 4:30pm- dinner  
at 5:30. Call 898-2238 for ticket  
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# FEATURES

8 ■ SIDELINES

Murfreesboro, TN

## ALL ABOARD!

*Commuter rail system a possibility to solve parking problems*

**Ruth Peltier**  
Staff Reporter

Before it was just a popular Chattanooga attraction; soon, it could be your ride to class.

Commuter rail service linking Murfreesboro to Nashville may offer an innovative answer to the parking problems on the MTSU campus, according to Deborah Roberts, head of the MTSU Transportation Department.

The recently conducted Middle Tennessee Poll found that more than half of the residents of the mid-state would rather build a commuter rail system than more roads. This figure is slightly higher than the results of the same poll conducted in fall 1998.

Roberts said her department works closely with the Regional Transit Authority, citing the MTSU participation in the Relax and Ride program, which provides bus service into Nashville.

Roberts is certain that, when rail transportation is available, her department will explore the possibility of running a shuttle bus to provide an easy way for students to connect with the trains. Roberts said that her office is always open to suggestions about ways to improve the transportation and parking situation on campus.

Robert Babbitt, executive director of the Metropolitan Transit Authority, said a commuter rail system is an essential factor in Nashville's plans for transportation in the second millennium. Babbitt reported that the trains would use existing rail lines to carry passengers into Nashville from five cities: Murfreesboro, Lebanon, Gallatin, Bellevue and Franklin. The system, when finished, would make it possible to commute to MTSU from almost anywhere in Middle Tennessee.

According to Babbitt, \$1.2 million in federal mass transit funds has been provided to the project for engineering and environmental studies, and \$8 million has been allocated for construction and restoration of stations. Babbitt believes \$5 million in additional funds

will become available within the next six months.

He indicated these funds would be used for improvement of gate crossings, refurbishing of railroad cars, and the construction of a station near Riverfront Park. This station would allow the incoming Lebanon trains to connect with the steamboats and river taxis already operating on the river.

Babbitt said the Murfreesboro corridor would begin at the old railroad depot in Murfreesboro, then stop at the new park-and-ride lot on Murfreesboro road near the Interstate 840 interchange. From there, it would travel to stations in Smyrna, LaVergne and Hickory Hollow. Then, after stopping at Briley Parkway, it would finish up at the Clement Landport, on Broadway next to the old Union Station.

MTSU reaction to the proposed train service has been generally favorable. Many of the students who commute daily from out of town indicated that they would gladly ride a train to the campus if one were available. Other students indicated that they would find rail service useful for shopping at Hickory Hollow Mall or for trips to the Nashville Arena, Nashville's new stadium and other attractions in Nashville. Some said that they would use it for weekend trips home.

However, not everyone wants to ride the train. A few students expressed a dislike for mass transit in general, but some students had more specific reasons for not wanting to ride.

"Probably not, I just got a new car," said freshman Jessica Morton.

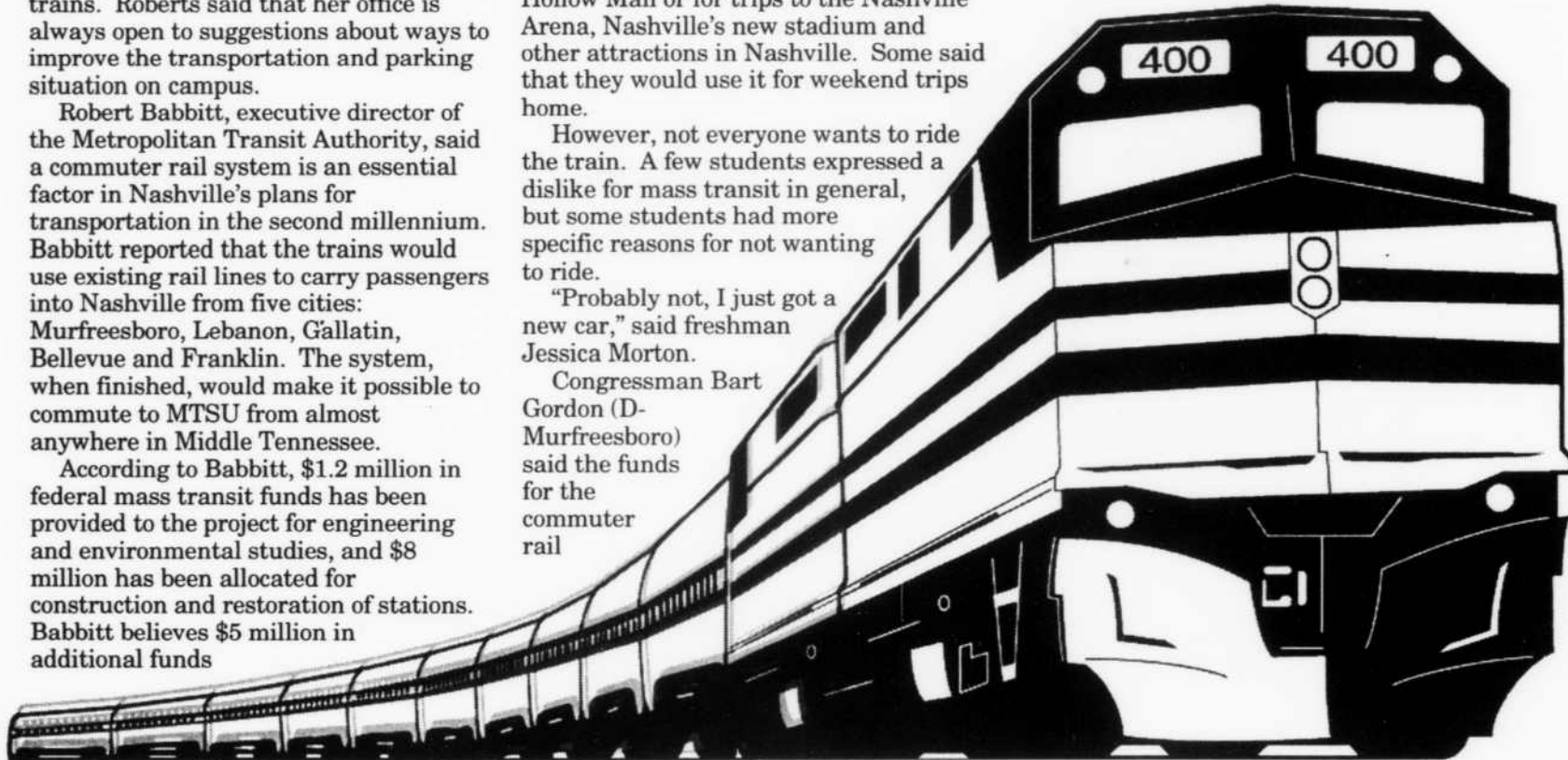
Congressman Bart Gordon (D-Murfreesboro) said the funds for the commuter rail

system were being provided through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. Gordon was instrumental in the passage of this legislation, which provides funds for all sorts of transportation systems from highways to bike and hiking trails. Under this program, cities all across America are establishing commuter rail programs.

Testifying before the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Commuter Rail Projects, Gordon said the proposed commuter rail corridor in Rutherford County would reduce highway congestion.

"It will improve the quality of life in our communities and allow our economy to continue to grow," Gordon asserted.

According to a report by the Regional Transportation Authority and the Metropolitan Transit Authority, providing rail travel is also an important tool in the battle for clean air. Rutherford County alone would see a reduction of 1,471 pounds per day in daily automobile emissions through the creation of the Murfreesboro corridor of the commuter rail system. ■



## Poll Position

**Amanda Virgillito**  
Staff Reporter

Does a program that strives to improve Middle Tennessee, appreciate each Middle Tennessee resident's opinion, and teach students about the public opinion process sound like a good idea? Well, that program already exists.

The Middle Tennessee Poll began last semester thanks to two hard-working people: Dr. Robert Wyatt and Dr. Kenneth Blake. Wyatt wanted to start a semi-annual poll, and Blake came to MTSU in 1996 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with poll experience.

Wyatt found funding for the program, and the two began the poll after a trial run in the spring of 1998. Along with Wyatt, director, and Blake, operations director, members of the program include Dr. Teresa Mastin, public affairs director, and Rob Clark, field coordinator.

The poll serves many purposes, including teaching students here at MTSU. The students conduct the surveys and later observe the poll's results.

Blake said, "We talk a lot in mass communication about 'the audience,'" Blake said, "but in reality most Mass Comm students have no idea who the audience is. Conducting half a dozen or so interviews with randomly selected members of 'the audience' helps students get an idea of what that audience is like."

The poll results also supply students and faculty with data for news stories and academic research and serves as the only ongoing assessment of public opinion across the 39 counties that make up Middle Tennessee, Blake said.

The poll also brings positive media coverage to MTSU, according to Blake.

"Each time local media publish a story about the poll's results, the university gets cited as a source," Blake said. "Over time, these citations contribute to raising the university's profile among potential students, potential donors to the university and potential employers of the university's graduates."

The poll also provides

See POLL, page 9

## MTSU student wins regional Miss Black and Gold Title

**Shawn Whitsell**  
Staff Reporter

She's already a three-time golden winner. And there's still more to go.

Leslie Miller, a senior wellness and fitness major and the only Bahamian student at MTSU, recently competed in the regional competition for the Miss Black and Gold title last month in Georgia. She took home the gold.

Miller first competed in the local Miss Black and Gold Pageant, which is sponsored by the Kappa Xi Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. There, she entertained the crowd with her flamboyant and creative customs and outfits.

Out of ten contestants, Miller stood out from the moment she graced the stage, impressing the audience with her poise and elegance. Her near-flawless performance was topped off with a creative, crowd-pleasing re-enactment of "The Creation," originally performed by God.

The short scene was complete with angels, columns and plants. Miller created a man right before the eyes of the crowd, just like God created Adam. Miller's talent was so impressive that she took home

first place in the talent category and eventually gained the crown.

After winning the crown here at MTSU, Miller went on to represent the Kappa Xi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha in the state Miss Black and Gold Pageant competition. There, she battled representatives of other Alpha Phi Alpha chapters in Tennessee for the state crown. Miller shined once again, convincing the judges that she deserved this title. She won second place in the talent category and again took home the crown.

After the state pageant, Miller went on to compete for the regional Miss Black and Gold title in Georgia. Her demanding performance won her first place in the talent category and brought home her third Miss Black and Gold crown.

Miller said her main reason for entering pageants is for self-motivation and self-confidence. She has competed in several throughout her lifetime and has had some good and bad experiences. Some of her bad experiences have included being cheated out of titles because of who she is in her country.

Some of the common things that go wrong the night of a pageant, which may mentally destroy some contestants, are totally "normal" to Miller.

"The worst that can happen to a person in a pageant, I've already experienced," she said.

Some of the good things were winning three Miss Black and Gold titles.

Miller said the – even with the good and bad times – the pageant experience is worth it.

"You get to bond with other females and experience being in front of a crowd," she said. "You get to experience the thrill of excitement."

Though she highly recommends participation in pageants, Miller said ladies should participate in pageants because they want to, not because someone else wants them to.

"It has to be something that you really want to do," she said.

Referring to the state and regional Miss Black and Gold pageants, Miller said she was honored to represent the Kappa Xi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha.

"It feels good to represent them because they also won 'Chapter of the Year,' which is a major accomplishment. That

tells me that not only am I working hard towards representing them but they are also working hard towards representing themselves. That makes me feel good," she said.

"I love them. They have really helped me out a lot and I couldn't think of a better fraternity that I'd want to represent."

As for the future, Miller looks forward to doing more pageants, but maybe not in her own country.

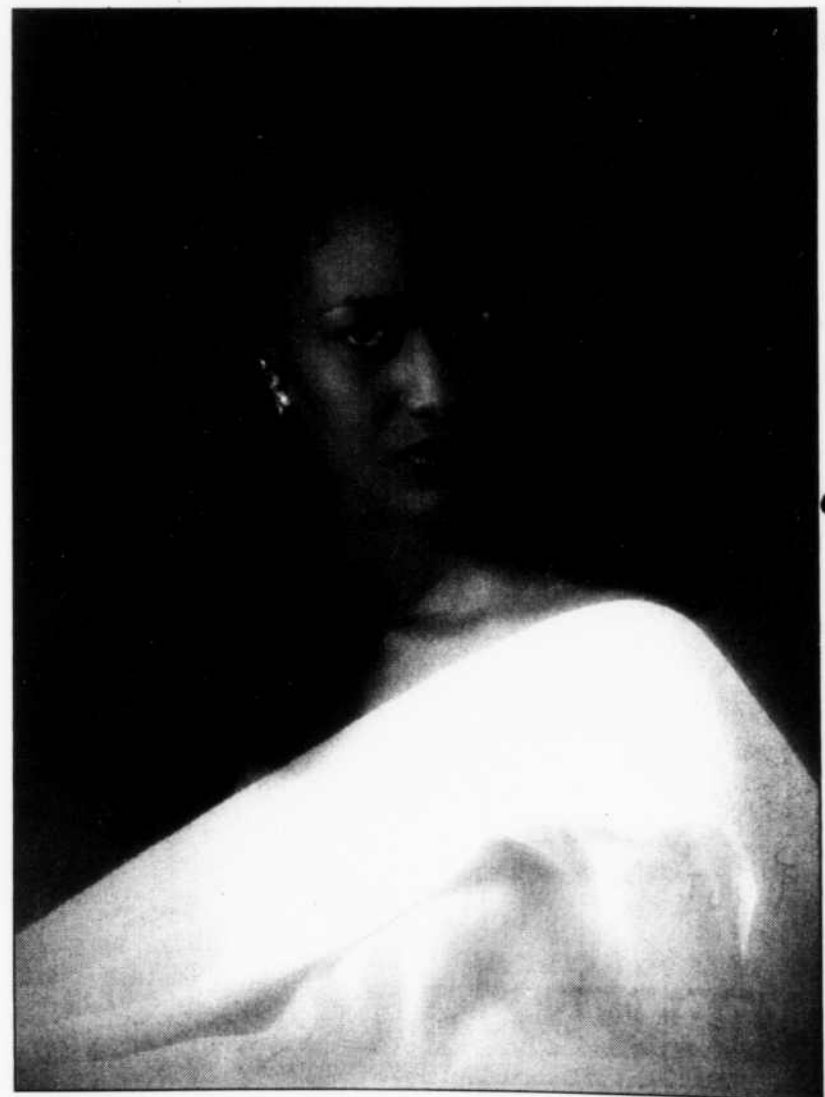
"No matter where you go, it's about who you know or who you are that could play against you or play in your favor. So, I don't think I'll ever do any more pageants in my country," she said.

Miller said, though, that she may enter more pageants in the U.S. – perhaps even next year's Miss MTSU contest.

After graduation, Miller plans to attend graduate school and maybe do more modeling. She wants to practice physical therapy in her country.

"The money is in the United States, but I do miss home a lot, so I'll probably go home, because there are not many physical therapists there, and

See TITLE, page 9



Leslie Miller



# POLL

continued from page 8

Middle Tennesseans a voice in regional and state politics and helps them confront some "less noble opinions," according to Blake.

"During the fall of 1998 poll, for example," Blake said, "we asked Middle Tennesseans whether they thought Hispanic people moving into the region had made life in Middle Tennessee better or worse."

"About a fourth said they thought Hispanics had made life in the region worse. Obviously, that's a pretty ugly manifestation of racism. The Tennessean ran an article about the finding, and perhaps the article will help Middle Tennesseans confront and deal with such racist attitudes."

The Middle Tennessee Poll covers issues important to residents in Middle Tennessee, including issues that affect both the region and the nation. According to Blake, the spring poll included questions from the state legislature's agenda to give Middle Tennessee residents a voice in the process. The poll also asks some of the same questions every other semester to observe attitudes over time. For example, each fall the poll questions opinion on free expression and faith in major institutions.

Some of this spring's poll questions covered food taxes on businesses, the possibility of a Tennessee state lottery, seat belt laws, graduated drivers' licenses, DUI laws, pay raises

for legislatures and teen smoking laws. The results of these and many other questions can be found at the Middle Tennessee Poll home page, [www.mtsu.edu/~commres/](http://www.mtsu.edu/~commres/).

"The university received substantial publicity in the local media both this semester and last semester as a result of the poll," Blake said.

The Tennessean covered the poll results in page-one stories, and local broadcast media also mentioned the poll's results. Blake and Wyatt also have plans to write research papers this summer based on data from the spring poll.

The MTSU students working for the Middle Tennessee Poll attempt to speak with 600 randomly selected residents of the region. The number gives the results room for an overall error margin of plus-or-minus four percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence, Blake said. This is an error margin similar to those of professionally conducted polls discussed on television or in the newspapers.

"All of the interviews are conducted by students, and all of those students should be proud of the important contribution they make to the poll. We couldn't do it without them," Blake said.

The Middle Tennessee Poll is funded by the College of Mass Communication's Office of Communication Research, the John Seigenthaler Chair, and the MTSU School of Journalism. All data are released to the public domain. ■

# TITLE

continued from page 8

our country really does need the help," she said.

She also plans to help put MTSU on the map.

"When I go home and speak at high schools, I always tell them about MTSU so we can get more international students."

Miller said she owes much of her success to her parents, especially her mother, for encouraging and motivating

her. She also credits Shane Rollea for designing her clothes, coming up with her talent and flying in from the Bahamas to support her in each pageant.

Miller's message to other people is to maximize the talents and gifts God has blessed them with.

"Even in the face of failure and set backs, you have to have a drive and passion for accomplishments," she said.

Miller will compete in the national Miss Black and Gold pageant in Texas in July. Let's wish her luck! ■



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**Amazonia's  
Voices  
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Rain Forest**

**Sunday, April 11, 4:00 p.m.  
KUC Theater**

**FREE and OPEN to the public.**

For the last 500 years the native people of the Amazon forest have defended their homeland against an invasion that has brought the mass extinction of over 700 tribes and the destruction of the rich rainforests in which they dwell. This award-winning film is a uniquely crafted and powerful documentary that blends vivid first-person accounts of the struggle for survival in the forests with stunning cinematography, a wondrous animation sequence, and an original music score by famed Brazilian composer Egberto Gismonti. Well-written, informative, and highly recommended. (color, 70 minutes)

**mtsu ideas and issues and  
mt anthropology society  
present**

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**Amazonia: Voices from the Rain Forest**

April 18 - Sunday - 4pm KUC Theater

**Spirit and Nature with Bill Moyers**

April 20 - Tuesday - 7pm KUC Theater

**The Moon's Prayer: Wisdom of the Ages**

April 21 - Wednesday - 7pm KUC Theater

**The Winter Wolf**

April 25 - Sunday - 4pm KUC Theater

**The Global Brain with Peter Russell**

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THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 1999

# SPORTS

10 ■ SIDELINES

Murfreesboro, TN



Michael Edwards  
Staff Reporter

## Batting around baseball's best

With the start of the 1999 baseball season passing, I began to think of the greatest hitters of all-time. These men range from the earliest of players like "Shoeless" Joe Jackson and span to the latest great hitter, Tony Gwynn.

Jackson started his career in 1908 for the Philadelphia Athletics, when he played five games and hit a cool .130. After Jackson left Philadelphia, he hit below .327 only two times. With a career average of .356 and 1,772 hits in only 1,332 games, "Shoeless" ranks 10th all-time in batting.

In 1963, a kid from Cincinnati emerged on the scene where he immediately became a star, playing in 153 games and hitting .273 that year. Peter Edward Rose, Sr., played 19 of his 22 major league seasons in a Reds uniform. During his career, Rose batted .303 with 160 homeruns and 1,314 runs batted in. Of course, he is the all-time hit leader in the Major League. Rose is ranked ninth all-time.

The eighth place slugger of all-time is none other than "The Georgia Peach." Ty Cobb won nine batting titles (five consecutively) over the course of the 1909-1913 seasons. Cobb hit .420 in 1911 edging out Joe Jackson, who hit .408 in the same year.

Ted who? A .366 career average, 117 homeruns, 1937 RBIs, and 4,189 hits make him the eighth best hitter in baseball history. Cobb was well known for sharpening his spikes before he stole second base.

He's probably the most decorated baseball player since the Babe and owns a .325 batting average. Call him "The Yankee Clipper," or "Joltin' Joe," but either way Joe Dimmagio is one of the greatest players of all-time. All baseball fans know about his 56-game hitting streak, but that was only his second best.

In the minor leagues, Dimmagio hit in 61 consecutively. After only 16 seasons of play, Dimmagio solidified himself as one of the top hitters ever. His career average is .325, thanks to owning 361 homeruns and winning nine world series. Dimmagio is seventh all time.

In sixth place is "The Man." To baseball fans that's all that you need to figure out who he is. He is the most famous Cardinal ever after playing 23 seasons in the Gateway to the west. Stan Musial hit .331 for his career while smacking 475 taters. He surpassed the 3000 hit plateau by 630 hits.

The hits just keep on coming with number five, Willie "Say Hey" Mays. Mays played 23 seasons, 15 of which were played in San Francisco. He finished his career in New York with the Mets. Mays fell just 54 homers shy of Ruth's home run record of 714. Mays hit .302 for his career and tallied 3,283 hits.

Mays, the godfather of Barry Bonds, hit a career-high 52 home runs in 1965 with the Giants. Mays was not only a great offensive player, but also a great defensive player in centerfield. He is known for his hat, which he deliberately wore two sizes too big, flying off in pursuit of a ball. Mays is fifth on this list, but number one in our hearts.

Ted "The Kid" Williams began his career in 1939. It took only two years for Williams to accomplish his greatest feat. Williams is the last player to hit over .400 for the entire year. He finished at .406 in the 1941 season. Although four of his years got cut out due to the World War II, he still managed to get 2,654 hits and hit .344 for his career. Williams only once hit less than .300. He played his entire 22 seasons with the Boston Red Sox. Williams is fourth.

The third ranked hitter is none other than Lou "The Iron Horse" Gehrig. Gehrig is more known for his games played streak that was broken by Cal Ripken two years ago. Lou played for the Yankees for 17 years. His career was cut short by the now infamous "Lou Gehrig's disease." Gehrig hit .340 for his career, and hit 493 home runs and amassed 2721 hits in his career. Lou Gehrig is third of all time.

The first runner up is "Hammerin' Hank." He hit his 715th home run at the beginning of the 1974 season with the Atlanta Braves. Babe Ruth owned the record for almost 50 years when Aaron surpassed him. Today is the 25th anniversary of that home run. Aaron hit 755 homeruns, which will probably never be passed in our lifetime. He also hit .305, and had 3771 hits.

Everyone knows he is a great hitter, but not many people know that he is the Braves all-time stolen bases leader. Aaron is being honored tonight after during the Atlanta Braves game which is on TBS at 6:35. Aaron had seven consecutive seasons when he hit more than 30 homers in the season, and he had 15 of them overall. Aaron averaged 31 home runs during his career per season. Henry Aaron is arguably the second-best hitter in the history of baseball.

The best hitter of all time will be announced Monday. ■

## How sweet it is

Kelly Finlen  
Staff Reporter

They've won here. It's time to hit the road.

MTSU Rugby's "Moosemen" are headed to UC Berkely to compete for the national championship after becoming Division I Southeast Conference champions.

The Moosemen capped off an undefeated season by becoming conference champs and going farther into the national tournament than ever before. They came in second last year in the SECC tournament, and started this season with a definite goal in mind. To get to this point, they defeated Georgia Tech, Vanderbilt, University of

Tennessee, Arkansas and North Carolina.

MTSU's first challenge in the national championship tournament on April 17 is UC Berkeley, the most successful rugby program in the nation. In fact, American collegiate rugby began at Berkeley more than 100 years ago. They have won the national championship 15 out of the last 18 years and even give scholarship for varsity rugby.

The first step in the Sweet 16 tournament may very well be the most difficult.

"The trip to California will be a tremendous experience for our boys, regardless of the outcome," Williams said. "How many times do you get to play the best team in a college sport? It will be a great learning

experience."

The Moosemen have won their last 15 games, a streak that extends through last September. They practice for several hours, twice a week, and Williams expects that their underdog status "will bring out the best in the team."

Williams plans to just practice the fundamentals and stick to the training regiment that got the Moosemen to this point.

"We are an aggressive, physical team with a newer style, fast-paced offense with great continuity skills," Williams said. "Berkeley probably thinks that we are just a team from the South that doesn't know anything about the game."

As far as the teams' future, Williams wants "to continue to improve and raise our level of comparison to teams like Berkeley."

"We want to be national contenders year in and year out," Williams said.

Though funding the trip has been difficult for the Moosemen, Williams wants his teams to "stay focused and keep their minds on the game."

"We haven't played our best game yet," Williams said. ■



## And then there were four

Michael Edwards  
Staff Reporter

For three years the Lady Raider tennis team won the Ohio Valley Conference Championship. With much the same team and top seed Jennifer Bryans returning, there was no reason for anyone to panic.

However, with the majority of the season passed the Raiders are in first place, but with a totally different look. MTSU second and sixth seeds have fallen to injury. That has left MTSU to play with four players.

"Numbers are few but talent is not lacking," Coach David Thornton said.

After the success recorded in the previous season, the expectations were sky high for the team. However, the losses to key players have put those hopes in jeopardy.

In college tennis the winner is decided by who ever wins five matches first. Each match - singles and doubles - counts as one point. The Raiders must win the rest of the matches to win the game. That puts a great deal of pressure on the remaining four players.

To the average player and person the odds would be enough to make them quit and just give up. That would be the easy thing to do. However, the team's goal has not changed; that is to win the OVC Champions, and quitters do not win the OVC Championship.

Thornton is still confident on the team's chances.

"It is ours to lose," Thornton joked.

Just like in World War II, the big four are left to settle the score. Jennifer Bryans, Michelle Gridling, Esther Eisenbarth and Niger Kaur will have the unprecedented honor of winning a fourth consecutive OVC Championship. Jennifer Bryans has a chance to do what Chamiqua Holdscaw could not do: win all the OVC titles that she can.

"The hardest thing that we will have to do is overcome our inner demons," Thornton said. "Negativity and poor attitudes will hand the OVC Crown to another team."

All championship teams have at least one thing in common - adversity. The '89-'90 Detroit Pistons had Dennis Rodman. The '97-'98 Chicago Bulls had Dennis Rodman, and the '94-'95 San Antonio Spurs had, well, you get the picture. There's no Dennis Rodman, but the adversity and distractions have been abundant this year.

"They haven't quit yet, and God knows they could have many times. It has put our character and integrity to the test," Thornton said. "To give up now with three weeks remaining is not what this team is about."

Thornton is firm on his belief that the Lady Raiders can still win the conference.

"We can win the conference, and if we don't, it will be because we were not willing to be uncomfortable physically, mentally, technically or tactically."

At the same time that MTSU has to overcome the adversity, the opposition has all the pressure on them. MTSU is no longer expected to win matches. They have excuses if they don't, but the opposition has to win.

They are spotted three points at the beginning and have to win only two more matches. If each one of the players don't concentrate and play tough they can and



MTSU's Matt Walker takes a swing against Louisville in a recent match. The team lost last week to Southwest Louisiana.

will be beat.

"We have nothing to lose, but everything to gain," Thornton said.

Win or lose, the team will leave an impression in the hearts of their fans. It's the type of team that gets a nickname.

The bottom line is this: the Lady Raiders can go two ways. They can lay down and just quit, or they can suck it up and win the conference like they know they can. The choice is theirs to make. This is when the students and community will find out exactly what this team is made of. ■

## Outdoor fun in the sun with Rec Center

Michael Edwards  
Staff Reporter

Now that the sun has emerged from the clouds, MTSU Outdoor Pursuits offers many fun and interesting ways to spend your weekends and breaks.

There are rafting/canoeing/kayaking day-trips to me Locust Fork River in Alabama are upcoming: April 10, 11, 25.

OP assistant Mitch Hoffman said, "The rafts are a great day activity and especially good for beginners, and fun and because they are in groups."

The cost is \$18 for the day. This covers transportation and all the equipment needed for a day on the river.

Another trip in the not-distant future is the Boundary Waters Canoe trip. This is an 11-day flatwater canoeing in a remote system of lakes and rivers that extend from Minnesota into Canada. The participants will camp along the edges of the rivers and the lakes. This scenic adventure will prove to be a great way to spend some time away from classes. The trip is scheduled for May 17-27 and only cost \$199. This includes transportation to and from Canada, all the equipment and permits/camping fees.

The trips are limited in space, so early registration is suggested. No experience is necessary to be apart of any of these Outdoor Pursuits' trips.

Hoffman said, "What we pride ourselves on is that anyone and everyone can take part in Outdoor Pursuits. Our trips are designed so that everyone take part."

Kayaking clinics will take place throughout May, June, and July and are a great way to warm up for the real thing. Canoe clinics are also available and offer the basics in canoe strokes and canoeing in general.

Also upcoming is a 15-day hiking trip down the Appalachian Trail in Vermont and New Hampshire, which costs \$85. More information on this trip will be coming soon.

Outdoor Pursuits also offers rental equipment for those who wish to camp or explore on their own. The student/faculty prices allow for a great and inexpensive way plan a weekend getaway.

Information on any of the Outdoor Pursuits trips or the rental equipment can be found at the Student Recreation Center or by calling 898-2104. ■

## Track team leaves a trail of smoke in Georgia

Staff Reports

The Blue Raider track and field teams had their best outing of the year as a whole over the weekend at the 22nd Annual SPEC Towns Invitational. The two-day event produced several winning efforts and a couple of NCAA provisionals almost guaranteeing Middle Tennessee with representatives at the NCAA Championships in Boise, Idaho, later in the year.

Rob Jordan picked up the first wins of his outdoor career in the long jump and triple jump. His

distance of 51'10.50 in the triple jump was a personal best and was seven inches longer than runner-up Anthony Reed (Charleston Southern). Middle Tennessee's Steve Reid placed third in the event.

Ron Bramett won the 110-meter hurdles for the second time this season with a time of 14.08. His other win in the event came at Florida State. Godfrey Herring's time of 45.96 in the 400-meters placed him second behind Auburn's Avard Moncur but gave the Raiders their first provisional in to the NCAA Championships.

Middle Tennessee would score their second provisional in the 400-meters relay with a second place finish behind Auburn's quarter with a time of 39.95. The relay team and Herring's times are the best in the OVC so far this season.

Others placing at the Georgia meet were Rashad Hayes (third) in the high jump, Mario Paul (third) in the 400-meters and Albert Ageymang (second) and Godfrey Herring (third) in the 200-meters.

The Lady Raiders came away from Athens with their best meet this year placing fifth or higher in

10 different events. The most surprising was Andreja Ribac's win in the triple jump with a distance of 39'05. Although Ribac led the OVC during most of the indoor season, she had been unable to win an event until Saturday.

Other Lady Raiders who placed at the Georgia meet were Shauntel Jennings (third) in the shot put and Tori Blander (third) in the 400-meter hurdles. The 400-meter relay team and 1,600-meter relay team took second and third places respectively. ■



## The Hook-Up

Commentary by Josh Ezzell/ Staff Reporter

# Expect some "madness" at Spring Stampede

Woooo!!! It's time to get hooked up. Woooo!!! Now let's style and profile into a Nitro review. Woooo!!!

Nitro introduced a new format on Monday. And something else was introduced: the Goldberg lottery. It is one lottery that most people don't want to win. You see, the winner gets to fight Goldberg.

Well, Kevin Nash is not most people; he actually wanted to fight Goldberg. He wanted to fight "da man" so bad that he called him out. Goldberg accepted the challenge, so it was a done deal: at Spring Stampede Goldberg would fight "Big Sexy."

In the first bout, Hak and Chastity faced Kendall Windham. With the help of a stick, Hak eventually triumphed over his pesky opponent.

What were Ric Flair and Miss Elizabeth meeting about in his office?

That was not the only bizarre meeting, as Nash met with Arn Anderson. "Big Sexy" told Hollywood they were discussing business...or were they?

K-Dog was in the house during the second match as he faced Lizmark Jr. The luchador put up a valiant effort, but fell short. He became just another victim of the "Tequila Sunrise."

"The Nature Boy" called out Hollywood Hogan. Hollywood stormed to the ring and accepted the challenge.

At this point, DDP showed up and made it a three-way dance.

Just when this segment seemed

to be over something happened: Goldberg made his way to the ring. This meant the main event was a four-way bout for the belt.

After a commercial break, "Big Poppa Pump" became the third person to issue a challenge when he called DDP out.

The fellow proclaimed "Genetic Freak" followed this up with a pinfall victory over Meng.

Hoooo!!! Hacksaw Jim Duggan made his return to the ring against Lenny Lane. Duggan was able to shock off the rust and win over Lane.

An NWO last-man-standing match involving Stevie Ray, Vince, Horace and Brian Adams followed. Vince was the first person out, courtesy of Brian Adams. But then Adams was ousted by Stevie Ray, leaving only Horace and Stevie Ray.

In the end Stevie Ray won the match, and won the title "Leader of the NWO."

Stevie Ray's brother, Booker T, was up against the "Lionheart" Chris Jericho. But Scott Steiner interfered, chair-whacking Booker T. Jericho didn't know about this; the referee didn't care. Booker T won by DQ.

The tag team duo of Rey Mysterio Jr. and Kidman defended the tag-team straps against Raven and Saturn.

The former champions, Dean Malenko and Chris Benoit, determined the outcome of this match when they attacked Raven and Saturn. Mysterio and Kidman exacted revenge on the men that cost them the belts.

Raven and Saturn weren't the only ones who lost because of interference. Just ask Bam Bam Bigelow. "The Beast from the East" dominated Buff, but lost thanks to Hak, Chastity, a stick and a fire extinguisher he fell to "The Stuff." And now, for the main event.

In the main event, Goldberg, Ric Flair, Hollywood Hogan and Diamond Dallas Page battled each other for the title in a four-corners match. Everybody pounded each other, but nobody won, thanks to Kevin Nash. He managed to get the match thrown out when he attacked Goldberg. Wait, there's more!!

After the match was thrown out, Sting appeared with an important announcement: At Spring Stampede, he is going to fight Ric Flair, Hollywood, and DDP in a four-corners match for the belt. Hold on!! Macho Man is gonna be the special guest referee!!

Wanna know what happens next week? I've got two words for you: Read Sidelines. ■

# Classifieds

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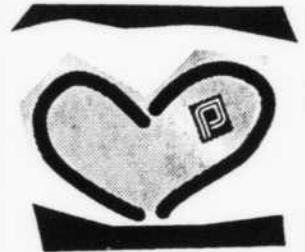
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**Scholastic Average 3.75 - 4.0**

Kelli D. Bettis	Angela M. Parkinson
Amy Michelle Brandon	Karen Kristina Petersen
Alysa Marie Cannon	Kimberly R. Rivers
Mark D. Carlton	Christy M. Rose
Rhonda Gayle Wright Cates	Michael Dylan Ross
Melissa Dawn Carlton	Jane S. Sanborn
Ruth Ann Chananie	Tiffany Lynn Schwarz
Elizabeth Anne Childress	Melissa K. Simmons
Lois Anne Deering	Kristi D. Stanfield
Aaron T. Grayum	Tara Anne Stepp
Gerald Troy Guinn	Shirley A. Sweitzer
Kely Marie Guy	Donna Jean Thorne
Katie Ellen Johnson	Matthew Dailey Walden
Noelle Elin Kirkham	Peggy L. Watson
Karen Rhode Lim	Kimberly Diane Willms
Melissa Leigh Marsden	Alonda Michelle Woodson
Paul Andrew Miller	

### OUTSTANDING ADVISORS FOR THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Ben Austin	Mary Hoffschwelle
Patrick Conley	Thomas Nolan

### DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

#### **ART**

**Charles Morris Brandon Award-** Paul Judson Dodez  
**Hester Ray Rogers Award-** Sorrel M. Dugan  
**Charles and Ola Massey Award-** Dustin Richard Ogdin  
**John O. Griffin Award-** Dawn M. Perault-Amstutz  
**Art Enrichment Award (Junior)-** Micah Kandros  
**Art Enrichment Award (Sophomore)-** Marta Slaughter  
**Art Enrichment Award (Freshman)-** Jena Christine Cook

#### **ENGLISH**

**Virginia Derryberry Award-** Christy Mae Rose, Margo Meyers, Stacie Beth Murphy  
**Richard C. and Virginia L. Peck Award-** Rebecca M. McWhirter  
**Christine Vaughan Scholarship-** Jennifer D. Thornton  
**William Wolfe Graduate Writing Award-** Ruth Dunkerly, Charles Goldthwaite Jr., Jeffrey Frame  
**N.C. Beasley Award-** Amy Schroder, Betsy Thompson

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGES & LITERATURES**

**Outstanding Students of Spanish-** Brenna Harris, Kimberly Keenum

**Outstanding Student of French-** Kelly Loveday

**Outstanding Student of German-** Robert Dougherty

### **GEOGRAPHY/GEOLOGY**

**Outstanding Student of Geography-** Donald J. Bice, David H. Burr, Lori A. Pittman

**Gem and Mineral Scholarship and Estwing-** Whitney Leigh Nelson

**Outstanding Geology Major-** Kelly A. Woody, Brandy Sue Sanders

### **HISTORY**

**Ernest Hooper Scholarship Award-** Lisa Marie Oldrock, Mark D. Carlton, Randy B. Higdon, Deborah R. Ketchersid

**Thelma Jennings Scholarship Award-** Bethany Noelle Berlejung

**William B. McCash Memorial Scholarship Award-** Tammy Lenae Allison

**Edward and Aileen Jennings Scholarship-** Randy B. Higdon

**Tennessee Historical Commission Award-** Lois Anne Deering

**Colonel Dames Award-** Jennifer Lee Knox

### **MUSIC**

**Outstanding Achievement in Graduate Music-** Philip Gregory

**Outstanding Achievement in Music Composition-** John Davis Thompson

**Outstanding Achievement in Music Education-** Tony Mondale Rogers, Karen Ashley Carter

**Outstanding Achievement in Music History and Literature-** Stacie Marie Horner

**Outstanding Achievement in Percussion-** Jillian D. Abraham

**Outstanding Achievement in Guitar Performance-** Joseph Villaveces

**Outstanding Achievement in Vocal Performance-** Holli Harrison

**Outstanding Achievement in Brass Performance-** Seth Fletcher

**Outstanding Achievement in Brass Performance (Trumpet)-** Jason Emerson

**Outstanding Achievement in Woodwind Performance (Clarinet)-** Stacy Horner

### **POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Norman L. Parks Award-** Amy Brandon

**Meritorious Service Award-** Richard Baxter

**C.C. Sims Award-** Richard Baxter

**John W. Burgess Award-** Karen Petersen

### **SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, SOCIAL WORK**

**Marian Clark Scholarship-** Robert Breon, Melissa Crossley, Lorraine Dwyer, Danya Fields, James Gilliam, Charity LaForte, Miessa McKinney, Heather Odom, Deborah Riddle, Jeffrey Rooney, Dawn Sengupta, Jennifer Termaat, Connie Vassen, Rhonda Whitworth, Crystal Parker, Cynthia Maule Trail

### **Sociology/Anthropology**

**Certificate of Appreciation-** Jonathan B. Douglas

**Clayton L. James Award-** Kimberly R. Rivers

**Joe Ramsey Leatherman Award-** Kara Renee Fields

### **Social Work**

**Gloria H. Kimmel Outstanding Student Award-** Connie Vassen, Ruth Ventrice

### **SPEECH/THEATRE**

**Naveen "Scott" Pejaver Memorial Debate Scholarship-** Matthew Carter

**Melanie Stacy Clinical Award-** Kathryn McDowell

**Clay Hawes Scholarship-** Kristen Boutwell, Melissa Cannon, David Longwater

**Dorethe Tucker Scholarship-** Shirley Sweitzer, Amber Herzer, Rob Brunson, Jessica Carter, Matthew Curry, Robert DeGrange, Curt Mann

**Robert "Bobby" Aden Memorial Scholarship-** Grayson White, Leslie Seaton, Craig Murphy, Melissa Goldhammer, Julie Ferrell, Joshua Duncan, Curt Mann, Robert DeGrange, Matthew Curry, Jessica Carter, Rob Brunson

**Speech Language Academic Award-** Courtney Phipps

### **OTHER AWARDS**

**Homer Pittard Creative Writing Award-** Lois Deering  
**Oakland Kiwanis-** LaShon Sneed