

# MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

EDITORIALLY INDEPENDENT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2008

VOL. 84 NO. 48

## INSIDE

### Student roughs it in Alaska



For four months, one student works day and night fishing for salmon on an Alaskan island

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### Gay like me

The third installment of our six-part series, *Walking In the Shoes of Others*, looks at a perspective of a gay student on campus

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After last season's 58-42 defeat at the hands of the Cardinals, the Blue Raiders are looking for revenge.

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## COMMUTE

Alumni Drive from Blue Raider Drive to Friendship Street will be closed for the fall semester for road improvements. With the closing of Alumni, there will be no access to the Library parking lot. During the construction period, the northern part of the parking lot by the Honors Building will be changed from green to white. The southern end of the lot by Ezell Hall will remain green for students. You will not be able to access the campus via Womack Lane.

Due to construction, several lots have been rezoned. All legal parking areas are designated by signs, painted stripes, or other marks. Be sure to check the posted signs BEFORE you park your automobile. If it is not marked, don't park!

For more information, visit [www.mtsu.edu/~parking](http://www.mtsu.edu/~parking).



Photo by Alex Blackwelder, photography editor  
Rutherford County Emergency Management and other agencies met at the MTSU police station to investigate a suspect for the fires in Miss Mary Hall and the threatening e-mails. All classes were canceled Thursday due to the threat.

## Dorm fires, threatening e-mails cancel classes

By SARAH LAVERY  
Editor In Chief

Additional reporting by Michael Stone, features editor and Alex Moorman, assistant news editor

This past Thursday, the FBI and Homeland Security flooded campus.

SWAT teams, Rutherford County Emergency Management and Special Operatives Tennessee Highway Patrol came to the scene. Although the FBI declared MTSU an official "No-Fly Zone" during the day, news helicopters circled the university. Rutherford County Police, Murfreesboro Police and Campus Police created a "command post" behind the Murphy Center and the Sports Hall of Fame.

President Sydney McPhee canceled all classes at noon Thursday and through Friday due to a "cred-

ible threat." Faculty and staff were asked to stay, but rumors—a bomb threat, an attack on campus, sightings of soldiers carrying automatic weapons and blazing fires on campus—abounded.

McPhee's official statement at the time of the sudden cancellation cited a series of "threatening e-mails and suspicious fires."

On Wednesday, Oct. 8, several campus e-mail clients received general but threatening e-mails. The author of the threat indicated that general damage and carnage would be done on campus Oct. 9. Campus security and administration has been mum on the exact content of the e-mails, but the threat was deemed "credible" enough to incite a campus-wide disruption.

Lisa Rollins from MTSU News

and Public Affairs said the newly-remodeled residence hall Miss Mary, part of Lyon Hall, was evacuated for a time Wednesday night. The setting of three small fires in campus dorms Wednesday and Thursday morning heightened concern.

Some news outlets have reported the malicious e-mails were directed at a specific faculty member, but Rollins confirmed that more than one administrator and a few deans were recipients.

But the university was never officially closed, though it has been reported otherwise.

In a press conference Thursday afternoon, Chief Peaster said officials took the fires and the e-mails—unsure at the time if they were con-

## E-mail suspect arrested

By TIFFANY GIBSON  
Campus News Editor

An MTSU freshman has been arrested and charged with terrorism and arson in connection with the e-mail threats and fires that canceled classes at MTSU Thursday.

Rutherford County Police apprehended 19-year-old Justin Davis, a

pre-professional dental hygiene major and Miss Mary resident, shortly after

5 p.m. on Thursday. Davis is being charged with three different counts of arson and one count of terrorism.

MTSU canceled classes because students and three campus police employees received anonymous threatening e-mails on Wednesday, Oct. 8. The e-mails were followed by a series of three fires on campus, including one in Miss Mary Resident Hall.

Campus police brought Davis in to talk about his roommate, who they suspected was involved with one of the incidents.

Peaster said that Davis began giving statements to detectives of



Justin Davis

THREATS, PAGE 2

ARREST, PAGE 2

## THE EVENTS THAT LED TO DAVIS' ARREST

Oct. 8, 2:58 p.m.	The fire alarm is pulled in Miss Mary Hall.	the week. MTSU faculty and staff are asked to resume office hours as normal.	A press conference is held at the Murphy Center parking lot.
Oct. 8, 7:01 p.m.	A third-floor kitchen fire is reported by the Miss Mary Hall front desk.	Oct. 9, 1:07 p.m.	Oct. 9, 5:00 p.m.
Oct. 8, 7:01 p.m.	A second fire is reported on the third floor kitchen in Mary Hall.	Oct. 9, 12:00 a.m.	Justin Davis is arrested on two counts of arson and one of terrorism and taken to the Rutherford County Adult Detention Center with a bond of \$500,000.
Oct. 9, 6:48 a.m.	All MTSU classes are canceled for the remainder of	Oct. 9, 3:30 p.m.	
		Oct. 9, 1:07 p.m.	Pi Kappa Phi fraternity holds "Pie-A-Kapp" outside of the KUC. President Sidney McPhee joins in on the festivities.

## Peck Hall evacuated for suspicious package

By BYRON WILKES  
Community News Editor

Authorities called for an evacuation of Peck Hall Wednesday morning so that a hazardous materials unit could inspect a suspicious package—later reported to contain paper towels—found near a bicycle rack.

"Some people said it was a towel, but we just honestly couldn't take the chance that it could have been something else," said Randy Weiler of MTSU News and Public Affairs. "We are just trying to put safety first."

The threat came days after a threatening e-mail which convinced the MTSU administration to cancel classes prematurely before fall break.

"After what happened last Thursday, I think today was just more pre-

cautionary," said Jennifer Shockley, sophomore chemistry major.

Two hazardous materials units, accompanied by three fire engines, two squad cars and an ambulance, answered the call after a potential threat was established, showing the seriousness with which MTSU and Murfreesboro authorities approached the situation following this past week's e-mail threat.

"I thought they handled it very well," said Jordan Fenton, freshman recording industry major.

MTSU officials originally canceled class for the remainder of the day until officials determined that the package posed no threat to either students or faculty and that use of the building could continue safely.

"We are going to leave some tape



Photo by Alex Moorman, assistant news editor  
Rutherford County Hazardous Materials Unit secures the area near Peck Hall.

SUBSTANCE, PAGE 2

Rape is  
**REAL.**

IT'S TIME TO TALK ABOUT RAPE  
**SO WE CAN  
PREVENT IT.**

 **TENNESSEE  
coalition**  
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& SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
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Educate yourself. Log on.  
**TN**blue.org  
**RAPE.** Its a reality.

 **Planned Parenthood**  
of Middle & East Tennessee, Inc.

"This project is funded under an agreement with the State of Tennessee."

# College radio to host benefit

By DAN POTTER  
Staff Writer

MTSU's student-run radio station will host its fall benefit concert tonight at Club 527 on West Main Street.

The Zombie Bazooka Patrol will headline tonight's show at Club 527, which benefits local college-radio station WMTS.

WMTS Murfreesboro will play host to performances by Nashville groups Canon Blue, Cactus's, the Champion and Murfreesboro's own Zombie Bazooka Patrol.

"We put the lineup this way to ensure a pretty good mix," said Elaine Pearce, WMTS promotions director.

Canon Blue is "a little Radiohead-ish," Pearce said, noting the band just returned from tour in Europe. "They're big over there," she said.

Zombie Bazooka Patrol guitarist Kevin "Toxic" Tillery said WMTS has done a lot for the group, which first played live on the station in 2006.

"The two shows that we've played on 88.3, I'd have to say were really fun and exhilarating - We got a chance to do a different style, do a little more acoustic," Tillery said. "It was really great to connect in a more raw form than normal."



Photo by Rachel Erwin, contributing photographer

The Zombie Bazooka Patrol will headline tonight's show at Club 527, which benefits WMTS.

Tillery said it's natural for the zombie-themed group, which plays dance rock with folk instruments, to return the favor by headlining the benefit, but really, they just love an audience.

"It's another ploy to get us out in the open, get people thinking: 'Oh hey, the ZBP! That's a band that exists, and that's a band that I really like,'" Tillery said.

The result is synergetic, Tillery continues.

"It's like if WMTS and the ZBP formed together, we're

like Voltron," Tillery said. "WMTS is the legs. WMTS runs us to the enemy and we just fight 'em."

Pearce, a senior business-management major, said the station is happy to play its part, because while it receives Student Government Association funding as a student organization, many of its daily activities depend on proceeds from benefits.

"If something breaks and we need to buy something new, then we have to use this money out of our account,"

Pearce said. "This money also goes toward promoting the station through apparel, stickers and other events."

WMTS has wrestled with a spat of technical issues this semester, ranging from software glitches to underground cables being cut by construction on campus. The station broadcasts from the Learning Resources Center, and is DJed by MTSU students and alumni.

Tonight's show is 18-and-up, and starts at 9 p.m. Cover is \$7.

## THREATS FROM PAGE 1

ected—into consideration when they made the decision to cancel classes.

According to MT Associate Vice President Jonathan Johnson, MTSU sent out e-mails Wednesday to alert students of the threat and also sent follow-up e-mails Thursday. MTSU Alert4U sent text messages to those students and faculty signed up for the service warning of the threat.

Some students, however, told Sidelines they did not receive the text message when it was initially sent out.

"It was decided by the Crisis Council—which includes President Sydney McPhee—at their 8 o'clock meeting that the emergency messages would have to be sent out," said Lucinda Lea, vice president of the information and technology division.

Jerry Moorton, freshman recording industry, was one of several students Sidelines questioned who said he didn't receive an alert. Moorton said

he signed up for the emergency text messaging system around the time of his freshman orientation, but still hadn't received an alert more than thirty minutes after McPhee canceled classes.

Travis Boyd, freshmans computer information systems major, said he also signed up for the emergency texts the first week of the school but hadn't received Thursday's text after an hour of the cancellation.

"I signed up for it just in case something like this would happen," Boyd said.

The MTSU Web site's alert notification page now includes a survey asking students whether or not they received it.

In a statement released Thursday, Governor Bredesen commended the university for its response to the incident.

"The university's prompt actions were absolutely warranted," he said. "I commend them for taking these measures to protect the university community."

## ARREST FROM PAGE 1

his own free will that led police to charge him with the crime, attributing probable cause.

"We believe at this point that he is connected with both [the e-mails and fires]," Peaster said.

Investigators believe Davis was working alone.

Davis is an Antioch, Tenn. native and is being held at the Rutherford County Adult Detention Center with a bond of \$500,000. His court date is scheduled for Dec. 25, but if he can't make bail within 10 days, he will have a preliminary hearing before a judge.

As of Oct. 15, Davis remains at the Rutherford County Adult Detention Center with no bail posted.

"When e-mails like this come out, we don't just ignore these things," Peaster said. "We haven't received a bomb threat, but the e-mails and fires that have been happening may be related."

Peaster said the sender of the e-mails detailed damage and killing people on campus if classes weren't canceled.

Neither specific vicinities on campus nor an individual was targeted in the e-mails.

"The [e-mail] says 'kill a bunch or destroy a bunch' and just do general carnage," Peaster said.

## PECK HALL FROM PAGE 1

up around the building, but we determined that there was no hazard in resuming use of the building," Weiler said.

As students and faculty milled around in droves, authorities on the scene declined to notify observers of the exact nature of the threat.

"A cop came in the room and told us we needed to get out of Peck Hall. He didn't seem worried, so we didn't really either," said Bradley Gotto, senior in liberal arts.

Students attending class in Peck Hall voiced mixed opinions of the handling of the incident.

"[Authorities] didn't really tell us much about what was going on," said Michael Moore, sophomore in aerospace who was in class during the occurrence. "Everything got really confusing. I got the MTSU alert text message af-

Peaster said that Davis e-mails either came from a Yahoo or Hotmail account. They did not come from an MTSU account, but came through an MTSU computer that could have been hacked from a different location.

Ronald Freeman, freshman business major and desk assistant for Lyon Hall, said he was there for the aforementioned fire last Wednesday.

"Someone had put an oven in the third floor kitchen," Freeman said. "It was really smoky, but everyone just thought that someone had forgotten to turn the stove off when they were cooking."

Freeman said the second fire took place between 7 and 7:30 p.m. and caused the whole floor to fill with smoke.

"Someone had put a bunch of paper in the stove of the third floor kitchen and lit paper bags on fire in the third floor lobby," Freeman said. "[On Thursday], a fire alarm was pulled in our building, and we had to evacuate everyone twice."

President Sidney McPhee said that campus has resumed its normal operations and released security since Davis has been arrested.

"Our university is bigger than a lot of cities and we students come from, and it's a very safe campus," McPhee said. "I would definitely not categorize our campus as a very unsafe campus."

ter I had been sitting outside for 20 minutes. It just wasn't organized there."

Moore was not the only person who didn't receive a text message during the incident. While many students and faculty did receive MTSU Alert4U's text message in a timely manner, several others reported receiving the message late or not at all.

"The fire department showed up 20 minutes before they let class out, and no one told us why they were there," Moore said. "But then we all noticed that more people were walking down the hall. So when class was over, I just walked to my next class, and a teacher came up to me and told me they had evacuated the building. I was told not to use a certain staircase, and when I got outside they had already taped off the building."

Neither MTSU President Sidney McPhee nor MTSU Campus Police Chief Buddy Peaster could be reached for comment.

<p><b>Thursday, October 23</b> <b>FIGHT SONG</b> Murphy Center 7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, November 5</b> <b>HORSE SHOE COMPETITION</b> Rec. Center 4:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Saturday, November 8</b> <b>HOME COMING PARADE</b> Middle Tennessee Blvd. 10:00 am <b>RAIDER WALK</b> Walnut Grove 12:30 pm <b>MTSU v. UL - MONROE</b> Floyd Stadium 2:30 pm</p>
<p><b>Monday, November 3</b> <b>PAINT THE HALLS BLUE CASINO NIGHT</b> JUB Tennessee Room 7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>Friday, November 7</b> <b>CHILI COOK-OFF</b> Murphy Center Lawn 5:00 pm <b>NPHC STEP SHOW</b> Murphy Center 7:30 pm</p>	
<p><b>Tuesday, November 4</b> <b>SWAP DAY @ THE KUC MTSU IDOL</b> JUB Tennessee Room 7:00 pm</p>		

Student Government Association Presents:

# HOMECOMING 2008

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# OPINIONS

## FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

### Why weren't we told more?

Last Thursday, classes were canceled because numerous threatening e-mails were sent to university administrators and police department employees.

An e-mail and text message telling students that classes were canceled was sent around noon, but the reasoning behind the dismissal was kept quiet from students, community members and even professors, who were instructed to stay on campus.

With only 8,500 students signed up for the text message alert system, many students wandered around campus, unaware of the events that were taking place. Several even failed to receive the campus-wide alert e-mail.

When arriving on the scene at the campus police department, a S.W.A.T. team was loading up in a pickup truck, and one policeman asked all of his men to take a good look at the picture of the suspect before heading to campus.

At the time, campus Police Chief Buddy Peaster said that he wasn't aware that a suspect had been identified.

Peaster told *Sidelines* reporters that threatening e-mails had been sent and could be in connection with a "fire" that occurred in Miss Mary Hall the evening before.

Speaking to a desk assistant in Lyon Hall revealed that "two fires" had taken place within 24 hours.

The second appeared to fill the whole third floor of the residence dorm with smoke to the point where students needed to be evacuated. Yet campus police hadn't heard anything about this incident.

In addition to facts being tossed around, rumors began circling that compared the situation to Virginia Tech. As reporters, we know not to believe everything we hear, but it's hard to compare facts when none are being presented.

We're not saying that the threats made in the e-mails weren't serious, but rather that things wouldn't have gotten so chaotic if students had been told what was going on instead of being left in the dark while a S.W.A.T. team swarmed campus.

It's understandable that administrators don't want bad publicity for the university, but students should come before damage control.

If something like Virginia Tech were to occur, we question whether or not students would be safe. If the campus-alert e-mail wasn't received by a great deal of students, then they might be in danger.

With various media crowding campus, Peaster finally called a press conference to reveal what was going on. Or at least what he was willing to admit was going on.

After listening to the same explanation that was given earlier, it was hard not to believe that there was more to the situation than what we were hearing.

We don't condemn campus police for the way the situation was handled because it was a collective decision made by the university. However, honesty isn't a bad thing when dealing with certain circumstances.

We appreciate the attempted concern for students' safety, but in order to ensure it in the future, they should be willing to give more information.

# Gay like me

A six-part series examining diversity on campus

Hispanic Gay  
Chinese Muslim  
Jewish Non-traditional

## Walking in the shoes of others

Hello, I am Katie Fowler, a current MTSU journalism major in my junior year, and I am going to attempt to convey to you what it has been like to be "Gay like Me".

As a teenager and young adult, I worked very hard at staying in the closet and keeping the secret that I was gay.

I was aware of a pervasive notion in my community that being gay was a horrible thing to be, and that gay people were to be condemned for their choice to behave "like that".

In my late teens, I realized that I wanted to have children and a family, and it was quite clear to me that those were options not on the table for gay people.

I did not make a master plan of action and decide to

**"I tried to ignore this entire part of myself. I failed."**

—KATIE FOWLER

hide being gay because that is not how life rolls along. Sometimes you find yourself swept up into your existence, and making sense of it as you go along.

I did try for a long time to put "gayness" into a category all mixed up in a purely sexual context, and having nothing to do with who I am. I tried to ignore this entire part of myself; I failed.

Life lived hiding is miserable and that inner misery leaks out onto everything you hold dear, and creeps into the areas of your life that you want to protect from negativity.

There are moments of

trepidation I remember. Moments when my heart would quicken, and then seem to stop, as a feeling of heaviness in my chest would set in. My face felt flush and hot as my mind raced. My palms sweat. I felt like I had to be guilty of something because I was certain this awful inner turmoil is for the guilty. I was about to reveal to people, *the people*, that I am gay.

Staying in any closet turned out to be far more complicated than just being who I am and risking the consequences.

While I do not believe any person should have to pay a price for living as they

are meant to live, that is not quite how the world works as of yet.

I have had some very bad moments since I revealed that I am gay, but I am happy to say MTSU has been a welcome surprise.

I worried about many things the night before our first day of classes. Would I fit in? As an older student, I wondered if the younger students would make room for me. Would I keep my voice or be intimidated?

All of these things crossed my mind, and I am happy to say that MTSU has been welcoming.

I still have those moments of trepidation that I wrote about earlier, but, for those just getting ready to embark on difficult journeys, I am happy to report everything, including being gay like me,

does get easier.

The following is a passage from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* that has always meant a lot to me.

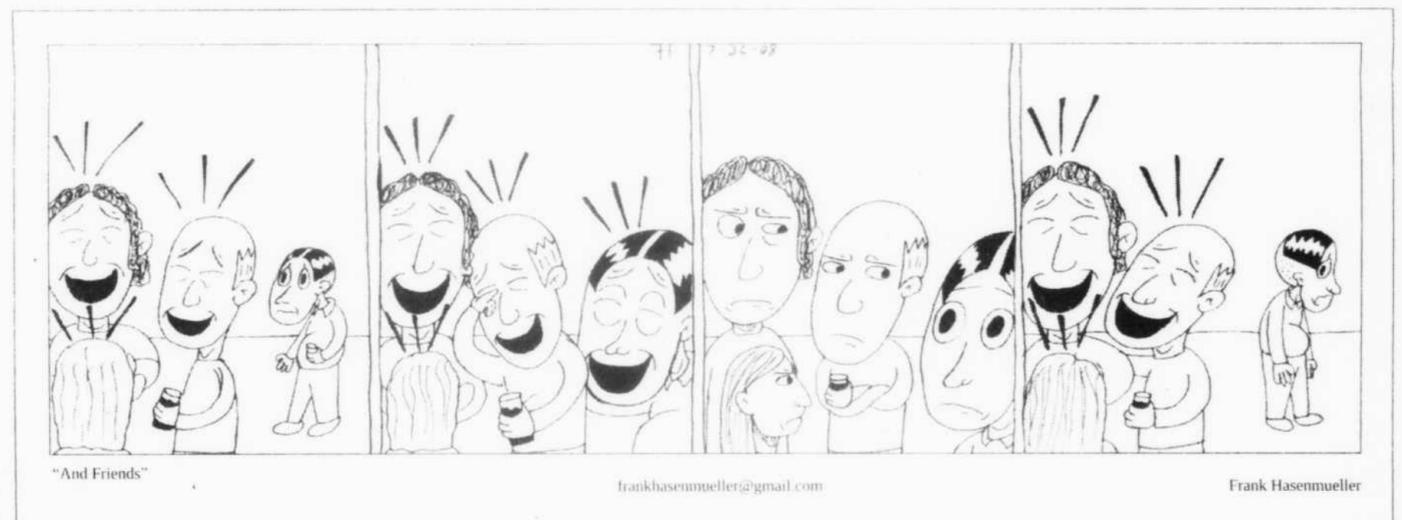
"Who are you?" said the Caterpillar.

This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, "I-I hardly know, sir, just at present—at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."

~ *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Katie Fowler is a junior journalism major and can be reached at [kcf2n@mtsu.edu](mailto:kcf2n@mtsu.edu). She is the second of six students featured in our six-week "Like Me" series.

## COMICS



## LETTERS

The college community is unique in a number of ways. Two differences, an endless supply of energy and a viewpoint not yet fully stained by cynicism, can help overcome many obstacles. College students rarely accept, "It can't be done." Hopefully these students are ready for the massive undertaking ahead of them - repairing a long-crippled democracy. First, can we agree that: 1. The legislative branch of our government is broken because it

does not adequately represent the will of the American people. 2. Any attempt to fix government by changing the Constitution is doomed to failure, due largely to the previous point, as well as America's extremely high regard for what the Founding Fathers left behind. 3. The only practical solution to this problem is to use a separate power mechanism outside of government, such as lobbying, to affect positive change. If agreement exists,

then maybe we can begin to look for solutions. What if thousands of like-minded citizens banded together, choosing one individual from their numbers to represent them before Congress the way a lobbyist might? While 10,000 voices, each representing a single citizen, might be overwhelming to a Congressman and easy to ignore, a single voice, representing 10,000 citizens, would not be so easily dismissed. Imagine if there real-

ly were people with political muscle that were genuinely concerned about the challenges ordinary people face. These new representatives, Proxies, might be the key to reaffirming the true meaning of democracy. It should be left to America to decide whether or not to fight back in this way. I, for one, have grown tired of shrugging my shoulders while we bury the future of this nation.

John Naylor, New Jersey

### Letters Policy

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

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

## FACES IN THE CROWD

**Do you think MTSU handled Thursday's incident appropriately?**



Baxter

"If they hadn't canceled school and something had happened it would have been terrible."

Kawan Baxter, senior Sociology



Stokes

"I think it was handled appropriately. We can't trust someone who is making those kinds of threats."

Justin Stokes, junior Mass Communication



McReynolds

"They did handle it well, because it's life-threatening, and they can't take that lightly."

Aaronetta McReynolds, sophomore Business



Moore

"They did, especially since there have been real school shootings."

Bedrick Moore, junior Liberal Studies

**DID YOU RECEIVE THE TEXT ALERT LAST THURSDAY?**

**online** TELL US ONLINE AT MTSUSIDELINES.COM

# FEATURES



**WHO DO YOU THINK WON THE DEBATE?**

BASED ON VOTES FROM MTSUSIDELINES.COM.

## Working for an unforgettable experience

A student works in Alaska for money as well as a time he will never forget

By **BEN UNDERWOOD**  
Contributor Writer

My forehead presses against the window as the beaded rain runs across the surface and strains my eyes for my first glimpse of Bear Island. The grey water of Uyak Bay rolls below us as a gust of wind rocks the small seaplane, turning my stomach.

As the pilot banks the plane over the sheltered channel, I grip my seat. We are coming in for a landing so we can taxi to a beach in Kodiak, Ala.

My first few nights, I sleep in a narrow bunk in Kodiak Harbor on the Cowbo, a boat that I would spend the summer riding anchor near our fishing sites. The Cowbo's claim to fame is the fact that it appeared for a split second in the film *The Guardian*.

On May 1, I begin my four-month commercial salmon fishing contract in the sleet and rain of Kodiak.

The first two days, we work in the city before boarding the seaplane and take off for Bear Island.

Bear Island is a tiny island located in the fertile fishing grounds on Northwestern edge of Kodiak Island. It houses Fields and Sons Inc., one of the largest family-owned salmon fishing operations in Alaska. The Fields use a small fleet of aluminum skiffs, a square bottom boat used for fishing and various other purposes, equipped with outboards and motors. In order to set and pick up massive nets,

setting is fishing with long nets attached to the shore that stretch out into the water on a long line secured by multiple anchors. Crews mend and maintain the nets during closures spent onshore.

I join a crew of college-age guys, and we begin learning the knots and techniques that will keep us safe on land and at sea. We practice every knot until the process becomes second nature, which was important because when seconds count, we could not hesitate.

The adjustment to life in Alaska is a challenge. We conserve water on the island, so the crew showers only once a week. Our shower house,

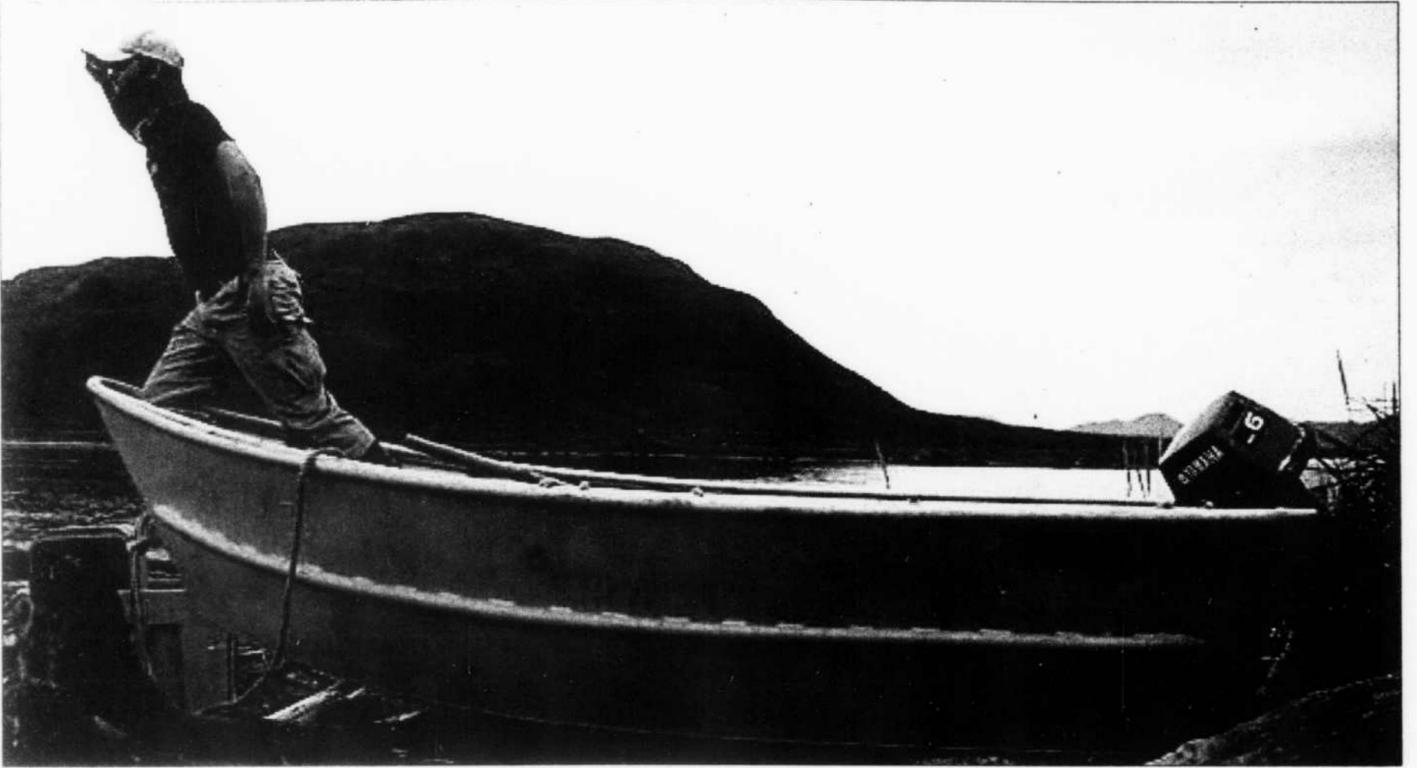


Photo courtesy Ben Underwood

Ben surveys the waters along the shores of Kodiak, Ala. for salmon aboard a skiff. Kodiak is the town where he spent all four months of his summer break from school.

called a "banva," heats up like a sauna. Often crewmen dare each other to work up a sweat in the steaming room then run down the beach and plunge in the numbing ocean.

Mail is slow and sporadic because storms often force airports to close and ground mail planes. A package arrives from my parents one month after they send it.

The main crew bunkhouse

Paul, Rob and I quickly see Bear Island living up to its name. We enjoy views of Kodiak bears, bald eagles, deer and fin whales daily as we work. And working we are, for Alaska is not a vacation.

I am trading long summer days working in a fast food restaurant for longer days of fishing, mending nets and pouring cement to repair foundations.

Rookie mistakes make for bad days in the unforgiving wilderness. Failing to tie a knot correctly on a calm day earns a tongue-lashing. Failing during a storm carries heavier consequences. It is

also a good idea to remember to roll hip boots all the way up before wading into the frigid water. Nothing ruins a day like losing feeling in your toes. I learned that lesson from personal experience.

"Did you remember your boots this time?" my fellow fishermen tease. The ribbing begins each time the crew tramps from the beach warehouse to the ferry skiff. I laugh at my own mistake and join in the jokes at my expense.

After unpacking and organizing the camp, the crew

can't wait to begin fishing, but we don't do as much as we hoped.

Alaska's Department of Fish and Game controls the fishing season, and its biologists monitor the salmon numbers in order to maintain a healthy population. Alas-

kan salmon season begins in June and continues into early September. During a strong season, biologists will open up salmon fishing and only close it for a few days once or twice during the three-month span.

But 2008 proves to be a dif-

ficult year for wild salmon. Fishing grounds are often closed due to dwindling populations and low numbers across the West Coast. California and Oregon suffer the

ALASKA, PAGE 6

**"I am trading long summer days working in a fast food restaurant for longer days of fishing, mending nets and pouring cement to repair foundations."**

-Ben Underwood



Photo courtesy Ben Underwood

Ben, fifth from the left, poses in front of Fields & Sons' main building with his fellow fishermen.

## Age doesn't keep one local band down

**BAND OF THE WEEK**

By **LAURA RAINES**  
Staff Writer

A thick crowd mills around an enjoying music and drinks at the newly opened Blue Rooster on The Square.

The bartenders can barely keep up with the orders from patrons, but they keep smiles on their faces as they keep the beverages flowing. What's the main attraction that brought the crowds to the bar that night? A Nashville-based band named Stretta.

When the band takes the stage, everyone at the bar

cheers. And as the members begin to rock, people crowd the stage and dance to the popish rock flowing from the band's instruments.

Even the people in the poolroom and the open deck area tap their feet and sway to the music.

As they play the night away, more and more people crowd the front of the room to get a closer look at where the music is coming from.

At the end of the set, Stretta shuts down and packs up as people applaud the performance. Some members relax and take drinks at the bar. Others slowly load equipment outside on the curb and

await pickup.

Bassist/vocalist Kenny Myers talk about the beginnings of the band.

"We came together in a very conventional way four years ago," Myers says. "A few of us met through classified ads, and the rest of us came into this project through referrals and word of mouth."



Photo courtesy Stretta

Debra Geiger and Jen Myers keep the crowd entertained at a Wal-Mart corporate party.

**online**

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**ALASKA**  
FROM PAGE 5

worst with a complete closure of the states' seasons.

The crew works hard through May nonetheless, launching skiffs, dropping anchors and breaking nets out of storage. We count down the days until the nets will go in the water and we can finally start earning our money.

And finally, that day arrives. The feeling is electric as the crew and I share breakfast before we suit up in our bright orange raingear and climb into the waiting skiffs. I feel nervous because of my lack of experience. Working on the water is difficult and it is easy to become overwhelmed by all the activities happening at once.

"You have to kiss your first fish," Paul tells me as we approach our first net together. "It's for good luck."

I share a skiff with Paul and fellow fisherman Elijah Emmons for our first pick. This is Paul's second year and Elijah, 22, has come back for his third year as a crewman. I think the veterans are joking with me until Paul pulls out the first salmon and kisses it before placing it in the holding tote. Elijah follows suit and both wait as I fumble with my first fish.

Reluctantly, I swallow my inhibitions, tuck up and show some love for my very first catch of the summer.

We fish for all five species of Pacific salmon: sockeye, chinook, pink, king and coho, in the rivers of Kodiak. Sockeye and red salmon are the most valuable types.

"Money fish!" Elijah exclaims as he hoists a large red salmon in the stern and holds it up for inspection. More red salmon means better pay-



Photo courtesy Ben Underwood  
Ben stands in front of the plane that brought him and his fellow fishermen to Kodiak.

checks since the crew receives a share in the final gross of the company.

"Everything depends on the weather," Paul says. "If the weather is good, then fishing doesn't feel like work at all."

His advice proves prophetic on the vessel. Calm, clear days when the sun sparkles off the water to reflect silver flashes of salmon waiting feels like vacation. But numerous storms and cloudy days make everyone appreciate good weather.

Kodiak weather is seemingly more turbulent than world politics. The days often begin promising because of clear skies and easy wind. But sometimes, days evolve into severe winds accompanied by downpours of rain.

Weather predictions save lives in places like Kodiak. People's safety and livelihood is affected by the elements each and every day.

The Shelikof Strait, which separates Kodiak from the Alaskan mainland, boasts frigid waters, massive tides and frequent heavy winds.

On one occasion, as we are fishing in the Shelikof, Rob neglects to set a pole in the

starboard pocket as a safeguard and the running line slips loose. He's knocked overboard into the icy water. His mistake is a dangerous one, but fortunately he manages to grab the net's running line. He holds on until another crewman can reach him and pluck him back into the skiff.

The crew takes a rare day off on the Fourth of July to visit another fishing camp and celebrate with other families and crews. Participants mix and mingle over potluck and beers. We find shelter from mosquitoes in a warehouse where we join in familiar choruses with new friends strumming of weathered guitars.

On our boat ride home, a signal flare lights the twilight above Larsen Bay's cannery. The red ball of light lazily down over the tiny village. For one day, there is not a single sign of distress.

As the summer continues, fish counts are lacking. We question the biologists daily and the judgments that are keeping us from fishing. We start days at noon with de-

termined attitudes, stretching our nets and hoping for

a massive haul. Yet time after time, we finish the process with little to show for our efforts.

The crew tries to remain positive in the face of a slow season. We work to improve the island's facilities. Our crew becomes the most excellent net menders the island has ever seen. We tie thousands of tiny knots to shore up every weak spot that will last the sea.

Slowly, salmon totals grow. But it's not enough, for the summer draws to a close without the massive fish numbers of past years. Total counts are up, but lack of supply drives prices up and helps compensate for losses.

The day finally comes when I watch my last sunset from

a grassy knoll on the western side of Bear Island. The bright orange and red hues blaze against the softer white of a snowcapped mountain range across the strait. Final meals with the crew feel different than previous ones, as we know we are about to leave for home.

On our last day, we clean our rooms and load a skiff to meet the incoming plane that will transport us away.

Paul, Elijah, fisherman David Barr, 20, and I climb aboard the waiting floatplane and rise into the bright Alaskan sky with a spray of water. I see the wide beautiful scene below and high green hills fall away, and after just four months, I feel like I am leaving home.

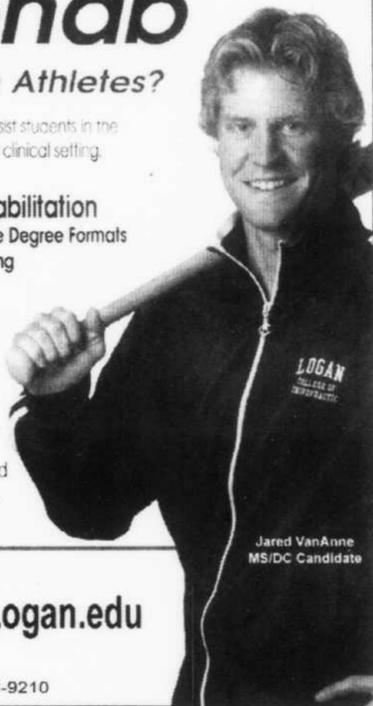
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# SIDELINES

# Student Media Town Hall Meeting

Middle Tennessee Television and *MTSU Sidelines* are offering an opportunity for students and community members to speak their mind about issues surrounding our campus. In an event that will be open to the public, the Student Government Association officers will be sitting on a panel to answer questions that will be submitted before and during the program.

**WHAT:**

"Town Hall" meeting starting at 8 p.m.

**WHEN:**

Monday, Oct. 20

**WHERE:**

Learning Resource Center, room 221

**Scheduled Speakers Include:**



**Sondra Wilson**  
SGA President



**Brandon McNary**  
SGA Executive Vice President and Speaker of the Senate



**Nathan Haynes**  
SGA Election Commissioner



**Jamie Boyd**  
SGA Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs

# SPORTS



Photo By Alex Blackwelder

Quarterback Joe Craddock leads the offense through drills during the week. MT will head to Louisville this Saturday for a rematch of last year's epic showdown.

## Cardinals rematch highly anticipated

By CASEY BOWMAN  
Assistant Sports Editor

This Saturday will mark the return of what has arguably been Middle Tennessee's most compelling out-of-conference football series, as the MT Blue Raiders once again head down I-65 to Louisville for another battle with the Cardinals.

While Louisville holds the edge on this young series, 2-0, both contests have been the type to fill up the highlight reels.

Last season, MT and Louisville battled in an epic shootout on a nationally televised stage. While this year won't be nationally televised, there is hope for another good matchup.

MT (2-4 overall and 1-3 in conference play) will look to right a ship that has veered away off course and headed toward a whirlpool. A win at Louisville would undoubtedly keep the ship afloat.

Quarterback Joe Craddock will look to pick up the Louisville defense as he did last season, but after a shaky performance against Florida International, Craddock will most likely be splitting more time with Sophomore QB Dwight Dasher, who sparked the MT offense last week.

"We are going to go through this week and watch them both practice because I believe in competition," Stockstill said. "Joe played very well the first five games but he was off a little on Saturday. I don't want to make a knee-jerk reaction but I think the way Dwight played, based on the performance in that game, he deserves more playing time. We will go through this week of practice and have a plan for Saturday."

After the disappointing loss to FIU, MT will have no choice but to come out with guns blazing if they wish to keep up with Louisville's high-powered offense. Whilst the Cardinals may not have the names of Brohm, Urrutia, or Douglas anymore, you wouldn't be able to tell when you look at their stat sheet.

Louisville is averaging a superb 203.4 yards a game with their rushing attack, while only allowing 82.6 yards a game out of their opponents. MT is only averaging 83.8 yards a game on the

ground. Through the air, Louisville is right on par with their running game, putting 204.6 yards of output a game behind the arm of Hunter Cantwell, whom the Blue Raiders actually are familiar with from their first encounter in 2006 when Cantwell was playing in place of an injured Brian Brohm. MT linebacker Danny Carmichael was on the field

**"I know we are ready to play and our guys are excited and we have to get this nasty feeling from last week out of our guts."**

RICK STOCKSTILL  
MT HEAD COACH

for last season's contest, and said the defense knows what they'll have to do to keep Louisville off of the scoreboard.

"Last year we had a lot of missed assignments and gave up three or four big plays for touchdowns," Carmichael said. "Two of those were in the first plays of the first two drives of the game. I think if we can limit the big plays and stop the run we will be alright."

MT had been steadfast

in their passing attack this year, but FIU was able to shut down the Blue Raiders and held them to just 72 total yards through the air.

Louisville will certainly attempt to do the same thing and force MT to run the ball, which is something they have not done successfully all season, with the exception of the FIU game.

Against FIU, the Blue Raiders were able to break through on the ground with 171 net yards, and they will need that production again when they face Louisville.

Running back Phillip Tanner stressed the importance of the entire offense coming together to get the job done, especially in the running game.

"We have been working on it all season and it all came together," Tanner said. "In games when we don't have good running games I would say it is partially my fault and partially the linemen. But when we come together as a team we get it

done." While the stats show the Blue Raiders have struggled on the ground, the stat sheet also shows another glaring obstacle that the Blue Raiders will have to overcome if they want any chance at competing with the Cardinals again.

For the season, MT has scored a total of three points in second quarter action. That's a combined total. Louisville, on the other hand, has amassed 77 total points in second quarter action this year. Altogether, the Blue Raiders are being outscored in first half action by a count of 23 to 71.

MT is a second-half team; there is no denying it. However, if they want to keep their ship out of this whirlpool of failure, they will have to play some ball early on to do so.

Stockstill said that his team will be up and ready to go Saturday, as they look forward to erasing FIU from their memories.

"I know we are ready to play and our guys are excited and we have to get this nasty feeling from last week out of our guts," Stockstill said.

Kickoff for Saturday's matchup will be at 2:30 p.m.

## 'Teflon Tilford' makes All-SBC



Outside the Pocket  
Chris Martin

This past Friday, the Sun Belt Conference released its preseason superlatives.

There weren't too many surprises on the All-SBC teams, save for one name listed on the second team: Domic Tilford.

For those who are unfamiliar with Tilford, he's a senior guard for South Alabama and averaged 12.5 points, 2.5 rebounds and two assists a game last season. Those numbers are certainly worthy of all-conference consideration.

However, this summer Tilford's career at USA looked to be over after he was arrested in Louisville, Ky. on felony drug possession and tampering with physical evidence charges. According to the Louisville Courier-Journal, it was his third run-in with the law since Sept. 2006, and he was suspended indefinitely following the drug charges.

That's not the end of the story, though.

It is also the third time in two years that Tilford has had charges dropped in the state of Kentucky, where he was named "Mr. Basketball" in 2005. In every case, the charges have been dismissed because the police have failed to appear in court.

According to the message boards, Tilford has been reinstated and, judging by his placement on the All-SBC second team, poised to make big contributions for the Jaguars, but one can't help but be suspicious regarding "Teflon Tilford."

When searching "Domic Tilford" on the Courier-Journal's Web site, the page will ask if you meant "demonic delivered," and maybe that is a more appropriate search query.

In Kentucky, it would appear that Tilford really is a "demonic delivered" considering charges against him always seem to be conveniently dismissed.

In his defense, Tilford's previous charges (trespassing and loitering) haven't made you want to keep your children out of his reach. But the most recent charges were much more severe.

This is not necessarily an indictment against Tilford; after all, it wasn't his decision to drop the charges. It's not really a wag of the finger toward USA, either. If Tilford hasn't been found guilty of any legal wrongdoing, then there's no reason he should be suspended. He will probably be one of the more productive players in the Sun Belt, and the Jaguars aren't going to suspend one of their best players if it's not warranted.

The party who comes out looking like a fool in this situation is the legal system in Louisville.

I'm not completely familiar

## Boogie named Preseason SBC Player of the Year

By TONY STINNETT  
MT Athletic Communications

This time last year Middle Tennessee's Desmond "Boogie" Yates was named the preseason All-Sun Belt Conference third team.

He evidently gained a great deal of respect from the league's coaches in a one-year span because they voted the Blue Raider junior forward the Sun Belt Preseason Player of the Year after a breakout sophomore campaign that saw him earn first-team All-SBC honors and help lead MT to the con-

ference tournament championship game.

If Yates remembers what got him to this point, MT coach Kermit Davis believes his talented frontcourt performer who presents major mismatch problems for opponents can have another sensational season.

"Desmond and I have talked a lot about this that last year he was not on one preseason team and now he is the Preseason Player of the Year," Davis said. "How did he get there? He has done it with hard work, but he has to understand it gets even

tougher now because he has earned that respect. Boogie is sensational to coach, he works hard and he practices hard."

"He has put in an unbelievable amount of work since his freshman year. What he did the last 18 months with strength and conditioning has made him a better player and his hard work is paying off."

In addition to Yates being named Preseason Player of the Year and landing a subsequent spot on the All-SBC first team, senior guard Kevin Michael also earned pre-

season honors when he was voted to the second team and is listed among the top 10 players in the SBC.

"Kevin has a good talent, and every coach that plays against him respects his talent, his toughness and how he plays the game," Davis said. "He is a coach's son and he has grown up around the game. He does things the right way. Kevin could leave Middle Tennessee as one of the best point guards in school history."

Both players are putting up numbers that have them among the best in program

history.

Yates has scored double figures in 70 percent of 60 career games and with 860 career points, he is on pace to become the 28th player to enter the 1,000-point club during his junior season. His career field goal percentage of .558 is ninth all-time, demonstrating the ability score around the basket, knock down mid-range jumpers and shoot for a high percentage beyond the 3-point line.

**Boogie**  
FROM PAGE 7

Yates said the preseason recognition is appreciated but added it would not affect his approach to the upcoming season. He said the expectations cannot exceed those he has of himself.

"I embrace the expectations," Yates said. "Coach has high expectations of me, but I have more expectations of myself so I embrace everything. It doesn't change the way I prepare for games. I still work the same way I did last year, just a little harder. I embrace all the expectations for me and for this team."

Kanaskie has put together one of the most complete careers of any Blue Raider

and has cemented himself as one of the program's top playmakers as a three-year starter. He enters his senior year fourth all-time at MT in assists (365), fifth all-time in 3-point field goals made (145), ninth all-time for free-throw percentage (.796), and he is on pace to enter the 1,000-point club with 873 career points.

"I think I've made good progress [in my career]," Kanaskie said. "I just want to win conference. And I hope to win conference, and to do that. I like [the make of this year's team]. We have some work to do. I think the new guys fit in pretty well, and we have some experienced guys that have been here for four years. I really like our team."

**Tilford**  
FROM PAGE 7

with the proceedings dealing with Tilford's, but when someone avoids prosecution in the same manner three times, it's hard to not be skeptical about the circumstances.

Kentuckians sure like their basketball, and apparently the judges are no different. The Courier-Journal article says that the judge in Tilford's drug case, Sean R. Delahanty, referred to Tilford as "Mr. Basketball," said he

had watched Tilford play basketball and even told him he could "probably make a living playing basketball" if he got his act together.

Thanks to Delahanty's dismissal of the case, Domonic Tilford found his way back onto the USA basketball team and on the SBC's preseason all-conference second team. Maybe now he can work towards earning that "living playing basketball."

*Chris Martin is a junior electronic media journalism major. He can be reached at slsports@mtsu.edu*

**MT basketball earns honors, but questions remain**

Usually teams that are picked to win their division don't have much to worry about.

Coaches look at their rosters and past success and make an educated guess on who can win it. While MT's fan base may celebrate both basketball teams being picked first in the SBC East, the teams themselves should feel like they have something to prove.

Before there was Amber Holt, Chrissy Givens or Rick Insell, basketball was Lady Raiders' sport. In the program's 32-year history, they have won 13 regular season conference championships, 10 conference tournament titles and appeared in the NCAA Tournament 11 times. Last year, the story of the year was Amber Holt. This year, the casual fan is searching for a reason to come to the game.

Last year, the Lady Raiders looked like a one-woman task force at times. In one



**The Lowdown**  
Richard Lowe

game, Holt broke the program's scoring record while the rest of the team combined for only 20 points. This made people question the talent of the other players, the coaching skills of Insell and the future of the program.

Most of the criticism has seemed to die down but the question remains: How successful can this year's team be?

Belmont transfer Alysha Clark looks as if she can follow in the footsteps of past stars, but you can't tell until she plays Sun Belt competition. According to the Sun Belt coaches, point guard Chelsia Lymon is the one bright spot on this team considering they voted her onto the All-Sun Belt second team. To compare, Western Kentucky has three players on the All-Sun Belt team, and one of their players is the preseason player of the year. The SBC coaches must know just some of its parts. On the men's side, many of the fans, students and alumni are split on their feelings of Kermit Davis. While you can't deny the fact that Davis has been successful in his time here, it hasn't been enough to some fans.

Davis is now the longest-tenured coach in the conference, but that may end soon if the team doesn't win the tournament in Hot Springs in March. Many of the same parts of the team that surprised the Sun Belt and made it to the conference finals last year have returned.

Desmond Yates was named preseason player of the year and, along with Kevin Kanaskie, was named to the all-Sun Belt team.

The number one question with the men's team is "Can Coach Davis finally win the big one?"

It certainly helps that this year's version of the Blue Raiders has the right mix of old and new players. It also helps that several teams are either rebuilding or just have nothing.

The number one mistake for both teams would be if they feel like the conference is going to lie down for them.

Neither MT team will sneak up on anyone so they better be ready to play from game one.

*Richard Lowe is a senior electronic media journalism major. He can be reached at rlowe@mtsu.edu*

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