THURSDAY MARCH 17, 2011

VOLUME 88 NO.15

WWW.MTSUSIDELINES.COM

State plans to ban Molly's Plant Food

By AMANDA HAGGARD Associate News Editor

Tennessee's attorney general and the agriculture commissioner are attempting to stop the sale of Molly's Plant Food, a substance that is considered to have a mindaltering affect on its users.

The Attorney General's Office has filed a lawsuit and asked for a provisional restraining order to stop stores from selling the product. It is also asking that law enforcement agencies in Tennessee assist in removing any existing products from shelves in local stores.

are Eric Ronnell Alexander and Joshua Covell. The two men operate businesses under the names of Faded Botanicals and Molly's Plant Food.

Law enforcement officers served seizure and restraining orders on the defendants at their homes and their business, Toke-N-Roll, which is located on Old Hickory Boulevard in Hermitage.

At this point, the product The defendants in the suit is not considered illegal, said Borger-Gilligan, assistant attorney general in the Criminal Justice Division, who is prosecuting the case.

"They've been selling this stuff online, and they've also been going out themselves and selling to distributors [like] adult stores and smoke shops," Borger-

Gilligan said.

State Rep. Ryan Williams of Cookeville is sponsoring a bill that would make it a Class A misdemeanor for a person or business to knowingly manufacture, deliver, or sell any of six listed synthetic derivatives or analogues of the Schedule I controlled substance mathacathinone, which includes

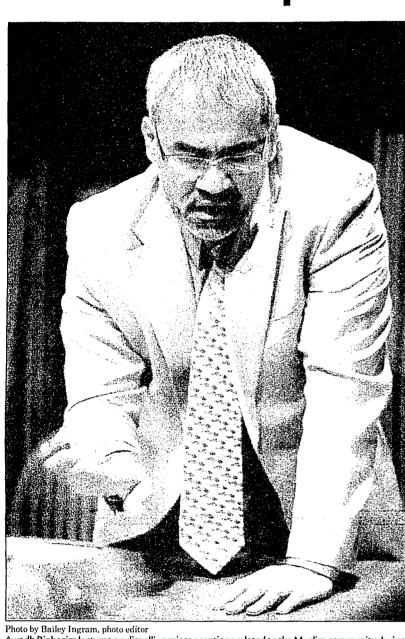
the chemicals found in Molly's Plant Food.

Borger-Gilligan said state officials have also discovered two similar products while conducting seizures in the past week, Kamikaze Plant Food and Happy Plant Food.

The suit is a civil case, using an agriculture statute that requires commercial fertilizer to be labeled

MOLLY'S, PAGE 3

Sharia lecture spurs mixed reaction



Awadh Binhazim lectures on dispelling misconceptions related to the Muslim community during the "Sharia 101" lecture on March 16 in the James Union Building.

Event culminates in multiple outbursts

By JOSHUA M. WARD Staff Writer

"Sharia 101," a presentation designed to educate others about Islam, drew not only the interest of many that attended, but also outbursts of laughter and sharp criticism from a few.

The presentation, organized by the Muslim Student Association, began with a tense exchange between Kamal Saba, president of the Muslim Student Association, and a man attempting to record the event.

After being told he was not allowed to keep his camera rolling during the proceedings, the man withdrew to the back row of seating in the James Union Building's Tennessee Ballroom, which would later prove to be the source of commotion throughout the presentation.

Jamie Sutton, the interfaith coordinator for the Muslim Student Association, started the evening by highlighting what he considered to be the main points of state Sen. Bill Ketron's bill to outlaw Sharia law.

Sutton said that while there have been many bills that are "hostile toward the Islamic faith," this bill goes "a bit farther than most." He argues that the far-reaching nature of the bill puts all Islamic practices at risk.

"If this bill is passed, simply following the religious laws of being a Muslim will be taken as evidence in and of itself that ou are a terrorist, without any other

SHARIA, PAGE 3

SGA disappointed in voter turnout

By TODD BARNES

News Editor

Fewer than 5 percent of the student body of almost 27,000 cast their vote in the Student Government Association spring elections, which has decreased from last year's voter turnout.

The 2011 spring elections were held March 1-3, and the winners were announced March 4, the Friday before spring break.

Fewer than 1,000 students voted in the executive officer elections, which may have something to do with the fact that three out of the four candidates ran uncontested, said SGA Election Commissioner Darrin Johnson.

[didn't people have] campaigning as much, and so that creates an impact on voter turnout,"

However, he said he used many outlets to communicate to students about the spring elections including Facebook and Twitter.

"We put information on the MTSU home page, the library, the Business and Aerospace Building in the computer labs," Johnson said. "We worked with the housing department and put information on their computers.'

Jeremy Poynter, a junior majoring in finance, ran uncontested for the presidential position and was elected

with 732 votes.

"If more people were to get involved in SGA, we would actually get more opinions and more feedback about what students want us to do, instead of the 732 people that I got the votes from," Poynter said, adding he wants to reach out to the students that did not vote.







Maclin



Three people ran for the executive vice president position: Sen. Sarah Hoover in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, Sen. At-Large Vanessa Patrick and former Sen. Shaun Luber in the College of Liberal Arts.

Luber was elected with 444 votes, Hoover received 233 votes and Patrick received 230 votes.

Erika Maclin, who currently serves as the SGA philanthropic coordinator, was elected as vice president of administration and public affairs with 730 votes.

John Thomas was elected as election commissioner with 728 votes.

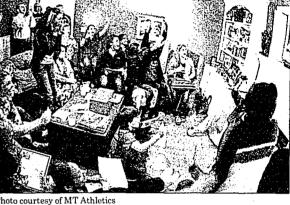
Almost 20 senate seats are still vacant, and Poynter said he would focus on making the SGA website "user friendly" by initiating online senate applications because most students are not aware they can apply anytime.

"Once elections are over, there are [senate] positions that are not filled, and so you can get appointed," Poynter said. "So, most people think that if you don't run for SGA elections, you can't do SGA until you run next year."

Poynter takes presidential office on May 1, but the transitional period has already begun.

He said he is searching to appoint the new philanthropic coordinator and attorney general. Anyone can apply for these positions, and Poynter said he is excited to appoint a diverse group of representatives.

"I want to do this job extremely well, especially going into the centennial year," Poynter said. "I'm just ready to see SGA just drive and expand to the capacities that I know it can do."



The Lady Raiders and coaches celebrate on March 14 after the team's NCAA bid is announced.

Lady Raiders get NCAA bid

By RICHARD LOWE Multimedia Manager

MT'swomen'sbasketball team will be making its fifth trip in six seasons to the NCAA Tournament this Sunday when the Lady Raiders take on the University of Georgia, as announced on Monday during a live national broadcast on ESPN.

"I'm excited for our young ladies more than anything," said head coach Rick Insell after the announcement was made. "They needed a positive."

omes on the heels of the death of teammate Tina Stewart, who was fatally stabbed March 2 at her apartment, and the subsequent loss to Arkansas State University only a few days after the incident.

MT's entrance into the field of 64 was not guaranteed after the team finished the season with a 77-62 loss to Arkansas State in the quarterfinals of the Sun Belt Tournament.

Raiders The Lady received a No. 11 seed while the Lady Bulldogs will have a No. 6 seed in the tournament. Game time is 6:30 p.m. at the Auburn Arena in Auburn, Ala. It will be broadcast live on ESPN2.

This is the 14th appearance in the the tournament for program but only the second time that the team has received an atlarge bid - the first time coming in 1996 when the Lady Raiders won the Ohio Valley Conference regular season title.

The game in Alabama is the shortest the Lady Raiders have had to travel for an NCAA Tournament game during Insell's tenure. In previous years, the Lady Raiders have been sent to Arizona, California, Michigan and



Photo courtesy of MT Athletics Anne Marie Lanning cheers with her teammates on March 14.

Pennsylvania for first round games.

"I think [being placed closer to Murfreesboro] The announcement came about because of where we've in the past Insell said. "We've had to play in places like Palo Alto and Michigan State."

> The Lady Raiders have only won once in 12 tries against Georgia, but Insell is 1-1 against the Lady Bulldogs. The most recent matchup against the two teams took place on Dec. 7, 2006 in Athens, Ga., with MT upsetting the then-No. 8 Bulldogs, 70-62.

When team members saw their name flash across the TV screen, they could not contain their excitement.

"When I saw 'Middle' on the TV screen, I didn't even have to see the Tennessee part," said sophomore Kortni Jones. "I just saw Middle and a little blue symbol and I began to cry."

"It's awesome," Anne Marie Lanning said. "I get to have another chance to play with these girls and to have them follow me and have us play together."

The winner of this weekend's game will go on to face the winner of the No. 3 seed Florida State University and No. 14 Samford University game that will also take place at Auburn Arena. That game is scheduled for Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.

The winner of Tuesday's game moves on to the Sweet 16 in Dallas, Texas.

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IN TODAY'S ISSUE



Check out what more and more students are doing to keep fit without the usual treadmill routine.

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Watch Kortni Jones and Anne Marie Lanning react to the news that the Lady Raiders made it to the NCAA. **SPORTS**

WEATHER



THURSDAY 75 / 51

Treasury reports six banks repay federal bailout money

WASHINGTON - Six banks are repaying their government bailouts, bringing the bank capital program close to 99 percent recovery.

The Treasury Department says that it received proceeds of \$475 million when the banks repurchased preferred shares and other investments that the department got in exchange for its cash injections.

Banks received \$245 billion under the program. Treasury has collected about \$244 billion in repayments, fees and other income from bailed-out companies.

The banks are: Fifth Third Bancorp.; National Penn Bancshares Inc.; Lakeland Bancorp Inc.; Stockmens Financial Corp.; Bridge Capital Holdings; and Heritage Bancshares.

House GOP proposes cutting federal property program

WASHINGTON - Republicans are ignoring a White House veto threat and pushing a bill through the U.S. House halting a federal program giving state and local governments' money to buy and upgrade abandoned buildings.

The Bush-era program has been embraced by the Obama administration at a time of mounting foreclosures as a way to prevent neighborhoods from decaying. Republicans say the initiative has failed and argue that with record federal deficits, taxpayers' money should be saved.

The measure would block the spending of about \$1 billion. A House vote is expected later Wednesday.

Healthcare appeals gaining more success nationwide

WASHINGTON - Don't take no for a final answer when a health insurer rejects a claim and leaves behind an unpaid medical bill.

A report from the Government Accountability Office says as many as 50 percent of some appeals prompt insurers to reverse their decisions.

Insurers frequently deny claims due to billing errors, missing information or judgments on whether the care or service is appropriate. Experts say some denials are based on fixable mistakes, and an appeal to an insurer can lead to a reversal.

The report also showed that appeals to state review programs fared well, too.



Report shows large increase in state's Hispanic population

NASHVILLE – Tennessee is becoming more diverse. Results released Wednesday from the 2010 census found that whites still make up 77.6 percent of the population, but that's down from 80.2 percent in the 2000 census.

And some of those whites are Latinos, whose population increased by 134.2 percent, putting the population at 290,059, or 4.6 percent of the state's overall population.

Blacks now make up 16.7 percent of Tennesseans, a 13.3 percent increase that brings that population

Memphis was the only one of Tennessee's 20 largest cities to lose people since 2000. The city lost 0.5 percent of its population, shrinking to 646,889. That makes it only slightly larger than the state's second largest city. Metro Nashville's population grew by 10 percent to 626,681.

However, Shelby County, with a population of 927.644, continues to be much larger than Nashville's Davidson County.

Tennessee's total population is 6,346,105.

Governor says he supports protests but not disruption

NASHVILLE - Republican Gov. Bill Haslam says he supports the right to protest but agrees with the decision to remove demonstrators if they disrupt government business.

Haslam told reporters after a tour of the Tennessee Technology Center in Nashville on Wednesday that it is up to law enforcement personnel to decide when to intervene, as they did a day earlier when they arrested seven protesters at a Senate Commerce Committee meeting.

Haslam said he will "always fight for people's right to protest something they don't like." But he added that it's also important to allow the democratic process to play out.

Tuesday's protests were made by activists speaking out against anti-union bills in the Legislature, including an effort to do away with teachers' bargaining rights.

New state licenses designed to be harder to reproduce

NASHVILLE - Tennessee will begin issuing driver licenses with a new design, aimed at making them harder to counterfeit.

Safety and Homeland Security Commissioner Bill Gibbons said the design will help combat document fraud and protect against identity theft.

There is a new holographic design and a bar code. A pilot program of issuing the licenses began Tuesday at the Gallatin driver license examining station. All

stations will issue them within six weeks. The department emphasized current licenses are valid until their expiration dates and drivers don't need to get new licenses before that. Fees for licenses and

identification cards won't change.

Police officers seek help with burned car case

STAFF REPORT

Law enforcement officials are looking for information regarding a car that was recently found burned on Hale Avenue between Burton and Bell streets on Feb. 10, a week after the car was stolen from campus.

Officers received a call shortly after 5 p.m. on Feb. 10 concerning a red 1998 Mercury Mystique that had been "set on fire and burned to the point where it could no longer driven," according to statements made by officials with the Murfreesboro Police Department.

"Upon further investigation, the responding officer discovered that the car had been reported stolen from campus," said Detective Lieutenant Jason Wofford of the MTSU Office of Public Safety. "The car had been stolen from the parking lot near Rutledge Hall sometime between 10 p.m. on Feb. 1 and 9:15 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 3."

Wofford said the investigators with the Police Department are seeking the public's help in solving this case.

"At this time, we feel as if they are related and are hoping a tipster can help us to make an arrest in these cases," Wofford said.

A \$1,000 reward is being offered for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons involved in either of the two incidents. Anyone with information should contact the Office of Public Safety at 615-898-2424.

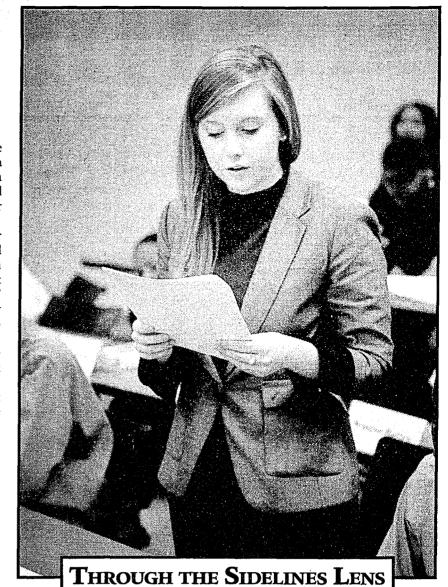


Photo by Drew Gardonia, staff photographer

The Student Government Association tabled Resolution 08-11-S during formal meeting March 3. The legislation would change the James E. Walker Library hours to be open 24 hours a day - five days a week. The sponsors of the legislation scheduled a meeting with William Black, the administrative service librarian, this week for his advice. The legislation will be voted on March 24.

Expert to speak on workplace bullying

STAFF REPORT

Gary Namie, who is a well-known expert on workplace bullying, is slated to speak tonight at 6 p.m. in the State Farm Room of the Business and Aerospace Building.

Namie taught the first university class on bullying in the workplace, and in the first bullying trial in the nation heard by the Virginia Supreme Court, he was the expert witness.

Namie and his wife, Ruth Namie, run eight public websites dedicated, to bullying education lawmakers, unions, and employers. Their work has been featured on "The Today Show," "Good Morning America," NPR and CNN.

Namie directs a national network of state coordinators for the Healthy Workplace Campaign, acting as a citizen lobbyist, who is working to pass into law the anti-bullying Healthy Workplace Bill in every state.

The bill lays out guidelines for employers about what defines an abusive workplace, gives employers reasons to fire employees for abusive behavior and requires workplaces to show proof of behavior documented 15.1% witnessed bullying

26.1% claim to have been bullied

9.1% claim to currently be bullied

50.1% have no experience to snotting of being bullied minimum a

Graphic by Josh Fields, production manager

Workplace bullying is a growing problem according to workplacebullying.org.

by mental health professionals, as workplace. well as requiring plaintiffs to use their own attorneys.

The bill also gives workers a route to take legal action against healthharming cruelty at work, allows employees to sue workplace bullies, allows for pay reimbursement for time, holds the employer accounting and gives employers a standard to correct and prevent abuse in the

Tennessee is one of 18 states considering the Healthy Workplace Bill. Twenty other states already have laws concerning bullying in the workplace.

The event is sponsored by the Distinguished Speaker Series and the Jennings A. Jones College of Business. The lecture is free and open to the public.

LOCAL EVENTS CRIME BRIEFS

The Armenian Genocide and Modernity March 17, 6 p.m.

Business and Aerospace Building, State Farm Room Tickets: FREE

Softball vs. North Texas March 19, 11 a.m. Softball field

Tickets: FREE

Almost to Eden March 21, 3 p.m. University Honors College 106 Tickets: FREE

Iconic Drag Fashion Show March 21, 7 p.m. James Union Building Tickets: FREE

Black History Month Keynote: Angela Davis March 22, 7 p.m.

James Union Building, Tennessee Room Tickets: FREE

Health and Beauty Fair March 23, 11 a.m. Keathley University Center Tickets: FREE

Amnesty International

Borders Bookstore in West End

Nashville meeting

March 21, 5 p.m.

March 11, 2:54 p.m.

Vagrancy

Murphy Center

Officers cited an adult black male and a juvenile white male for trespassing on campus, who they believe were looking for bicycles to steal.

March 12, 1:38 a.m.

Harassment

Womack Lane Apartments

A complainant reported that she was being harassed after she asked the suspect to leave the apartment complex.

March 12, 2:39 a.m.

Alcohol

Faulkinberry Drive

Alicia Marie Riley, 27, was arrested for driving under the influence.

March 12, 2:52 p.m.

Scarlet Commons Parking Lot A complainant reported that her vehicle had been struck while parked

at Scarlett Commons near Building 3.

March 13, 12:01 a.m. Drugs

MTSU Boulevard

Justin Whiteaker, 22, was arrested and charged with simple possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

March 13, 1:12 a.m. Alcohol

Middle Tennessee Boulevard

Kassidy Brooke Lowe, 20, was arrested for driving while impaired.

March 13, 8:01 p.m.

Vagrancy

Jim Cummings Hall

Officers arrested an individual who was trespassing on campus for exhibiting unusual behavior. He was then transported to Middle Tennessee Medical Center for evaluation.

March 14, 8:27 a.m.

MTSU Campus

A complainant reported that the MTSU Information Technology Division had notified him that his student account had been accessed without authorization.

"Of God and Gods: **Envisioning Ultimate** Reality in Hindu Traditions"

March 17, 6:30 p.m. Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Auditorium

Tickets: FREE **Bright Eyes with The**

the Arts

Mynabirds March 17, 7:30 p.m. Ryman Auditorium Tickets: \$27 - \$30

"The Robber Bridegroom" March 18, 7:30 p.m. Murfreesboro Center for

Tickets: \$12 for students

New Viking March 22, 9 p.m. The Mercy Lounge Tickets: \$10 advanced, \$12 door

Wild Flag with Times

March 23, 7:30 p.m. Zanies Comedy Night Club Tickets: \$15

Hypnotist Rich Guzzi

Stoney LaRue March 24, 8 p.m. The Exit/In Tickets: \$12

EVENTS POLICY

Sidelines welcomes current campus and community events submitted by all readers. Please e-mail events sinews@mtsu.edu. Include the name, date, time and location of the event, as well as your name and contact information. We reserve the right to refuse events at our discretion as our space is limited.

Authorities seize product

MOLLY'S FROM PAGE 1

andregisteredinaccordance with state law, Borger-Gilligan said.

Under state law, nitrogen a chemical component in the formula for mephedrone – is also recognized as a "plant nutrient" and falls under the department's registration and labeling laws.

A laboratory analysis by the department established that a product sample purchased from defendant's business, Toke-N-Roll, contained 3.75 percent nitrogen, making it a fertilizer and thus subject

to regulation by the agency.
"We filed [the suit] because they were selling this as plant food," Borger-Gilligan said. "We bought several packets of it, and it contained nitrogen, under statute it's a plant nutrient."

Borger-Gilligan officials are trying to determine if the two men were licensed to sell the product to other retailers and if they have paid any state taxes from the sales.

Tennessee Attorney General Bob Cooper and Agriculture Commissioner Julius Johnson announced that the product, alleged to have "severe physical and psychological side effects," would be seized from all businesses in the state.

"We are glad that current law gives us a way to get this product off the shelves while the legislature considers stiffer penalties," Cooper said.

Almost 1,200 capsules of the drug were confiscated last week in Rutherford County.

In general, store employees and owners in Rutherford County voluntarily turned over the product after reviewing media coverage about Molly's Plant Food, said Narcotics Lt. Egon Grissom.

At several stores where the product was sold, employees told Grissom customers bought the product for \$8 to \$12 a capsule "all the time," adding that the product was "very popular."

Grissom said a mother contacted him recently about her son's use of Molly's Plant Food. She said the product appeared to have affected his mental state and caused him to lose 20 pounds in two weeks.

Other parents have called him about their concerns. "It's causing irreparable

damage to these young adults," Grissom said.

While the packaging is labeled as "not intended for human consumption," it often has directions indicating that users should take the capsule "with a large glass of water."

"I don't buy my plant fertilizer in a capsule form and definitely not for \$8," Grissom said.

Currently, mephedrone is not considered a controlled substance and can be sold in Tennessee legally.

The Federal Analog Act allows any chemical "substantially similar" to a Schedule I or II drug to be treated as if it were the actual controlled substance. However, the act only pertains to drugs that are labeled "intended for human consumption."

Grissom and several narcotics detectives said they removed "plant food" from about 80 percent of the convenience stores.

The Department of Agriculture is also taking part in the investigation.

"Our product registration and labeling laws are important for not only protecting consumers and farmers, but in this case helping to ensure proper product usage," Johnson said.

selling Stores product will not face legal repercussions if they choose to turn the product over voluntarily.

Marie Kemph, editor-inchief, contributed to this report.



Photo by Bailey Ingram, photo editor Students, teachers and local residents gather in the James Union Building on March 16 for "Sharia 101," hosted by the Muslim Student Association.

Discussion leaves some questions unanswered

"This is what I expected. Their

flowery words with hollow

meanings. They're trying

to portray themselves as

something they're not."

GEORGE ERDEL

FORMER STATE REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATE

SHARIA FROM PAGE 1

factors involved," Sutton said. "We know that not all Muslims are terrorists."

The bill would not only give law enforcement the right to imprison Muslims for practicing Sharia, but also the power to designate two or more Muslims adhering to Sharia as a terrorist organization.

Furthermore, the bill could potentially affect any individual who "provides material support or resources to a designated Sharia organization."

"Under the text of the law, it is conceivable that, if a mosque is considered a Sharia organization, loaning a member of that mosque gas money could land you in federal prison," Sutton said. "Bringing a cup of sugar to those Muslims' house could land you in prison."

Awadh Binhazim, adjunct Muslim chaplain for Vanderbilt University, lectured on the many facets of Islam and attempted to dispel many of the misconceptions and stereotypes related to the Muslim community.

Topics ranged from the definitions of words like

"Allah" and "Sharia" to discussions of women's rights in Islam, Muslims' contributions to society and culture, and the normalcy of the Muslim community.

However, it was when Binhazim said that he and other Muslims "pledge allegiance to the laws of [the United States]" that laughter and sarcastic remarks from the back row began.

It continued when

and raised in Kenya,

ended his lecture with the

rhetorical question "do all

Kenyans run" to serve as a

metaphor for the idea that

while some terrorists are

Muslim, not all Muslims

answer this question, he

was met with an outburst

from someone claiming

that it "depends if you

chase them." This was just

one of many uncomfortable

Before Binhazim could

are terrorists.

moments still to come. Ron Messier, professor

of Middle East history at Vanderbilt University, shared his past experiences withMuslimsasaresearcher and archaeologist as part of his short speech, but this was overshadowed by the "question and answer" session that followed.

Instead of allowing attendees to stand and ask questions of the speakers Binhazim, who was born in person, index cards were

distributed for questions

to be written on and

collected by organizers.

Questions were then selected by Saba based on

what he said was relevant

drew heated reactions from

some seated at the back,

including shouts calling

Binhazim a "liar" and

claims that "They won't

ask the hard [questions]."

Afterward, many said they

This choice of format

to the topics discussed.

"This is what I expected." said George Erdel, who ran for office as representative of Tennessee's 6th district last November. flowery words hollow meanings, and

They're trying to portray themselves as something they're not." Delbert Ketner, Rutherford County resident, said he was disappointed in the format

these screened questions.

felt the questions were "screened" and that the

Muslim community was

"trying to hide something."

"Their

because he believed the presentation was going to be an open discussion on Sharia law specifically. "They use that as an excuse," Ketner said, "but

they barely even touched on it. Here, they were just using the university as a platform to promote Islam."

The Muslim Student Association said that another lecture discussing Sharia law in more depth is to be scheduled soon, with Imam Ossama Bahloul of the Islamic Center of Murfreesboro as a guest speaker.

Bahloul was originally scheduled to speak during Wednesday's event, but could not appear due to travel arrangements.



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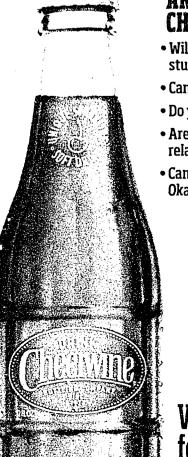
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FEATURES



Photo by Erica Springer, staff photographer Students exercise during a Zumba aerobics class Feb. 22 in the Health, Wellness and Recreation Center. The workout is fused with music from multiple genres and various dance-inspired moves.

Zumba encourages ditching normal workout routine for calorie-burning fun

By EMMA EGLI Features Editor

I'm fidgeting awkwardly as I stare at my nervous reflection in the wall-length mirrors of the aerobics room. There are 50 girls around me chattering excitedly with each other. Some are jumping around or stretching their lean muscles.

I look down in dismay at my skinny, white legs. Then, I quickly eye the door. Maybe, I have enough time to escape without anyone noticing.

But just as I'm about to put my plan into action, a curlyhaired, 5-foot-something, animated instructor comes bounding into the room, sending everyone into a hysteric fit of excitement. The Black Eyed Peas' "Don't Phunk With My Heart" suddenly blares through the speakers and the instructor yells, "Are you guys ready to party?"

I don't think so.

Before I can fully comprehend what's going on, the instructor has danced across the length of the room, moving with the beat and encouraging us to move our hips the same way she is.

I look down at my waist.

I don't think I'm physically capable of gyrating

I'm tripping over my own feet, the fear of embarrassment slowly creeping in. In anguish, Ilookaround at the girls next to me to see if they are struggling as much as I am. Then, I realize something groundbreaking that every beginning Zumba participant must come to understand: No one is watching.

"It really is just one big party," says Christina Lee, who, even after an hour of jumping and dancing around like a mad woman, is still grinning.

Lee, who has been teaching Zumba at the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Center since 2007, is still trying to comprehend how her classes have seen such an influx of Zumba-crazed enthusiasts.

"When I first started out, there were 10 girls in the class," she says. "Now, we have upwards of 70."

Lee, a graduate student in the College of Education, had no prior background in instructing group fitness classes. She now teaches more than five, including Zumba, which seems to be the most popular.

But, what exactly is Zumba?

"It's Latin aerobics fused with hip-hop dance," Lee explains. "It's a fusion of rhythms, beats and dancing." To put it straight, it really is just one big party.

The word "Zumba" was derived from the word rumba, which means "to party." After the flashy "z" was tacked onto the word, the workout program became a commercial success and is practiced around the world to this day.

Lee, a certified instructor, choreographs the dances that incorporate basic merengue, salsa, reggaeton, tango and samba moves. Integrating these moves with more popular hip-hop and urban moves gives this workout routine a flair of its own.

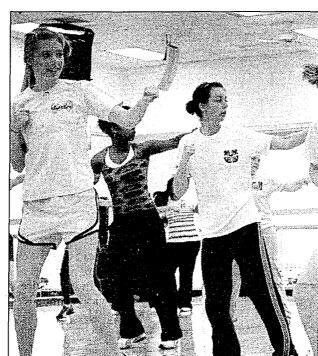
On Tuesday and Thursday evenings, a long line of girls - and occasionally guys - can be seen waiting anxiously on the second floor of the Recreation Center. Sometimes the class reaches its capacity and latecomers have to be

Some participants, like Christine Poythress, a professor in the School of Music, get there early in order to get a good spot in the room.

clothes on," Poythress says jokingly. "I needed exercise,

and this is way better than running."

Dancing to Shakira's "Hips Don't Lie," I'm almost proud of the progress I'm making. I'm no longer stepping on people's toes or dancing in the opposite direction as every one else. Not to mention, I haven't worked out this hard in a



Students find their rhythm by tuning out and having fun Feb. 22 in the Health, Wellness and Recreation Center during a Zumba class.

long time.

"I was in the Marine Corps for seven years," says Jennifer Moore, whose daughter regularly attends the class. "This gives me a better workout than boot camp

Passersby are curiously watching us through the glass windows, walking slowly to observe our group bouncing around in unison to pop songs that can probably be heard throughout the gym. At this point, we don't even notice.

We're only half an hour into the class, and some of us are starting to feel the exhaustion and cramps from using muscles we don't normally use.

But when the Pussycat "When I Grow Up" comes on, whoops and hollers echo around the room and the energy returns. This is obviously

a crowd favorite. Lee bounds around the room, often popping up in the center of the group, all the while encouraging everyone to "dance like you're in the music video!"

"I make sure to mix it up and travel around the room so that the girls in the back can see me,"

Howshemaintainsherupbeatandenergeticdemeanor "This is really the most fun you can have with your is a mystery, but for most, it's what makes the class so enjoyable.



Photo by Erica Springer, staff photographer Zumba class teacher, Christina Lee, leads class in a variety of dance inspired moves on Feb. 22 in the Health, Wellness and Recreation Center.

"I love how she pushes us to work our hardest," says Brittany Pate, a junior majoring in nutrition. "Half the experience is getting to work out with her. I couldn't

do it on my own."

After an hour intense hip shaking, fist pumping, and more body shimmying than I would care to think about, the workout is over and it's time for the cool down.

"Remember that the most important thing is oxygen," Lee tells us, as

we slowly stretch our tired and sore bodies. "So, don't forget to breathe."

While Zumba classes are the perfect alternative workout for those who dislike running on the treadmill or fighting with an elliptical, it also encourages self-assurance.

"The main thing is to build confidence," Lee says. "It makes people more in tune with their bodies. It's an hour of freedom to just let loose and realize that no one cares and no one's watching."



AND THE SEARCH FOR NEW CONTRIBUTING STAFF

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"I was in the Marine Corps

for seven years. This gives me

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UPINIONS

Sidelines is the editorially independent, student-produced newspaper affiliated with Middle Tennessee State University and the College of Mass Communication. Sidelines publishes Monday and Thursday during the fall and spring semesters and online during June and July. The opinions expressed herein are those of individual writers and not necessarily Sidelines or the university.

Japan quake brings out worst in economists

After the quake in Japan wiped out a vast amount of infrastructure and took thousands of lives, some have found it playing in favor of an economic recovery. In an interview on CNBC, President Barack Obama's former economic adviser, Larry Summers, suggested that the disaster could actually offer a temporary "boost" to the global economy.

This idea, of course, is preposterous and ignores a critical rule of economics called "opportunity cost." In the case of a nation spending billions to rebuild its

infrastructure, the question arises, what could it have done with the money otherwise? The answer and differential of this question is what is known as opportunity cost and is a critical idea in the margin theory of value. Something many economists seem to ignore if it's not politically palatable to their school of economics.

In a 2005 survey by the American Economic Association, only 21.6 percent of professional economists correctly answered a question in regards to opportunity cost. In a similar survey by the same group, only 7.5 percent of college students correctly answered the question despite having economics courses. Ironically, of the students who had never taken an economics course, 17.2 percent of them



Columnist

answered correctly.

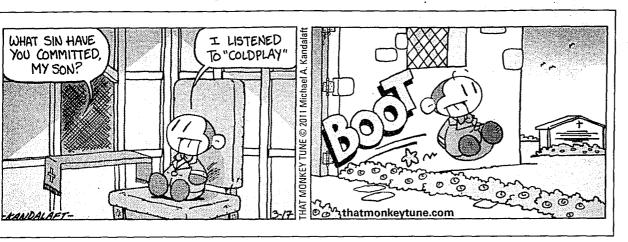
This "broken window fallacy" extends to the press. In a Huffington Post article titled "The Silver Lining of Japan's Quake," Nathan Gardels showed his ignorance of economics when he said, "Mother Nature has accomplished what fiscal policy and the central bank could not... The result of all the new wealth creation will be money in the pockets of Japanese to buy global goods and services.'

While it is true that the economic output will likely increase due to more aggregate

demand, the entire point of GDP measures is to measure the welfare a nation. I hardly view destruction and rebuilding as a boost to the livelihood of individuals in any economy.

If economists really believe such destruction is good for the economy, then we'd be ill advised not to burn down neighborhoods and destroy infrastructure, in times of economic downturn. After all, think of the demand for construction workers and equipment it would produce. We'd soon be kings, and the middle class would be restored.

Josh Fields is a senior majoring in economics and can be reached at josh@virtualblend.com.



Facts, diligence needed after Stewart tragedy

The recent fatal stabbing of basketball player Tina Stewart near campus is causing investigators and attorneys to scratch their heads about what happened on the night of March 2 at Raiders Crossing Apartments, where the roommates lived.

No doubt the incident is tragic, and I sympathize and mourn the loss with the Murfreesboro community and Stewart's friends, family and the Lady Raiders, who were like family to the promising young athlete.

I want to commend President Sidney McPhee and administrators for their subsequent handling of the issue. These difficult issues are always an administrative nightmare for those

in charge. I want to caution MTSU, however, from convicting Shanterrica Madden before all the facts of the case are discovered. According to Madden's attorney, Joe Brandon, Stewart's fatal end came after a struggle between the two girls.

Brandon alleges it was Stewart who attempted to attack Madden with a knife before she gained control of the weapon and turned it on her attacker.



Guest Columnist

News reports suggest the evening's events were contentious, and the presence of drugs was likely. Details are few and the picture is unclear, but evidence may be found in the unlikeliest of places.

In the coming weeks, investigators and attorneys will examine use of social media as it pertains to this case to collect facts. Stewart may posthumously testify based on a series of tweets she issued on the night of the incident.

According to local media, these electronic communications could play a key role in illustrating which led the events. Stewart's death: what caused the disagreement, who initiated it, and so on.

As we become more technologically advanced as a society, tools like Facebook and Twitter will undoubtedly play a role in the investigation of serious crimes. Online posts will likely be used as evidence in an increasingly technological world.

We must remember in our justice system, judges convict criminals. Twelve jurors must believe beyond a reasonable doubt that a defendant is guilty of a crime before he or she can be convicted.

While the public debate may sometimes get emotional, we must remember that in our system, defendants are innocent until proven guilty - not the other way around.

Iam certainly not trying to diminish this tragedy, as the loss of life is always heartbreaking. I am simply asking the MTSU community to separate emotion from fact in pursuit of the

Matthew Hurtt is a 2009 alumnus of MTSU and can be reached at matt. hurtt@gmail.com.

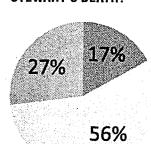
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"Madden suspended from university"

"It was or wasn't self defense. It's just sad that so many of us today can't find a more constructive and peaceful way to settle our differences without losing our cool and killing each other. Whatever happened to a good 'ole fistfight? Next day your over it and friends again anyway." - Todd Hooper Whether

"Well said Todd, so many lives will be suffering due to this event. A moment of carelessness can cause a lifetime of sorrow. What a loss on both sides." - Darrell Ray Land

"Served with a side of smiles"

"I remember Donna. She was the best! I don't know if there will be room for one more "shout out" Sidelines story, but there is one more lady that was always serving up smiles! She worked at the little convenient store in the Mass Communication Building. She was very petite with short black hair." - Alecia Smith

SGA, students share blame

The Student Government Association has a serious disconnect between itself and the student body. During the last round of SGA elections, many positions ran unopposed. This should have the SGA asking itself some serious questions about its public image on campus.

Many students could care less about the SGA, and some barely acknowledge its existence. It is time for the SGA to reach out to the student body and pull students into the process. I applaud the SGA for some of the work it does, and I take issue with others.

I recently attended an SGA meeting, and besides the small group of people who accompanied me, there was no one else there outside of the SGA. It is not completely to blame for the apathy that the student body has.

It is time that the students rise up and become part of the process or at least go to a meeting. After the SGA Elimination of Special Perks Act debacle, many students said they were frustrated about the perks that certain members of the executive council receive, including scholarships and reduced or free meal plans.

After all the complaining about these issues, I expected people to pack the SGA meetings, but it was practically empty for the two proceeding meetings. Eric Bisby, the sponsor of the act, has been at every SGA meeting since his bill was proposed.

He has taken an active role in participating in the

Adviser

Leon Alligood

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Columnist

process and has become one of the leading voices for dissent on campus. We need more students like Bisby who are willing to take an active role in how their university is run.

It is time to take a stand and show the university, and the SGA, who it serves.

Thomas Jefferson once said, "All tyranny needs to do to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to

remain silent." I implore the student body to exercise its rights and become involved in the process. I also implore the SGA to take steps to get more people involved. One idea would be to eliminate some of the senate seats so the races are more competitive, and people may just pay more attention to them.

In the end, if you're not involved, it won't matter anyway so get involved. You don't have to run for office. Go to an SGA meeting or sit down with a senator. Most of them are willing to meet with you.

Matthew Blanchard is a senior majoring in political science and can be reached at mmb4b@mtmail.mtsu.edu.

Proposed anti-Sharia law beyond ridiculous

State Sen. Bill Ketron has sponsored a bill that would criminalize Sharia law.

The bill was written with advisement by Frank Gaffney, a famous and anti-Muslim apparently tireless propagandist, who also worked lawsuit against the Islamic Center of Murfreesboro. This is the same man who admitted, under oath, that he was not an expert on Islamic law.

Now, there are many excellent arguments to be made on political grounds against this bill, relating to

the constitutionality of it. There are also several welldeveloped religious and theological reasons I could use to explain why it's both an offensive and needless law. But limited on space as I am, I won't even need to go into those. This law is ridiculous on the face of it for two easily demonstrated reasons.

First, all religious law including the Catholic Code of Canon Law, Jewish kosher laws, and faith-based arbitration, already must comply with state and

These religious laws are forbidden from contradicting applicable criminal and civil codes. Even if you believe the false assumption that all Muslims and their beliefs are inherently dangerous, the bill is at best entirely redundant because any actual damaging or treasonous



Guest Columnist

behavior that it might be seeking to criminalize is already criminal in state and federal statutes.

Despite Ketron saying that his bill is not aimed at peaceful practice of Islam, it is that same peaceful practice which could be the only possible thing under this law to be made illegal.

The effect of the law can only be to criminalize peaceful moderate Muslim behaviors. Any harmful behaviors a Muslim might engage in could already be adequately treated under

existing law. Secondly, Sharia is not a codified collection of law statutes, which is universally accepted by Muslims. Sharia actually consists of a set of principles and religious understandings, which Islamic judges are supposed to use in arbitrating questions and disputes.

A ban of Sharia law is ridiculous because then you must define what you mean: Sharia law where? When? Interpreted by whom? Education is the key to avoiding conflict for

both sides.

Jamie Sutton is a senior majoring in philosophy and can be reached at jmsutton3@gmail.com.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Photo courtesy of Hopeless Records Ryan Mendez, Sean Mackin, Ryan Key, Longineu Parsons and Sean O'Donnell look to put Yellowcard back on top of the charts with their new album When You're Through Thinking Say Yes.

When you're through thinking... Say yes.

By JOSH FIELDS Production Manager

When Yellowcard is mentioned in roundtable discussion of modern music, many people have reservations, having grown out of the group's music. As if that high school memory of the cool summer breeze flowing through your hair, when you tasted your first bit of adolescent freedom while listening to

Ocean Avenue, is all too distant.

With its new album, When You're Through Thinking, Say Yes, the band hopes to quench your nostalgia, yet lure you forward with a clean slate to be the soundtrack of new memories. And like a slow song starting to accelerate, the new album, which will be released Tuesday, dashes through the toils and snares of our youth and makes us sing until our voices strain.

It's not too distant of a memory – it was only in 2004 that the band enjoyed the success of the platinum album Ocean Avenue, which earned Yellowcard a place on the national stage. At that time, they weren't associated with a lot of the bands that came afterward, such as My Chemical Romance. Instead, it was discussed among some critics and among fans that the band was the next Blink 182.

Unfortunately, in 2006, with its move to abandon the sound that defined so many summers with the sophomore album Lights and Sounds, the lights began to dim and the sound of screaming fans started

In 2007, Yellowcard released Paper Walls, but the road the band members helped pave had left them behind as Paramore's success stole their thunder. Shortly after the album dropped, Capitol stopped

promoting the band and awaited the band's exit from the label, despite many critics calling Paper Walls its finest work. Yellowcard's final tour under Capitol Records was filled with songs from the members' indie days and was almost like a symphony exit of a sinking ship pushing the band to indefinite hiatus.

Fast forward to 2010, with new label Hopeless Records and new member Sean O'Donnell, the former singer of Reeve Oliver, the band looked to embrace the fans it may have left behind. Lead singer, Ryan Key, told artist Ben Folds in an online interview that the energy for the new record would be one that would bring the intimacy between the fans and the band back to fruition.

With all the pieces back in place – Longineu Parsons on the drums, Ryan Mendez on lead guitar, O'Donnell on the bass, Sean Mackin on the violin and Key as the front man – a new record was within grasp.

There was another member of the band that was missing: producer Neal Avron, who is dubbed "Yellowcard's sixth man." Avron has a long resume with big name artists, from Sara Bareilles to Linkin Park, from Weezer to the Wallflowers magnum opus Bringing Down the Horse. His hands can be felt pushing the band to its best in When You're Through Thinking, Say Yes.

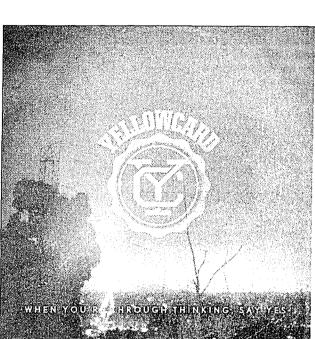
From the opening song "The Sound of Me and You," the band gives the vibes of early Yellowcard, with the beats of Parsons keeping the pace while dueling guitars

set the rhythm and the ripping violin fills the void.

The band makes a plea, "let me back in, love me again," then breaks down funneling into the second track and its first single "For You and Your Denial," with an all too familiar violin introduction remnant of the track "Breathing" from Ocean Avenue. This time, the band confronted its past struggles and never

The album doesn't beg for your attention for too long because it doesn't need to. The album doesn't deal with abstracts but with human emotion. The songs are sure to bring a smile to your face, if not for the lyrics, than for the memories they spark.

I don't think this is Yellowcard's greatest album, but you probably missed that one when you were busy growing up. Instead, the album comes full circle, attempting to take you on a journey through the pathos of your youth, while writing the hymns of your present memories. So, whether you're running underneath the California sun, or just looking for melodies in the air, push play, say yes.



Yellowcard's album will be released on March 22.

Track List:

| 1 | The Sound of You and Me | 8.0 |
|----|-------------------------|------|
| 2 | For You and Your Denial | 9.0 |
| 3 | With You Around | 10.0 |
| 4 | Hang You Up | 9.5 |
| 5 | Life of Leaving Home | 8.0 |
| 6 | Hide | 7.5 |
| 7 | Soundtrack | 9.0 |
| 8 | Sing For Me | 9.5 |
| 9 | See Me Smiling | 8.0 |
| 10 | Be The Young | 9,5 |
| | | |

Consensus:

Highs:

The song "With You Around" is sure to be a summer hit with its slick guitar licks and signature Yellowcard feel. "Sing For Me" is one of the bands strongest songs lyrically.

Lows:

"Hide," is the album's weakest song and sometimes sounds instrumentally empty compared to the rest of the album and the majority of the bands previous work.

Renowned musician teaches students valuable lessons

By AMANDA HAGGARD Associate News Editor

Accomplished musician, Bela Fleck, left an impression on budding musicians who are striving to find their musical personality during his lecture and performance at Tucker Theatre on Tuesday, attendees said.

"A Conversation with Bela Fleck" marked the 20th anniversary of the Windham Lecture Series.

George Riordan, the director of the School of Music, said Fleck was especially fitting for the anniversary of the series.

"Fleck is an eclectic polymath," Riordan said. "[He is] a sponge that seeps up every style and forges stylistic alliances, while fashioning new and fresh music."

Students said Fleck, while talented and proficient, made them feel that practice was more important than skill.

"I've always had this idea that raw talent was the only way you could excel in music," said Jamie Walsh, a Murfreesboro resident.

Practicing the material musicians would like to play makes the player more apt to produce their own sound, Fleck said.

"It takes a long time to find out who you want to be in music," Fleck said.

On Feb. 13, Fleck won his 14th Grammy Award for the "Best Contemporary World Music Album" for Throw Down Your Heart, Africa Sessions Part Unreleased Tracks.

Fleck said his "type A personality" drives him to practice banjo meticulously.

"As an artist, I get to believe that playing banjo is the most important thing in the

world," Fleck said. Greg Dorris, 24-year-old MTSU alumnus, said he could relate to Fleck because he was also a control freak and because he also felt musicians should be more in tune with their

own style. "I think what he hammered on was that a musician should be an individual," Dorris said. "I could learn to let others show

their individuality."

Fleck's Grammy nominations in more than seven music genres do not come from the desire to make money, he said, but rather, the drive to make music that people want to come and see live.

"I just want to play things I can be proud of," Fleck said. "I really want to get this one thing right."

Nicole Millsaps, a junior majoring in biology, said she waited for more than an hour

"I like how he's encouraging people to find their voice and fit into their own category," Millsaps said.

Other attendees said they enjoyed the chance to be able to ask a career musician questions about the craft.

"I loved watching him play," Walsh said. "He is absolutely incredible. But, I'm really glad I got insight into some of his interests and

loves as a musician." Fleck said he began playing a banjo his grandfather bought him when he was 15 years

old, and within four years, he produced his first solo album, Crossing the Tracks, at age 19. Fleck never learned to read music, but reads tablature to play.

"It's simple," Fleck said. "It just makes more sense to have numbers to look at so I can play faster.' Walsh said he could not believe Fleck did

not know how to read music. "I'm starting to learn that playing [banjo] should be my motivation," Walsh said. "The



Photo by Sara Gilbert, contributing photographer Bela Fleck answers an audience member's question March 15 in the Tucker Theatre in between playing traditional bluegrass and classical music.

fact that Fleck doesn't use conventional playing methods can tell all of us it takes drive more than skill.'

In the early 1980s, Fleck was invited to join New Grass Revival, reuniting with an old friend, mandolinist Sam Bush, alongside Pat Flynn on guitar and John Cowan on bass, to chart new territory with their blend of

bluegrass, rock and country. "I get to play with the best musicians," Fleck

said. "And that is humbling." As a musician, Fleck said he feels he must draw lines and find out what he is going to bite

"I want to continue to soak up all kinds of

music," Fleck said. "It's not my intention to

become that music, just to let it come out in

my music."

Although Fleck said he takes a lot of influence from other musicians, he added that he engineers his own records because he does not feel they would have the same sound otherwise.

"My goal is to just be me," Fleck said.

The initial Windham Lecture in 1990 featured Dan T. Carter of Emory University and Dewey W. Grantham of Vanderbilt University, who spoke on "The South and the Second Reconstruction."

William and Westy Windham established the series through the MTSU Foundation.

Bela Fleck and the Flecktones will play June 10 at Bonnaroo Music Festival, held annually in Manchester.



Word on the street is that "The Bachelor's" Brad Womack and Emily Maynard have already postponed their wedding. The future of the couple is still up in the air. Emily said she needed to figure some things out. I personally always wanted Ashley to win. I was more than happy to hear she will be the new "Bachelorette." The new season is set to premiere May 23 on ABC.

By now, we all know that Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel have called it quits after four years together. But we all want to know why. Word is spreading that actress Mila Kunis is the real reason the couple split up. Timberlake and Kunis co-star in the upcoming movie "Friends With Benefits," and it's been said they acted quite cozy while on set. Could there be truth to this rumor? Or is this just another stunt to promote an upcoming movie?

As for Jessica, don't feel sorry for her. The actress was spotted out and about in Los Angeles looking better than ever. Biel was all smiles as she celebrated her brother Justin's birthday. I always knew that relationship wouldn't last – it's never OK when your brother and boyfriend have the same name.

Recently, there have been multiple celebrity nude scandals. Last week, it was Chris Brown, and this week it was Usher and Vanessa Hudgens, which is the third time for this starlet. I have officially come to the conclusion that celebrities leak photos and videos of themselves on purpose. Brown has a new album coming out and Hudgens has two films out this month. It definitely raises the question: Is this



another media stunt or a truly unfortunate event?

Dust off your flutes people: Universal Studios is making another "American Pie" film. So far, Jason Biggs, Eugene Levy and Seann William Scott have signed on to be a part of the cast. The studio is still trying to get the rest of the original cast signed on as well. The studio is calling the film "American Reunion," and it will actually open in theaters. It sounds like it has some potential, unlike the cheesy straight-to-DVD films we've been ignoring for years.

Amid the insanity, some elite celebrities have stopped the hustle and bustle to use their star power for good, to help the people of Japan.

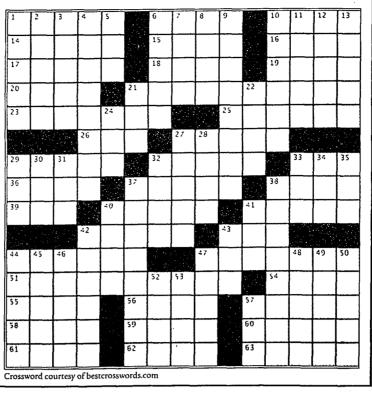
Some have come together this week to help raise money for Japan. Lady Gaga created a "We pray for Japan" bracelet. It is only \$5 and available in the Lady Gaga official store. Katy Perry is donating proceeds of certain merchandise to the American Red Cross, and Blink-182 singer Mark Hoppus is auctioning off rare collectables on eBay, including the original lyric sheet for the bands hit "The Rock Show."

The proceeds of all these products will go to tsunami and earthquake relief. This is one bandwagon we should all jump on.

That's all the celebrity gossip for this week – stay tuned.

SIDEWORDS

The weekly Sidelines crossword puzzle

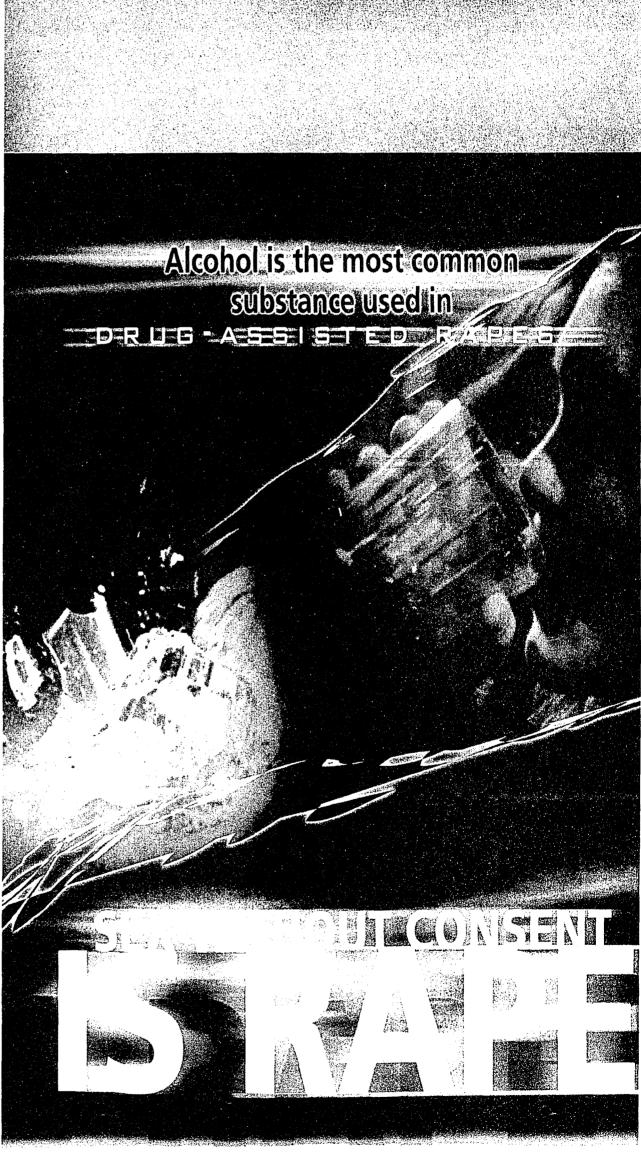


ACROSS

1- Old sailors; 6- Crown of the head; 10- Sketch; 14- Love affair; 15- Designer Schiaparelli; 16- Do followers; 17- All, musically; 18- Fly; 19- Med school subj.; 20- "___quam videri" (North Carolina's motto); 21- Trial of skill; 23- Traders; 25- Sort of; 26- At all; 27- Small change; 29- Appraise; 32- Red cosmetic; 33- Bumbler; 36- Mature; 37- Brings up; 38- Other, in Oaxaca; 39- Golfer Ernie; 40- Ezio Pinza, for one; 41- Facial expression used by Elvis Presley; 42- Country singer Travis; 43- Average guy; 44- Corn; 47- One playing alone; 51- Brotherhood; 54- Vincent Lopez's theme song; 55- Expel; 56- Mrs. Chaplin; 57- Short letters; 58- Actual; 59- Arguing; 60- Not proper; 61- Fashion mag; 62- Go out with; 63- Irritably impatient;

DOWN

1- Satisfied; 2- Divert; 3- ___ luck!; 4- Guardianship; 5- Hindu title; 6- Mexican money; 7- Baseball family name; 8- Boris Godunov, for one; 9- Wages; 10- Stage plays; 11- Continue a subscription; 12- Appliance brand; 13- Jocose; 21- Attempt; 22- Chip in; 24- Chemical ending; 27- Seashore; 28- Basic monetary unit of Greece; 29- College sr.'s test; 30- Afflict; 31- FedEx rival; 32- Breather; 33- Suffix with Capri; 34- 100 square meters; 35- At a great distance; 37- Locomotive track; 38- Person-to-person; 40- Soft cheese; 41- Impresario Hurok; 42- Gossip; 43- Happiness; 44- Preceding, poetically; 45- Porridge; 46- Like Fran Drescher's voice; 47- Declare; 48- Little bits; 49- Slumbered; 50- Delicious; 52- ____ bene; 53- Monogram ltr.; 57- It may be picked;









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