



Audiences thoroughly love 'Millie'

In [flash], inside



Middle Tennessee State University

SIDELINES

The university's
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student newspaper

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Opinions mixed about harassment claim

Some reserve judgement while others take sides

By Erica Rodefer
Staff Writer

Students expressed disgust and support for President Sidney McPhee regarding the sexual harassment allegations brought against him Oct. 6 and withdrawn on Oct. 14.

"I think the board should probably investigate it and figure out whether we need a new

president or not," Allen Eby, a sophomore mass communications major said.

"I think that anybody who has a mysterious medical emergency as soon as people start getting wind of his possible indiscretions, and disappears as soon as the news breaks, is looking pretty shady," Eby said.

"If he won't even try to exonerate himself, then he's probably

guilty," Eby added.

The president checked himself into a hospital for "stress-related problems" several days after he was notified of the claim, according to a *Sidelines* article published online of Oct. 17.

"Sexual harassment should not be tolerated in any form or any place especially by people in power, like the president," fresh-

man Sean Freeman agreed.

"If he is guilty what's that saying about academic integrity, and all, if the president isn't even being moral," Freeman said.

But not all students share these opinions.

Danielle Baker met President McPhee when she received a scholarship at a banquet.

"He prayed at the banquet, and he seems like a good Christian man," Baker said. "His wife is a very nice woman,

and she's an attractive woman. He wouldn't have to sexually harass anybody. I don't think it's true."

Baker implied that the accuser had ulterior motives.

"A lot of people do that kind of stuff for attention, and the fact that she was like hiding her name and everything," Baker said.

"That's like saying 'I'm going to say he sexually harassed me, but I'm not going to say who I am or anything besides that -

just so long as I get his reputation in the mud," she said.

Baker is not alone in her suspicion.

"I definitely don't think it's true," Lynn Emberton said. "Women do this all the time and it isn't true, especially with men that are in places of power."

Philosophy professor Jack Purcell said the public shouldn't rush to judgment.

See Opinions, 4

Horse death leads to fight

By L.P. Anderson
Staff Reporter

A horse's death sparked a scuffle between two men at the Tennessee Miller Coliseum on Saturday, according to an MTSU police report.

MTSU Police arrested James O'Kelley, 55, after the resident of Hendersonville repeatedly hit Buist Carr, 55, of Gallatin, the report stated. The affray occurred during the horse show, Walking For The Children.

Carr confronted O'Kelley that night to collect a debt of \$1,177, Carr said during a telephone interview Monday. O'Kelley had sheltered his walking horse for several months at a stable Carr owns near Nashville, he added.

The walker died of colic the day after O'Kelley moved his horse from the stable on Aug. 29, Carr said, adding O'Kelley then stopped payment on a check for boarding costs and commission due Carr for selling a horse for O'Kelley.

"The horse was fine when it left my stables," Carr said. "I don't think I did nothing wrong other than take his licks."

But the stable owner did plenty wrong, O'Kelley said during a telephone interview Monday.

"It's awful strange that you take a horse from one place and something happens to it that afternoon," he said. "When he was laying down, we knew something was wrong."

O'Kelley first boarded two years ago, Carr's barn roughly two years ago, O'Kelley said, adding this is his first horse that became ill or died while in Carr's care.

O'Kelley said he stopped payment on the check because Carr was not entitled to a payment after killing O'Kelley's horse. But when Carr confronted him about the money, O'Kelley said he had to defend himself.

"He got right dead in my face, and there were a few words spoken," O'Kelley said. "He wanted his money."

MTSU Public Safety transported O'Kelley to the Rutherford County jail where he was held on \$2,500 bond, a county sheriff's deputy said during a telephone interview Wednesday.

Charged with simple assault, O'Kelley is to appear Nov. 3 in county General Sessions Court, the deputy added. ♦

Miss Black and Gold



Photo by Micah Miller | Staff Photographer

Sophomore broadcast journalism major Danielle Colburn was crowned 2003 Miss Black and Gold at the 19th Annual Miss Black and Gold Pageant on Tuesday in the Tucker Theatre. The pageant was sponsored by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

American Indians hold ceremony

By Liz Karlson
Staff Writer

Last week, MTSU's Native American Student Association held a dedication ceremony with programs including a sacred pipe ceremony, a storytelling session and traditional music.

In honor of Tennessee Native American History Month, musician and ceremony leader J.J. Kent and story-keeper Fred Bradley,

educated students on the traditions of the Oglala-Lakota, Cherokee and Choctaw tribes.

The evening started with the sacred pipe ceremony around 6 p.m. Around 20 students gathered in front of the James Union Building. They were asked to sit in a circle and take off their shoes as part of participation. The ceremony included the passing of the Red Stone, praying over the sacred pipe and then the

smoking of the pipe. All students participated.

The sacred pipe originated around 19 generations ago with the Oglala-Lakota people, said Kent, who belongs to that tribe.

"The pipe was originally given to the Lakota people many years ago by a messenger of the Great Spirit, who we refer to as the White Buffalo Cat Woman who brought us the original

See Tradition, 3



Photo by James Harris | Staff Photographer

Trash thrown out of the dorm piles up outside of Cummings Hall. At least one student has been fined for littering.

Students toss trash from their windows

Grounds surrounding dormitory littered with refuse from residents

By L.P. Anderson
Staff Reporter

Residents of Cummings Hall routinely drop pennies from their windows, targeting students near the seven-story dormitory.

Other students routinely heave trash bags and fling pizza boxes out dormitory windows, Cummings Hall resident Sara Eason said Monday. The freshman said an MTSU policy asks that students throw their garbage into dumpsters near the dormitory.

Yet, MTSU officials and Cummings Hall residents ignore much of the littering that occurs here, Eason added.

"They throw (things) out of the windows all the time," she said. "It looks pretty nasty when you look on the ground."

Sarah Sudak, director of Housing and Residential Life at MTSU, could not be reached this week for comment.

Richard Smith, assistant director of Facilities Services at MTSU, would not comment on this story. Facilities Services heads the maintenance and custodial work at residence halls.

"That's something that the hall staff will have to deal with," he said

during a telephone interview last week.

But MTSU officials do attempt to curb the littering at Cummings Hall, said Yolanda Flagg, resident assistant for the second floor of the dormitory that houses roughly 300 students.

The university will charge students \$20 if a student throws from a window enough trash to fill a standardized garbage bag, she added Monday. And MTSU posts resident assistants along the perimeter of Cummings Hall at the end of each semester, as students vacate their dormitory room, when littering is most rampant.

Resident assistants have met moderate success in catching residents who throw their garbage out dormitory windows, Flagg said, adding a student was nabbed three days ago.

"But unless you're standing behind the dorm, looking at the windows, you're not going to catch people throwing trash out the windows," she said.

And so residents continue throwing pennies and bananas on students near Cummings Hall, Flagg said.

The rate of littering has remained constant in the past two years, said

See Litter, 3

Bedside manner examination now required for doctors



Photo by Tiffany Everts | Staff Photographer

Junior nursing students Debbie Barnett and Chris Etheridge practice bedside manner on a mannequin.

By Leah Massey
Staff Writer

Good bedside manner has always been emphasized for nursing students, but medical schools have only recently started acknowledging the importance of this type of care. Nursing students have been tested on their bedside manners for years. Now, medical students that will be future doctors and physicians will also be tested on their bedside manners.

National Healthcare Chair of Excellence Suzanne Prevost explained that bedside manner determines how satisfied a patient is with the health care he

or she has received.

Patients that are treated rudely are less likely to return to the same place for their health care needs, or may attribute bad bedside manners to all hospital staff.

"Bedside manner is an extremely important component of health care delivery," Prevost said, "including care provided by physicians, nurses, pharmacists and various therapists."

She added that therapeutic communication, interpersonal relations, empathy, compassion, respect, courtesy and appropriate physical contact are all aspects and components of

proper bedside manner.

Bedside manners are taught mostly through examining case studies and role modeling in clinical settings.

To test bedside manner, students are observed in clinical practice settings. They also take written exams with case studies in which they must explain the correct way to react in each given situation.

"We can evaluate bedside manner by observing how students actually interact with patients and families in clinical educational settings such as hospitals or clinics," Prevost

See Exams, 3

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Opinions: Public should withhold judgment, professor says

Continued from 1

"In this situation, the basic principle of innocent until proven guilty is thrown aside," Purcell said. "The fact that someone makes an allegation doesn't mean we should assume they are guilty, but people do. It's just bad reasoning."

essarily be played out in the public arena, he added.

"The parties agreed to settle between themselves so I think this is a private matter," Purcell said. "If he did do it, clearly that is a bad thing. But it's not for me to decide punishment."

Some students, however, were in the middle or felt it is still too early to have an opinion

on the subject.

"I think I'd have to know what really happened to have a strong opinion on it," Zack Denton said. "Because I wouldn't want to accuse somebody of doing something falsely - not saying that that's the case - I have no idea what the details are."

"Also they should be very

careful about compliments they make on someone else's appearance because those things can be misconstrued," he added.

Frank Kennedy, a senior recording industry major, was concerned about the effect the scandal would have on the university.

"I hope it is not true because it would make the university

and the president look bad," Kennedy said.

"It tarnished the reputation of the school and might make recruitment for the university more difficult."

Bryan Pope, senior nursing major, also considered the fallout from the scandal.

"For the sake of the university if it can be dealt with private-

ly that would be better," said Bryan Pope, senior nursing major. "If they can deal with it without a lot of publicity, that would be better for MTSU." ♦

Kristin Hall, news editor, and Tiffany Brown, staff writer, contributed to this story.

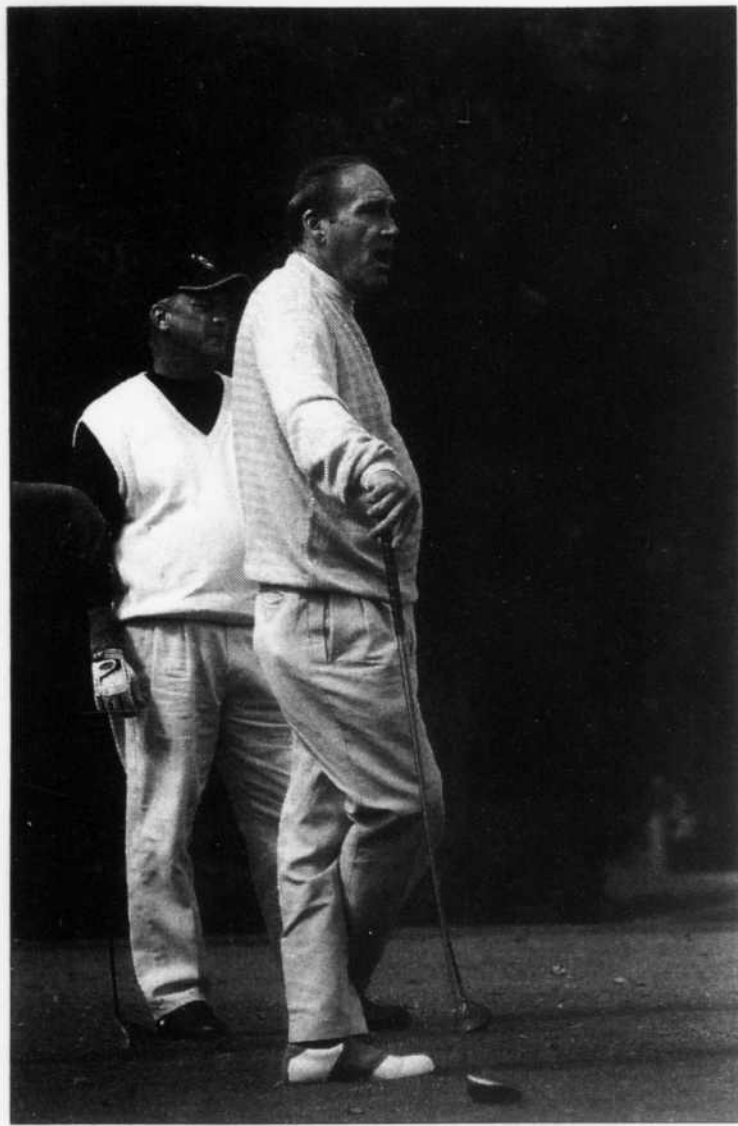


Photo by Micah Miller | Staff Photographer

Athletic Director Boots Donnelly played golf at the 10th annual Danner Invitational Golf Tournament on Oct. 1 to raise money for scholarships for 10 incoming freshmen.

Golf tourney raises money for scholarships

By Tiffany Brown
Staff Writer

The 10th annual Danner Invitational Golf Tournament, sponsored by the Neill-Sandler Foundation was held on Oct. 1 at the Hermitage Golf Course.

The event, which helps fund the Neill-Sandler Scholars at MTSU program, provides scholarships to 10 incoming freshmen each year.

The Neill-Sandler Scholarships are unique because they provide awards for students with unusual hardships or that have had to overcome enormous difficulties, said Joe Bales, vice president for development and university relations.

School systems in Bedford, Cannon, Coffee, DeKalb, Franklin, Rutherford, Warren, Williamson and Wilson counties and the Tullahoma City Schools are eligible to nominate one student for the scholarship each year, Bales said. From there the Neill-Sandler Foundation determines who will receive the scholarships.

"The Neill-Sandler Scholars at MTSU program began in 1999 with entering freshmen," said Randy Weiler from News and Public Affairs.

Since then, 47 scholarships have been awarded, he said.

The tournament was a scramble format, with two flights and prizes to the top two teams in each flight. Tournament prizes were awarded for the closest to the pin and the longest drive. The prizes for a hole-in-one at all four of the par-3 holes were automobiles, Weiler said.

The winning golf team this year consisted of Mike Sandler, Kermit Davis, Mark Tillman, and Mike Williamson, Weiler said.

There were approximately 100 people in attendance, Bales said, with teams of golfers consisting of four people.

"We did meet our fundraising goal," said Amanda Bell of the Neill-Sandler Automotive Group.

The scholarships are divided among the 10 recipients with eight of them receiving \$5,000,

Weiler said. The recipient of the Ray Danner Scholarship receives \$10,000. And the recipient of the Sidney and Elizabeth McPhee Scholarship receives \$7,500.

The total scholarship amount is disbursed throughout the course of the student's four-year educational career at MTSU, Weiler said.

The criterion that the students must present in order to receive a scholarship is "your key to success despite obstacles you've had to overcome in your life," Weiler said.

Weiler explained that the obstacles the students have faced vary, and can be anything from the death of a parent or caregiver to having to overcome a serious illness or injury.

The awarding of the scholarships culminates in the Strive for Excellence Banquet held each spring.

Gary Neill and Mike Sandler are good community citizens and they contribute a lot to the lives of some very deserving students at MTSU, Bales said. ♦



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OPINIONS

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Thursday, October 23, 2003

SIDELINES ◆ 5

From the Editorial Board Groups commendable for participation

According to the American Bar Association's Commission on Domestic Violence, 90 to 95 percent of domestic violence victims are women.

The commission also wrote that violence against women occurs in 20 percent of dating couples. Those statistics are alarming and painfully accurate. They also demand immediate attention.

Although Domestic Violence Awareness Month may not be a solution, it definitely helps to shed light on the problem. Several university organizations are participating in events throughout the month in awareness of the issue and should be commended.

The June Anderson Women Center held a panel discussion to address the issue just yesterday, and Alpha Chi Omega sorority is planning numerous events this month.

The JAWC panel discussion used many domestic violence victims' life experiences as explanation for increased need for knowledge and education of the problem.

Many of the speakers emphasized the need to report domestic violence incidents and praised Tennessee authorities for now being able to file charges themselves without the victim.

Many people may not have known that bit of information and it could be very beneficial to someone in the future. Way to take matters into your own hands.

All organizations on campus should be patting themselves on the back and should be getting all sorts of kudos for their participation in this months events.

We encourage all students to participate in the events and gather as much information as possible for yourselves. The only to fight the problem is through education and prevention. ♦

Homosexuality doesn't justify division

Wit and Wonder



Callie Elizabeth Butler
Staff Columnist

The Rev. V. Gene Robinson, the first elected Episcopalian bishop to be openly gay, announced Monday that he currently plans to go forward with his consecration in New Hampshire scheduled in two weeks despite major uproar within the church.

Robinson said in a religious education meeting at Grace Church on Sunday that even if he does step down, the ushering of change within the church will not cease.

"If I step down, do you really think other qualified gays and lesbians wouldn't be elected? My standing

down isn't going to make it all go away," Robinson said. He did note the heated church debate over homosexuality is likely to continue churning.

But many conservatives within the church are trying desperately to make it all just fade into the background. Some, in fact, have proposed dividing the church over the issue. Robinson stands against this division. Anglican leaders warned that with Robinson's consecration, "the future of the Communion itself will be in jeopardy."

"I don't want anyone to leave the church, and I don't like being thought of as the reason they leave the church," Robinson said in a recent Associated Press article.

Robinson explained that he believed this was all a sign of an end to patri-

archy within the church and new, equal inclusion for women, people of color and homosexuals.

Indeed, this is a positive sign. However, this once again brings to light the great division within the United States and around much of the world over the issue of homosexuality, a division that may cut straight through a long-established faith.

The major question here is how one's sexual orientation should rob him or her of the ability to participate actively within churches and other areas. How does the gender of who you love affect your relationship with a deity, your work performance, your membership eligibility into an organization or your simple right to walk down the street without fear of attack or ridicule?

Maybe patriarchy really

isn't dissolving when a church is willing to divide over such a small and petty issue and questions the leadership capabilities of a long-standing religious figure - having served as assistant to the prior New Hampshire bishop for years - simply because his partner's name is Mark Andrew instead of Marie Anne?

The Methodist Church divided over this issue some years ago, but why can't the Episcopal Church stand together and accept the diversity within their congregations? Whether churches divide or not, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals will shuffle in with their heterosexual and labeled "normal" neighbors on Sundays and will, from time to time, seek to serve their God in religious service. This is a reality that

exists and won't disappear if one man stands down from his elected position or a church divides over difference.

The Episcopal Church is often regarded as one of the more open and accepting denominations within the Christian faith. Why don't they begin to hold up to this reputation and welcome difference while celebrating unity? Acceptance of homosexuals within organized religion is long overdue, and the chance to unify and set aside what has only proved to be pointless prejudice has arrived. The Episcopal Church should harness this moment and usher in a new era of equality. ♦

Callie Elizabeth Butler is a senior mass communication major and can be reached via e-mail at ceb2k@mtsu.edu.

Women may be more ambitious, but miss joy of slumber, sloth

Thursdays



Wesley Jackson
Staff Columnist

Driving to and from campus, I often notice so many of our sophisticated MTSU women on jogging tours. Maybe it's just me, but I think the girls have got us guys beat when it comes to physical fitness.

I rarely see the guys out jogging, and when I do see them, they don't look like they're working off those beer bellies. They're showing off their new bike shorts. How sexy.

Now, to be fair, there are many times when the girls do the same. They love the fashion, too. This is never more obvious than at the Recreation Center - MTSU's dating service.

Most of the women seem to be hoping that Victoria's Secret will be coming out with a new line of aerobic, sports wear and will be seeking models for photo shoots. It's painful just to watch some of my fellow female students work out in those tight, body-strangling outfits they manage to fit themselves into.

The guys don't really come to the Rec Center to workout, either. They seem to have a general routine of lifting a small dumbbell hand weight, and then walking in front of the mirrors for the next 15 minutes before lifting the next one. Hopefully, one of the model wannabes will look up and notice "that hunk."

But if the Rec Center

people don't count, I still think it's fair to say the women do a better job, on the whole, of staying in shape. In fact, it's been my experience that women in general seem to work harder than guys at most things.

Maybe I've simply been blessed with the opportunity to know several of the more disciplined women at our university.

First conversations with some of these girls usually go something like, "So, you having a busy semester?"

And she replies, "Oh, a little. I'm taking 21 hours, doing an internship program, leading a ministry at church, organizing my sorority's fundraising campaign and working 40 hours a week. It gets tough sometimes, but it's manageable."

The guys seem to respond differently when I ask them if they're having a busy semester. A look of panic comes into their eyes like a rat trapped in a cage. They get no sleep. They live on coffee. They're stressed. They're overworked. They're only taking 12 hours of school.

I wonder where the girls get all the energy to be Wonder Women. Such energy seems to indicate a disturbance in the Force.

The gals also know how to live in style. They like the expensive clothes. They eat the fancy foods. Guys have a reputation for never tossing old clothes. It's like we keep some of our underwear from the third grade. If the elastic still snaps, why not? And our eating habits have come to resemble a human garbage disposal.

I've concluded that the problem is that women

just don't know how to relax. Despite the fact that women seem healthier, smarter, than men, I believe the females are simply exhibiting signs of social distress.

They need some guy to teach them the fine art of rest and relaxation.

I'm tempted to start an organization of men against overachieving women - to bring true equality to our campus. We'd make it illegal for women to rise above the underachieving sloth of some of us guys. We'd eradicate the differences between men and women and ensure the laziness of all students.

But this may be too hasty. I'm afraid our world would fall apart without those overachieving Wonder Women. What would we do without them?

However, the men must still remain on guard to ensure a balance between such overachievers and the equally important normal people who know what it is to relax and chill out.

So guys, the next time you see a woman torturing herself jogging or rattling off her list of academic achievements, comfort yourself with the knowledge that she's just doing her part. She doesn't know the art of slumber and sloth.

Take pride, guys, in the fact that you do know that art. And with it, you bring balance to the Force. ♦

Wesley Jackson is a junior English major and can be reached via e-mail at wtj2b@mtsu.edu.

Reality TV bites and I don't care

And Justice For All



Ashley Swafford
Staff Columnist

I recently saw the most vile thing I've ever seen on TV in a long while - and it wasn't sex, drugs or even violence.

It was average Americans putting cow eyeballs in their mouths in order to squeeze a certain amount of "eye juice" into a cup. If that wasn't bad enough, these people then had to drink the cup of "eye juice."

Of course, this sort of thing could only happen on NBC's *Fear Factor*. Even though it was indeed utterly disgusting, I couldn't take my eyes off of it (no pun intended).

I've never been a fan of these reality-based television shows. Not the dating shows, the gross-out shows, or the "let's throw-strangers-into-a-house-and-watch-the-show" shows.

However, once I start watching one, I find myself getting sucked into it without any idea as to why. There are many people, as high ratings would indicate, who watch these shows religiously. I've developed some theories on why they are so popular.

First, they seem to answer the age-old question, "What would you do for money?" Some people would eat a spider as big as the palms of their hands (I'm deathly afraid of spiders, so I would never be one of those people).

Some people would go weeks on end without bathing and brushing their teeth while they rough it on some remote island. Some people would marry a perfect stranger. All of these things are done on national television as an added twist.

It could be widespread fascination with human behavior. How do they react with one another when faced with a sticky situation? Do they work together or tear each other apart? What backstabbing techniques do they have?

I really think these shows tend to bring out a person's true personality. They're mostly just games of strategy, anyway. I like to see if certain contestants get chummy with someone they actually like, or do so because it is an "enemy" and must be watched at all times.

My last theory is because there's something for just about everyone. If you're a nature buff and like teamwork, you probably like *Survivor*. If you like all things grotesque, you probably like *Fear Factor*. If you like backstabbing, sex, and constant arguing, you probably like *The Real World*.

There was even a reality show that spoofed a reality show. On *Joe Schmo*, actors were pretending to be part of a reality show that was in actuality based all on one guy, but he had no idea. That one is by far my favorite.

I've really tried hard to resist this movement. When *The Bachelor* first aired, I couldn't believe that women would actually want to do something like that. A single man basically dating 25 women at once is normally frowned upon, especially considering that all the women are looking for an engagement ring. As barbaric as I thought it to be, I once again got sucked in.

Even so, I'm pretty sure I won't be calling myself a fan just right soon. Not that being one is a bad thing - I'd just rather be a hypocrite on this one. ♦

Ashley Swafford is a freshmen mass communication major and can be reached via e-mail at xori-on25x@yahoo.com.

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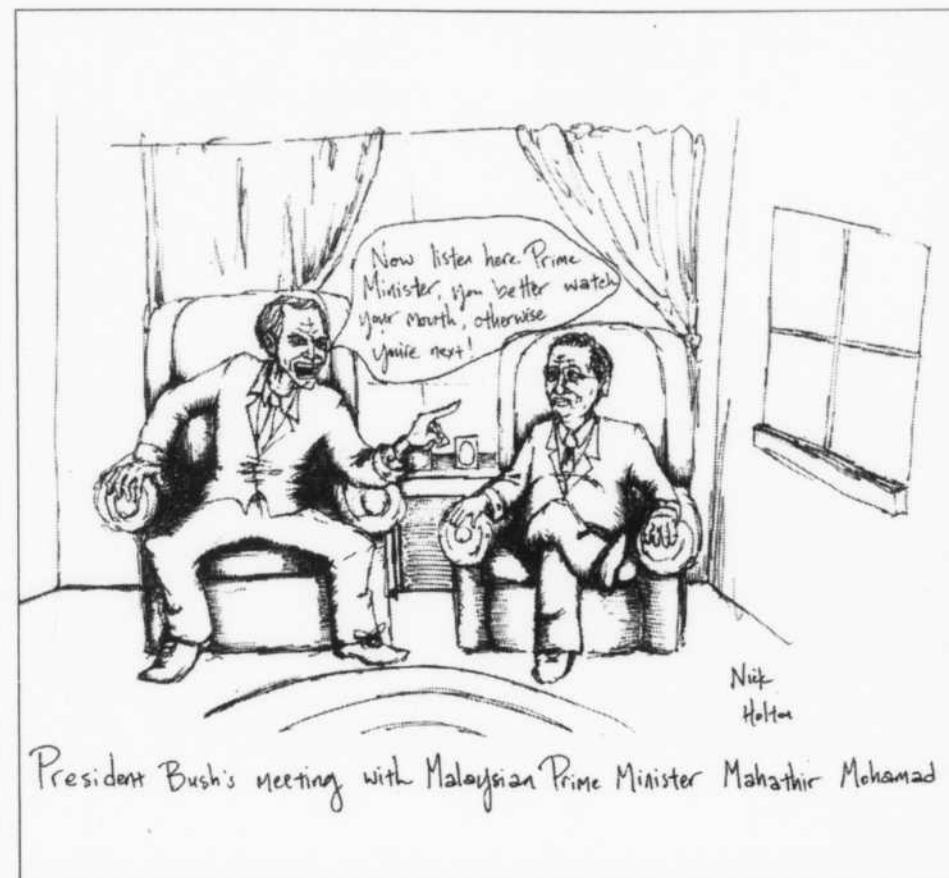
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Simply seeking free lunch for wounded soldiers

By Maggie Bowden
Cavalier Daily

(U-WIRE) – How do you thank someone for sacrificing themselves for the good of others? For putting their lives on the line to defend their country and its ideals?

If you follow the lead of the American government, it's quite clear – send a soldier into combat, let him get hurt, and then charge him for his meals while he's trying to recoup in the hospital.

Starting in 1957 for all military officers and in 1981 for all enlisted service members, the government mandated that any service member injured in combat would be required to pay for the meals they received while in the hospital.

This practice is not only disrespectful to America's troops, but it is altogether detrimental

to the health of the U.S. Armed Forces and a symptom of a much greater problem.

The very idea of making our troops pay for their meals is ludicrous and a slap in the face to every man and woman who has ever donned an American uniform. These soldiers are being sent into the depths of hell – combat zones where their lives are on the line every single moment of every single day, even after the war is declared "over."

And why? Because they have made a commitment to defend and protect their homeland, no matter what the personal costs.

How dare the very government that would send these brave souls into harm's way then have the audacity to charge them when they are subsequently injured?

The American fighting force is already one of the lowest-paid

groups in America, with some service members being forced to take on extra jobs just to make ends meet.

The life of a soldier is not easy – it's a demanding, grueling path characterized not only by low pay but by frequent moves, questionable health care and the constant threat of war and destruction that affects not only the combatant but every member of their family. They deserve accolades and respect, not tabs for hospital food. Talk about kicking someone when they are down.

Luckily, American politicians seem to agree. Last Friday, the House approved 399 to 0 to end the meal costs for troops for fiscal year 2004 ("End near for charge on wounded soldiers' meals," www.foxnews.com). It is a step in the right direction – but still more must be done.

To begin with, the bill must

be made permanent. The current Iraq supplemental bill is only a quick fix. There is no doubt that in 2005 there will still be soldiers laid up in hospitals, recovering from wounds endured in Iraq or Afghanistan.

There is also no doubt that in 2005, 2025 or even 3005, charging our wounded for their meals will still be as fundamentally shameful and wrong as it is today. A bill must be passed to ensure this practice is ended forever.

In addition, the bill needs to be retroactive. Right now there are thousands of American troops in hospitals, with more coming in every day. These wounded should not suffer financially simply because Congress didn't realize there was a problem until after they were hurt.

All troops injured within the latest conflicts – the war in Iraq,

the conflict in Afghanistan – should immediately have all meal charges dropped and be reimbursed for the money they have already paid to keep themselves fed while in recovery. It is the very least the government could do to honor our veterans and active duty soldiers.

Soldier morale is crucial to the life and strength of any fighting force. If troops feel underappreciated and disrespected, the cohesiveness and power is lost – there's no reason to fight for a country that won't support you when you come home.

This, though, is just one indicator of problems with in the U.S. military. The Army released information about 13 suicides of American combatants in Iraq, and returning troops in Georgia are complaining about substandard living conditions for the wounded.

The armed forces will continue to lose the best and brightest to the corporate world if it can't properly take care of its own. In a world growing more and more dangerous by the day, that is an unacceptable loss.

If America wishes to maintain its position as the strongest superpower in the world, it must begin with the basics – treat the troops well.

And start by picking up the tab for the hospital meals. The meal tab is nothing in exchange for the hard work and selflessness demonstrated by the U.S. Armed Forces.

Start picking up the meal bill or who knows what's next – the government may just start charging grieving families for the American flags that drape their loved ones' coffins. ♦

Letter to the Editor

Complexes shouldn't mislead tenants

To the editor:

I'm writing to inform your students of a policy on housing at Sterling University Gables. My son and two other students rented a four bedroom apartment from Sterling University Gables leaving the fourth bedroom to the Gables to fill. When signing up for the unit, we were misled into believing that the complex was for student housing.

Sterling University Gables informed my son that they had rented the fourth bedroom on Oct. 13.

They informed him that a 39 year old male non-student would be moving in.

I have spoken to Marissa Swanson (property manager) and her boss, Janice Nichols (VP of operations) to protest the decision. They informed me that there is nothing that can be done. The three students have asked to be released from their lease to seek alternate housing and have been refused permission.

I believe that college is a special time in a young adult's life and these students should not be put in an incompatible housing situation by a complex trying to fill their vacancies.

Please print this letter as awareness for students. Hopefully it would prevent other students from falling into the same trap.

Paul Visconte

Lottery funds may ease symptoms, but they won't cure the problem

Staff Editorial
The Oracle

(U-WIRE) TAMPA, Fla. – Gov. Jeb Bush's is daring lawmakers to distribute a \$30 million unclaimed lottery jackpot among the state's colleges and universities and not the state's 67 school districts as originally intended. The decision couldn't come at a better time, as many universities are suffering budget crises. This can, however, only be a temporary fix, as the government is still doing little to correct what triggered these crises.

Florida's government has owed its 11 state universities more than \$125 million in the past several years, according to

Michael Rierson, vice president of advancement at USE. The reason for this debt is the government's failure to match major donations made to Florida universities as promised. At USE, such money adds up to \$15 million.

Nevertheless, universities statewide greeted the proposal jubilantly. Rierson said to *The St. Petersburg Times*, "Frankly, I thought it was Christmas in October."

And even the public schools do not seem to be upset that the overturned money is not in their favor. As Jim Hamilton, chief of staff for Hillsborough County schools, said, "That's disappointing for us, but I don't think it's a bad investment."

Florida universities have been itching for this money for some time now.

The government had previously promised to match donations to universities and is now using this unclaimed lottery jackpot to substitute as a quick fix.

As donors learned their donations went unmatched, they stopped donating large sums, in some cases even cutting off these sources of income to universities completely, as some donors are only willing to donate if the money is matched as promised.

The state Legislature appears to support Bush's proposal. House Speaker Johnnie Byrd, R-Plant City, warns the schools to

spend this money wisely, saying it will be a one-time deal, and that schools cannot rely on funding anomalies like this. Then again, state colleges seemingly cannot rely on money promised to them by the state government, either.

The state government allocation of the unclaimed lottery jackpot would be a boost for universities like USE, but the government also needs to be able to back up its promises and not use sporadic and temporary relief measures to save face.

Maybe they should try to fix the cause of the budget short-comings rather than the symptoms. ♦

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