

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

EDITORALLY INDEPENDENT

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FROM MARCH 7 - AUGUST 2008

MTSU Blvd. is closed from Rutherford Blvd. to Blue Raider Drive due to construction. Drivers will be able to enter the campus off Rutherford Blvd. at Alumni Drive (newly opened road by Greek Row). The 4-way stop at MTSU Blvd. will also be closed during construction. Please follow detour signs.

The gravel lot at the corner of MTSU Blvd. and Rutherford Blvd. will also be closed during this time. Students are advised to park in the Rutherford Blvd. lot across from Greek Row and ride the shuttle.

Students 'Take Back the Night'

By ALEX MOORMAN
Staff Writer

Volunteers from the June Anderson Women's Center held a "Clothesline Project" to inform students about sexual assault and the people that it affects.

"Basically the clothes line project is a way to show students and faculty all about sexual awareness," said Angela Golden, senior child development and family studies major. "We have tee shirts here from previous years and from students that made them this year about what they went through themselves and it's a way to let them get it out and to show others what they went through too."

The volunteers set up clotheslines and hung t-shirts made by victims of the sexual assault in front of the Keathley University Center last week.

"We aren't supposed to disclose the names of the students that participated basically they could come into the June Anderson Woman's center in the JUB [James Union Building] and they fill out a form so basically it's just between us and them," Golden said.

"We don't want to tell the names because it's personal but it's not only the students it's also the community. They can come to the table and make one so it's just a personal thing."

Students walked around the clotheslines in silence reading the shirts in horror.

"It's just out there if you don't want to you look, you don't have to look but its just eye catching there are some about people being raped by people they knew like their father, its really emotional once you read it, it hits you, but I think it effects everyone which is one reason why I feel like this is a great way to inform people," Golden said.

She said a lot of the students who made t-shirt sometimes where writing down what had happened to them for the very first time and that it really allowed them to face what happened and maybe even begin healing.

"Some of the shirts are really blunt and they don't sugar coat anything and I think that's important when trying to inform people of the dangers that are out there," said Laciresha Seals senior nursing major.

"Even as nursing students we've heard a lot of stories from emergency room patients and even just students around Murfreesboro who have been raped and assaulted and its good because it helps get the information out there and the tee shirts just make it more real."

"Even the people who come in are kind of afraid to write their whole heart on the t-shirt, its just whatever they feel comfortable with is all they have to put down there's some that just say a couple of words and then there's some that write their whole life story so I do think it's a great way for



Photo Courtesy June Anderson Women's Center

Students march with signs while chanting during 'Take Back the Night.'

them to escape and tell their feelings," Golden said.

In addition to the clothes line project, the JAWC also held an event called "Take Back The Night."

"We also had "Take Back The Night" [which is] a march we have every year for students or faculty," Golden said.

"I mean anyone can come and we march around and say chants like "one two three four you cant touch me anymore," and we just go around campus so people

can see that rape does go on even if you think it cant happen to you, it can," Golden said. "And we just have the march and the candlelight vigil to honor people who have survived but may be to scared to come up and admit that that's happened to them."

Golden said they supply the participants with a microphone in case they want to share their story, but no pressure is placed on anyone to do so.

"Its called 'Take Back The

Night' because women are so afraid to go out at night because they could get raped easier and so basically this is just saying women are going to take back the night and say hey this cant happen to me I'm going to learn and be educated about this," Golden said.

"We also have the martial arts people here and it was free classes that they were offering for thirty days so women can learn how to

ASSAULT, PAGE 3

New Blue ID card will be required for Rec Center access

Students must swap old identification card

By AMANDA HARRIS
Contributing Writer

New Recreation Center hand geometry technology requires all MTSU students to get a new Blue ID card in order to access the facility and confirm user identity.

"Hand geometry technology doesn't scan fingerprints," said James Taylor, ID office employee. "It takes a picture of the outline of your hand."

Around 27,000 people have to be re-carded and only about 4,000 of those are faculty and staff.

Campus ID office manager Shawn Alverson said that the new technology is primarily for the Recreational Center.

Alverson said people not affiliated with the university are getting access to the Recreation Center by using other people's IDs, but the new hand scanning process should eliminate the problem.

"With this setup you will punch in the last four numbers on your ID card, then

"You can't identify someone from the shape of their hand; you have to have prints for that."

SHAWN ALVERSON
CAMPUS ID OFFICE MANAGER

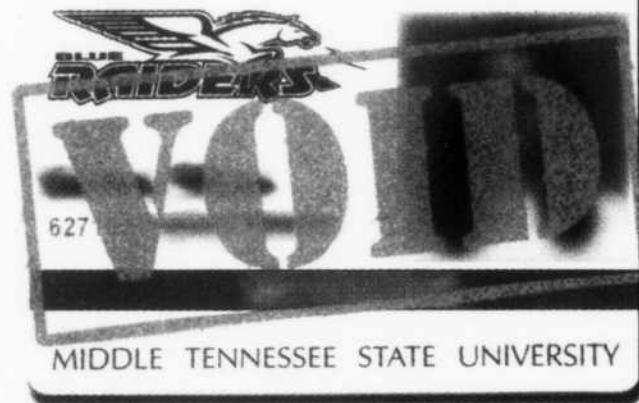
scan your hand to get in," Alverson said. "There will be six turnstiles to enter and one old swipe machine will stay for handicapped people."

Alverson also explained how the hand scanning process protects user identity.

"You can't identify someone from the shape of their hand; you have to have prints for that," Alverson said. "Hand shapes are not as unique as prints. Prints also become unreliable because they wear away after time, especially with people who do hard labor and work with chemicals."

Taylor said that this is part of MTSU converting to Banner.

"Banner is our new administrative system that



Graphic by Eric Shuff

New Blue IDs will replace old identification cards.

stores all student and faculty information," Taylor said. "It has replaced Student Information System."

He also said that this conversion keeps students from being identified by their social security number, which protects identity. "Student identities are even secure from agencies like the FBI and IRS."

"This technology uses 16 points of reference when it takes the picture of your hand. Each impression scans your hand 30,000 times," Taylor said. "You won't even need you card to get into the Rec Center anymore."

Charlie Gregory, Recreation Center Director, said, "We have been looking at this system for at least 10 years now, but then it would

have cost close to half a million dollars."

"By waiting we have spent around \$60,000 on the entire project," Gregory said. "The hand readers only cost about \$1,500 a piece, which we have six of. For new technology that's a really good deal."

To get a new ID, students, faculty and staff need to go to the MTSU Blue ID office located in room 306 in the James Union Building. The University is asking people to come by before May 2nd to avoid new coming freshmen who will be going through Customs.

"My classes start at 6 p.m. and I live in Nashville. I get here as early as I can at 5:30 p.m. [so] I don't know when I'll get my new ID," said Adam Linton, night class student.

The office will be busy with the fall semester approaching, but it will remain open throughout the summer.

The office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Students celebrate Earth Day

By DANIEL POTTER
Campus News Editor

Students for Environmental Action will host Earth Day activities to promote environmental awareness on the Keathley University Center Knoll all day Tuesday.

"The point of Earth Day is not just to raise awareness, but to show people there are numerous ways of getting involved - whatever fits your preference," said Reggie Miller, senior recording industry major and co-chair of SEA.

The event will showcase environmentally minded technology and include "a few demonstrations - alternative fuel vehicles, hybrids and cars on biodiesel," Miller said.

Samuel Cliff Ricketts, a professor of Agriscience, will be displaying several vehicles powered by alternative energy sources if there is no heavy rain, said Carl Caum, junior computer science major.

Among the cars in Ricketts' collection is one that runs on pure ethanol and one that is completely electric, powered by a solar generator.

"He's also got a hydrogen truck, and that one runs off just sun and water," Caum

EARTH, PAGE 4

Kappa Delta holds fifth annual Wing Fling

Students and community help raise money for child abuse

By TIFFANY GIBSON AND
ANDY HARPER
Campus News Editor and
Editor in Chief

Kappa Delta Sorority hosted their fifth annual Wing Fling and raised money for the Prevent Child Abuse America organization.

Restaurants from all over Murfreesboro entered Wing Fling to compete for the title of the "Best Wings in the Boro" while entertainment and child's games were present.

Some of the restaurants that participated were Hooters, Kirkenburt's, Wing Stop, Zaxby's and Chef Raymond's.

"We do Wing Fling for the advertising. We are a small company that started about two years ago, so it definitely helps to get our name out," said Sean Daughtery, employee for Wing Stop in Murfreesboro. "Today we are serving garlic-parmesan and lemon pepper wings, two of our customer favorites. I'd say we've gone through about 1,600."

"Today we served mild, hot, insane and barbecue. The insane is our hottest," said Devonny Markley, general manager for Zaxby's in Murfreesboro. "Actually, it was pretty funny watching people try it since the first person was a little girl, and we have grown men who will say 'no' to these wings."

In 2006, Kappa Delta raised \$11,000 and hope to exceed this amount this year.

"Wing Fling is a chance for everyone to come back, get

“Wing Fling has been amazing, and I'm glad we missed the rain. It's great to see all the people that came.”

JESSICA BURNS
Sophomore elementary
education major

in touch with alumnae and celebrate Kappa Delta," said Ashley Whitaker, 2005 elementary education graduate and Kappa Delta alumnae. "We sell handmade items to raise money for the alumnae chapter."

Besides the "Best Wings in the Boro" wing competition, there was also a wing eating contest. Brandon Reedy was the overall winner of this event.

"The wing eating competition was a close and grueling one to say the least. I didn't know that there was going to be a competition until after I had already eaten alot from each tent, so it was very hard to push myself through it," said Reedy, senior business major.

"It's been crazy out here," Whitaker said. "People have been in shots and tank-tops and it's freezing cold, but it's nice to see so many people come out and participate."

The Wing Fling took place outside by the Murphy Center on Saturday from 12 p.m. until 3 p.m.



Photo By Andy Harper, Staff Photographer

Students compete in a wing eating competition at the Kappa Delta Wing Fling outside of the Murphy Center on Saturday.

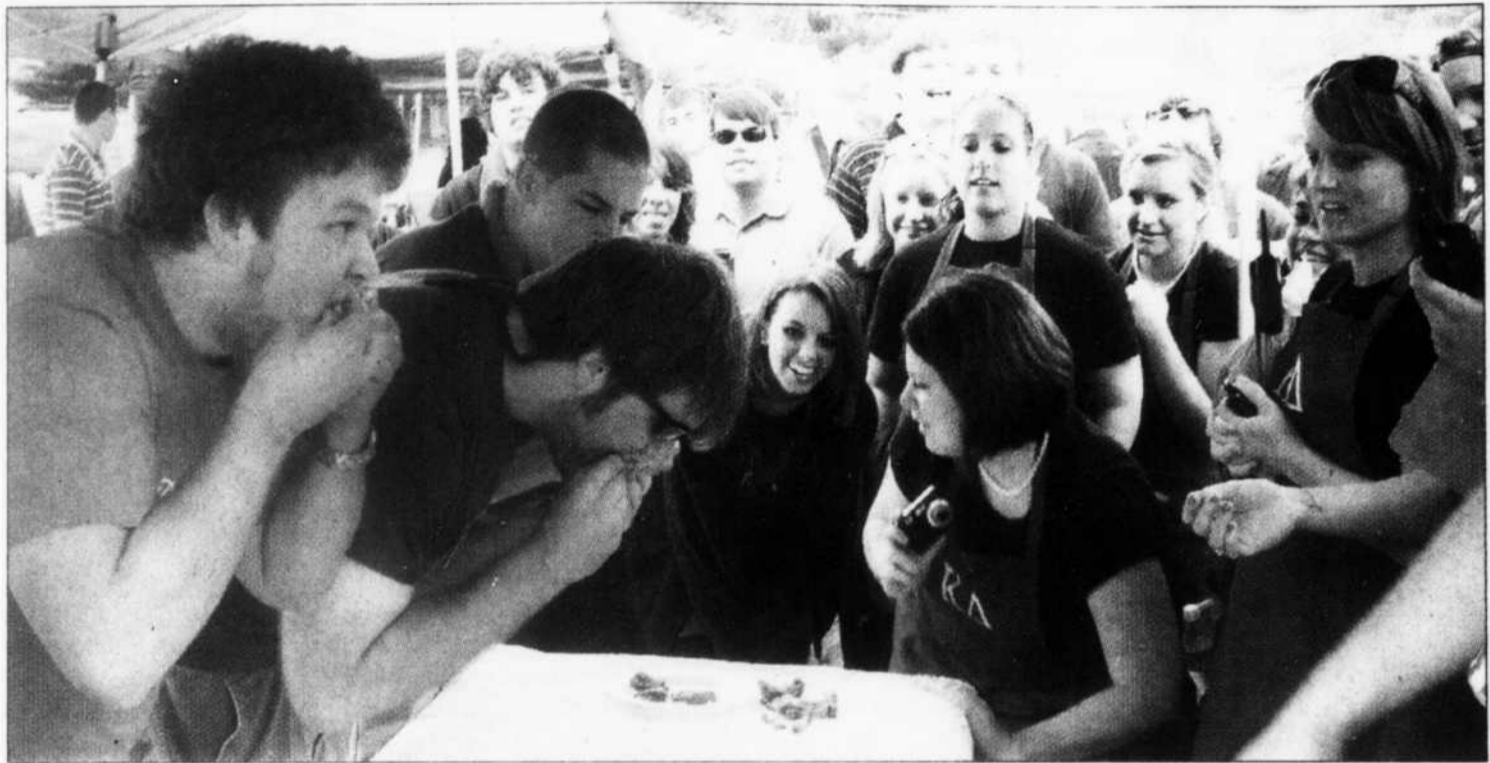


Photo By Andy Harper, Staff Photographer

Community members and students enjoy wings from various restaurants such as Zaxby's, Chef Raymond's and Hooters.



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Trojan gives out free condoms

STAFF REPORT

Trojan Condoms visited MTSU last Thursday to talk about safe sex during its Trojan Evolve Bus Tour in the Keathley University Center.

The tour is scheduled to take place over six months with visits to 60 college campuses nationwide.

According to the 2007 Trojan Sexual Report Card, MTSU placed in the bottom 10 of 139 colleges concerning sex health resources.

In addition to this, one in four teenage girls have a sexually transmitted infection and Tennessee has the eighth highest rate of syphilis, ninth highest rate of Chlamydia and the tenth highest rate of Gonorrhea in

the United States.

The purpose of the tour is to encourage students to use condoms to decrease the 19 million new sexually transmitted infections diagnosed every year. It also serves as a harsh reality for the 65 million Americans living with incurable sexual transmitted infections.

During the event, students pledged to use a condom every time by signing a petition and even received practice by participating in a race to put a prophylactic on a banana correctly.

A roundtable discussion was also held with a sex health counselor to answer students' questions and curiosities while free condoms were given out.

ASSAULT FROM PAGE 1

protect themselves."

She said people have been volunteering all week including students from the nursing department and the men of Kappa Alpha.

"We had like 40 of them and it's more complicated for men to come out because

people want to make fun of them," Golden said.

"They question why they are doing that. I don't know why it is, why other men find it threatening and help us to come out and help us.

"But I do think its better to have both girls and guys to say, hey, you know it happens to guys too, and so it was really cool for them to come out, and they stayed the whole night."

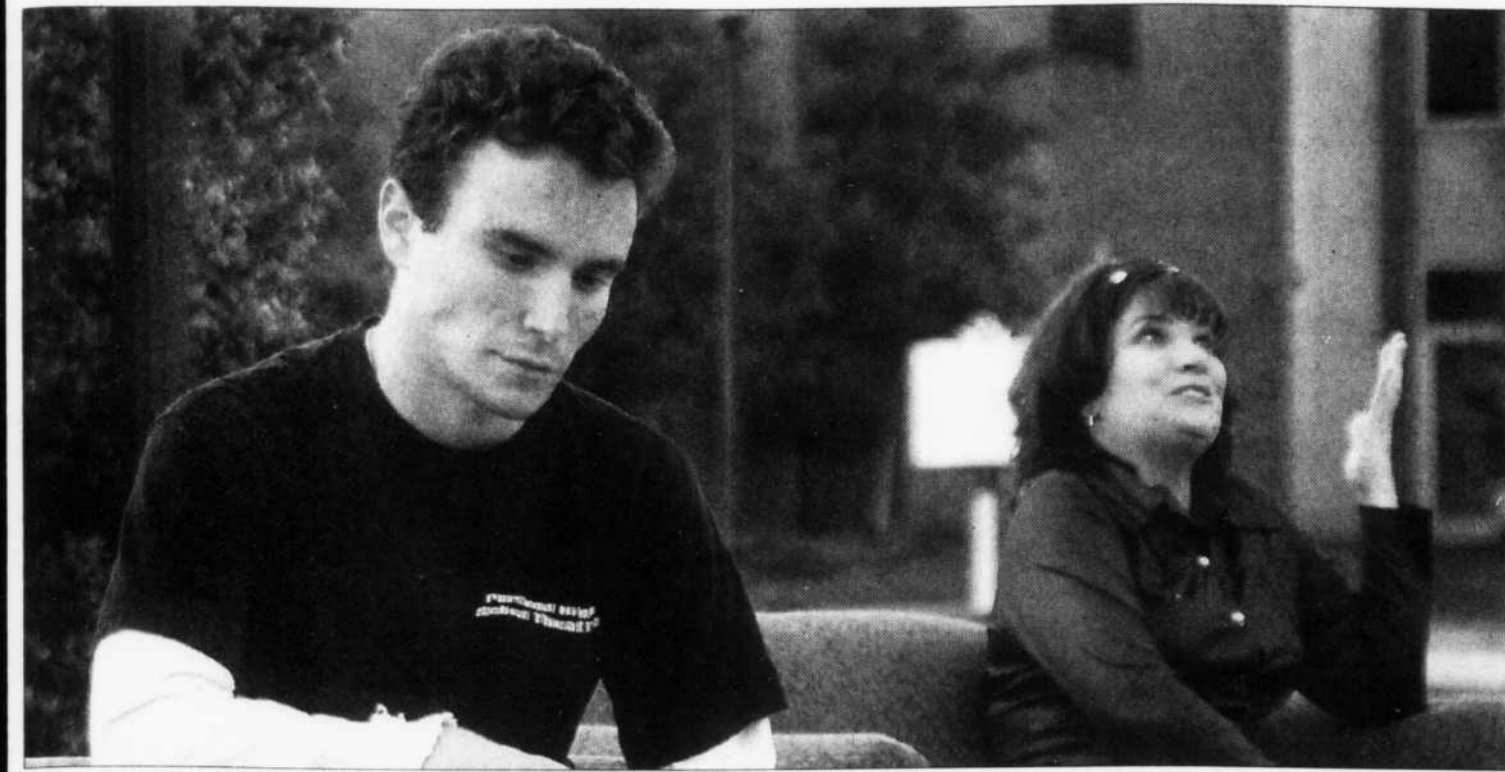
"I think it's important because by shedding light on rape victims we can somehow prevent it or at least decrease the amount of rapes," said Ashley Holbert, sophomore chemistry major. "There's a lot of crazy stuff [happening] on the campus, people need to be informed."

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Photos By Ryan DeBooy, Photography Editor

Students act out plays on the Quad

Theater students perform their final plays of the semester outside of James E. Walker Library on the quad Sunday night.



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Continued from last column

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POLICIES

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Continued from last column

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Widespread Panic performs on campus

By GREG RUDY
Contributing Writer

Southern rockers Widespread Panic proved yet again why they are the crowned kings of live music Wednesday evening with their three and a half hour performance at the Murphy Center.

Having been absent from MTSU's campus 7 years to the date, they left both dedicated and casual fans with the same impression: it was well worth the wait.

The Athens, GA based sextet arrived with a mission to inject Murfreesboro with their honest, driving southern-fried rock n' roll with the aid of New Orleans based jazz/funk quintet Galactic. For those who dismiss either

band as happy hippie jam-bands, do your eardrums a favor and listen more closely when you get a chance.

If Michael Jordan had put aside his basketball and picked up a guitar, his name would be Jimmy Herring. An alumnus of Hollywood's Guitar Institute of Technology and Boston's Berklee School of Music, he is Widespread Panic's second lead guitarist since the death of original member Michael Houser.

Herring's credentials don't end on paper or his extensive resume which includes, but is not limited to the Allman Brothers Band, Jazz is Dead, and seminal improv-rock band the Aquarium Rescue Unit. His unassuming de-

meanor and stage presence are in sharp contrast to his pristine lead lines: sometimes soaring and atmospheric, often aggressive and blistering, always flawless to both trained and untrained ears.

His polished form provides perfect balance to lead singer John Bell's raspy vocals and John "Jojo" Hermann's honky-tonk piano style.

As if Widespread Panic's melody masters weren't quite enough to impress, the rhythm section comprised of drummer Todd Nance, percussionist Domingo "Sunny" Ortiz, and bassist Dave Schools did their best to crumble the foundations of the Murphy Center with the assistance of Galactic's

legendary drummer, Stanton Moore. The rumbling thunder emanating from the stage during the drum and bass break could be felt through the arena's padded seating.

The band's 23 years of touring experience easily translates into what could be perceived as a psychic connection with their audience.

Wednesday night's set list included something for everyone, from the casual live music aficionado to the most hardcore fan.

Only two songs from their new album "Free Somehow" were played. Cover songs included J.J. Cale's "Travelin' Light", Jerry Joseph's "Chainsaw City" the Grateful Dead's "Cream Puff War", and bassist Schools gave the

crowd a teaser taste of King Crimson's "Thela Hun Ginjeet" during his solo.

Crowd favorite originals such as "Hatfield", "Big Woolly Mammoth", and "Papa's Home" were the meat and potatoes of the evening, but the dreamy "Second Skin" was the dessert. They have never played the same set list twice, and use their expansive repertoire to lead each gathering through a musical journey like a six-headed marathon coach.

This is their greatest strength: they'll make you dance until you think you'll drop from exhaustion, play a slow song that everyone can relax and regain some energy, then dial the intensity up higher than before. It's

no surprise that members of their nomadic following, often referred to as "spread-necks", are physically fit as a whole.

As the second set came to a close, not a soul in the house turned to leave. Despite their bleary eyes, aching feet, and a weekday midnight quickly approaching, all in attendance stayed where they were and cheered wildly for an encore.

The boys from Athens were more than happy to oblige with two old classic originals. The next time they play our Murphy Center won't be soon enough, hopefully less than 7 years, provided that we have the time in between to verify the building's structural integrity.



Photo Courtesy Brad Wilson

WMTS record convention

DJs from WMTS, MTSU's student-run radio station, pose with members of the rock band Superdrag during the station's record convention at the Holiday Inn on Sunday.

EARTH FROM PAGE 1.

said.

Corn-derived ethanol has come under criticism recently for being an inefficient alternative to gasoline, Caum said. However, ethanol itself is not the culprit, as it can be produced from other sources, including most trash.

Wasted biomass "takes up 60 percent of landfills by mass," Caum said. The unused biomass could be converted to ethanol.

"In my opinion, combustion in general is not the way to go - not in the future," Caum said. "It is an absolutely horrible, inefficient process and a bad way to propel our vehicles."

Tuesday's event will also feature live music. Kenny Torrella, sophomore recording industry major, booked several local bands to play the event.

"We have The Incredible

Heat Machine, which is alternative rock with a funk feel," Torrella said. "Then we have Hello Spencer followed by Boroughs. Besides Boroughs, there's Soul Syndicate, a funk band, who will be followed by live DJs and hip-hop artists, some free-styling."

The closer will be the all-girl, air-guitar band called Elephant Magnet, Torrella said.

In addition to live music, students will be distributing literature on topics ranging from vegetarianism to bicycling, as well as free food, including cookies baked in a solar oven, weather permitting.

"A solar oven works on the same principle as your car in the summer," Miller said. "It gets really hot inside because the heat passes through the glass and is basically stuck there."

In addition to SEA, the Stones River Watershed Association and Murfreesboro Electric will be pres-

ent. Murfreesboro Electric sells blocks of green power from wind and solar sources through Green Power Switch, a program of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Caum said.

"If it does rain we're going to move everything into the KUC," Caum said. "We've got both floors reserved."

After Earth Day activities on the Knoll end, a bike ride around Murfreesboro will ensue at 6 p.m., Torrella said. Interested cyclists can meet by the Knoll and are encouraged to bring noisemakers and wear blue and green.

Torrella hopes the event encourages and unites people by way of concern for the environment.

"No matter who you are or what you believe, the environment is being [messed] up and that needs to stop," Torrella said.

A representative from Stones River Watershed Association could not be reached for this article.

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Teen arrested for plot to bomb high school

By JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press Writer

A high school senior collected enough supplies to carry out a bomb attack on his school in South Carolina, detailing the plot in a hate-filled diary that included maps of the building and admiring notations about the Columbine killers, authorities said Sunday.

Ryan Schallenberger, 18, was arrested Saturday after his parents called police when 10 pounds of ammonium nitrate was delivered to their home in Chesterfield and they discovered the journal, said the town's police chief, Randall Lear.

The teen planned to make several bombs and had all the supplies needed to kill dozens at Chesterfield High School, depending on where the devices were placed and whether they included shrapnel, Lear said. Ammonium nitrate was used in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 that killed 168 people.

"The only thing left was delivering the bombs," the police chief said.

Schallenberger kept a journal for more than a year that detailed his plans for a suicide attack and included maps of the school, police said. The writings did not include a specific time for the attack or the intended targets.

CAMPUS BRIEFS

Dramatic Arts

The MTSU Commercial Music Ensemble will perform at the T. Earl Hinton Music Hall of the Wright Music Building on Monday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m.

The T. Earl Hinton Music Hall of the Wright Music Building will host the MTSU Symphonic Band/Brass Ensemble on Tuesday, April 22, at 7:30 p.m.

The Guitar Ensemble Concert will take place on Wednesday, April 23, at 3 p.m.

Amy Duncan will perform at the Senior Flute Recital on Wednesday, April 23, at 6 p.m.

On Wednesday, April 23, Maya Stone and Leo Erice will perform at the faculty recital at 8 p.m.

Earth Day

MTSU's Students for Environmental Action will sponsor an Earth Day celebration on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 22 and 23. The festival will be held on campus on the knoll in front of the Keathley University Center from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day in an effort to bring the campus and community together in support of a common goal. Earth Day events will kick off with a climate-commitment signing by MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee shortly after noon April 22. Activities will include an earth-friendly art show, food from local vegetarian and vegan restaurants, live music from local bands and organic shopping. SEA, Recycle Rutherford, the Murfreesboro Electric Department, People for a Better Tomorrow and MTSU Environmental Studies Department will have booths set up during the celebration.

For more information about SEA's event plans, please visit the organization's Web site at www.mtsu.edu/~sea.

Student and Wall of Fame awards

The MTSU College of Mass Communication will conduct its 15th Annual Student Awards and eighth Annual Wall of Fame Awards ceremonies on Wednesday, April 23, at 3 p.m. in the John Bragg Mass Communication Building. This event honors mass communication alumni who have gone above and beyond their studies and distinguished themselves

through their accomplishments. Scheduled to be inducted into the college's Wall of Fame for 2008 are James Stevens, founder and CEO of James Stevens Creative; Mark Blakeman, vice-president of orchestra and building operations and general manager of the Nashville Symphony; and Sgt. Maj. Phillip R. Prater, Army Public Affairs.

For more information about the awards ceremonies, contact Lisa McCann at 615-898-5171 or lmccann@mtsu.edu.

'Paper Rewind' Project

The James E. Walker Library and the MTSU Department of Art are joining forces to raise student awareness of paper usage through an interesting and creative project that will be on display in the last remaining days of spring. The "Paper Rewind" project will be installed at the library from 12:40 p.m. to 3:40 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Monday, April 21, one day prior to the international celebration of Earth Day on April 22, and will remain in place through Wednesday, May 7.

Local Music

Juan Prophet Organization's Farewell Show will take place at Wallstreet On Saturday, April 26, at 10 p.m. Admission is 21 and up.

That same night, the Protomen, Wax Fang, and Heypenny will be performing at the Mercy Lounge at 9 p.m.

Contemporary Women Writing in Israel

Israeli writer Dr. Miriam Sivan will present a lecture on "Contemporary Women Writing in Israel" at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, in Room 106 of MTSU's Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building. This event is free and open to the public. Sivan is the recipient of a number of awards including the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute Award and a Ford Foundation Grant. MTSU's Middle East Center and the Distinguished Lecture Fund will sponsor the lecture.

For more information, contact Dr. Allen Hibbard, director of the Middle East Center, at 615-494-7906 or ahibbard@mtsu.edu.



College of Liberal Arts Awards Reception Tuesday, April 22, 2008 · 2:30 pm

Middle Tennessee State University · James Union Building · Tennessee Room

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Students must have been enrolled full-time for the current and past three semesters at MTSU, have completed 90 or more semester hours before the current semester, have a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 and are working on their first degree.

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OTHER AWARDS

Scholar's Week Poster Winners in Liberal Arts

1st Place Graduate
Dayron Deaton, *Sociology*
Ron Aday, faculty mentor
Title: *Older Female Inmates View of Death: The Effect of Health and End-of-Life Issues*

2nd Place Graduate
Catherine Jones & Leah Mittelmeier, *English*
Allison Smith, faculty mentor
Title: *Collaboration Squared: An Experiment in Collaborative Pedagogy Between Two Composition Teachers*

3rd Place Graduate
Alicja Kutyla, *Biology - EASR Team*
Hugh Berryman, faculty mentor
Title: *Gunshot Residue on Bone as a Potential Indicator of Gunshot Trauma in the Absence of a Bullet*

1st Place Undergraduate
Dean Andrews, *Political Science*
Clyde Willis, faculty mentor
Title: *Individual Rights and the President's Military Tribunal System*

2nd Place Undergraduate
Marjorie Gombert, *Geoscience*
Melissa Lobegicier, faculty mentor
Title: *The Effect of Pollution in the Penobscott River on Benthic Faunalifer*

3rd Place Undergraduate
Salina Branson-Carll, *Sociology & Anthropology*
Richard Pace, faculty mentor
Title: *Child Health and Nutrition in the Brazilian Amazon*

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Title: *The Effect of Pollution in the Penobscott River on Benthic Faunalifer*

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Ernest Hooper
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Shelly Doyle
Meagan Humbert
Amber Hyde
Susan Jones

Marian Clark Scholarship (cont.)
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Rose Leach
Yoland Marable
Caretia Merriweather
Janay Moreland
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Kisha Ledlow
Lindsey Wozencraft
Jamie Fuston

Marian Clark Scholarship
Christopher Dial
Kisha Ledlow
Tara Lee
Jodi Stewart

SPEECH & THEATRE
Dorethe Tucker Scholarship
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Dustin Napier
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Nicole Payne
Navren "Scott" Pejaver Memorial Scholarship
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Exemplary Student in Communications Disorders Award
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Excellence in Choreography
Kaleena DeVar

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Steven Tate
Grace Stevenson
Jessica Cavender
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Grace Stevenson
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Nicholas Palmer
Cherise O'Connell

Outstanding Senior in Organizational Communication
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Cynthia Morgan
Leigh Piper
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Jessalynn Price
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Brandon Palma
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BreCIA Martin

OPINIONS

'The Paper' does not do journalism justice

"Journalists are the most important part of the world."

At least we are according to Amanda Lorber, editor in chief of the Cypress Bay High School newspaper *The Circuit*. Amanda and her staff are the new focus of MTV's "The Paper," a reality show about life in a newsroom.

There's only one problem: it isn't a newsroom; it's a high school class. No self-respecting newspaper would allow any external media to chronicle the unimportant, uninteresting and irrelevant events that transpire within their work area.

Journalists exist to relay the news. Obviously, dramatic antics will pop up every now and again, but these scenarios exist in any working environment. The only important and newsworthy thing about a newspaper and its staff is the final product placed on the stands.

With this in mind, *The Circuit* just forgot one of the most basic rules of our industry - we are not the story. Journalists don't exist to be the stars of a reality show; we exist to deliver strong, factual, entertaining and interest-

ing news to our audience.

It's already difficult enough to be like "Grey's Anatomy" and "Law and Order." People develop a disillusioned view of these careers and expect every ER doctor to be sleeping with a nurse and every lawyer to have high profile murder cases.

Hopefully, the general audience for these shows can tell the difference between reality and fantasy, but it still warps the perceptions of these career fields. We begin to expect certain actions and events from doctors, nurses, police officers and even journalists. Because of this, industries that should be held in high respect are reduced to primetime soaps.

The unfortunate staff of *The Circuit* has entered itself into the worst genre of television possible, because everyone loses in a reality show.

Most of these journalistic-hopefuls screwed their careers in the very first episode. After their last issue under the "old" editor in chief, the staff celebrated with a house party that included a game involving ping-pong balls, red plastic cups and a mys-



Yeah, Whatever
Andy Harper

terious unseen liquid. Two of the show's characters, Trevor Ballard and Giana Pacinelli, sneaked upstairs for some "alone" time.

Not to say high school students are required to be "innocent," but Web sites like Facebook and MySpace already cause future episodes trouble. The first episode of this show is basically like "Minors Gone Wild."

True, these high school staffers could have been drinking water or sparkling cider. Trever and his girlfriend Giana could have just gone upstairs to talk or snuggle. But I doubt future employers will view their actions as such.

The second screw from this reality show comes in the form of character assassination.

Amanda is a self-righteous, obnoxious know-it-all who sends her staff into rage at the sound of her voice. She's about as well-equipped to lead a publication as a first-year med student is to perform heart surgery. Amanda may know the mechanics, but she lacks the grace to direct her nurses and the finesse to keep the patient alive.

The managing editor is anything but. Alex Angert is a sheepish, two-faced mediator between the big, bad editor and his unhappy peers. Instead of plotting to overthrow a leader who cannot be fired by the staff, he should be concentrating on assisting Amanda in making the newspaper the best possible publication. Although, with Amanda's obvious control issues, it's unlikely she'll actually let Alex do his job.

Trevor and Giana apparently didn't get enough "alone" time during the house party, because the only time you see either of them in the season preview, they are groping each other like bunnies in spring.

Adam Brock is a lot less striking than his name implies. The first time this

overdramatic queen of advertising throws a tantrum in a real newsroom, he'll be fired. Being passed up for editor in chief is a major let down, but for Adam to drop to his knees and cry in agony, in the middle of a hallway surrounded by his coworkers extinguished any respect his peers had for him.

Scratch that; throwing papers down during production and yelling, "You don't see what they do, why can't you see what I see?" and storming out of the room in a huff of his own awesomeness looks to be the final nail in a coffin designated for Adam's professionalism.

If anything, Rhonda Weiss is the only victim in this poorly-acted melodrama. Rhonda, the adviser for *The Circuit*, plays the role of the overstressed mother-figure over pleasing everyone. Too bad her children are unruly and unappeasable, too caught up in their own ambitions, wants and needs to find a place of compromise, ethics and integrity.

These potential future pillars of the journalism

'PAPER', PAGE 7

FACES IN THE CROWD

In 2007, MTSU was ranked in the bottom 10 out of 139 universities in terms of sex health resources. Do you think Thursday's visit by Trojan Condoms' "Evolve" bus tour will help?



COX

"No."

Andrew Cox, senior electronic media production



Klagstad

"The people we need to protect against this will not flock to a big bus in front of everyone who can see what they are doing. It needs to be more [discreet]."

Clea Klagstad, sophomore biology



Mason

"I don't think it can do anything but help. It provides protection and education about protection."

Brian Mason, senior business administration



Onitsuka

"It will probably be to protect yourself. You have to have a strong mind and say 'I have to wear a condom.' Don't do random people you don't know."

Kei Onitsuka, senior accounting

Activism needs to attract students, not bore them

By ERIC FIELDS
Guest Columnist

I'm writing in response to "Activism Requires More than Dance-Offs" by Burch Glover. I am with Students for a Democratic Society and was quoted in Michael Stone's original article.

There are several factual claims (not opinions) that are simply incorrect. I'll address things in the order they appear in the article.

1. SDS did not write the first, Sidelines did not write the first, and we did not "sign on" to it or even read it before it was published. I thought the article was good, but any complaint against SDS.

2. Glover claims we are "a bunch of C-average students." This is both juvenile and demonstrably false.

3. SDS does not have "ringleaders." We are fully democratic and non-hierarchical. This was described in the first article.

4. Our parents are quite diverse and are not all hippies who protested the Vietnam War. My parents were Baptist. In any case, we have our own beliefs and reasons for the activism we do, independent of our parents.

5. We have clear and detailed ideas of what we believe. Some of the most politically knowledgeable and well-read people you will ever meet are in SDS.

The idea that we are ignorant or do not understand what we stand for could only be held if you have

never talked to most of our members. If you disagree with us, but you will not find that we don't know what we're talking about.

6. Our members know varying degrees of privilege, but it is true that we are all quite privileged relative to most people in the world. In fact, most of our political position is built on an understanding of this privilege and the desire to build a more equal world.

7. Glover is correct that it is not 1969. This is one of the only facts he gets right in his entire article.

I will not address our reasons for opposing the war. Unlike Glover, we don't believe that arguments for or against the war can be given in a few sentences about Sept. 11. It is a complicated topic and to discuss it properly would take much more space than I have here.

Overall, Glover's article was little more than a list of factually incorrect statements thrown together in a not-particularly-coherent manner along with opinions that show that his reasoning abilities are about as poor as his fact-checking.

That being said, I feel like I should also address the protest itself as there is apparently some concern about it, even among those that oppose the war.

We didn't have that of people on MTSU campus would end the war, obviously. Our goal was to do something visible and interesting

on campus that would add to the increasingly anti-war atmosphere in this country.

The dancing part was simply an attempt to do something nontraditional and different. Yes, it probably won't change anything, and yes, it is silly in a way. But that doesn't mean voicing opposition to the war is not worth doing and doing in an interesting way.

We could have held a panel or talk on why we oppose the war, and it would have been in more informative. But in our experience these things tend to draw only a handful of people.

In contrast, our protest was observed by thousands of MTSU students. It was our hope that this would bring more attention to the anti-war movement. The majority of the country now opposes the war, according to surveys. But are they doing anything about it?

It will certainly take more than a handful of students protesting to end the war. But when it is difficult even to get more students to join a protest, how can we be expected to do anything larger or more effective?

We are fighting for a better world. Maybe we don't always do it perfectly, but activism is a constant struggle to do better. If you have ideas on how we could improve the fight, we would love for you to join us.

Eric Fields is a senior educational and behavioral science major and can be reached at ecf2f@mtsu.edu.

The finer things...



Buddy finally deals with his problems

TheFinerThingsComics@yahoo.com

Jeremy Ball

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Safer sex education helps prevent disease, pregnancy

Trojan Condoms paid a visit to our campus this past week to promote safer sex. A pretty good idea, considering Tennessee ranks low on the 2007 Trojan Sexual Report Card.

What's worse is that MTSU placed in the bottom 10 of the 139 colleges ranked in the nation. Which is a travesty considering the multiple options available for safe, responsible sex.

Our campus health clinic has a women's clinic that provides condoms, affordable birth control and sexu-

ally transmitted infection tests. The main clinic also provides STI tests for males.

It takes a lot of hard work to play. Anyone who has an active sex life should be working hard to ensure that they also have a safe sexual life.

The issue of safe sex doesn't come down to whether sex is morally sound. No one should be prosecuted for having sex, whether casual or in a meaningful relationship. What is worthy of

EDITORIAL, PAGE 7

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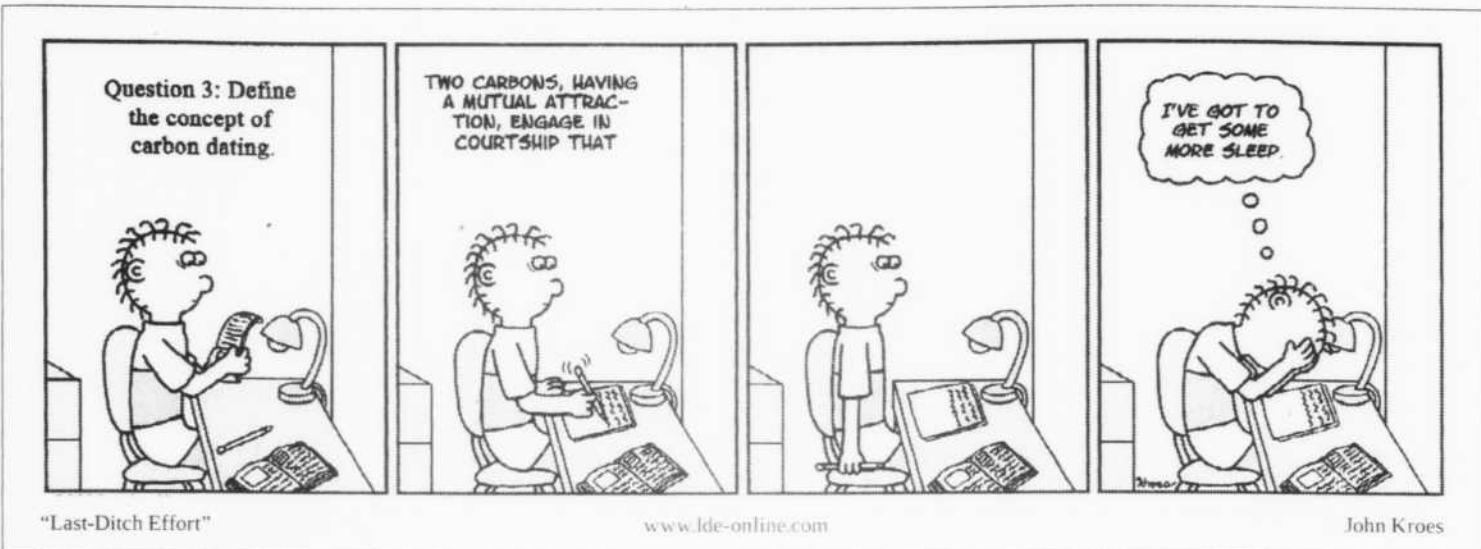
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COMICS



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Taxing marijuana would put a stop to harder drugs

I'm writing about your recent online poll question: "Do you think marijuana should be legalized?" (4-17-08).

It seems to me that you asked the wrong question. The question should be: Should marijuana remain completely

untaxed, unregulated and controlled by criminals?

Because marijuana is now illegal, it is sold only by criminals (criminals who often sell other, much more dangerous drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine), and they often offer free samples of the more dangerous drugs to their marijuana customers. Thus the so-called "gateway effect."

In a regulated market, this would not happen. Do the readers know of anyone who has been offered a free bottle of whiskey, rum or vodka when legally buying beer or wine? I don't either.

If we regulate, control, and tax the sale and production of marijuana, we close the gateway to hard drugs.

Kirk Muse, Mesa, AZ

Letters Policy

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

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

EDITORIAL FROM PAGE 6

judgment is the irresponsibility of sexually active individuals who willfully ignore their responsibility to themselves and their partner.

One of the biggest problems facing safer sexual practices is the social stigma that comes from the actual act of sex, particularly regarding women.

More often than not, women find themselves in precarious situations of whether it is morally and socially acceptable to have sex. They might be ashamed to purchase protection or set up necessary medical checkups. The situation can be similar for men. Buying condoms in the middle of a crowded Wal-Mart can seem like an invasion of privacy. But if anyone's character is judged for being responsible enough to protect themselves and their partner, the only verdict is that person is intelligent.

Another major fear for sexually active women, as well as men, is the pregnancy scare. While safe sex holds no perfect guarantee against pregnancy, it does decrease the chances of conception. And while the fear could al-

ways be present, no matter what the situation, being less responsible only increases the pregnancy fear.

Of course, abstinence is always an option. But unless a vow of celibacy is taken, even people who choose to remain abstinent for whatever reason should be preparing themselves through education on products and medical checkups for a future sexual life.

A common misconception is when companies like Trojan appear their sole mission is to promote the sexual lifestyles. This isn't the case. Trojan is only interested in protecting their consumer base, and maybe adding a few new clients when they start having sex.

We think that even Trojan would agree that no one should have sex until they are ready - mentally, physically, emotionally and medically. The ideal situation is that intercourse be between a partner you know and trust.

Even if sex is just casual, we need to lessen the risks of spreading disease and accidental pregnancy. No one should have to suffer for someone else's recklessness. We need to educate ourselves and practice safer sex, or not have sex at all.

'PAPER' FROM PAGE 6

industry have shamed the very job they wanted to immortalize. And worse, they have dragged their own good names through the mud, and a good name is one of the most prized possessions a journalist can own.

To be fair, these high school students could be amazing people. They

could be responsible, talented, journalistically attuned, career-ambitious individuals, but at the end of the season, none of those qualities matter. Because in the end, no newspaper wants to use a byline tattered with a mixture of mud and shame.

Andy Harper is a senior journalism major and can be reached at sah3u@mtsu.edu.

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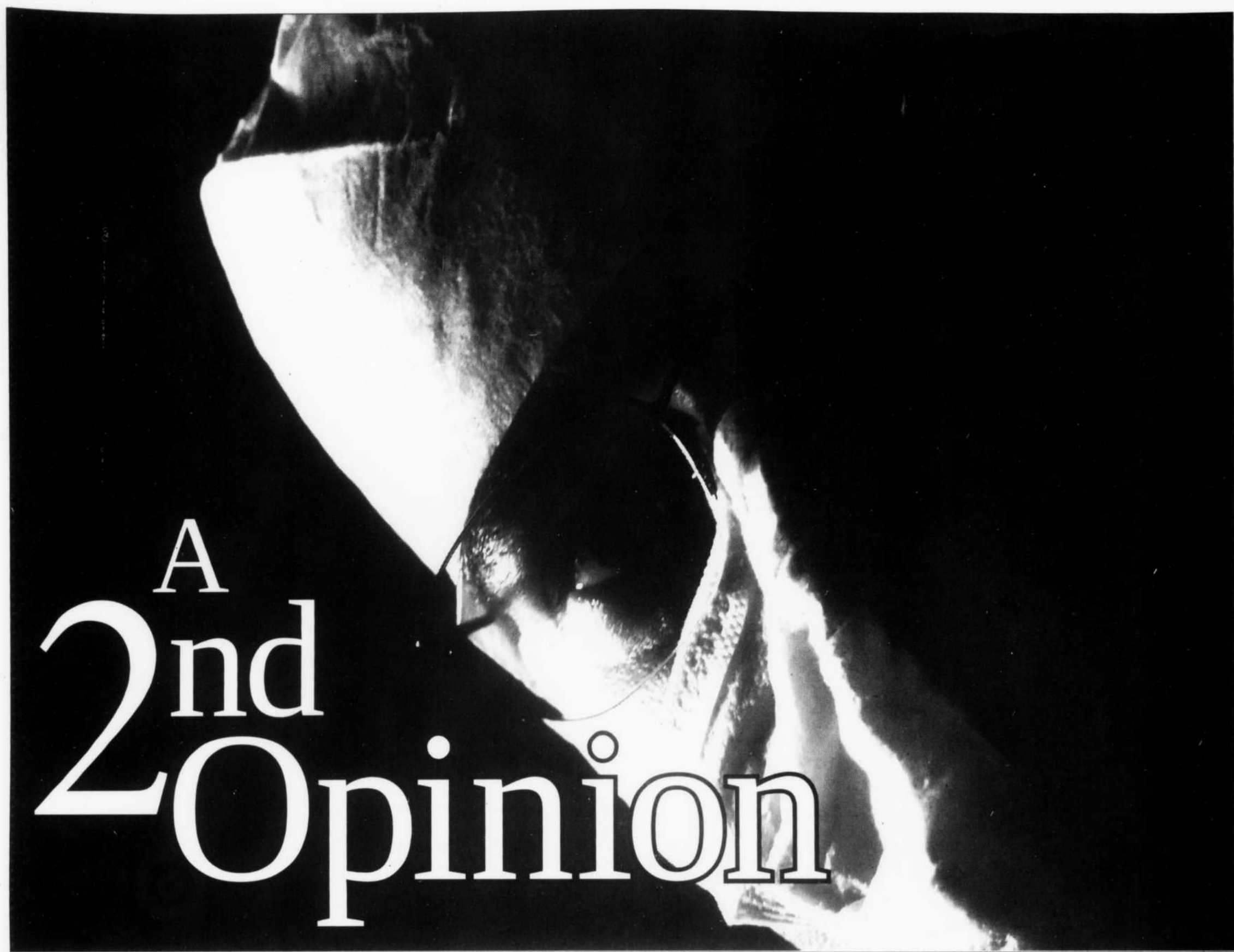
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A 2nd Opinion

Photo Courtesy Morguefile.Com

New hope comes for a student battling a chronic illness

By SARAH LAVERY
Features Editor

I've already memorized each poster on the wall of this doctor's office.

I know the one with the detailed picture of the gastrointestinal track like the back of my hand.

Liver. Gallbladder. Pancreatic duct. Transverse colon. Ileum.

I've already pointed out each disorder on the poster that I suffer from. Already stood up close to look at the images of strange bumps, ulceric wounds. Already pointed out each one that I have.

A breeze is hitting the window. The colors outside are just starting to turn green with early signs of spring. The people walking throughout Nashville's Hillsboro Village look happy, energized by the budding warm weather.

But in this room, the air conditioner is turned down perpetually too low. Aside from a lonely, sophomore painting of a sailboat, the room is drab. Everything is a putrid shade of cream.

And all there is to do is wait.

This visit to the Vanderbilt Digestive Disease Center isn't out of the ordinary. It's a new doctor, one whom I've only met a handful of times after growing too old for the pediatric wing.

But I've grown so used to the waiting, the bad news, the pleas to try this new medicine or join that new medical research study. I've become so inured to it that these visits barely make me nervous.

My mom sits next to me, her eyes slowly closing and opening, her hands folded politely on her lap.

She's used to all this, too.

The quiet hum of the sterilized hallways, the intermittent yelps from patients who just had some blood drawn, the hurried footsteps of doc-

tors and nurses walking past the door—the sounds almost feel like home.

My doctor finally walks in, a nurse trailing behind him. He's carrying a folder of my records, images from my colonoscopy the week before.

I barely remember what he told me after that procedure. Trying to fight off the remnants of sedation, I struggled to listen to his words.

Something about strictures—things are worse—couldn't even finish—steps need to be taken—bad, bad, bad.

Maybe it's just that I've had this disease for so long I've forgotten what it's like to feel normal. Maybe I've forgotten how to feel pain. Because I don't, at the moment, feel all that terrible. I've felt worse. Things could always be worse.

I wasn't expecting it at all.

My mom and I were even smiling, joking about how hungry we were, where we were going to go out for lunch after the appointment.

But the doctor's not smiling.

After taking a deep breath, he looks so squarely into my eyes that I can't help but look down.

"Sarah," he tells me, "you need an ostomy. Now."

.....

I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease when I was 10 years old. I wasn't getting any taller or gaining any weight. My stomach pain was becoming intolerable.

My family knew something was wrong.

We chose to ignore my Murfreesboro pediatrician—the one who said I was just being dramatic.

Several intrusive tests later, I was given a more concrete answer.

Crohn's disease—named after Dr. Burrill B. Crohn, the Mount Sinai Hospital physician who pinpointed the

Inflammatory Bowel Disease Quick Facts

- In 1987, it was estimated that 300,000 to 500,000 people in America suffered from Inflammatory Bowel Disease (including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis), according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Two to 6 new cases were found per 100,000 people.

- More recent data estimates that as many as one million Americans have IBD—with that number evenly split between Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

- Males and females appear to be affected equally.

- Crohn's disease may occur in people of all ages, but it is primarily a disease of adolescents and young adults, affecting mainly those between 15 and 35. However, Crohn's disease can also occur in people who are 70 or older and in young children as well.

- In fact, 10 percent of those affected—or an estimated 100,000—are under the age of 18.

- Nationwide, many colleges do have protocols in place to deal with the unpredictability that comes with chronic disease — when students come to them, of course.

effects of the disease—is a chronic disorder that causes inflammation of the digestive or gastrointestinal tract. Crohn's and a related disease, ulcerative colitis, are the two main disease categories that belong to a larger group of illnesses called inflammatory bowel disease.

I have both. Both illnesses have one strong feature in common: They are marked by an abnormal response by the body's immune system. The immune system comprises various cells and proteins, which normally protect the body from infection. But in people with Crohn's disease, the immune system reacts inappropriately.

Researchers believe that the immune system mistakes microbes, such as bacteria that

outside of the skin to function as the colon. It has to be emptied every few hours.

For some, such a surgery is a lifesaver. Most learn to live full, normal, happy lives with an ostomy bag.

But I'd rather survey my options.

And although considerable progress has been made in IBD research, investigators still don't know the cause. Studies indicate that the inflammation in IBD involves a complex interaction of factors: the genes the person has inherited, the immune system and something in the environment.

Maybe I got it because my mother's sister had ulcerative colitis and my dad's father had Crohn's disease. Maybe I got it because I am an American Jew of European descent, an ethnic group that is four to five times more likely to develop IBD than the general population.

But I've never spent too much time trying to figure out why I got this disease. I've been too busy trying to figure out how to conquer it.

Crohn's sufferers are everywhere. They're hidden behind whispers and discomfiture. It's a disease that a lot of people feel ashamed to claim as their own.

My good friends all know about my health problems, of course. Colleagues eventually find out.

And then there are acquaintances, people you feel squeamish admitting your health problems to. Teachers. Employers. Boyfriends.

And strangers—the ones who don't need to know.

Take, for example, family acquaintances—people who, much to my humiliation, often get an earful about my disease.

I was visiting my mom at work a few weeks ago when she decided to tell a colleague about my impending ostomy

surgery.

Just as my cheeks promptly turned a bright shade of red, the woman proudly lifted up the bottom of her shirt to reveal an ostomy bag.

Like her, I'm tired of feeling embarrassed. Or ashamed.

.....

The starchy, hospital bed sheets feel like sandpaper against my skin. I'm no stranger to hospitals, but I am to this one.

I'm in an unfamiliar city—Cleveland, Ohio—surrounded by unfamiliar faces.

They wouldn't let my mom leave the waiting room. And even at 21 years old, it's one of those moments where you just don't want to be alone.

My room divider isn't completely closed. A woman lies across from me, her stomach moving up and down with deep breaths, her hand clutching her sheet.

I watch a doctor come in and greet her. He asks about her medical history. She tells him she has an ostomy bag because of diverticulosis. High blood pressure. Liver problems. Arthritis.

I've been waiting in this recovery room to start my procedure for at least an hour. Waiting is putting my nerves on edge—each second that goes by, each time the thin room divider rustles with a passing doctor, my heart thumps a little louder.

But I'm still waiting.

Back home, my personal physicians have strongly recommended a colostomy surgery. They say my Crohn's has caused too much damage. There's really no other choice. A simpler procedure could work, they told me. A surgeon could perform a stricture dilation procedure, gently stretching the many narrowings that proliferate my intestines.

But they decided that my case is too bad. It's gone too far.

CROHN'S FROM PAGE 8

So, in March 2008, I went to the best hospital for gastroenterology in the country, the Cleveland Clinic, for a second opinion. There I was told that I'm not a lost cause. A simpler procedure could be possible.

My new doctor is a native of China, his English riddled with a heavy accent. He doesn't boggle his words down with flowery sentiment. He simply told me that I'm "too young" for an ostomy and that, while this simpler procedure can be risky, I'm safe with him.

"With other doctors," he says, "chance of perforation during the procedure is 15 percent. With me, one percent."

But I have a hard time trusting doctors.

Alone and scared, my thoughts are becoming more and more frenzied. The thought of something going wrong in a city that isn't my home, the thought of having to return to Vanderbilt, to hear my doctor say, "I told you so," the thought of emergency surgery, of the knife slipping, of my intestines perforating.

I just want to get it over with. I want to stop waiting.

A nurse finally comes to wheel me away, apologizing for making me stay in the recovery room for so long.

My doctor is already in the room waiting for me. He already has his latex gloves on.

He sees that I'm crying—the waiting really did get to me—and tries to ease my fears.

"I've already done three of these procedures today," he says.

I ask him what's the worst that can happen.

My intestines could perforate, he says. Then they

would take me to emergency surgery.

"But only one percent. One percent."

As he speaks, another doctor injects me with sedation. My eyelids get heavy. My body gets heavier. I can feel myself falling asleep, but I try to fight it. I'm too nervous. I want to be awake if something goes wrong.

My doctor back home told me this simpler procedure was nearly impossible for someone like me. The strictures were too severe.

I can hear a radio playing. The doctor and nurses are listening to Coldplay.

And then—all I see is black.

.....

I'm staring at the same poster of the gastrointestinal tract in my doctor's Vanderbilt office. Waiting... waiting... waiting...

My stomach growls. I stand up, walk to one side of the room, lie down on the examination table. Stand back up. Read a flyer about a medical research study.

Waiting... waiting... waiting...

The procedure in Cleveland couldn't have gone better. My strictures have been temporarily widened. I will have to go back in three months to do the procedure over again—and every three months after that, indefinitely, until a better option becomes available or it stops working.

But, for now, I've staved off getting an ostomy bag.

Aside from the persistent rumblings coming from my stomach, my gut hasn't felt this at ease in years.

That trip to Cleveland for a second opinion made me feel somehow guilty. My doctor at Vanderbilt told me I needed an ostomy. He told me that the stricture dilation procedure wouldn't work.

But I found someone who disagreed.

I'm not nervous about impending bad news. After all, there's nothing my doctor can tell me, when he finally decides to open that door, that can undo what the doctors at the Cleveland Clinic already did.

I just don't want to be the one to tell him. Doctors don't like to hear that they might have been wrong.

Someday, I might have to get an ostomy surgery. If so, I hope I could learn to live with it, just like I'm learning to live with Crohn's.

But that's not going to happen today.

For now, I'm just seeing how many times I can make a full circle in my doctor's swivel chair without touching my feet to the ground.

Then the door slowly opens, and my doctor takes a seat front of me. He says that I look great. Healthy.

I have a tendency to ramble when I get nervous. I mumble something about the upcoming presidential election, about the traffic, the unseasonably cold weather.

Then I tell him about Cleveland.

"Well," he says, his eyebrows furrowing, "it's a shame you had to go all the way out there to do something we could have done here."

My new medicine, he says, must have improved the strictures enough that the procedure became possible. Because when they last saw me, it just wasn't.

He scribbles a signature on a prescription pad, a refill for one of my many medications. He wants to see me again in a couple of months to determine when I'll need my next procedure.

I reach out to shake his hand. We're both forcing smiles.

He's a good doctor. One of the best in the region.

But at Cleveland, it's only one percent. One percent.

BOOK REVIEW

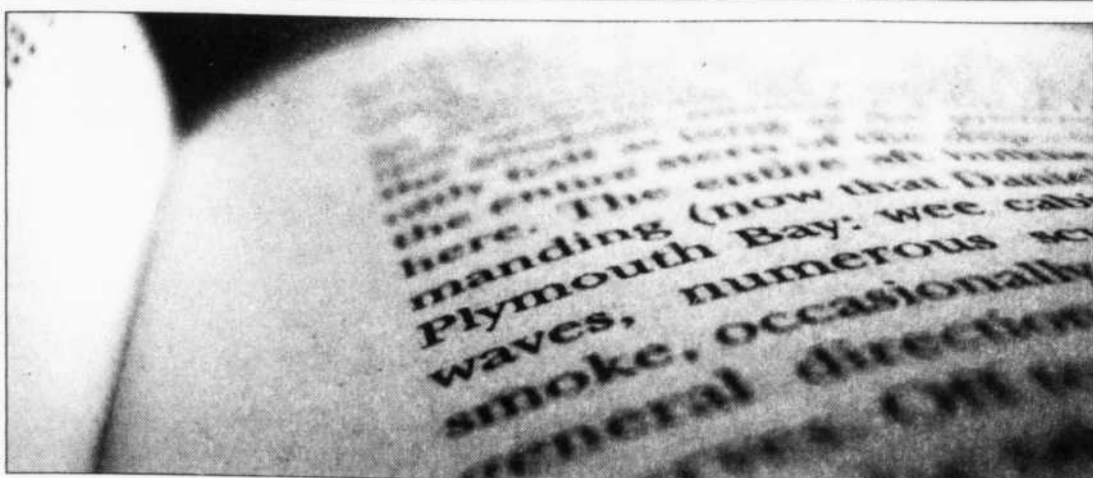


Photo Courtesy Morguefile.Com

'Midnight at the Dragon Café' is a fast-paced family drama

By JESSICA LINDNER
Contributing Writer

In the 315 pages it takes to reach this novel's ending, there is tragedy, treachery and little love. The love that's there is tangled and twisted and all the wrong kind.

Judy Fong Bates' (*China Dog: And Other Tales from a Chinese Laundry*) first novel, *Midnight at the Dragon Café* (Counterpoint, \$14), chronicles the life of an immigrant Chinese family and their restaurant in the small town of Irvine, right outside of Toronto, in 1957. Through the eyes and voice of the youngest family member, Su-Jen, the reader is introduced to the tight-knit immigrant family surrounded by a strange people and a foreign tongue, pinching pennies and struggling to keep their Chinese traditions in the new country of "Gun-ah-dye."

Su-Jen is only six years old when she arrives. She is given the "proper" name of Annie, quickly masters the English language and plays with the English-speaking girls at school. Over the book's time-length of six years, she integrates herself so much into the Canadian culture that the distance between her and the rest of the family widens into a yawning canyon, impossible to bridge.

Su-Jen becomes little more than a spectator on the sidelines, remarking on the daily routine at the Dragon Café, the steady flow of regular customers and the menial, everyday tasks that make up the running of a restaurant. She comments on her parents' crumbling marriage, her mother's love affair with her stepson and the oppressive, threatening silence that hangs over the family like a

storm cloud.

Su-Jen talks about the love she has for her new culture and the longing she has to fit in with her peers. But there will always be a barrier blocking her from being a true Canadian-born girl, no matter how opalescent or thin it may be.

"But whenever I was in the alley and tried to separate the tangle of branches to catch a closer glimpse of what lay on the other side, I ended up with scratches, fine white lines on my arms," Su-Jen says. Here, there is already a symbol of this barrier, as Su-Jen tries to see into the perfect gardens and perfect lives of her English-speaking neighbors.

Although the reader directly enters into Su-Jen's mind, and sees everything from her point of view, Su-Jen inevitably fades into the background and is only there to narrate the tragic and deceitful drama that envelops her family. For such a central character, her personality is bland and one-layered. Perhaps this impression is formed because there is no external description of Su-Jen, no other character to describe or add dimension to her, and perhaps because the reader is stuck inside her, prepubescent mind the whole time.

The real heroine of the novel is Su-Jen's mother, Lai-Jing. Bates has crafted her into an elegant caged tigress, trapped in a country she doesn't understand, trapped in the daily monotony of working in the café and trapped with a husband she neither loves nor respects.

Lai-Jing prowls around throughout the novel, sob-

bing over her plight and voicing her unhappiness: "Day in, day out, it's work and more work. Nothing ever changes. You begin to feel like the walking dead." It's no wonder that when her stepson arrives, she pounces on him, sits with him outside in the darkness of night, smoking cigarettes, and falling in love. She is eager for something to break the dullness, eager to love and be loved, indifferent to her family's pain. Selfish yes, but brave and bold for chasing down one glimmer of happiness in her bleak existence.

The rest of the characters are nowhere near as strong as Lai-Jing and are more like stock characters: the hard-working father-husband, the rebellious brother-son and the sweet dimpled friends who pass in and out of Su-Jen's life.

Bates writes masterful prose, simple and to the point. Her writing is not bogged down with senseless metaphors or heavy with descriptive passages that drag on unnecessarily. She weaves Chinese words into the story, which allow the reader to get an in-depth peek into this immigrant family's inner circle. Bates may not mold Su-Jen into a terribly solid character, but she does bestow her with a strong narrative voice that makes the novel fast-paced and easy to read. Bates herself came to Canada from China as a young girl and lived in several small towns, which gives authority and experience to her words as well.

This is a novel about growing up, growing accustomed to a place and growing apart. It is also a novel about a family that tries to be perfect, or at least seem perfect, which is the same idea every family goes for, of whatever nationality.

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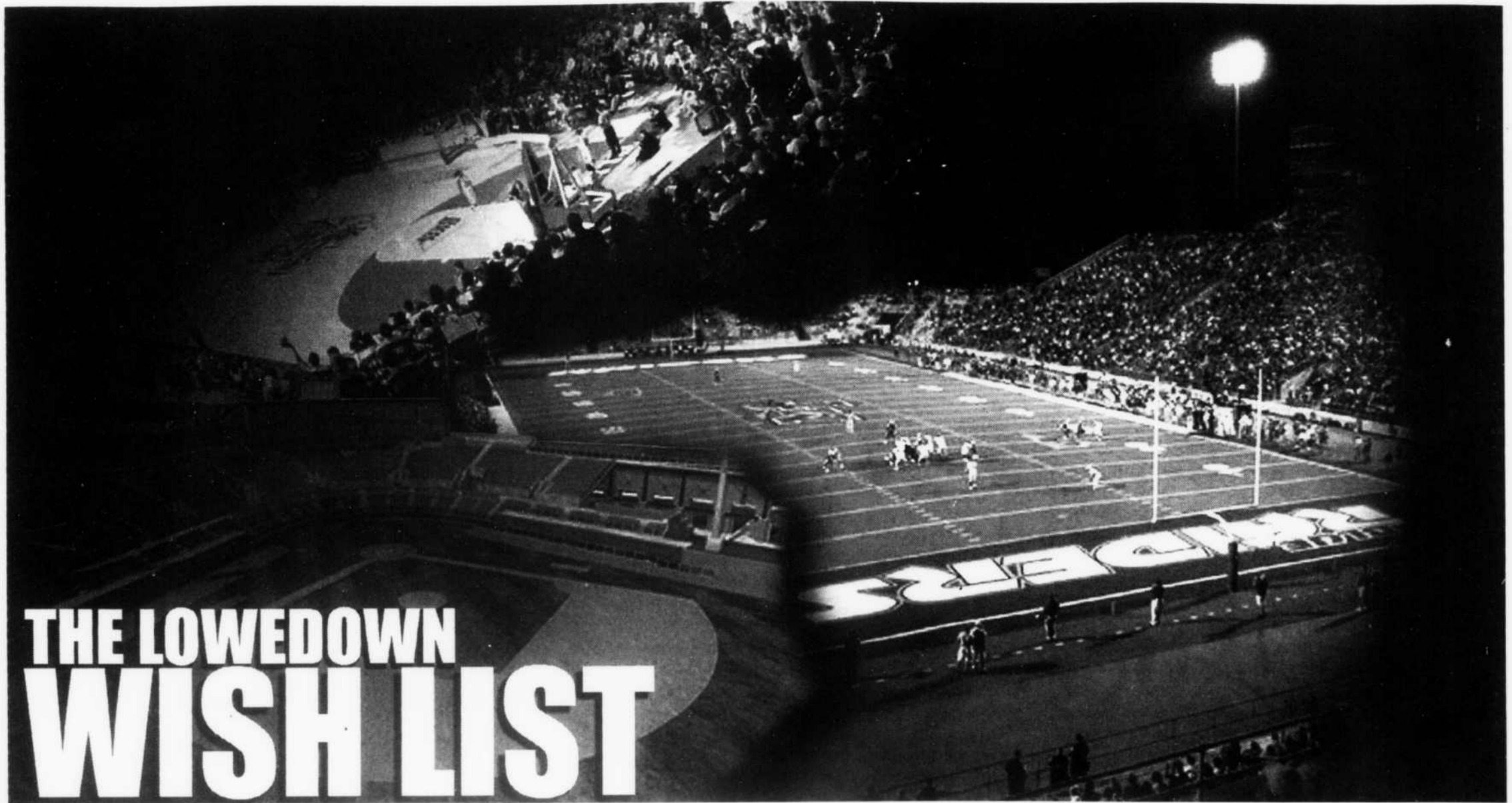
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SPORTS



Photos Courtesy MT Media Relations/ Photo Illustration by Ryan DeBooy

Expectations are high for MT's athletic programs and the 2008-2009 athletic year can be a big step towards cementing their status of being a major player in the Sun Belt Conference and Tennessee.

Suggestions that will make the next year unforgettable

As of today, students are preparing for final exams while others have given up on the semester and saying to themselves "better luck next time." Although I am getting ready for my finals, as well, I am also finalizing my wish list for this university.

Normally this practice would be saved for Christmas time or for New Years, but for a Blue Raider fan like myself, I make it of my requests during the summer time. This is normally the time of year when athletic departments sit down at the round table and come up with ideas for the next athletic year. I am here to offer my suggestions on how to make it a successful school year. Keep in mind though, some of these requests require community involvement as well, not just the athletic department.

1. 25,000 – 5,000 – 5,000

Attendance has been an issue ever since I came on campus, but I think that next year will be the year where we hit some exceptional plateaus. The num-



THE LOWEDOWN
Richard Lowe

bers above represent the average attendance I would like to see for football, men's and women's basketball. Women's basketball is well on its way and with the excitement that is surrounding them for next season, men's basketball can achieve it as well. Football is my only concern even though it shouldn't be. We have the most fan-friendly home schedule I have seen in a long time. We have the Battle of the Palladium (Maryland), a nationally televised game (Florida Atlantic), homecoming (Louisiana-Monroe), and North Texas. If you are a seasoned MT fan then you know why the North Texas game is huge. But for the new fans, it leads me to my

“Some of these requests require community involvement as well, not just the athletic department.”

next wish.

2. Promote November 21 and 22 like there is no tomorrow!

The buzz for this weekend has already started on the MT message boards that follow MT religiously. There is no better way to head into the Thanksgiving holiday than to see our men's basketball team at Tennessee on Friday and our football team playing North Texas on Saturday. The tailgating should begin Thursday morning and end Sunday night!

I honestly believe the Murphy Center can be sold out for this game just based on the fact that the Volunteers will be in the Murphy Center. And before you count out the Blue Raiders, talk to someone who has been around this University long enough to know what the "Murphy Center Magic" is. I'm a firm believer that we can

play any team in that arena and have a genuine chance at victory.

3. Give out T-shirts at the UT/MTSU game.

It's time for the Blue Raider Athletic Association and the Marketing department to step up for this wish. Nine times out of 10, this game will be televised at least on a local level so let's prevent embarrassing ourselves by giving away free T-shirts at the door.

It would be silly to think that there wouldn't be any orange clothing in the arena, but we can make for certain there is blue in the building if we hand them out to people that enter. Not the first 2,000 fans or the first 500 students. Everybody.

4. Offer more bus trips to students for road games

No matter what the overall consensus is for our fan base, one thing is certain:

They can bring an advantage to any of our teams. This is why we should offer more bus rides to road games. The BRAA offers a variety of bus trips during the school year, but the word tends not to spread to the students.

Also, the SGA does their Annual Road Rallies even though the locations seem to not make any sense. In the past two years, they traveled to the University of South Carolina and the University of Memphis. In each year, however, they traveled to Louisiana-Monroe in what they have advertised as their New Orleans trip. Instead of going to games in which student support would be fuel a rivalry, closer in distance, and/or the games would be better (Troy, Louisville and LSU to name a few).

SGA decides that it is high priority to go to Bourbon St. With Louisiana-Monroe visiting Floyd Stadium this year and Louisiana-Lafayette hosting MT on a Wednesday in December, it would be nice if the Road Rallies went to Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green,

or Starkville.

There are also good basketball trips that we can go on as well. Wait until the schedule comes out and plan accordingly.

5. Sell out Reese Smith Field on Opening Day 2009

For my final wish, I think it would be fitting if Reese Smith Field were filled to capacity for the first game of the 2009 baseball season. Quite frankly, they deserve it. No other team has had to go through playing a full season with dugout trucks and a crane sticking out behind the home plate umpire. They have played when the weather is horrible and have played home games an hour south from campus. Not once has a complaint come from Coach Steve Peterson's or any of the players' mouths. To top it off, it will be the grand opening of the newly renovated stadium.

Richard Lowe is a junior broadcast journalism major. He can be reached at rhowe@mtsutv.org

NBA won't be balanced until Eastern Conference wises up

It took all of 82 games for the NBA to finally figure out which eight teams would play be squaring off in the Western Conference playoffs.

In the east, it took 80 games for the final seed to be decided. The big difference? No one outside of Atlanta cared when the Hawks clinched by the Boston Celtics in the first round. The Golden State Warriors missed the postseason with a 48-34 record, which would have been good enough for the fourth spot in the east.

What is wrong with this picture?

For years now, the Eastern Conference has been little more than a B-league. In fact, if the NBA were to throw out the conferences and just hold a tournament with the 16 best teams, ten



OUTSIDE
THE POCKET
Chris Martin

teams from the Western Conference would earn spots in the postseason.

The Eastern Conference's No. 8 seed, the Hawks, would have missed the playoffs by four games, with the 19th best overall record, and the No. 6 seed, Toronto Raptors, would be the last team to make the postseason.

The Western Conference had an exhilarating finish to the regular season, and

for a while, it looked as though a team would win 50 games and not make the playoffs. Compare that to the East, where three teams made the postseason despite finishing with a .500 record or worse.

It's difficult to find a viable solution to the lack of balance between the conferences, but much of the blame (or credit depending on how it's viewed) falls on the front offices of the clubs. In the west, teams are just better at putting together contenders. Just look at the trades made at this season's deadline. Shaquille O'Neal, Jason Kidd and Pau Gasol all kicked their bags and headed west, in what has become an annual event where the league balances itself out by putting all the power west of the Mississippi.

The Celtics did fleece Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen from the Timberwolves and Sonics, but Eastern Conference teams too often let their top talent move to the other side of the continent.

Unfortunately, recent drafts have compounded the problem. Last year's against-all-odds lottery gave the West an even bigger advantage when two of the three worst teams in the league, the Boston Celtics and the Milwaukee Bucks, didn't land in the top three, forcing the two most-heralded prospects since 2003, the draft that produced LeBron James, Carmelo Anthony and Dwyane Wade, to land on the Trail Blazers and Sonics. Now, the Eastern Conference can look forward to Greg Oden and Kevin Durant leading their teams to

the playoffs in the future.

But the problem isn't getting the top picks, but the East's propensity for blowing its picks, i.e., the 2005 draft. In that draft, the Bucks and Hawks had the first two picks and used them on Andrew Bogut and Marvin Williams, respectively. The Jazz and Hornets thankfully accepted the consolation prizes of Deron Williams and this year's MVP-candidate Chris Paul.

The discrepancy carried over into 2006 when, out of the top-10 picks, the Western Conference landed Lamar Odom, Brandon Roy and Rudy Gay, while the best the Eastern Conference came away with was Andrea Bargnani, Tyrus Thomas and Adam Morrison.

While the Mavericks,

Suns, Lakers, Spurs, Hornets and Jazz are managing their teams to be competitors, the Eastern Conference teams (outside of the Celtics, Pistons and to a lesser extent, the Cavaliers) are continuing to put together teams that strive to make the playoffs with sub-.500 records.

Until general managers on the East Coast can figure out how to build through the draft, lock their best players up with long-term contracts and avoid selling their stars to the Western Conference for spare parts, expiring contracts and draft picks, the discrepancy is just going to continue.

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

Titans looking to provide Young with more help

By TERESA M. WALKER
AP Sports Writer

Vince Young has an offensive rookie of the year award and a playoff appearance in his first two NFL seasons.

His offensive numbers in that time? Well, he can run really well.

And while Young has had memorable moments as a passer, he's not had nearly enough of them. That's why the Titans announced after a 17-6 wild-card loss to San Diego that their offseason focus would be improving the offense.

They have been busy in free agency, and now the Titans prepare for the NFL Draft with their first-round pick, No. 24 overall, likely to be used on offense. General manager Mike Reinfeldt says Tennessee wants to continue adding playmakers.

"If one were looking for a playmaker, you could argue we're in a good spot to get a pretty good guy at 24," Reinfeldt said.

Tennessee already has signed tight end Alge Crumpler, given receiver Justin Gage a new deal and brought back receiver Justin McCareins for a second stint. Coach Jeff Fisher fired Norm Chow and lured Mike Heimerdinger back as his offensive coordinator.

"We feel like we've got a good start," Fisher said.

Now do the Titans start

off by drafting a receiver? This franchise has drafted only two receivers in the first round in its 48 previous years and none since Kevin Dyson in 1998. But the Titans could use a speedy receiver to stretch the field, giving Young more room to operate.

"There's a lot of very talented offensive skilled players in the draft, and there are going to be many talented skill players selected in the second day that can have impact and contribute almost immediately for a lot of clubs," Fisher said.

The Titans have tried finding receivers through quantity, taking seven in the past three drafts with none selected before the third round.

They have size in the 6-foot-4 Gage, who had 55 catches for 750 yards. Mike Williams, at 6-5 and the 10th pick overall in 2005, is on the roster as a reclamation project.

Roydell Williams blossomed late and had 55 catches before breaking his ankle in practice before the playoff game. Brandon Jones had 21 catches before being placed on injured reserve with a groin injury in his third season, and Paul Williams, a third-round pick last year, never got on the field.

Reinfeldt said a receiver with speed is something they would look for in the draft — but so is everyone else.

"Whether we would be able

to get it where we are would be another issue," Reinfeldt said.

Young tried to pump up his receivers last year, working with them and constantly expressing confidence in them. But he had only one 300-yard passing game, and that was in a loss at Denver when Jones dropped a would-be TD.

Only five NFL teams threw for fewer yards than the Titans, who had 2,878 yards passing. No one was worse than Tennessee inside opponents' 20, scoring touchdowns only 36.4 percent of the time with 20 TDs on 55 such chances. They went 10 games without a TD pass, and their nine touchdown passes were the fewest by a playoff team in a 16-game season.

So the Titans have visited with receivers such as Limas Sweed of Texas, Mario Manningham of Michigan, Devin Thomas of Michigan State, Donnie Avery of Houston and Earl Bennett of Vanderbilt.

Tennessee also could go for a running back such as Felix Jones of Arkansas. Veteran Chris Brown won't be back. LenDale White ran for 1,110 yards but had no run longer than 28 yards, and Chris Henry, a surprise second-round pick in 2007, is remembered most for being run over by a defender last season.

"Any time that you have



Photo by Mark Humphrey, Associated Press

Quarterback Vince Young finished his second season with the Titans with poor offensive numbers.

a chance to acquire a playmaker, it can be any of those positions," Reinfeldt said. "I think the good thing is receiver, running back, there are some guys in that draft that are very interesting, guys that do make plays."

Then again, Fisher loves defense.

Adding depth to a unit that

was the NFL's fifth stingiest isn't out of the question, either, since defense was the biggest reason Tennessee got to the playoffs. Gone are defensive ends Antwan Odom and Travis LaBoy as free agents. The Titans signed Jevon Kearse, and Jacob Ford, a draft pick last year who tore his Achilles' tendon, should

be healthy.

"We're going to obviously pay particular attention to the best players on the board and who we think can come in and help us immediately," Fisher said. "That very well could be a defensive player as well. We don't know. It's hard to predict how all these players are going to come off."

Lawmakers want probe of college football bowl system

By BEN EVANS
Associated Press

Three members of Congress want the Justice Department to investigate whether college football's Bowl Championship Series is an illegal enterprise.

Reps. Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawaii, Lynn Westmoreland, R-Ga., and Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, are introducing a resolution rejecting the oft-criticized bowl system as an illegal restriction on trade because only the largest universities compete in most of

the major bowl games. The resolution would require Justice's antitrust division to investigate whether the system violates federal law.

The measure also would put Congress on record as supporting a college football playoff.

"Who elected these NCAA people? Who are they to decide who competes for the championship?" Abercrombie said at a press conference Thursday on Capitol Hill, gripping a souvenir University of Hawaii football.

Abercrombie said the mat-

ter is worthy of federal review because college football is big business with hundreds of millions of dollars at stake.

"It's money. That's what this is all about," he said.

But it's no coincidence that all three lawmakers have home-state schools with recent beefs against the bowl system.

The University of Hawaii and Boise State University in Idaho each had an undefeated season in recent years, but were denied a shot at the championship. And Westmoreland said he is still smarting

about his University of Georgia Bulldogs being passed over for the national championship game last year.

Georgia instead was matched up against undefeated Hawaii in the Sugar Bowl, winning 41-10.

Westmoreland and Abercrombie said they started talking about the resolution after that game, as Abercrombie was paying off a bet with chocolate-covered macadamia nuts.

The lawmakers say the bowl system is rigid and blocks all but the largest universities

from competing in postseason bowls, denying dozens of others not just the opportunity to compete but also a shot at the big payoffs and national exposure that come with bowl appearances.

Abercrombie maintained that television markets are one factor in selecting which teams go to high-profile bowls.

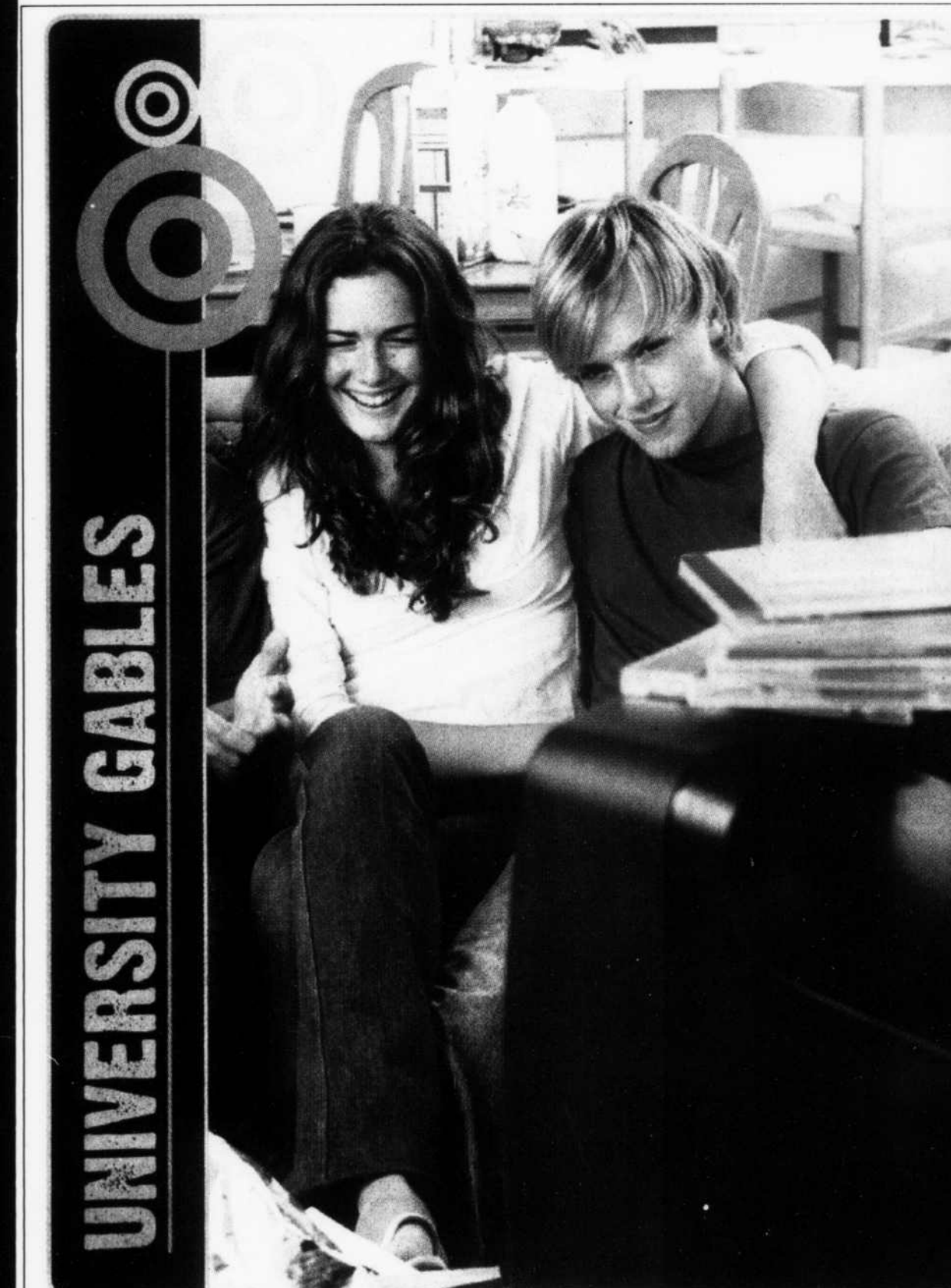
"We shouldn't have to argue about who the champion is," Westmoreland said, citing the excitement and unpredictability of the NCAA college basketball tournament.

"That should be decided on the field."

The BCS was created in 1998 by the six most powerful conferences. It relies on polls and computer ratings to determine which teams qualify for the top bowls.

Congress held a hearing on the BCS in 2005, but no legislation came of it.

In a statement, ACC Commissioner and current BCS coordinator John Swofford said the BCS allows all qualified teams to participate and is beneficial for student athletes, universities and fans.



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SPORTS BRIEFS

Women's tennis season ends in 4-0 loss to DU

The Blue Raiders fell to No. 1 seeded No. 28 Denver 4-0 in the second round of the Sun Belt Conference Championships on Saturday, ending the 2008 season.

The Blue Raiders lost the doubles point to begin the match and could never catch up. Junior Marlene Chemin and sophomore Stephanie Parkison lost their match 8-3 to begin play.

Then junior Pooja Komireddi and freshman Shannon Hartmann fell to Annette Aksdal and Bhavanie Tirumurti 8-4 to round out doubles action. Seniors Claudia Szabo and Ann-Kristin Siljestrom were trailing Ute Schnoy and Kyla Iwinski 6-5 when their match was called because the point was won by the Pioneers.

In singles action, Parkison fell 6-1, 6-0 to Aksdal as Denver took a 2-0 lead. Then junior Andrea Herrera lost her match 6-0, 6-1 to Iwinski.

Denver clinched the match as Voelker defeated Siljestrom 6-1, 6-1. The SBC championship was played on Sunday with Denver topping FIU for the title.

The Blue Raiders end the 2008 season with a record of 9-16 overall and 3-4 in Sun Belt Conference play.

Men's tennis loses consolation match

The men's tennis team fell to Florida Atlantic in a close 4-3 match in the consolation match of the Sun Belt Championships on Sunday.

Middle Tennessee won the doubles point winning two of three doubles matches. Sophomore Joao Paoliello and freshman Kyle Wishing fell 8-3.

Then the Blue Raiders rallied as junior Morgan Richard and sophomore Marc Rocafort defeated Oliver Sajous and Karol Szmurlo 8-6. Freshmen Alex McCann and John Peers clinched the point with their 8-5 win over Marc Abdeinour and Eddie Majcher.

In singles play, FAU tied the score at 1 all as Majcher defeated McCann 6-1, 6-2. Then Joe Cadogan put the Owls up 2-1 as he won his

match over Wishing 6-3, 6-2.

Rocafort fell 6-4, 6-4 to Sajous as FAU pulled ahead by two. Then freshman Chris Nowak started a rally as he defeated Daniel Vardag 6-4, 6-4. Peers tied the match at 3 with his win over Abdeinour 5-7, 6-3, 6-2.

Richard's match was the last to finish as he fell to Szmurlo 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (8) who clinched the match for the Owls.

The Blue Raiders end the 2008 season 9-16 overall and 2-1 in SBC play.

Baseball gets doubled up by ULM, 16-8

Middle Tennessee lost the final game of its series with Louisiana-Monroe 16-8 on Sunday.

Junior Jordan Alvis (3-2) took the loss as he allowed eight runs on five hits in one inning of work. The Blue Raiders (20-17-1, 9-11 Sun Belt) used four pitchers in relief with senior Langdon Stanley going the longest pitching four innings allowing seven runs on nine hits.

Sophomore Blake McDade led the Blue Raiders at the plate once again Sunday as he went three for five with two RBI, a double and scored two runs. As a team, MT notched 16 hits, the same as ULM (27-12, 17-4 SBC) but left nine on base. Every player in the line-up for the Blue Raiders recorded at least one hit in the game.

ULM's Ben Soignier had a perfect three for three day at the plate before moving to the mound and notching the win. Soignier allowed two runs on five hits in four and two-thirds innings of work.

Men's basketball signs two new recruits

Kermit Davis had two items atop his wish list during the recent recruiting period and the veteran Middle Tennessee men's basketball coach was able to achieve both when the NCAA late signing period began Wednesday.

Davis announced the signing of guard Eric Allen and post Josh Jones to national letters of intent Wednesday, filling a pair of needs--a 3-point shooter (Allen) and post player (Jones).

Red Wings advance to semifinals

By TERESA M. WALKER
AP Sports Writer

The Detroit Red Wings can take a couple days to rest up. The NHL's best team in the regular season won't miss the Western Conference semifinals this year.

Nicklas Lidstrom and Jiri Hudec each scored, and the Red Wings closed out their opening series by beating the Nashville Predators 3-0 in Game 6 on Sunday.

Brian Rafalski added an empty-netter with 4.8 seconds left. Goalie Chris Osgood stopped 20 shots for the shutout in his second straight playoff start as top-seeded Detroit became the first road team to win in this series.

With the victory, Detroit passed Toronto for second on the list of playoff series won with its 59th.

Nashville had hoped to use hot goalie Dan Ellis and an earsplitting crowd to force Game 7 in Detroit on Tues-

day night. But the Predators missed their best scoring chance when David Legwand hit a post in the first period, and they failed to advance out of the first round for a fourth straight postseason -- each time on their home ice.

The eighth-seeded Predators had no pressure in a series few thought they'd get a chance to play in. Their season featured a change in owners and the unloading of several top players and previous owner Craig Leipold. Nashville couldn't capitalize on a soldout crowd that tried to help by screaming and waving free towels at every opportunity.

Ellis stopped 40 shots after setting a franchise playoff record with 52 saves in Friday night's 2-1 overtime loss in Detroit. That was the most through regulation in a post-season game since May 24, 1996, when Tom Barrasso had 56 for Pittsburgh in an Eastern Conference final loss

to Florida.

But neither Ellis nor the fans could score.

It started Sunday when Lidstrom took a shot from past the red line in the second. Ellis came out to the edge of the crease only to see the puck bounce a few feet in front of him and into the net for a 1-0 lead at 13:44 of the second.

Nashville had a chance to answer. The Predators went on the power play and had 54 tripping of a 5-on-3 after a tripping penalty on Kris Draper at 14:43. Detroit killed off the penalties.

Then Hudler sealed the victory at 3:52 in the third, flipping a shot past Ellis' glove.

The Predators played a second straight game without captain Jason Arnott, whose 72 points in the regular season tied for the team lead. But they got back Michigan native Legwand, who has missed the three games in Detroit to protect his bruised left foot, and forward Scott

Nichol, who broke his thumb in the opening minutes of Game 1.

They took the first five shots and hit everything in red and white. One of the best hits came near the end of the first period when Shea Weber knocked down Johan Franzen.

But Osgood, who won Game 5 after replacing Dominik Hasek in the middle of a Game 4 loss here on Wednesday night, stopped all nine shots he faced in the first and had a little luck. The shot by Legwand bounced off the post and skittered cross ice away from the goal.

The Red Wings may have been a bit tired from taking a franchise-record 53 shots in regulation in Friday night's 2-1 overtime win. Pavel Datsyuk couldn't collect a cross-ice pass with room to shoot on the power play, and Valtteri Filppula had half the net to shoot into and slapped his shot wide left late in the first.



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