

What is the **COST** keeping time?

For university administrators, it's too much.

By AMANDA HAGGARD
Associate News Editor

In an attempt to abstain from spending \$300,000 on a new clock system, the administration chose to remove clocks from classrooms, despite concerns from students and teachers regarding electronic devices.

"In the next year [MTSU] is looking at taking a one million dollar hit to the budget," said John Cothorn, the vice president of MTSU. "It is about making good decisions about spending money."

The system the university currently uses is very old and hard to synchronize, Cothorn said.

In a Sidelines random survey, 70 percent of students said they would most likely look to their phone for

time if there weren't clocks in the classroom. Of those, 57 percent said they already used their phone as a clock during class time.

Students were also concerned about those who do not carry electronic devices.

"If they take the clocks out," said Natasha Greeson, a sophomore majoring in accounting. "Not everyone has a cell phone or electronic device to tell time with."

Students said that certain professors already go over the time limit, with the clocks already in place.

"It's not that I don't mind staying over class a few minutes," said Dana Williams, a junior majoring in the recording industry

management. "I just don't think some professors even realize how long they're going over, especially in lecture-style classes."

Greeson said she has had a professor in the past that constantly checked his phone for time and it became obnoxious after awhile.

"It's an inconvenience to students and teachers," Greeson said. "It's rude to have your face in your phone all the time and it will happen more if the clocks aren't there."

Cothorn said he understood the issue with cell phone use, but felt the overwhelming amount of electronic devices on campus weren't a problem compared to the

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Assault suspect heading to court

By TODD BARNES
Associate News Editor

A 22-year-old male student who is facing charges of sexually assaulting a female student in January is scheduled to appear in court Feb. 10.

Two police officers from the Murfreesboro Police Department arrested Michael J. Craig, 22, on Jan. 16 for allegedly assaulting a 21-year-old female victim at her Raiders Ridge apartment during a study session.

Craig, a senior in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, was taken into custody without incident outside of his dorm room in Judd Hall, after police "conducted an active warrants check" through dispatchers from the MTSU Office of Public Safety, according to the incident report.

This is one of two court cases involving sexually related crimes that are scheduled to be heard in the Rutherford County General Sessions Court next week. The other case, scheduled for Monday, involves two former baseball players who are accused of raping another female student in December.

The detective assigned to the case "had informed MTSU dispatch that Craig had an active warrant for his arrest for the charge of rape," according to the report.

The victim reported that Craig became upset with her, and pushed her onto the bed as he got on top of her pushing his knees into her stomach and pinning her arms down.

According to the report, the victim said, "he pushed his hand on my collar bone, and I started crying, which just made him keep pushing harder."

The length of time that Craig forced himself on the victim is unknown, but she told police she got Craig to leave by saying a friend was coming to visit.

"Then, I tried to get him to leave for an hour, and he wouldn't leave until I told him my friend was coming," the victim told police.

That evening, according to the report, Craig phoned the victim to ask if he could take a shower at her apartment. The victim refused and said he was no longer welcome there.

"He called later that night and asked if he could come over and take a shower," she said. "I told him, 'No, I had friends over,' and after this morning he was not invited to my apartment."

Craig refused to leave the victim alone and told the victim he was coming over, showing up shortly after ringing the doorbell repeatedly and calling her cell phone.

"We hung up [the phone] and about five minutes later he was at my apartment and kept knocking and ringing the doorbell and messing with the door knob for 10 minutes," according to her statement. "Then my roommate told him to leave, and he called my phone and my friend answered [telling] him to leave - he could take a shower at his dorm. He kept repeating 'I know' and then said, 'But I'm coming in.'"

It wasn't until she threatened to call the police that Craig finally left, she reported.

"Then I finally yelled through the door that I'm going to call the cops if he doesn't leave and that he's scaring my friends," according to her statement. "Then he asked if I was serious and said 'take care.'"

Health care focus of congresswoman's visit



Photo by Drew Gardonia, staff photographer
U.S. Representative Diane Black enjoys a moment of laughter with Rutherford County Mayor Earnest Burgess Feb. 1, 2011, at the Chamber of Commerce in Murfreesboro.

By JOSHUA M. WARD
Staff Writer

U.S. Rep. Diane Black made an appearance at the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center for a meet-and-greet with the Chamber of Commerce members and local business leaders Wednesday evening.

Destination Rutherford, a group campaigning for stimulating economic growth within the county, hosted the event.

Black, a Republican originally from Gallatin, introduced the evening with a short speech highlighting her purpose for coming to Rutherford County and what she means to accomplish.

"The purpose of this is just to get out and say 'hello' and give you an opportunity to talk to me," Black said. "[The newly elected representatives] have three weeks in Washington and one full week at home, and we're taking full advantage of that."

A brief question and answer period

followed her introduction with topics ranging from the repeal of the health care law to the economy and trade. When it came to the controversial topic of health care reform, Black said she felt that there was a lot of work to be done.

A federal district judge in Florida found the health care law to be unconstitutional Monday, with 26 other states signed on to the lawsuit.

This decision comes a little more than two months after a court in Virginia originally ruled that the individual mandate was unconstitutional, but not necessarily the law as a whole.

The legislative branch is also involved in the question of the law's constitutionality.

The U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, of which Black is now a member, held a hearing Jan. 26 about the issue.

Witnesses came before the committee and testified that the law could potentially

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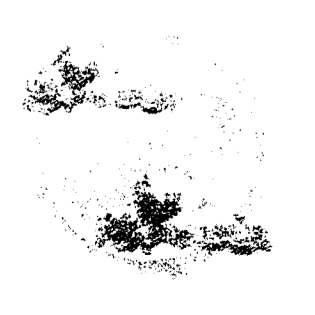
Learn how one student is adjusting to life in Africa - one adventure at a time.
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EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE



Keep up with the latest news and analysis on the Lady Raiders on our website.
SPORTS

WEATHER



THURSDAY
35/24

Provost reveals love of archaeology



Photo by Erica Springer, staff photographer
During a lecture Jan. 31, 2011, lecture held in the University Honors College, University Provost Brad Bartel discusses the role of women during the Paleolithic Period.

Bartel opens lecture series with discussion on Stone Age

By KIMBERLY BARKER
Contributing Writer

University Provost Brad Bartel presented the first installment in the "Celebrating Creative Scholarship" lecture series Monday with "The Mother-Goddess Figurine Problem of the European Paleolithic," highlighting women's role during the Stone Age.

Bartel spoke to the packed lecture hall about figurines that have been found resembling historic Greek goddesses in excavation sites throughout Europe.

"It's a moving target," Bartel said. "There's a limited amount of sites where these figurines have been excavated. Every time [archaeologists] find another site, we're off to the races."

The figurines date back as far as 22,000 B.C. The Paleolithic Period has been pegged by scientists as the earliest documented era of humans living on Earth. Although Europe does not appear to have been fully colonized, groups of hunter-gatherers roamed the continent up until the Mesolithic Period.

Experts believe that Europe at that time was colonized by a succession of *Hominid* species. It was first inhabited by *Homo erectus Neanderthals*, and eventually, anatomically modern human beings.

Although Bartel's focus was on female figurines, he also discussed male figurines and animal figurines. Bartel said the animal figurines are consistent with species painted on the walls of caves during the time of the Stone Age.

Modern archaeologists have trouble uncovering the meaning of a group of small palm-sized artifacts, Bartel said. The materials used by the artists included clay, ivory, stone and bone.

Bartel said he and other experts have concluded that

there must have been a dominance of females in the Upper Paleolithic civilization. Also, because obesity was virtually nonexistent, corpulent female figurines were meant to represent pregnant women.

Bartel closed his lecture by telling the audience that the artifacts might have been used as teaching devices. There may not be a concrete answer to be found, but archaeologists are searching nonetheless, he said.

Several students said they found the lecture relevant to their studies.

"It was a very interesting topic," said Lauren Cooley, a senior majoring in marketing.

"I really like anthropology and learning about cultures. The topic dealt with what we're learning right now in 'Introduction to Pre-World History.'"

Bartel said he chose to speak about the European Paleolithic because students who are not yet a part of the professional world have not been exposed to this in-depth material.

"They've heard of things like Mother-Goddesses or read about them in their textbooks," Bartel said. "[The topic] has a lot of currency today."

Bartel said he has been fascinated by the study of anthropology since childhood, explaining that his father took him to museums where they would spend hours studying ancient artifacts. He said he contributed to several excavations in Europe, including a trip to Ireland.

"I really enjoyed Ireland," Bartel said. "It has more archaeological monuments than any other place in the world."

CRIME BRIEFS

Hit & Run

Jan. 28, 4:12 p.m.

Greenland Drive Lot B

Victim reported that his vehicle had been struck while parked at the Greenland Drive parking lot.

Alcohol

Jan. 29, 4:36 a.m.

Sam Ingram Building

Tyler Garrett White, 19, was arrested for driving under the influence and was in violation of implied consent.

Alcohol

Jan. 30, 5:08 a.m.

East Main Street

Caitlyn Little, 20, was arrested and charged with her first driving under the influence offense.

Drugs

Jan. 31, 2:34 a.m.

McFarland Health Services Lot

Tajh Nichols, 18, Roney Strong Jr., 19, and Wilner Azor, 18, were arrested and charged with simple possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Theft

Jan. 31, 7:08 p.m.

Cummings Hall

Victim reported that some money and her camera had been stolen from the 4th floor study room.

Theft

Feb. 1, 11:42 a.m.

Phillips Bookstore

A victim reported that her book bag had been stolen from the lockers.

Hit & Run

Feb. 1, 12:42 p.m.

Fairview Building

A victim reported that their vehicle had been struck while parked at the Fairview Building.

Drugs

Feb. 1, 8:08 p.m.

Corlew Hall

Megan R. Kilgore, 18, was issued a state citation for simple possession of marijuana.

Theft

Feb. 1, 9:05 p.m.

Greenland Drive Lot B

A victim reported a wheel was stolen from his vehicle in the Greenland Drive parking lot.

HOUSING REAPPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR FALL 2011 / SPRING 2012

The Housing and Residential Life Office is now accepting housing reapplication forms from returning students for the Fall 2011/Spring 2012 academic year. Students are encouraged to reapply for housing as early as possible, particularly if they are requesting to move to a different location on campus next year, as new assignments are made by application due date.

Students requesting to remain in the same location on campus next year will be given first priority to do so as long as their reapplication and \$300 prepaid rent deposit are received by the deadline. The reapplication deadline with priority for the 2011/2012 academic year is **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2011 AT 4:00 P.M.**

Students may reapply by completing a reapplication form and paying the \$300.00 prepaid rent in the Housing and Residential Life Office in the Keathley University Center, room 300, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Students also have the option of reapplying for housing with priority online at www.mtsu.edu. The \$300 prepaid rent is paid by using a credit card, MasterCard or Visa, or by completing an online check. There is an additional \$18 nonrefundable service fee charged by the third party for processing the payment online.

To obtain a **HOUSING REAPPLICATION FORM**, please come by the Housing and Residential Life Office during office hours, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, in the Keathley University Center, room 300.

**Summer '11 Housing Applications are also available in the Housing Office. Reserve your summer space now by completing the housing application and submitting it with the \$175.00 prepaid rent deposit. It is not too early!!

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For additional information or questions, please contact Housing and Residential Life during office hours at 898-2971.

LOCAL EVENTS

On Campus

Lectures: Debunking Apocalypse 2012

Feb. 4, 6:30 p.m.

Wiser-Patton Science Building
Room 102
Tickets: FREE

Experimental Vehicles: Innovation and Creativity in Engineering

Feb. 7, 3 p.m.

University Honors College
Room 106
Tickets: FREE

Carl Sandburg and the Spanish Guitar

Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m.

Business and Aerospace Building
State Farm Room
Tickets: FREE

Visions in America: Music of Paul Osterfield

Feb. 7, 8 p.m.

Wright Music Building
Hinton Hall
Tickets: FREE

Concerts:

MTSU Wind Ensemble

Feb. 4, 8 p.m.

Wright Music Building
Hinton Hall
Tickets: FREE

Faculty Voice Recital

Feb. 6, 7 p.m.

Wright Music Building
Hinton Hall
Tickets: FREE

Events: Unity Luncheon Keynote Speaker: Gloria Ladson-Billings

Feb. 3, 11 a.m.

JUB Tennessee Room
Tickets: Students \$10

Campus & Community Collaboration-Keynote: Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings

Feb. 3, 6 p.m.

JUB Tennessee Room
Tickets: FREE

Intercollegiate Horse Show

Feb. 5, 10 a.m.

Tennessee Miller Coliseum
Tickets: FREE

Black History Month Step Off

Feb. 8, 7 p.m.

Tom Jackson Building
Tickets: FREE

QUESday: Omegas in the Military Display

Feb. 8, 11 a.m.

Keathley University Center
Tickets: FREE

Off Campus

Concerts: Tina Dico

Feb. 2, 7 p.m.

Wildhorse Saloon
Tickets: \$20-\$85

Cobra Skulls

Feb. 2, 7 p.m.

The Muse
Tickets: \$6 advance/
\$8 door

The Civil Wars

Feb. 2, 8 p.m.

Belcourt Theater
Tickets: \$15

Monotonix

Feb. 2, 9 p.m.

The End
Tickets: \$10

Kurt Elling

Feb. 4, 8 p.m.

Schermerhorn Symphony Center
Tickets: \$44-\$104

Joshua Radin featuring Anya Marina & Andrew Allen

Feb. 4, 9 p.m.

Mercy Lounge
Tickets: \$17

The Oxford Circus

Feb. 4, 8 p.m.

Rockettown
Tickets: \$6

Tokyo Police Club

Feb. 5, 9 p.m.

Exit In
Tickets: \$15

Performing Arts:

You can't take it with you:

Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.

The Swan Performing Arts Center
Tickets: \$10

Murder Mystery Excursion Train:

Feb. 5, 8:30 a.m.

220 Willow Street
Tickets: \$52

Film:

Marwencol

Feb. 1, 6:10 p.m. & 8:20 p.m.

Belcourt Theater
Tickets: \$7.25

Events Policy

Sidelines welcomes current campus and community events submitted by all readers. Please e-mail events to slcampus@mtsu.edu or slnews@mtsu.edu, and include the name, date, time and location of the event, as well as your name and a phone number for verification. We reserve the right to refuse events at our discretion as our space is limited.

Sidelines is the editorially independent, nonprofit student-produced newspaper of Middle Tennessee State University. Sidelines publishes Monday and Thursday during the fall and spring semesters and online during June and July. The events listed are not necessarily associated with Sidelines or MTSU.

University officials unwilling to pay for upgrades

CLOCKS FROM PAGE 2

cost.
"With all the personal devices people have like cell phones, laptops and iPads," Cothern said. "The clocks just really aren't necessary anymore."

A main concern among professors was not the use of devices during regular class time, but how the removal could affect exam time. Removing the clocks could make it appear more acceptable for students to use their phones during exams, professors said.

"Even if professors themselves don't accuse students of cheating," said James Curtis, an adjunct English professor. "Other students could potentially accuse others of cheating and the entire issue

could simply snowball."
Curtis said he didn't think students should be allowed to use their phones as timekeepers during any exam because too much temptation is present for students.

"I think it should be set up much like standardized tests are," Curtis said. "You're allowed an analog wristwatch for time-keeping and nothing else."

Students with access to the web could have an unlimited wealth of knowledge during exams if they were allowed to peak at their phones while taking exams

"If you can look at your cell phone [for time]," said John Vile, dean of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors College. "You can look at the web."

More than 80 percent of students agreed that the cost was a good reason

to forgo buying new clocks for the university.

Students and professors said they wondered if there wasn't a cheaper option, like battery-operated clocks.

"I could see going with something a little more old fashioned," Vile said.

Greeson said she felt there are clocks out there that are more financially sensible.

The fear of the liability that surrounds allowing professors to remove and put batteries is a viable reason why they might not go with battery operated clocks, Vile said

"There are already a lot of classrooms without them," said Williams. "Personally, I would like to see them stay, but I understand why the costs are such a big deal."

Forty percent of students surveyed said

they would prefer to go with something cheaper if at all possible.

"I know there are so many classrooms now that are computer classrooms that some students will always have the time available right there on the desktop, even during exams," Curtis said.

While Curtis said he recognizes that students have access to time in other places, he also said he feels a cheaper option might be available.

The clocks will not be taken out immediately, Cothern said.

"It's a slow process," Cothern said. "There are about 400 clocks on campus, and it will take a long time to get them all down."

All members of administration including President Sydney McPhee and University Provost Brad Bartel, Cothern said, generally approved the actions.

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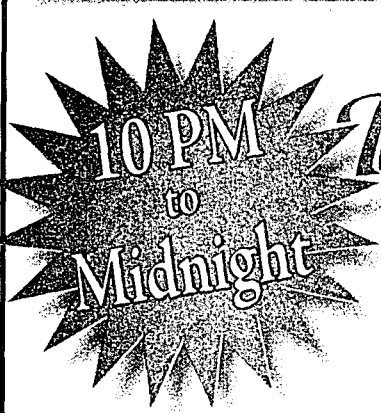
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Photo by Drew Gardonia, staff photographer
Diane Black, the Republican congresswoman, discusses health care and the economy Feb. 1, 2011, with voters during a visit at the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce in Murfreesboro.

Chamber of Commerce hosts Tuesday meeting

BLACK FROM PAGE 1

hinder job creation and cost business owners too much to be beneficial.

"It didn't have the kind of evaluation needed," Black said. "It was done in the dark of night. We need full and open debate on this issue."

Black is also on the Budget Committee, which came to the same conclusion as the Ways and Means Committee. She reassured those in attendance that all discussions of making changes to the law would be transparent and urged them to "tune in to C-SPAN" to follow the progress.

Black said she wants a bill that does not "kill jobs" or drive up costs,

which she said is "what that bill was doing" while she referenced President Barack Obama's State of the Union Address.

On the economy, Black said her main concerns involve restoring the job market back to its full potential, tackling growing debt, and cutting taxes. As a member of the Budget Committee, Black said that she and other representatives are working on "productivity" and getting rid of unnecessary programs that are creating more debt.

This was Black's first formal appearance in Rutherford County since she was sworn in to office Jan. 3. Black was elected to serve as representative for Tennessee's 6th Congressional District after defeating Brett Carter in November.

Singer ushers in Black History Month

By **KELSEY WELLS**
Contributing Writer

Students kicked off this year's Black History Month on Tuesday by enjoying a variety of African-American centered musical numbers and parts of history performed by tenor Keith Craig.

Craig, who is from Washington, D.C., sang a variety of music, from old African spirituals to operatic arias, in his performance entitled "Keith Craig Musical Medley." Each song carried a theme of perseverance and hope.

"As an artist, you have to pretend to be happy, even when you're not happy," Craig said, referencing a piece by Margaret Bonds, the first black composer to gain recognition in the U.S. Her song "Minstrel Man" depicts black life in the 1940s.

Bonds, who studied music at The

Juilliard School, worked closely with well-known black American author Langston Hughes, Craig said. "Minstrel Man" and two more related pieces were inspired by Hughes's visions of a nation that employed equality.

"I am an American, too," Craig said. "Just because my skin is a different color - that doesn't mean anything."

Bonds also composed the spiritual "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Craig said he chose to include this piece because, "no matter what influences our lives, we must know there is a power greater than us."

Two of Craig's choices came from the time period in which slavery began in the U.S. "Is There Anybody Here That Loves My Jesus?" and "Ride on,

King Jesus" were both sung by early slaves, Craig said.

"It is from these people that [today's] music comes," Craig said.

To illustrate its widespread influence, Craig sang A te, o cara, or "To You, Oh Dear," an aria from the opera I puritani, written by Italian opera composer Vincenzo Bellini in 1835. The aria was made famous by Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti, Craig said.

Kaylina Madison, a master's candidate, accompanied Craig on piano.

Vincent Windrow, director of the Intercultural and Diversity Affairs Center, organized the performance. Windrow said the center seeks to enhance education by exposing students to different cultures.

SIDEFACTS

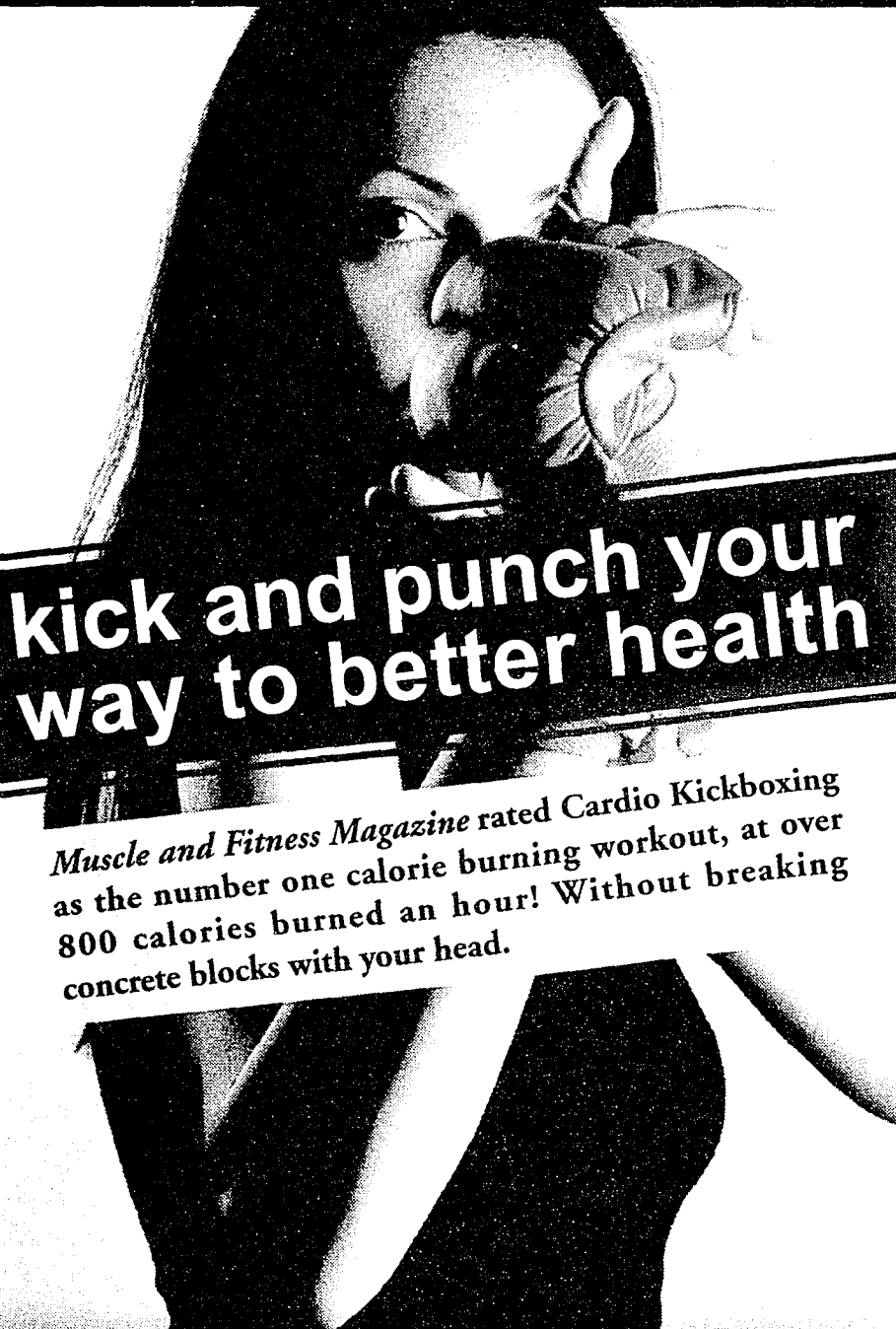
FACT: Black History Month originally started out as a week long event in 1925.

"According to the Library of Congress, Black History Month has its roots in something called Negro History Week. In 1925, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, an African-American historian who founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, proposed Negro History Week as a way to encourage people to learn more about black history. He selected a week in February that included the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and black abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

The first Negro History Week was celebrated in February 1926. "The response was overwhelming," says the Library of Congress. "Black history clubs sprang up; teachers demanded materials to instruct their pupils; and progressive whites, not simply white scholars and philanthropists, stepped forward to endorse the effort."

In the early 1970s, Negro History Week was rechristened Black History Week to reflect the changing language used to describe African-Americans. Then, in 1976, as America observed its bicentennial, Black History Week was expanded to the full month we celebrate today." - AOL News

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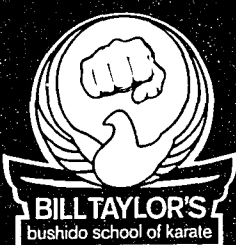


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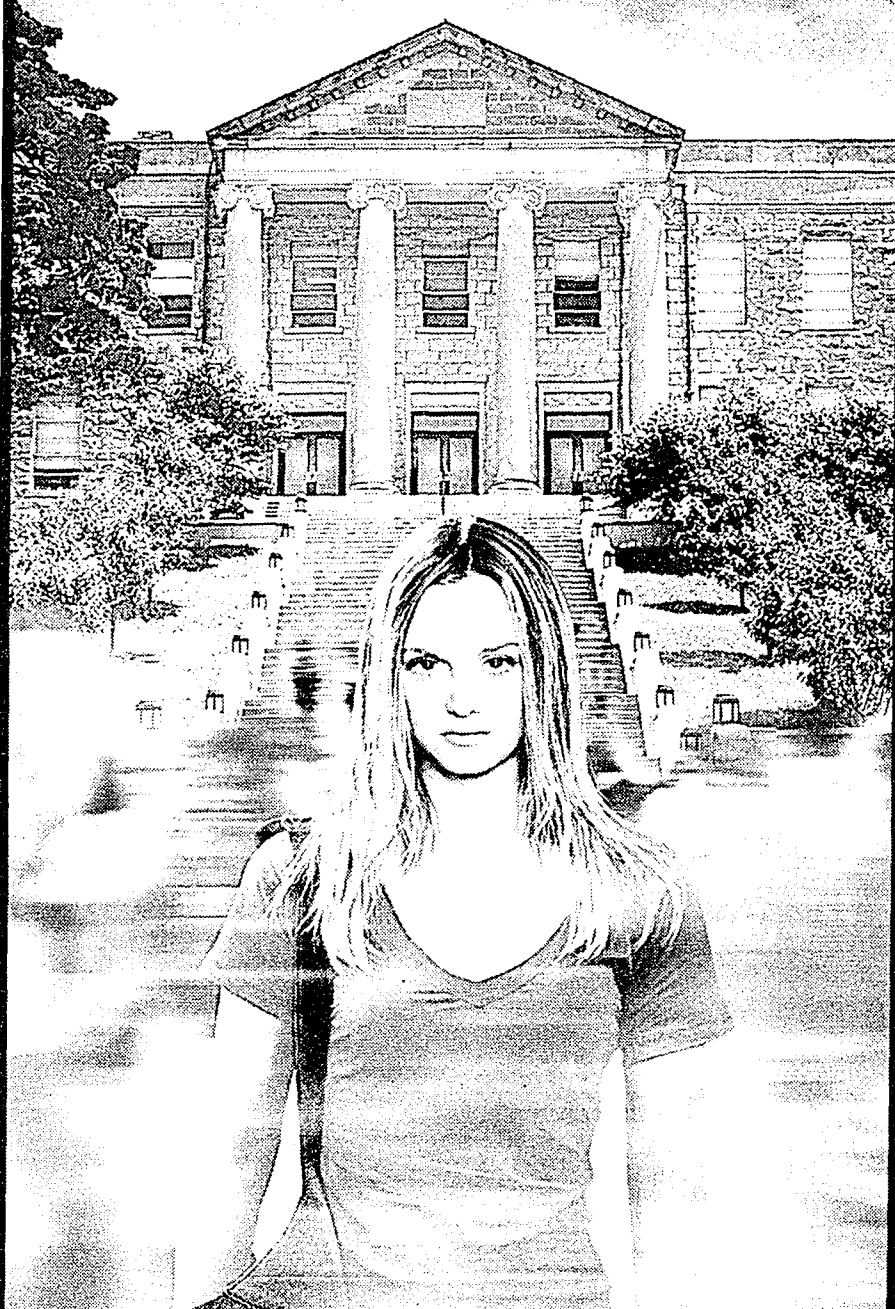
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IN THEATERS FEBRUARY 4

FEATURES

FOREIGN TO FAMILIAR

FACING THE HARDSHIPS OF LIVING IN A DISTANT COUNTRY, ONE STUDENT DISCOVERS MORE THAN JUST ADVENTURE.

By BAILEY TODD
Contributing Writer

When people back home and here in Africa ask me why I chose to study abroad in Botswana, I never know quite how to answer. "Because I crave adventure" or "to advance in my career" or even "so that I may be different than everyone else" are all viable answers to this perplexing inquiry.

The truth is that I chose Africa for a multitude of reasons, most of which are nearly impossible to explain. However, a need to throw myself outside of a mundane existence and to live a life of new experiences and perspectives may be the best answer.

Botswana has already provided me with just that.

Although Botswana is called Africa's success story, it is still located in Africa, which means that unpaved roads, visible poverty, birds with tails twice as large as their bodies, and baboons running through mall parking lots are all commonplace.

A woman I met just days before my departure claimed Botswana to have "third world charm with first world comfort," and I couldn't agree more. Although Botswana is one of the most developed countries in Africa, it is still far less developed than anywhere I have ever been.

Comfort is not a big concern here, and as a result, I have to remember to bring toilet paper whenever I leave my room and not get upset when there is dirt in the drinkable tap water. Everywhere I look, it is apparent that I am somewhere completely different from anywhere I have ever been before. The dirt is red, the sky is bigger, and I have never seen such beautiful and obscure looking plants.

My first weekend in Botswana was spent on a cultural excursion, in which a group of international students took a bus to a local village where we slept in mud huts, danced traditional dances around a fire, sat in a traditional court, and performed a mock wedding. We also went on a safari where we saw zebras, warthogs, ostriches, countless impalas, and two cheetahs, making for a very successful first safari experience.

Now when I hear English, I turn to look.

I know almost every white person on campus.

Strangely, most people here know more about American hip-hop music than I could ever have imagined. The school cafeteria, Moghoul, is sometimes jokingly referred to as "Club Moghoul" by the international students, due to the continuous blasting of Top 40 Hits.

My cafeteria experience is probably the perfect representation of the same – but different – world here. The food they serve

is as follows: rice or maize or bread or noodles, chicken or beef stew, and sometimes, if we're lucky, a spoonful of cooked carrots or beets.

Not only is the food significantly less healthy and enjoyable than

food back home, they serve the same exact thing for every single meal of the day. There is no comfort in choices – there is only food that is somewhat edible.

The food was difficult to get used to in the beginning, but it was not the hardest. When registering for classes, I discovered the true meaning of the slower pace when they told me that because the computer system was down, no international students would be able to register until halfway through the first week of classes.

Looking back, there was no need to worry as most professors did not show for the first week and a half, and even then classes have started at a significantly slower rate than I am used to. Despite this, I spent most of the first month here in a very frustrated mood.

Ultimately, going on a journey to a different world does not make life much easier, nor does it always leave one feeling great. In fact, pre-departure jitters left me sleepless and apt to begin weeping at any moment.

Fear is not comfortable or easy to ignore.

On a deeper level, the fear of leaving made me re-examine my life – a very necessary, but unpleasant experience. I

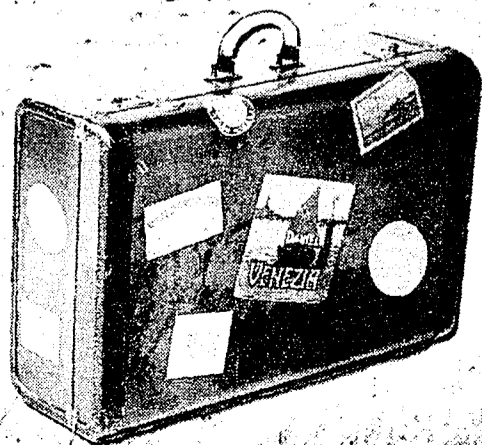
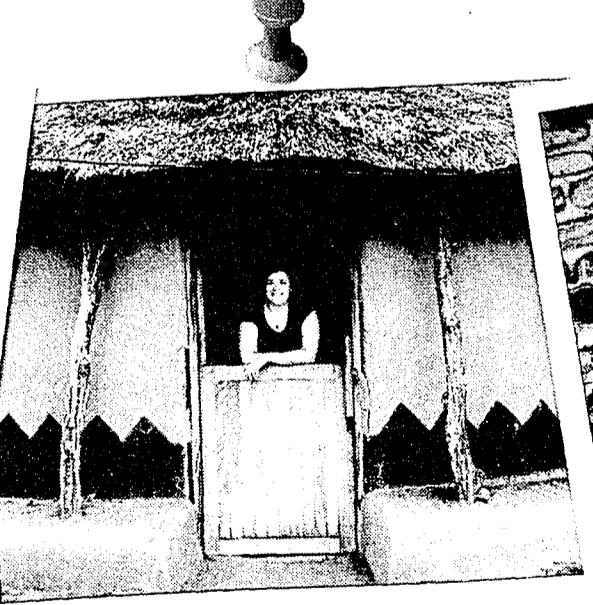
found myself being honest with friends and family more often, telling them how much they have meant to me.

While Botswana is safe, theft and mugging are quite popular outside the university gates, which means solo trips to the mall or just to explore the surrounding area are out of the question.

Nevertheless, the scariest part of leaving home and living in Botswana is the forced seclusion. I have to rely more on myself than ever before.

Despite the turmoil of leaving and the unsettling roller coaster of the first week, my experience in Botswana has already proven to be a worthwhile one. I am admittedly unsure what exactly it is that I am to learn here, but I look forward to it.

I do know that in the end, life is not necessarily about the great times but about taking risks and stepping outside of your comfort zone. It is here where we truly learn to grow. Being comfortable is sometimes inadequate. There is beauty unseen, and it takes courage to seek it, and so I am obliged to shamelessly promote international travel, especially studying abroad.



Photos courtesy of Bailey Todd

(Top) Two African children smile at the camera in Gaborone, Botswana (Bottom) Bailey Todd poses with three children in Gaborone, Botswana. Todd leans out of the hut where she sleeps. Three African children lean against a structure near the village in which Todd resides.



Cyclists call for recognition

Photos by Peter Hostermann

By TAYLOR HIXSON
Staff Writer

It's rush hour during the last Friday of the month, and dozens of cyclists have randomly met up to partake in a spontaneous bike ride on the city's main roads.

From Budapest to San Francisco, the scene is familiar in cities around the globe. The worldwide event is called Critical Mass, and its purpose is to raise awareness about cyclists' rights. Critical Mass has been labeled a "protest" and a "social movement," having been a controversial event since its founding in 1992. Whatever it is, cyclists definitely get noticed.

senior majoring in math and philosophy, stands up on a bench to remind the riders of safe biking practices: Use a light, have a buddy, be safe, and don't be stupid.

While riding through the neighborhoods of downtown Murfreesboro toward Memorial Boulevard, people gawk at the site of the pack zooming past.

The lack of a centralized leader or route allows for the mass of cyclists to ride the roads without prior permits or notifying the local police. The unplanned route falls together naturally as the riders at the front of the pack shout out the next turns. The route hits many major roads and intersections in Murfreesboro such as Memorial Boulevard, Rutherford Boulevard, Middle Tennessee Boulevard and Broad Street.

"The route was really good because we hit a lot of main roads," says Jesse Keogh, a computer science graduate candidate. "That was the point."

Instead of shying away to less traveled roads or only roads with bike lanes, Critical Mass events strive to hold up traffic and block intersections.

When the pack hits red lights and intersections, one or two riders block oncoming traffic so that drivers are forced to stop and watch. This not only allows the riders to stay together and safely cross the road, but also prove bikes can be traffic too.

Running red lights and blocking traffic isn't legal, but Critical Mass isn't exactly known for obeying laws or using accepted tactics. While these actions could even be seen as counterproductive to the movement's main goal, one of the points of Critical Mass is to be seen.

"They'll remember it, that's for sure," Keogh laughs.

After an hour or so of riding, the pack begins to dissolve into single riders or small groups making their way home.

The night was met with the usual hoots, honks and hollers from passing cars, but everyday riding can be more unpleasant for the lone riders. Many drivers harass

people on bikes with various slurs, obscenities and silent gestures.

"I don't think it's a very friendly community for single bicyclists on the road," DeTorres says. "I get honked at and a lot of stuff thrown at me. I've had eggs thrown at me and empty beer bottles."

In a state where people riding bicycles have the legal right to ride on the road, it's not uncommon for someone riding their bike in the road to hear from drivers to "get on the sidewalk!"

"Just because there's laws and rights and policies doesn't mean that people driving and other cyclists adhere to all those rules, so sometimes it gets kind of rough in Murfreesboro," DeTorres says.

Critical Mass and other bike events in Murfreesboro, like Bike Night and Mash Monday, bring awareness to the community about people on bikes and their rights to ride on the road because, as the name implies, the sidewalk is for walking.

"I think it's really good that small

towns are doing stuff like this, and it's not just big cities," says Drew Beeler, a senior majoring in entrepreneurship.

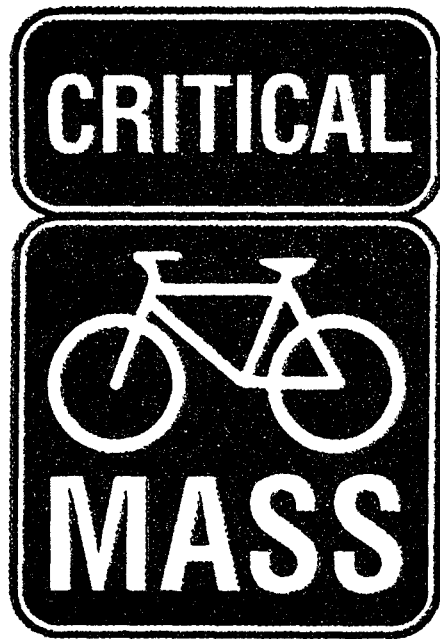
Beeler hopes Murfreesboro citizens will start to not only notice people on bikes more, but also respect that some people choose to commute by bike.

"Maybe eventually we'll get some bike lanes in places that don't have them right now," Beeler says.

Murfreesboro's mostly flat terrain makes it an excellent city for people to bike instead of drive. If more people rode bikes instead of drove to campus, maybe parking wouldn't be most students' biggest concern. After all, bike racks offer prime parking in front of all your classes.

Whether people think bike riders are a nuisance to the road or deserve the basic rights of anyone traveling on wheels, Mitch Kluge, a senior majoring in mass communication, offers words of wisdom.

"If someone's on a bike, don't hit them," he says.



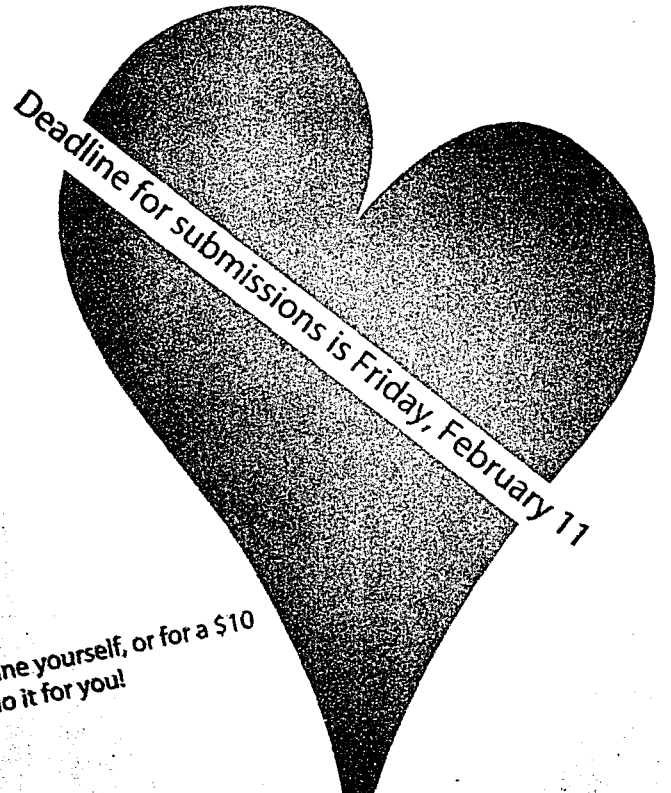
After a seven-month hiatus from Critical Mass, the Murfreesboro biking community decided to hop back on its bikes to let the area know bikes do indeed have the right of the road.

On a chilly January evening, 38 people meet up at Jaycees Park for Critical Mass. Bundled up in coats and scarves, the cyclists streamed in alone or in small groups ready to ride as one.

Before riding out, Eric DeTorres, a

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Letters Policy

Sidelines welcomes letters to the editor from all readers. Please e-mail letters to slopinions@mtsu.edu and include your name and phone number for verification. Sidelines will not publish anonymous letters. We reserve the right to edit grammar, length and content.

OPINIONS

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.

Liberal media bias just a myth

This past week, right-wing talk radio hosts across the nation celebrated what they perceive as a mighty blow to the "vaunted liberal media." Keith Olbermann's unexpected departure leaves a large vacuum in the media.



Patrick Wright
Columnist

His show, lined up with Rachel Maddow's, was possibly the last bastion of liberalism in today's 24-hour televised news. The long-running myth of the liberal media still persists to this day in the United States.

Add to that NBC—the parent company of MSNBC, the nation's only liberal news outlet—was just purchased by Comcast, a company known for supporting conservative candidates.

Things aren't looking good for the liberal media. There hasn't been a strong liberal media since the early-2000s.

Only a handful of news shows on TV today could be considered liberal—that's including Jon Stewart and Bill Maher.

In the middle of the previous decade, news companies began to kowtow to the Bush administration when it came to scrutinizing its policies.

Even the Internet, a long time bastion of liberal blogs and websites, such as Fire Dog Lake and The Huffington Post, has seen a proliferation of right-wing blogs and noise machines.

America's liberal media, if it could ever have been described as such, has been replaced by conservative media. Today the airwaves, both televised and audio, are dominated by the likes of Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh.

Anyone who watched CNN after the latest State of the Union Address had to notice very few liberals among its commentators.

Many have been replaced by people like Erick Erickson, the creator of the conservative blog RedState.

The few liberal personalities left on television have been marginalized.

Today the quarter of the country that is liberal has been left to scrounge amongst the scraps for the few remaining liberal journalists.

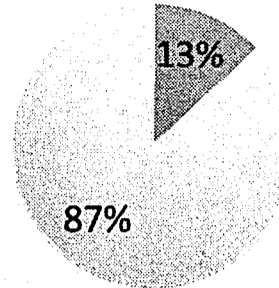
The era of journalists like Walter Cronkite and Tom Brokaw is over. No country should have a news culture as polarized as we do, be it right-wing or left.

Any discussion of a new Fairness Doctrine is a non-starter. In today's highly charged climate, it would never move past its first congressional committee.

Besides, as long as the American people think they're being fed real news, they don't care.

Patrick Wright is a senior majoring in political science and can be reached at phw2b@mtmsil.mtsu.edu.

RESULTS: DO YOU THINK THE U.S. SHOULD BE MORE INVOLVED IN THE PROTESTS IN EGYPT?



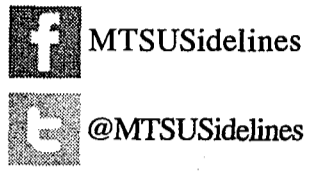
- Yes
- No

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WHO DO YOU THINK WILL WIN THE SUPERBOWL?

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The gym: It's a jungle out there.

January is almost over, which means the newbie additions to the Health, Wellness and Recreational Center are dropping like flies. Have no fear if you are one of the many.

You can get back on track in no time with a couple of helpful tips. The recreation center can be as terrifying as a jungle for a newly motivated student. The rules for continuing your journey are about the same as the rules I used surviving boarding school in the Costa Rican jungle.

First, only touch the things you can identify. By this, I mean make sure you know what machines you are using and how to properly use them in order to avoid harm. Second, realize that most people around you can tell you're fresh meat and are willing to help, so don't be afraid to ask. Next, try to establish a workout buddy because it will aid in keeping your 2011 fitness dream alive.

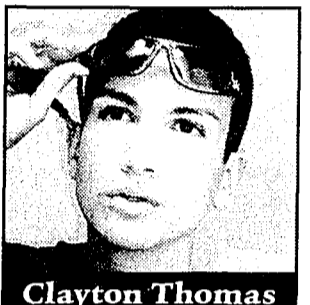
The logistics and creation of a routine are vital in preserving your confidence. Your routine at the recreation center begins when you swipe your student ID card and place your hands on a scanning machine. For all you conspiracy theorists concerned about Big Brother, no worries. This machine doesn't take your fingerprints.

After you pass the front desk and walk through the awkward rotating bars, you can obtain a lock for your things at the next desk across from the rock wall. The lock is free and convenient to secure your things in the locker room, which is located outside the weight room.

Now, you are ready to workout.

The second floor has all the cardio you need. It is important - even if you are trying to build muscle to do cardio before your workout in order to burn fat and warm up.

Don't go too hard here and burn yourself out, because you will never want to come back. I, like many, have had the experience of working out with a personal trainer only to awake the next day



Clayton Thomas
Columnist

feeling like I had received a back transplant.

We all know this only leads to a bag of potato chips on the couch and the traumatic stress of equating the gym with a slew of torture devices. The weight room is a great place to tone up, build muscle and target specific muscles.

It is important to start light with the weights when you do new exercises to avoid injury. As you build your muscles, you can increase based on the amount of muscle you'd like to build. Remember, lightweight with many repetitions will tone muscle, and heavy weights with small exertion bursts will build muscle.

Most students who yearn to lose weight want to slim their stomachs. The majority of your stomach fat content comes from how you're exercising your mouth, while chewing large quantities of unhealthy food.

By far, the most important weight loss variable is to rely on moderation. Beyond that, when you have a binge, don't give up because you can get back on track the next day. Coffee has been a great way to control my appetite and increase metabolism. Also, make sure you eat protein, because it takes longer to digest - keeping you full longer.

This has been your novice crash course in keeping your fitness resolution. Remember, before starting a diet and workout plan always consult your physician and/or nutritionist.

Good luck, it's a jungle out there.

Clayton Thomas is a senior majoring in psychology and can be reached at cct2g@mtmail.mtsu.edu.



GOP disregards rape victims

Since the mid-1970s, abortion rights groups and anti-abortion groups have agreed upon few exceptions for abortions that can be partially paid for with government assistance.

These exceptions are rape, incest and cases in which the woman's life is in threat of serious harm. However, the Republican Party has plans of breaking up that middle ground.

A newly revitalized U.S. House of Representatives, with the Republican Party in the majority, has veered off the path of "campaign promises" concerning economic recovery and job growth. The Republicans have decided to dive into controversial social issues.

A recent piece of legislation, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, introduced by Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey, would be detrimental to the protection of women, as well as all young girls across the country.

The bill has countless regulations, which is ironic for a group that prides itself on limited government interference. The bill redefines rape. This definition determines whether or not a rape victim can have an abortion covered by taxpayer funds.

As the bill currently stands, federal funds would only be allowed to cover "forcible" rape.

This definition would leave out statutory rape, coerced rape, when consent was not explicitly given, or no physical exertion was used in attempts to stop the perpetrator, and mentally incapacitated rape, performed under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, date-rape



Katie Bogle
Columnist

drugs, or rape against a person who is mentally handicapped.

Right now you might be wondering, Wait, does that really mean that a poor 13-year-old, mentally handicapped girl or a date-raped girl who becomes pregnant by her rapist may have to live with it the rest of her life? Simply because the victim did not want to risk her well-being by fighting back, or she was unaware of the rape at the time? The answer to these questions is yes.

Appalling, isn't it? The legislation even goes a step further, disallowing government aid to cover abortions for women whose pregnancy may cause them serious permanent harm.

Now, don't get me wrong, I am not an abortion rights advocate. I even find myself siding with anti-abortion groups from time to time. However, this legislation destroys protection for some of the most vulnerable victims of abuse in the country.

Women have fought too hard and too long for even the most basic of rights to have some conservative political figures rip those rights out from underneath them.

The good news is even if the bill is passed in the House, it doesn't stand a chance in the U.S. Senate.

House Republicans need to stop playing games and start "fixing" our economy like they promised.

Katie Bogle is a junior majoring in political science and can be reached at kjb4j@mtmail.mtsu.edu.

Letter to the Editor

Oops, columnist Josh Fields made a huge error in his Jan. 27 column, "Obamacare" is a bailout disguised as a moralistic endeavor." Employer-based health care was a byproduct of World War II price and wage controls. Therefore, despite Mr. Fields erroneous assertion, the Great Depression and

Roosevelt's New Deal had nothing to do with these. In fact, he should have recognized this, citing a 1942 act and a 1943 administrative ruling. Newsflash—the Great Depression and the New Deal ended Dec. 7, 1941. I know it is trendy as of late for conservatives to falsely accuse the New Deal of all sorts of things, but

for pity's sake, before you do something like this, do please check your facts and chronology. This is, after all, a university and not a Glenn Beck teach-in.

Louis Haas is a professor of history in the College of Liberal Arts. He can be reached at lhaas@mtsu.edu.

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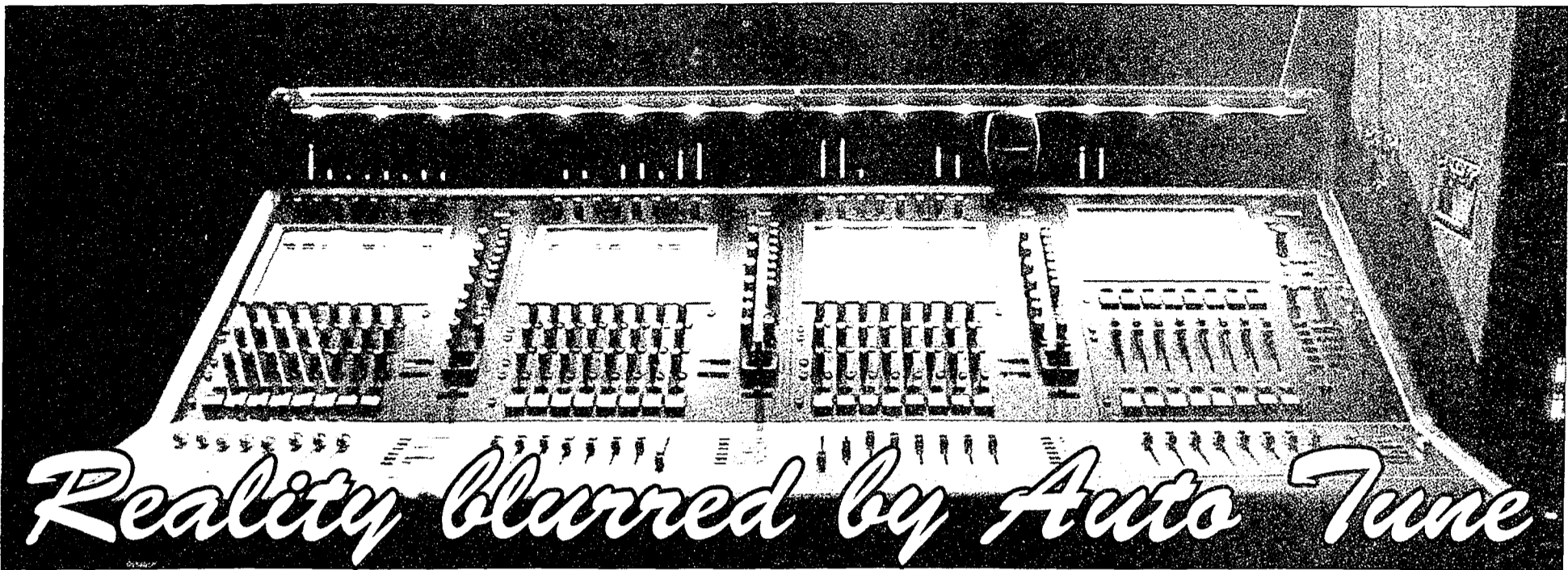
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



By TODD BARNES
Associate News Editor

Victoria Stephens, a Middle Tennessee State University sophomore majoring in vocal performance, worries over the usage of Auto Tune in music.

Questions are raised regarding the difference between what's natural and synthetic, that the singing standard is being lowered, the music artist's integrity suffers, and that society is being conditioned to be intolerant of vocal mistakes, Stephens said.

"It worries me," Stephens said. "In commercial music you don't have to sing. You can talk, and have a career."

Auto Tune, a software plug-in created by Antares Audio Technologies, uses a sophisticated pitch-shifting algorithm to correct pitch in vocal and instrumental performances. The main use of the program is used to disguise off-key inaccuracies, and has allowed singers to perform perfectly tuned vocal tracks without the need of singing in tune.

Additionally, Auto Tune is sometimes used to give music artists a robotic effect to their voice, and is popular amongst the pop, hip-hop and electronic dance artists, but is found in almost every musical genre.

Cher's 1998 song, "Believe," first used Auto Tune, and is considered to be her best single of all time, which sold more than 10 million copies worldwide, according to Billboard Charts. The single rose to the number one position in 19 countries, and won a Grammy for Best Dance Recording.

Cher's success with Auto Tune inspired a new wave of music artists using the effect to achieve stardom, and has increased in usage in the last five years.

T-Pain, a hip-hop artist who calls himself the "father of auto tune," virtually was the only artist using the robotic effect prominently and noticeably amongst the top selling singles of 2005, according to the Billboard singles charts.

By 2009, T-Pain was far from the only

artist using Auto Tune, which includes artists like Kanye West, The Black Eyed Peas, Lady Gaga, Lil' Wayne, Britney Spears, and Kesha.

In 2010, 20 percent of the top 10 Billboard singles in the United States presently use Auto Tune explicitly for the robotic effect, such as Kesha's "We R Who We R." However, the remaining 80 percent of the top 10 singles use auto tune, but not for the robotic effect; they use it to cover up mistakes.

Music artists, such as Taylor Swift, Katy Perry, Lady Antebellum, Sarah Bareilles, and John Mayer use the software covertly to correct their vocal mishaps, and this raises questions regarding the importance of singing ability.

In a random MTSU survey consisting of 50 students, 86 percent said they believe Auto Tune is decreasing the standard for singers. Singers are able to rely on technology to enhance their sound.

H. Stephen Smith, an MTSU professor of voice, said he is concerned about the

importance of his career when Auto Tune can correct singing mistakes.

Stephens is not one of the students who said she questions what is natural or Auto Tuned based upon her experience as a vocal performance major, and she said she knows that when turning on the radio that it is mostly Auto Tuned.

"Because I've done recordings for Christian music and pop music," Stephens said. "I pretty much know that 90 percent of what's on the radio is auto tuned."

People should inherently know that everything is touched by some sort of tuning software, Piekarski said while adding an analogy to the fact that when audiences view movies like Avatar, which uses visual effects synthetically, that they still enjoy the content of the movie regardless of how authentic the images are.

"When you see special effects in movies, and you really like Avatar, were you really thinking 'I don't like this because I know that people don't really

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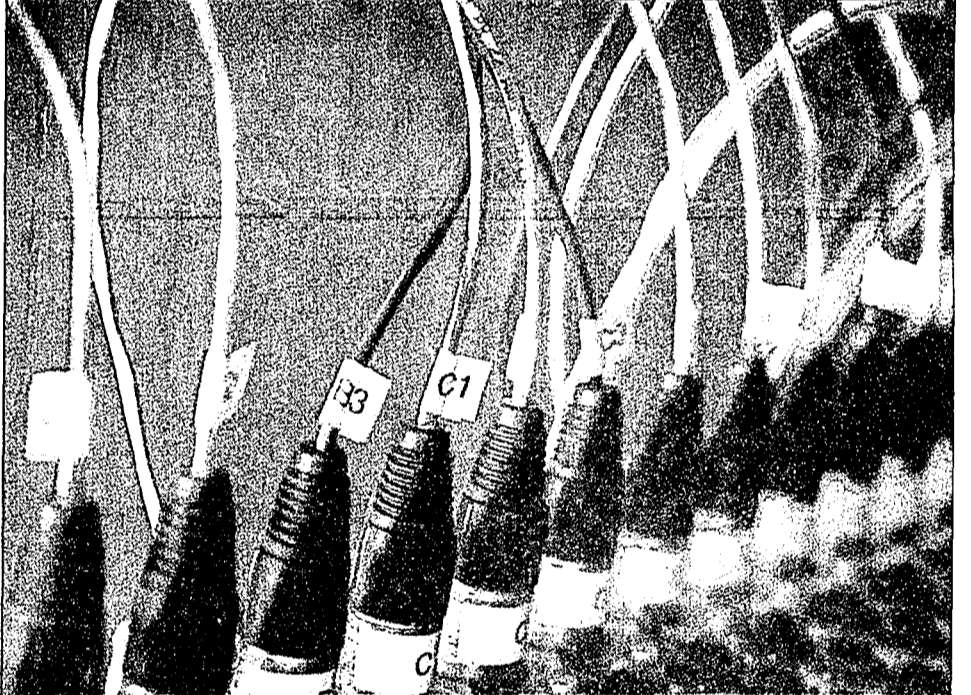
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importance of his career when Auto Tune can correct singing mistakes.

"It concerns me," Smith said. "I'm not very happy about Auto Tune. I think, 'why am I even doing what I'm doing for a living, and why do I even try to help students learn to sing in tune.'"

Before Auto Tune software, singers like Aretha Franklin, Michael Jackson and Freddie Mercury would conduct many singing takes to get that perfect sound, which is something now of the past. Money is the driving force behind this change, according to Jim Piekarski, MTSU recording industry management professor.

"Because artist W is tuning the vocal and selling a million downloads, then artists X, Y, and Z feel they need to tune vocals as well to stay competitive," Piekarski said. "The bar is [high]. So, if you want your records to be competitive with everybody else, it's gotta be spot on because one flat note or out of tune vocal, people may turn off the track."

Besides album sales driving the Auto Tune phenomena, it also saves the record label money because music artists are spending less time in the studio because they are not doing several takes. Instead, they can do minimal takes and the producer can use the Auto Tune software to format the singer's mistakes into a perfect pitch, Piekarski said.

Tuning vocals is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to musical enhancement, and that the Pro Tools program used by music producers and MTSU students majoring in recording industry is also used to correct instrumental pitch and rhythm inconsistencies, such as percussion, guitar riffs and any other instrument on the track, Piekarski said. "Regarding auto tune, that's the least of what goes on behind the scenes, as far as what you can do with Pro Tools," Piekarski said. "You can take drummers who can't play in time, and you can fix it

fly around on dinosaurs," Piekarski said. "Just enjoy it for what it is. If the song you like has a great message, or an undeniable groove, do you enjoy it less because the vocal might be tuned, or the drums time corrected? Probably not."

However, the tradition of a professional musician is being able to perform a song from beginning to end without mistakes, which can be depressing when that is not accomplished, Piekarski said.

"At least for myself, I feel somewhat let down when I hear an artist live, only to find out they can't sing, or play their instrument," Piekarski said.

Students were asked in the survey if Auto Tune diminishes the credibility of the music artist, and 78 percent said that it does.

"I think there is something dishonest about it," Smith said. "A lot of people are going to assume that it has been doctored with. The assumption will be made, and frankly I might make the same assumption if it were someone else."

Along with Smith, Stephens said she also believes music artists suffer from using the Auto Tune because the passion and the message gets lost because singers do not spend the time nurturing their vocal talents.

"You're losing the sense of line, meaning your losing the message behind it because the person is not singing with passion as much as it's, 'oh, you sang through it, and we fixed your mistakes,'" Stephens said.

Students were asked in the survey if Auto Tune conditions society to be intolerant of music artists making mistakes in live performances, and 68 percent said that it does.

Auto Tune will not impede the music industry, as seen in present album sales, but it does diminish the singing standard in popular music, and the music artist's credibility in this technological revolution.