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Meditate for the Mountains with Sounds of Isha performed on campus in front of the Keathley University Center on Thursday, April 19. The genre of music incorporates rustic sounds that create a soothing effect. Richard J. Davidson of the University of Wisconsin says that meditation can help people make positive changes in their mind and body. Photo by Kelsey Klingemeyer.

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SIDELINES

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Students build, race experimental vehicles

by Asher Hudson
Multimedia Manager

Over the past six years, MTSU has been racing like a pro—in a futuristic sense.

The university's Experimental Vehicle Program was founded

in 2004 with the start of the Moonbuggy project. Today the program includes a Mini Baja, a solar-powered boat, and a Formula 1-inspired car-racing team with around 25 members.

"This is a great program for graduating students. It is open to all MTSU students and all MTSU majors. If they can build these vehicles, they can go into industry," said Saeed Foroudastan, the assistant dean of basic and applied sciences and faculty advisor for the Experimental Vehicle Program.

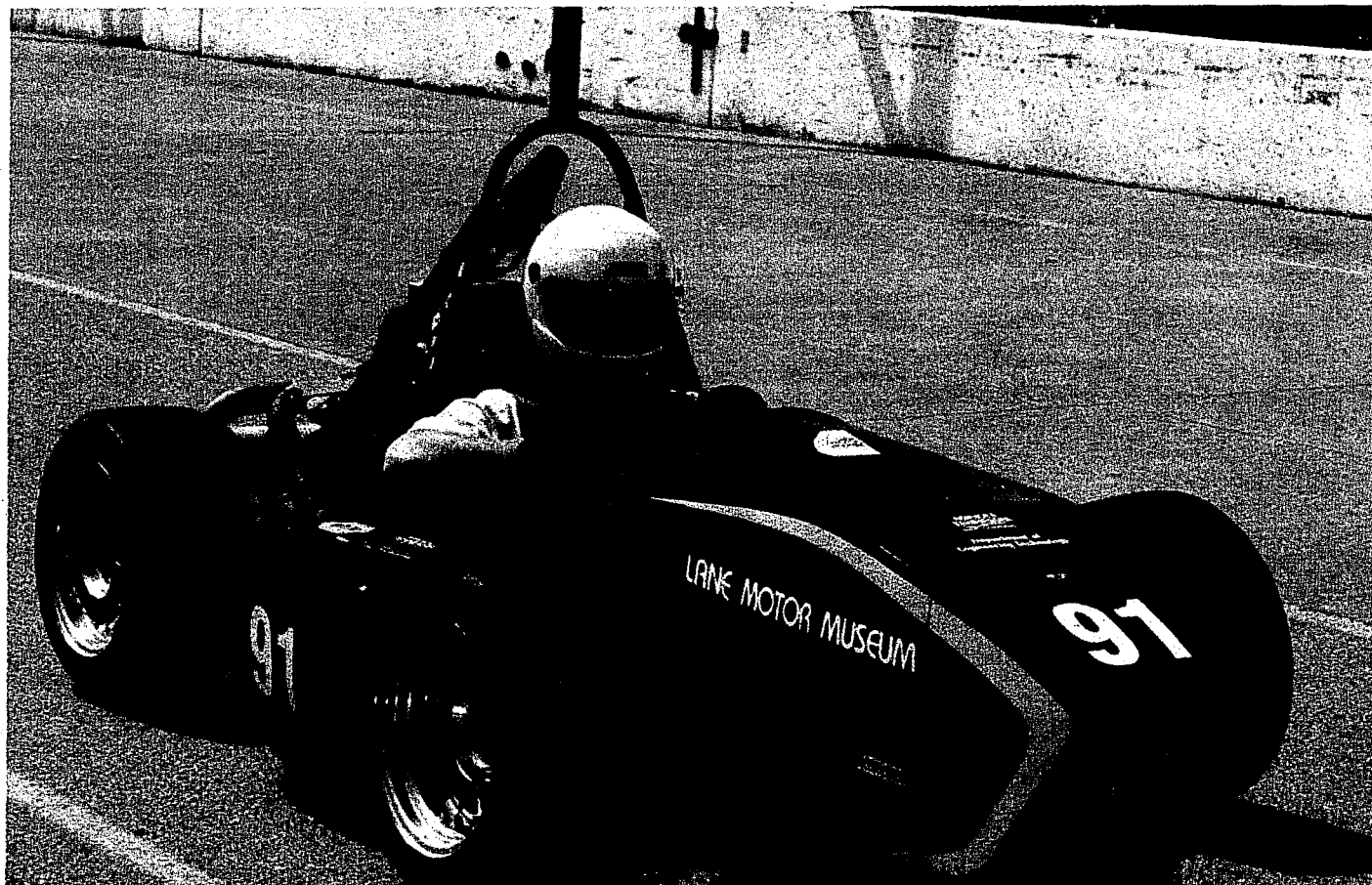
The Moonbuggy project took part in NASA's 19th annual Moonbuggy Race April 14-15. Returning and rookie teams from across the world competed in various timed trials set up by NASA.

The competition is split into two categories: high school and collegiate levels. This year, 44 teams competed at the collegiate level. MTSU entered two teams and placed 14th and 17th.

In previous years, MTSU has placed as high as 5th overall, and has received various awards. In 2011, MTSU won the NASA Systems Safety Award for its approach to building, testing and racing.

"[The students] become a family; they study together, they work together, they design these vehicles together and this is a way that they stay in school, in college, and graduate," Foroudastan said. "I have about 95 percent retention rate for students that join the project, stay, and graduate."

Another project that is part of the Experimental Vehicles Program is the SAE Formula One, which is a scaled-down, formula-style autocross racecar. The formula team will be participating May 7-14 in the annual Formula SAE—Society of Automotive Engineers—competition at the Michigan



The Experimental Vehicle Program on campus competed in NASA's 19th annual Moonbuggy Race and placed in the top twenty of their division. Photo courtesy of Facebook.

International Speedway. Approximately 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students representing over 100 teams from around the world will participate in the event. The competition requires that the cars be designed, built and raced by the students.

"The Formula SAE is one of the most complicated and hard projects that [the students] do," Foroudastan said. "They are building a race car from scratch. They build the frame. They build the suspension, and they put it together. It involves mechanical and electrical components."

The Experimental Vehicles Program also incorporates Solar Boat and the Mini Baja. Last year's Solar Boat was made of

fiberglass. However, this year the students are diving deeper into more complex composite materials—specifically carbon fiber. The hull will have a carbon fiber exterior and a fiberglass core.

"Solar Boat is another [program] that opens the student's eyes to alternative fuels, the benefits and how it is possible," Foroudastan said.

The Mini Baja will be competing in various competitions throughout the summer, from Alabama to Portland, Ore. The Mini Baja is "a single-seat, off-road recreational vehicle that is safe, fun to drive, easy to maintain, and has the ability to be mass produced and sold to the public," according to the group's Facebook

page.

Blue Raider Baja, as the group is referred to, is also part of the Baja Collegiate Design Series hosted by the SAE and is open to all current MTSU students of all majors.

"If someone wants to come down and join the team and help out, we are always open to new people," Foroudastan said. ■

SGA food bank on hold for fall

University administration calls for a 'workable plan,' more time



Coby Sherlock, 2012-2013 SGA president



Rachel Lee, 2012-2013 SGA executive vice president



Debra Sells, assistant vice president for student affairs

by Alex Hubbard
Sports Editor

An attempt to begin a campus food bank for disadvantaged students failed to pass muster after a university official expressed concerns over which university department would control the organization.

A resolution to create the food bank passed in a unanimous vote of the Student Government Association senate in an April 5 meeting, but Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Debra Sells declined to let the legislation take effect, citing the roll that counseling services would play in administering the food bank.

"I've responded to this particular piece of legislation with the recommendation that the SGA name a steady group of students, staff and community people to create a workable plan for how to proceed," Sells said. "The initial

legislation suggests that MTSU Counseling Services would play a major role in deciding to whom to distribute the food aid, and I don't think this is a viable role for the counseling staff, who are needed to devote their time 100 percent to crisis intervention and dealing with mental health concerns."

The resolution calls for the SGA to collaborate with the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership, counseling services and "any other affiliated department" to "open a food bank for enrolled students experiencing temporary financial difficulties or homelessness."

"We are currently doing some revisions, and I have meetings scheduled as well as having met with the current executive vice president already," said Sen. Rachel Lee, the resolution's sponsor. "Before [Executive Vice President] Shaun [Luber] met with Dr. Sells, I

did meet with Counseling Services and they were very supportive. However, with a campus this large, I know there are many concerns for them to face, so we are currently revising our plans and finding the best direction to go from here."

Heidi Buckalew, speaking for Director of Counseling Services Jane Tipps, said the department was unfamiliar with the legislation and referred all questions on the topic to Sells.

Sells said President Jeremy Poynter and incoming President Coby Sherlock would make the decisions on how and when further discussions would take place.

"What we're going to have to do as a senate is bring this back in our caucus meeting with some new ideas on how we're going to open it up here on campus and pretty much find a new department to work close in hand with us in order for us to be successful through this

process," Sherlock said.

Sherlock said the resolution will have to wait until the senate reconvenes in the fall, due to the limited amount of SGA meetings left in the current semester.

Sherlock and Lee, who is the incoming executive vice president, will not be able to vote on the future version of legislation, but Sherlock assured his personal support.

"I can promise you that I am in full support of it," Sherlock said. "I really like this bill. I have friends on campus who struggle through some of the needs that we're trying to reach out and help here, so my role on this is really just going to be trying to find other students to support us in this action that we're taking here on campus." ■

CORRECTIONS

In the April 18 edition of *Sidelines*, it was reported that Senator Bill Ketron was affiliated with the "Don't Say Gay" bill. Ketron is not a sponsor of and is not associated with the bill. *Sidelines* regrets this error.

Students continue to assemble queer-allied fraternity

Staff Report



Sigma Phi Beta founded its first chapter in 2003, and currently has two active chapters at Arizona State University and Indiana University. Photo courtesy of Brandon Thomas.

The Sigma Phi Beta queer-allied fraternity is working to create a full chapter on campus after five students were initiated into the national fraternity this month.

In order for this group of students form a colony, they had to demonstrate community and campus involvement, raise \$350 in funds and obtain two letters of recommendation from the university.

Currently, the university has 28 fraternities and sororities classified as a part of Greek life, and students must seek the approval from the Multi-Cultural Greek council to gain a chapter status.

Although this upcoming queer-allied fraternity is Greek, the chapter will need a

minimum of 10 members to be stable, and the formation of the chapter could take six months to a year.

Sigma Phi Beta has two active chapters at Arizona State University and Indiana University. The fraternity started in 2001, and founded its first chapter in 2003.

Over the years, the national fraternity has been selective in working with different universities as it tries to work with campuses that will see positive benefits.

Office of Greek Affairs Coordinator Dave Sullivan said in an article with The Tennessean that as an office there is no one that is not open to it and that candid conversations about the issue are required. ■

Campus & Community Crime Briefs

Fraud

Keathley University Center
April 18, 1:38 p.m.
A complainant reported that someone had been stealing money from her bank account possibly used a stolen debit card.

Vagrancy

Boutwell Dramatic Arts
April 18, 6:08 p.m.
Authorities issued a student a trespass warning who had been disciplinary suspended from school. The student was instructed to leave campus.

Disorderly Conduct

Parking and Transportation
April 18, 7:29 p.m.
A complainant reported that he was being followed by an individual.

Vandalism

Greek Row
April 19, 8:30 a.m.
A complainant reported that spotlights had been damaged outside the fraternity house.

Warrant

Cummings Hall
April 19, 2:24 p.m.
Authorities posted an arrest warrant for Tanner Rejnitz, 19, for theft over \$1,000.

Theft

Business Aerospace Building
April 19, 2:29 p.m.
A complainant reported that his iPad had been stolen.

Theft

Davis Science Building
April 19, 4:32 p.m.
A complaint reported the theft of an iPad.

Arrest

Parking and Transportation
April 19, 6:30 p.m.
Authorities charged Kristen Samples, 19, Jared White, 19, and Lauren Moulton, 19, with simple possession of marijuana.

Theft

MTSU Police Department

April 19, 10:21 p.m.

A complainant reported that his wallet was missing.

Alcohol

East Main Street
April 20, 1:24 a.m.
Authorities arrested Cody Jones, 19, for underage consumption of alcohol and Chandler Jordan, 19, for driving under the influence.

Arrest

East Main Street
April 20, 2:20 a.m.
Murfreesboro police arrested Joshua Carter, 23, for public intoxication.

Alcohol

Rutherford Boulevard
April 20, 3:21 a.m.
Authorities arrested James Hill, 19, for driving under the influence, implied consent and driving without a license.

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Thursday, April 26

MTSU After Dark: Pajama Jam
McCallie Dinning Hall, 10 p.m.
Admission: Free with MTSU ID

With finals just around the corner, your stress level is probably beyond comprehension to anyone outside of the collegiate world. My mother always advised me to take a little break every now and then from studying so I could stay alert, and mother always knows best, right?

By the time Thursday rolls around you'll probably want a little break—at this point, I wouldn't be surprised if you're seeing double because you've been staring at your notes and book for so long. So take some time to run on over to McCallie's Dining Hall to enjoy the Pajama Jam. There will be a street fair with free food and a DJ.

Go stretch your legs and have a good time, go let loose and get off your caboose. Enjoy yourself before finals week kicks into full gear. After all, your books and lecture notes will still be at your desk when you get back. (Nataly Morales)



Portugal. The Man
Cannery Ballroom, 8 p.m.
1 Cannery Row, Nashville
Admission: \$17 advance, \$20 doors

I know, I know, the name is a bit odd, and their music is anything but ordinary, but these reasons alone are worth checking out this band.

Portugal. The Man have mastered the art of combing old psychedelic sounds while putting their own modern twist on it. With high pitched OH's and AH's and an Andrew VanWyngarden-esque touch, Portugal. The Man take the cake as one of the most loved indie-turned-mainstream bands.

Take some time out of your Thursday night and head down town for what's sure to be a great live show. (Nataly Morales)

"Marley"
The Belcourt Theatre, 6 and 8 p.m.
2102 Belcourt Ave., Nashville
Admission: \$8.75 (adult), \$7.25 (student)

The Belcourt Theatre may be seeing more dreadlocks and people who are "high on life" these days, since the release of "Marley."

The documentary tells the story behind the man many of us have grown to love and obsess over. From his message of peace and love to his Rastafarian lifestyle, "Marley" gives audiences a look into Bob Marley's rise to fame, with personal interviews from his family members and friends.

Fans will be glad to know the film even shows never-before-seen footage from concerts and previously-unheard music, along with some of our favorite tracks and performances.

"Marley" is a great film for long-time fans and for those who are new to the Bob Marley bandwagon. I highly recommend this film for anyone wanting to know more about this legendary music icon. (Nataly Morales)

Friday, April 27

"The Screwtape Letters"
TPAC - James K. Polk Theatre, 8 p.m.
505 Deaderick St., Nashville
Admission: \$29

If you've ever been fortunate enough to read C.S. Lewis' "The Screwtape Letters," you know the story is one that is both intriguing and eye opening.

The letters between demons Screwtape and Wormwood give a satirical look at Christianity and its faults and how easily corrupted or skewed the lifestyle can become from a demonic point of view. However, Lewis doesn't stop there—he also delves into how non-religious people can be as easily influenced by demons as well. The correspondence between the two demons is eerie but also enlightening for and has been known to translate well between all sorts of audiences.

This masterful novel will be brought to life on TPAC's stage with Max McLean as Screwtape. Reading and imagining Screwtape's voice and actions is one thing, but to see this manipulative character played out in real life will be a real treat. Grab your fellow Lewis fanatic friends and head to the James K. Polk theatre for a night of hellish good fun. (Nataly Morales)

"The Raven"
Check local theatres for show times and prices

I'm not going to lie— I cringed when I first heard that Edgar Allen Poe's famous piece of literary work was the inspiration behind this film. Then, I read John Cusack will be playing Poe, and I promised myself to never watch a mainstream Hollywood film again. However, I don't want to jump to conclusions and write this off completely, so let's take this film piece by piece and then come to a conclusion, shall we?

In the film, Poe is questioned after a mother and daughter are found murdered, and the gruesome scene oddly resembles one of the author's stories. The police soon discover another murder has occurred during questioning and quickly dismiss Poe as the prime suspect. He then teams up with a local detective to find the murderer before the next victim succumbs to a gory death.

Cusack will always be remembered as the lovable Lloyd Dobler from the film "Say Anything," but frankly, he should have stayed in the 80s melodramatic realm instead of desperately taking every career opportunity afterwards. Poe is one of those iconic figures that shouldn't be tarnished by a ridiculous portrayal on the big screen, especially by Cusack. That's strike one.

Strike two is the fact that the film will have Poe running around like Sherlock Holmes, when we all know that just simply wouldn't happen—filmmakers took a little too much liberty with this one.

The fact that someone thought it a good idea to put a modern-day twist on something as classic as "The Raven" merits the third and final strike. It's one of those rare pieces of literature that needs no twist or fresh take on.

Overall, the film is about as appealing as any overwrought mystery film and looks as unappealing as "Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter," but if you're in the mood to check it out, do so, but don't say you weren't warned. (Nataly Morales)

Saturday, April 28

Ziggy Marley
Marathon Music Works, 9 p.m.
1402 Clinton St., Nashville
Admission: \$25-\$30

If seeing "Marley" didn't exactly give you your reggae fix, don't fret, mon. The next best thing to the original reggae pioneer is coming to town—Bob Marley's son, Ziggy.

Music city goers will be trading in their cowboy boots and Miranda Lambert hairstyles for dreadlocks and red, yellow and green necklaces as fans head downtown for a night of mellow Jamaican music.

Even if you're not a fan of reggae, I still advise anyone who's a music lover to go check



out this great performer. He manages to get crowds moving and smiling as he spreads his message of love and freedom among all people being the solution to the world's problems. Trust me, you'll leave his show feeling happy and refreshed, and if you weren't a fan already, you will be afterwards. (Nataly Morales)

MTSU Baseball vs. Arkansas State
Reese Smith Field, 4 p.m.

Admission: Free with MTSU ID

Baseball season is now in full swing. Fans have filled out their brackets and are ready to see who will make it to end and take home the championship.

MTSU's baseball team is no exception. As the team hosts Arkansas State, the star players will be ready to put their best foot forward as they fight to get one step closer to a spot in this year's Sun Belt Conference.

Take some time to join other MTSU students as they cheer on our baseball players and show some Raider pride. (Nataly Morales)

Sunday, April 29

Timbre

Mercy Lounge, 8 p.m.

1 Cannery Row, Nashville

Admission: \$7

If you're looking for a soothing way to bring your weekend to a close, head on over to the Mercy Lounge Sunday evening for a night of sweet music by Timbre.

This Nashville-based singer, songwriter and harpist broke into the music scene when she performed with bands and artists like *mewithoutYou*, *Jack White*, and *the Chariot*, but since going solo and releasing her own album, Timbre has been captivating audiences everywhere.

Her voice has a quality of sound that very few major artists manage to get by with. There are no traces of her calming melodies being tampered by computer-generated tracks, and what's cool is that she actually makes the harp look less like a clunky classical instrument and more of a concert necessity—it's become her staple piece while she's on stage; kind of like Taylor Swift's guitar, only less annoying.

You don't want to miss this talented up-and-coming musician, so grab some friends, have a couple of drinks and prepare yourself for a calm night at the Mercy Lounge. (Nataly Morales)

Live from Chelsea Lately's Roundtable ft. Ali Wong and Ben Gleib
Zanies Comedy Night Club, 7:30 p.m.
2025 Eighth Ave. South, Nashville
Admission: \$15-\$18

Anyone who knows comedy knows that the witty, sarcastic, vodka-loving Chelsea Lately has a hit comedy sitcom on NBC called, "Are You There, Chelsea?" And anyone who's familiar with the show knows how hard it is to not love the adorable, petite character Olivia, played by Ali Wong. Anyone who is a fan of Lately's late-night talk show, is probably familiar with Ben Gleib, seeing as how Lately loves to tease and give him a hard time during the show's roundtable discussion.

Wong and the hilarious Gleib will be performing some side-splitting stand up Sunday at Zanies. In 2011, Wong was pinned as one of the top 10 comedians to watch out for in *Variety Magazine*, while Gleib has received praise from *Esquire* and was named one of the next big comedians to look out for.

You'll surely have a great and fun-filled night hearing these two comedians' take on everything from relationships to their zany families and everything in between. (Nataly Morales)

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'First to the Top' could complicate public education system

by Michael Wilson
Contributing Writer

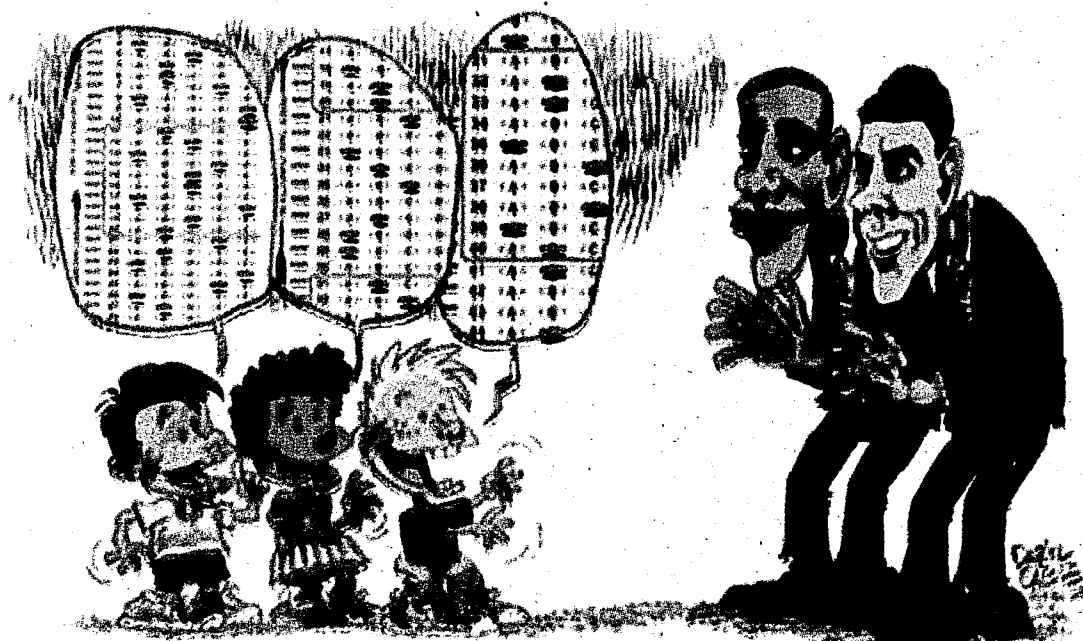


Photo courtesy of truthabouteducation.org

The 1,000-plus students in the College of Education planning to go into teaching after graduation may be subject to the Tennessee First to the Top program and the teacher evaluations involved.

Middle Tennessee State University is one of the top producers of teachers in Tennessee, according to a 2010 MTSU News report. In fall 2010, there were 1,427 undergraduates majoring

in education, and 194 graduate students seeking education-specialist degrees.

Tennessee was one of two states, the other being Delaware, to be the first to win Race to the Top grant money from the federal government. The state's proposal for the grant was spelled out in a 264-page application, which can be found at www.tn.gov/firsttothetop.

The First to the Top Act was passed by the members of the 106th Tennessee General

Assembly in a special Jan. 2010 session, but the grant money was not won by the state until March 29, 2010.

"We received a grant for \$501 million based on the proposal we outlined in our application," said Meghan Curran, director of First to the Top.

Tennessee's final request exceeded estimates by about \$17 million, mainly due to additional resources that were being sought for turnaround schools, according to a media release from Jan. 20, 2010.

"First to the Top" was the name Tennessee gave to the Race to the Top program, since it was one of the first two states to win the federal grant money," said Don Odom, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction.

At the end of this academic semester, Odom will be named director of schools for Rutherford County.

In order to win the grant money, the state had to make some concessions to the federal government with its educational system. Tennessee had to commit to common course standards,

the improvement of low performing schools and a system of measuring teacher performance based in part on student outcome, Curran said.

After its implementation in March 2010, there has been a monthly update issued each month explaining alterations in the program.

"Governor Haslam hired SCORE to conduct forums on the educational model," Odom said.

SCORE, an acronym for State Collaborative on Reforming Education, is an independent,

non-profit and non-partisan advocacy and research institution founded by former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist. SCORE has and will continue to conduct 'round table' focus groups of teachers and administrators throughout the state, according to Odom.

SCORE released its previous findings on Jan. 26. The fourteen-member board of directors is due to report its next findings to the state in June. The information it provides will be used by the Tennessee Board of Education to improve and further develop the program.

A component that will most directly affect graduates going into the teaching field is the teacher evaluation portion of the program, Odom said.

After SCORE reports new findings to the state in June, there may be some changes in the program.

Currently, evaluations are to be performed four times per year for veteran teachers, and six times per school year for "apprentice" or novice teachers. In the fall, the evaluations will be decreased for both groups.

Veteran teachers are those with five or more years of experience and a professional license. Those with less are apprentice teachers.

Slight variations can be found in different school districts, but all must follow the specifications spelled out in the Tennessee First to the Top Act of 2010, according to Curran.

The teacher evaluations are done in three parts, according to the evaluation rubric on the Tennessee government website.

The first part consists of 50 percent of the evaluation and deals with classroom evaluations. The second makes up 35 percent of the evaluation, and deals with a student growth score. The third makes up the last 15 percent, and is taken from student achievement data.

When rating teachers, administrators are looking at three major categories: instruction, planning, and environment. These are broken down further to smaller categories to guide the evaluator and to create more specific criteria.

Instruction is the largest grouping and



includes student motivation, lesson pace, activities and materials, and question-and-answer activities that exercise students' analytical thinking skills, among a multitude of other skills. The point is for the students to not just memorize materials, but also be able to apply the information to everyday use, according to Curran.

Planning goes beyond the older idea of a lesson plan. Instructors must create a set of measurable and specific goals adhering to state standards. These new lesson plans aim to expand on the students' current knowledge and be presented in a way that is relevant to their lives, Curran said.

Environment covers class expectations, student behavior, and the look and feel of the classroom. The classrooms should be organized and understandable by all students. It should also be welcoming to members and guests, and resources are to be easily and readily accessible to students.

The 35 percent of the evaluation is based on Tennessee Value Added Assessment System statistics that measure the growth of students from one year to the next.

The TVAAS measures student progression compared to the national average. This rates student improvement as individual students rather than comparing the school average to the national average. A student that shows a significant growth but is still below the national average is measured as a positive rather than a negative factor, according to the rubric.

The last 15 percent is based on student achievement data selected by the educator and their supervisor from a list of state approved options. Such options include graduation rates, and testing such as TCAP and other standardized tests approved by the Tennessee First to the Top Act.

These three portions are combined to create the teachers' evaluation score. The score rates from one to five, with one being the lowest and five being the highest rating a teacher can achieve.

"At this time in Rutherford County, there is not a differentiated pay provision based upon student performance or teacher evaluation," Odom said.

Tennessee Teaching Evaluation rubric by percentage

- Classroom Evaluations
- Student Growth
- Student Achievement

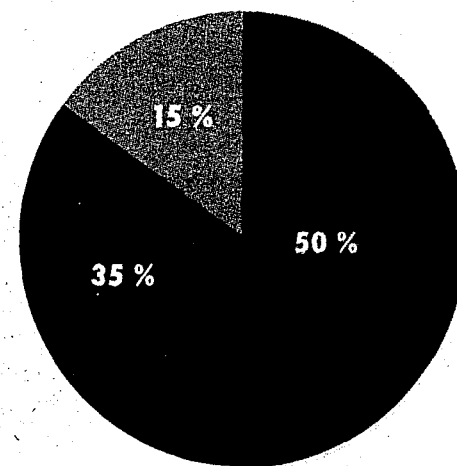


Photo courtesy of fair.org

Grandmother of the glades guides environmental preservation

by Emily Kubis
Features Editor



Grandmother of the glades Bertha Crietzberg visits Flat Rock Cedar Glade in Rutherford County, east of Murfreesboro. Photo courtesy of Kim Sadler.

Bertha Crietzberg's home is filled with framed pictures of flowers and wildlife. Field guides line her shelves, and she pages through them still, with hands worn paper thin with age.

She flips one open and points. The lavender petals of the pale, purple coneflower extend gracefully outward and down from its yellowish brown center.

This flower is the showiest plant of Rutherford County's native cedar glades, she says.

And she would know. Bertha, now in her 90s, has spent her life learning about the glades. Though botany was not her life's work, she researched the unique habitats, and when Murfreesboro's burgeoning infrastructure and development began to threaten the glades in the 1970s, she protected them from destruction.

In her later years, Bertha has been nicknamed "Grandmother of the glades." She bears the name proudly.

Environmentalism had been a hobby of Bertha's long before she moved to Rutherford County in 1964. Her passion for plants was born in childhood, on the farm where she grew up near Montgomery, Ala.

The farmland had a large river bottom running through it that contributed to an abundance of flora and fauna.

"I had plenty of places to roam and find wildflowers," she said, articulating her memories in that old Southern drawl that strings along the vowels and drops the 'r's' entirely.

That simple desire to roam and find wildflowers never left Bertha. After graduating from the University of Alabama, Bertha married her high school and college sweetheart, and they began their life together. James was an Army man, and their life was one of constant relocation.

Their family moved from Alabama to Georgia, to Virginia and Texas, and finally settled in Tennessee. The creases around her eyes grow deeper as she smiles and lists some of the various plants she loved in each state, in each place that was home for only a few years.

"Each place I've been, I've studied the botany

of it," she said.

When her husband took a job as the assistant ROTC director at Middle Tennessee State University, and she took one as a physical education instructor, her work with the cedar glades began.

According to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the cedar glades are environmental habitats native to the central eastern United States. Middle Tennessee has one of the largest concentrations of glades, but due to the urbanization of Nashville, Murfreesboro and the surrounding areas, these globally rare environments are put at risk.

But back in the early 1970s, none of that was

"WE LIVE ON THIS EARTH, AND WE'RE BUILDING SO MUCH TODAY THAT ALL THE NATURAL AREAS ARE BEING TAKEN OVER, AND WE'RE NOT PROTECTING ENOUGH OF THEM AND SETTING ASIDE ENOUGH OF THEM SO THEY CAN BE ENJOYED BY THE YOUTH," SHE SAID SADLY.

common knowledge.

"The first cedar glade I went to was out on Factory Road," Bertha remembers.

Her interest was piqued, but there was a lack of resources available for her to learn more.

So she made an appointment with now-retired MTSU biology professor Thomas Hemmerly.

"He was the first one who really gave me some background, and he had a great deal," she said. "He was the one, I guess, who really got me into it, since he was really knowledgeable about it."

Surrounding the glades are cedar trees, and in the center are the native and often endangered wildflowers that Bertha studied and cared for, including the purple coneflower, sunnysbells and the leafy prairie clover.

Because of the rarity of these wildflowers and habitats, Bertha solemnly explained that there was a great need to protect them against development.

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Jason Mraz released his album *Love is a Four Letter Word* on April 18. Photo courtesy of Dipity.com.

Mraz's new sound blends well with old upbeat style

by Meredith Galyon
Contributing Writer



Almost a decade after releasing the album that put him on the charts, Jason Mraz is back with a new, matured look, but maintains that laid back sound that he has become well known for.

Love Is a Four Letter Word was released April 18. The deluxe edition, which offers the 13 original tracks plus five live songs, instantly shot to the top of the iTunes charts.

The first single from this album, "I Won't Give Up," is a declaration of his unwillingness to let anyone or anything interfere with his relationship. Lyrics like "Cause even the stars, they burn / Some even fall to the earth / We've got a lot to learn / God knows we're worth it," speak to anyone who has ever struggled to keep their romance afloat.

The album starts out with "The Freedom Song," a feel-good tune with catchy beats and lyrics about singing out of happiness. The use of trumpets and heavy back-up vocals bring life to the track and make it a great opening for the album. From there, it moves into "Living in the Moment," an acoustic-driven song with a message similar to that of "The Remedy." Mraz sings, "I will not waste my days / Making up all kinds of ways / To worry about some things / That will not happen to me." The positive lyrics are married with an upbeat, folk-inspired melody that feels inspiring.

"The Woman I Love" is not as impressive as others on this album, leaning more along the lines of a cheesy, cliché love song. Other tracks like "Frank D. Fixer" and "Everything Is Sound" had the potential to be good songs from a

musical standpoint, but the lyrics are lacking. In "Frank D. Fixer," Mraz attempts to personalize the song by singing about his grandfather's ability to fix cars, and compares it to his desire to fix people. The concept is a decent one, but the name of the song is too cutesy to be taken seriously.

The same can be said with "Everything Is Sound," where chants like "Let's sing / La la la," make it fun, but the rest of the lyrics are scattered and do not appear to send a particular message.

Mraz really starts to evoke emotion later in the album with songs like "93 Million Miles" and "Who's Thinking About You."

"93 Million Miles," a song about always knowing that you have a home, is toned down from his usual cheerful, laid back sound and complete with heartfelt lyrics such as, "Just know that wherever you go / You can always come back home." Another leap from Mraz's typical island, beach-y sound is "Who's Thinking About You," a soulful, slow song with a hint of piano that really adds to the mood.

The only guest performance on *Love Is a Four Letter Word* is Inara George, singer from the band The Bird and The Bee, whose vocals are featured on the track "Be Honest." The song is a good blend of acoustic guitar and soft percussion with a mellow feel, but George is barely heard except in the bridge. Her voice harmonizes well with Mraz's, and would have made for a better track if it were treated more like a duet.

The album ends on a good note with "The World As I See It," a love song that proves more powerful than corny. The ambient sound and lyrics are romantic without going overboard.

Overall, Mraz did not disappoint. It is evident that he has gone through changes that have influenced his writing style, but Mraz stays true to his sound while showing growth. Whether you want to hear a song that will lift your spirits or a song that will make you ponder about the meaning of life, there is something on this album for everyone. ■

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As Cities Burn: A History Lesson in Emotional Discourse

by Daniel Kreipe
Arts & Entertainment Editor



Friday the 13th is a day horror film fanatics have held in their hearts for decades. But this year, it belonged to the heavy music fans of Nashville and surrounding areas: As Cities Burn had returned from the grave. And it wasn't just any As Cities Burn—apart from a single member change, it was the As Cities Burn that put out the widely acclaimed 2005 album *Son, I Loved You at Your Darkest*.

As Cities Burn has had more ups and downs over the years than a fan cares to handle, but they have an incredibly devoted following. After releasing their first album and touring extensively, the band announced they would be doing a final tour. However, the band was so touched by the fan response, they decided to continue.

But, there was a catch. When the demo from 2007's *Come Now Sleep* surfaced, their original vocalist TJ Bonnette and indie-hardcore stylings were completely absent. Instead, TJ's brother, Cody, had stepped into the shoes of lead vocalist and the band produced a more laid back indie-rock record. Fans were understandably shocked and upset, but in the end they gave their unconditional support and *Come Now Sleep* is a beloved record in many record collections.

In 2009, the band released what would turn out to be their final album, *Hell or High Water*. It built upon the indie sound of the last record, while adding a little extra rock-and-roll crunch to the mix. But after they released this record, they played a handful of shows and quietly bowed out of the scene with a small message in their MySpace bio.

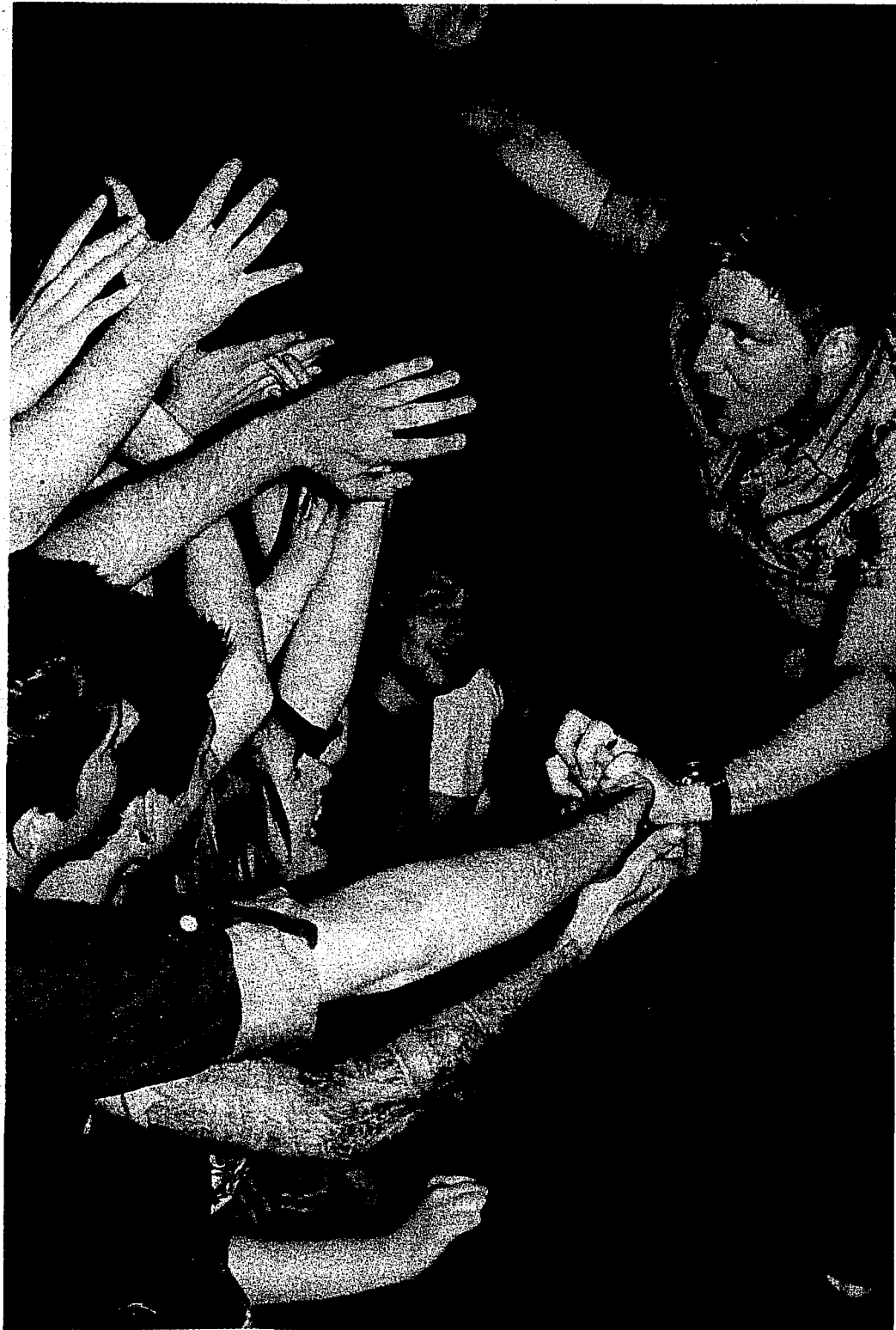
Fast forward to 2011, when the band announced they would be reuniting to play the Unsilent Night Festival in Dallas, Texas. Most believed this to be a one-off reunion show, but the band continued to announce dates across the country, and even some abroad. The most recent string of shows brought them to the South-Tennessee and Louisiana, specifically. That is how this reviewer ended up at one of two sold-out shows on Friday the 13th.

The show took place at the Exit/In, a venue greeted by most with a forced grin. It's poorly laid out, the sound is never on point, and the doormen are far from polite. However, that didn't stop them from selling out two shows, and scheduling another the previous night across the street at The End. With whiskey and coke in hand, I settled in to watch the opening band play.

The opener was O'Brother from Atlanta, Ga. They had a great sound (not unlike something you would hear on As Cities Burn's *Come Now Sleep*), and they knew their songs to the T. The drummer was especially on point, playing interesting, diverse beats throughout the set. But in the end, myself and the rest of the crowd were anxious to see the main attraction.

And when the moment finally came, it was nothing short of legendary. The band exploded into "Thus from My Lips, by Yours, My Sin Is Purged" with enough force to knock a whale unconscious. The crowd was in a frenzy, and I was screaming myself hoarse right

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As Cities Burn played at Exit/In on April 13. Photos by Joel Kreipe, contributing photographer.

Mastodon delivers spectacular performance



Mastodon has released five full-length albums since the band formed in 2000. Photos courtesy of Facebook.



by Jacob Roberts
Staff Writer



From the opening notes of the first song of the set to the moment the lights dimmed, progressive metal legends Mastodon thrilled a packed crowd at Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville on the 'Heritage Hunter Tour.'

The band played their new album *The Hunter* in its entirety, starting with "Black Tongue." The multi-colored LED lights flashed, and the journey began. A huge replica of the massive deer head that artist A.J. Fosik made for *The Hunter* album stood 30 feet tall in the stage background and its eyes glowed brightly in different colors throughout the set. The band found time to play older tracks such as "Blood and Thunder" from their 2004 album *Leviathan*, and the title track to their 2009 album *Crack the Skye*.

Brann Dailor is one of the best metal drummers active today. His swift double kicks and fast hands were constantly on display throughout the evening. Brann also sang on the track "The

Sparrow" while drumming.

Bill Kelliher chugged away on the custom, Silverburst Lola, nine-string electric guitar that First Act named for him. Brett Hinds and Troy Sanders' vocals were spot on all night. Sanders' ran back and forth around the stage like a madman, mercilessly beating on his bass. Hinds pulled out a barrage of guitars, including his custom aluminum, flying v-style electric, with its transparent, acrylic body, and his custom First Act with the dual neck.

Fans jumped up and down in rhythm for the whole set, but never as fast as they did as when Mastodon performed "Spectralight," one of the heaviest tracks off their new album.

It was a night and a performance to be remembered. Mastodon is on the U.S. 'Heritage Hunter Tour' with Swedish progressive death metal band Opeth, and Swedish doom metal band Ghost. ■



LIBERTY IS A STATE OF BEING

by Eric Sharp
Contributing Columnist

Sadhguru Vasudev cautions those that want to change the world to first rid their own hearts of fear and pain, before embarking to change the way others live -otherwise one will only transcribe one's own darkness upon the world and make a bigger mess.

Before you can bring the message of liberty to anyone, you must first "live in truth" and experience liberty in your mind and heart. If your heart, mind and body are not aligned to the same purpose, your message will be muddled. As the saying goes, "No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care." But if you have dedicated your entire being to freedom and really feel it, then no force can stop your message.

Break yourself apart from the archetypal authoritarian nested deep in your mind. Cease your fevered dreams of wandering the Stately Halls, searching for meaning that isn't there. Krishnamurti writes:

"It is very easy to conform to what your society or your parents and teachers tell you. That is a safe and easy way of existing; but that

is not living, because in it there is fear, decay, death. To live is to find out for yourself what is true, and you can do this only when there is freedom, when there is continuous revolution inwardly, within yourself. Freedom and liberty are not mere political concepts, nor simply ethical systems..."

You must first bear your own fruit of mind and heart before you can help someone else bloom.

Krishnamurti also writes:

"Don't take it for granted that this is an orderly society; don't mesmerize yourself with words...If you see the decay, you have a challenge: you are challenged to find a way of solving this urgent problem. And how you respond to the challenge is important, is it not? You can respond fully, adequately only if there is no fear in you, only if you don't think as ... a communist or a capitalist, but as a total human being who is trying to solve this problem..."

He faults both the capitalist and the communist, because they both have a vision of society that they want forced upon the other, and

the entire world. The libertarian understands this folly and to paraphrase Frederic Bastiat, "has joined the ranks of the reformers, for the sole purpose of leaving people alone."

The Police State grows. Let it grow, and let go of all fear. Act now because you will not be any freer tomorrow, next week, or next year. Let go of all restraints inside you and dedicate your being to the freedom of all sentience.

No matter how bad things get no force can take that away from you: No forced confession, no waterboarded murmur can change what is in your heart.

The central planners are inflexible and unadoptable and will fail under their own weight and blindness. Markets will find workarounds and alternatives, human beings will find ways to live in liberty as the establishment of the State-Corporate Elite erodes beneath them.

Freedom and prosperity will be ours and, as Tao de Ching 17 says, the people will rise up with their hands in the air and say, "We ourselves have achieved it!"



Eric Sharp is a senior majoring in political science. He can be reached at eric.sharp@yaliberty.org.

Sidelines is the editorially independent, student-run newspaper affiliated with Middle Tennessee State University and the College of Mass Communication. The opinions expressed herein are those of individual writers and not necessarily Sidelines or the university.

TRUE BLUE: I am a learner now and forever

by Ron Kates
Contributing Columnist

While working on my PhD at Georgia State University, I had the pleasure of taking three classes from Dr. Bradford Fletcher, including a required Bibliography and Research course. While I find that, in the nearly 20 years since I took that course, I have modeled a lot of my classroom approach to Dr. Fletcher's. One seemingly-innocuous comment he made during a class has strongly defined my professional approach to teaching and ultimately, to learning.

When I took his course, Dr. Fletcher was nearing the end of a career started in the late '60s. One of my classmates asked him how he was able to continually teach a class like Bib and Research quarter after quarter. His response (as he leaned back in his chair and propped his feet on the seminar table—his typical pose when addressing such professional questions): "Good teachers have to re-invent themselves every seven years or so or else they'll go stale." In other words, the best teachers never cease dully-functioning as learners.

I often urge my students and advisees to "take control of your

education"—that is, to seek out enriching, inquisitive, and often wholly-practical extra- and co-curricular activities, experiences that can deeply contribute to a college career studded with transformative opportunities.

Looking backward at my 15 years at MTSU, I have continually sought out opportunities to further explore such diverse topics as advising methodologies, learning space theory, integrating civic engagement into the curriculum, sports literature, and academically-based community service. I am far, far afield from my Renaissance Drama dissertation, but I believe I have personally and professionally benefited from exploring the above and other "re-inventions" during my time at MTSU.

In Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, protagonist Arnold Spirit comes to the realization that "if you let people into your life a little bit, they can be pretty damn amazing." But I think one could easily paraphrase Arnold's epiphany by replacing "people" with "opportunities to continually learn" and still end up with "amazing" as the end result.

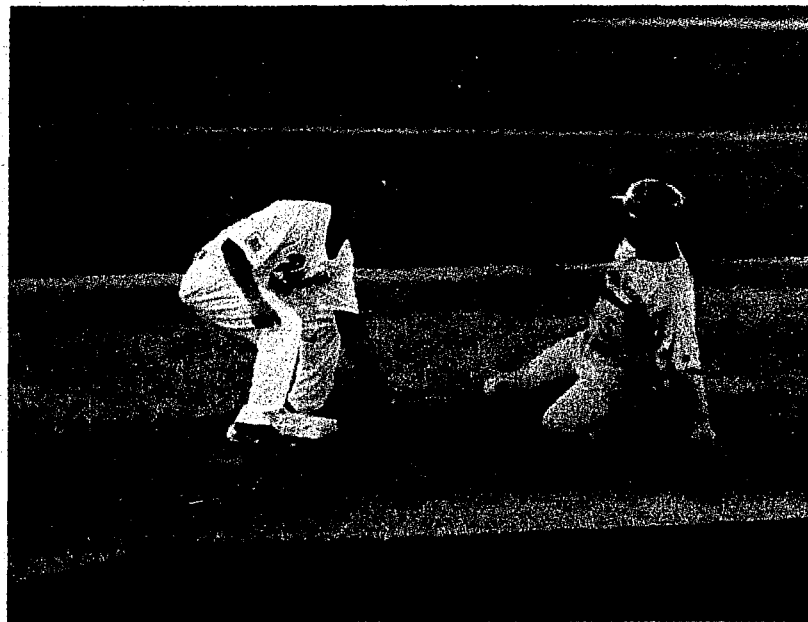
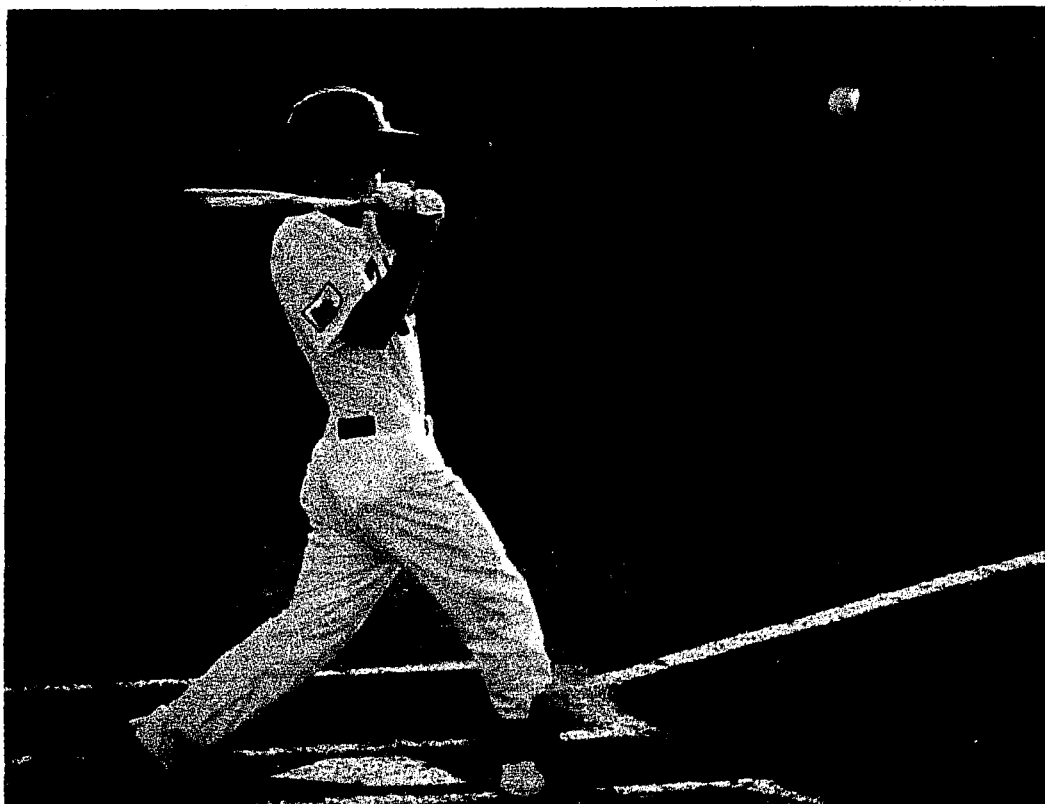
A college education – to me, at least – should represent more than a drive-thru experience or filling out a graduation

requirements form like a bingo card. Consequently, I feel a sense of responsibility to at least attempt to engage those students who might eventually manage a business I frequent, teach my children, produce the music I listen to, or play for a team I root for, in the process encouraging them to continually learn, to seek their own respective means of re-invention. Yeah, this is a really daunting task, and –I'm not going to lie—requires some perseverance, but students should not perceive a commitment to learning as a purely solo journey.

As members of MTSU's "True Blue" family, we are all part of a community of learners, of teachers, of unique individuals with a desire to learn, to share, and to seek sources of amazement.

Dr. Ron Kates is a professor in English. He can be reached at Ron.Kates@mtsu.edu.

Pitching leads to a resurgent baseball season



The Blue Raider baseball team beat the Austin Peay Governors April 18 to win the game 10-7. After the top of the first inning, the Raiders were down 5-0 and had to pull the starting pitcher. However, the Raiders started their offensive attack in the bottom of the third to come back and win the game. Photos by Emily West.

by Alex Hubbard
Sports Editor

The Blue Raiders baseball team is in a completely different place than it was supposed to be.

The squad's 23-18 record (10-8 Sun Belt) exceeds last year's total wins by five in 14 fewer games—a solid mark for a team that was picked last in a preseason Sun Belt coaches poll.

Despite some rough outings in recent games—particularly in a 10-3 loss to Austin Peay, a 5-1 loss to Vanderbilt and two series losses to Troy and Louisiana-Munro—the key stats are in pitching, where MT's 4.23 ERA prior to a rough weekend at Munro ranked third in the Sun Belt behind Florida International and Louisiana-Lafayette.

With Sunday starter Eric Gilley graduated, and Friday starter Daniel Palo pitching mainly in relief, Coach Steve Peterson remade his weekend staff, moving junior Hunter Adkins from Saturday to Friday and inserting true freshman Johnathan Frebis on Saturday.

Peterson also added junior-college transfer Jonathan Sisco on Sunday.

"Frebis and Sisco have shown right off the bat what type of competitors they are," Peterson said. "Johnathan Frebis, just being a rookie, just a freshman, he doesn't even have the benefit of the doubt. Sisco, first year here, but he's had two years of junior college, so he's had a little experience... I think they are really pushing Hunter Adkins, showing him how important it is to get into the late innings and get into the sixth and seventh inning."

Adkins entered the season with the most to prove of any of the starting staff. In 2011, Adkins posted a 2-9 record with a 5.44 ERA.

In 2012, Adkins has posted a 5-4 record, trimming his ERA to 4.05 and finding the strike zone, striking out 50 and walking 22.

Although he has struggled occasionally—notably against Louisiana-Munro, when he gave up five earned runs on 9 hits as part of a 13-0 loss—the turnaround from last season is apparent.

"I just tried to eliminate the walks," Adkins said. "That was my big thing last year was I

walked just as many as I struck out, and that was terrible. I gave up 15 homeruns last year and 16 my freshman year, and this year I'm just trying to get in the strike zone more, and that's pretty much what I've been doing."

Sisco and Frebis, both Murfreesboro natives who were opponents in high school while Sisco played for Blackman High School and Frebis with Riverdale, now team up to try to produce series wins on the clinching Saturday and Sunday contests.

Sisco carries a 5-3 mark and a 3.07 ERA.

While Sisco played two seasons at Volunteer State, Frebis executed the full leap from high school to college starter.

Peterson said Frebis exhibited a consistency and a work ethic through fall and the preseason workouts that impressed him and made Frebis an easy choice for a spot on the starting staff.

Frebis responded and currently maintains a 4-2 record with a 2.78 ERA and has nearly matched Adkins's strike out to walk numbers, striking out 49 and walking 24. Although he showed signs of struggle in a 6-2 loss to Troy on April 14, when he gave up two runs on

three hits, but walked five while striking out two, Peterson said Frebis is simply dealing with aspects of adjusting to college baseball.

"Now he's finding out the hard part of, now you're not going to be good every time out and now you've got to get in that grind of being that guy once a week," Peterson said. "In high school lots of times it was just four or five innings in seven-inning games; and now we're asking him to get in that seventh and eighth inning."

Frebis responded against Louisiana-Munro, when he pitched into the eighth inning, sitting down 10 hitters in a row at one point in a 3-2 victory.

With six weekend-series victories to their name, Peterson said he planned no changes, noting that most of the pitching problems come mainly in Tuesday and Wednesday games.

For Adkins, who knows about pitching-staff struggle, it is a comforting sign to be a part of a confident squad.

"When they're pitching well, everyone is lights out," Adkins said of Sisco and Frebis. "They're catching on well, and it's great to see everybody kind of click as a team." ■

Local woman saves endangered wildflowers: continued from page 10

When Route 840 was in its planning stages, her need to protect the glades became dire.

"They were going straight through the glade," she explained. "I literally went up to the wall where they had the maps...and redrew the route of 840 around the coneflowers. And they built the road that way."

Her crusade was a constant source of joy and pride.

"There's a big curve in the road, and that's the reason," Bertha said happily.

In Bertha's physical education classes, she often took students camping. "I was never the person who was going to stay indoors with kids—if I didn't get those kids outdoors in the field, they wouldn't learn what was out there. I taught them primarily protection of the outdoors."

Bertha sadly admits that she does not believe children today are being taught to protect nature. She explained that without field experience, children learn to only see fields of grass that need mowing instead of flourishing

ecosystems made up of unique plants.

So Bertha partnered up with elementary school children for a project called "Rescue Glades." The idea was to create a small cedar glade at Campus School.

"We were rescuing the flowers—buildings were going to go in there and we had to get the nice wildflowers out. The idea was, I think, to let the students all know they needed to protect things like that," Bertha explained.

Protection has always been Bertha's biggest concern.

"We live on this Earth, and we're building so much today that all the natural areas are being taken over, and we're not protecting enough of them and setting aside enough of them so they can be enjoyed by the youth," she said sadly.

But protection is also Bertha's legacy. And every time a driver rounds that unusual curve on Route 840, they are unknowingly bearing witness to what Bertha says she is most proud of—protecting Middle Tennessee's glades. ■

As Cities Burn leaves memorable impression: continued from page 12

along with the rest of them. You could cut the cloud of emotions with a knife.

Since the band was playing their first album, the crowd anticipated what was coming next. This didn't stop them from screaming as the intro to every song started. And who could blame them, despite the aforementioned sound issues—the music was incredible. It was like listening to a louder, more intense version of their record.

The first big difference happened when they skipped over their biggest single "Bloodsucker Pt. II" and moved straight into "Terrible! How Terrible for the Great City!" I knew they would go back to it at the end of the set, so I wasn't worried. Then, they also skipped the track "The Widow." I found this odd, seeing as the quieter track would have been a nice touch in the middle of the aggressive set. I assumed they would play that track as an encore as well, and I settled back into my drink.

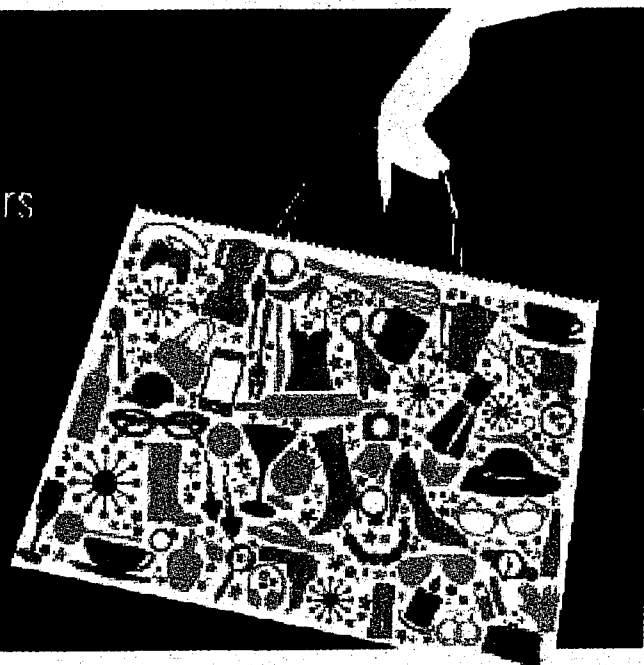
As the main set wound down, the band closed with non-album track "Gates." This was

a pleasant surprise, and the crowd reacted by reflecting the passion they were getting from the stage. The band walked offstage after this, and the crowd began to chant. The band did indeed return, sans TJ, and played the track "84 Sheepdog" from Hell or High Water. It was great to see Cody tearing it up on the lead vocals, and TJ even returned to the stage mid song to contribute.

After this, the band returned to "Bloodsucker Pt. II," and milked every last ounce of energy from the crowd. But then, it was over. The band was gone, and the sound guy had flipped his iPod back on over the speakers. Myself and those surrounding gave a general "hmmf" at not being able to hear "The Widow" performed live.

But as I closed out my bar tab, I knew I had nothing to be disappointed about. I had just seen a band play live that I thought to be dead and gone, and the energy and passion of the night had nearly moved me to tears. ■

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