

SIDELINES

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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MTSUSIDELINES.com

EDITORIALLY INDEPENDENT

Nuclear waste possible in TN

By Daniel Potter

Community News Editor

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is currently considering a company's application to import nuclear waste from Italy for processing in Tennessee before disposing of it in Utah.

"We are consulting with the states that would be involved, Tennessee and Utah," said David McIntyre, an NRC spokesman.

The company, Utah-based EnergySolutions, would import 20,000 tons of low-level radioactive waste, mostly "metal and concrete from the buildings of nuclear facilities," McIntyre said.

The commission has been gathering information since fall, and earlier this month began taking comments from the general public. This continues until March 12.

"We welcome all comments," McIntyre said. "Our interest is in whether the proposed action can be done safely and in accordance with the proper regulations."

McIntyre noted that U.S. policy on nuclear energy in general is an issue beyond the scope of the regulatory agency. "That's not something we can address," he said.

There is precedent for the EnergySolutions plan, McIntyre said, but "it's not something we would really call 'common.'"

"What's unusual about this, and what's really raised eyebrows in the media and in Congress, is the volume involved," McIntyre said — 20,000 tons, or roughly one million cubic feet, the *Oak Ridger* reported.

Still, McIntyre expects the company can handle the job.

"EnergySolutions is a leading company in the processing of radioactive waste, so they have expertise and resources to handle all sorts of issues involving cleanup of nuclear facilities, such as the one they're helping with in Italy," he said.

"This isn't particularly hazardous waste that they're planning to bring in," McIntyre said. "Certainly not weapons grade material — certainly not high level waste, which would be the spent fuel from a reaction that is highly radioactive."

"It's considered nuclear waste because of where it comes from, and because there's a possibility of some low level contamination," he said.

"As far as the security aspect," McIntyre said, "there have always been strong security requirements."

"Those requirements have been strengthened dramatically

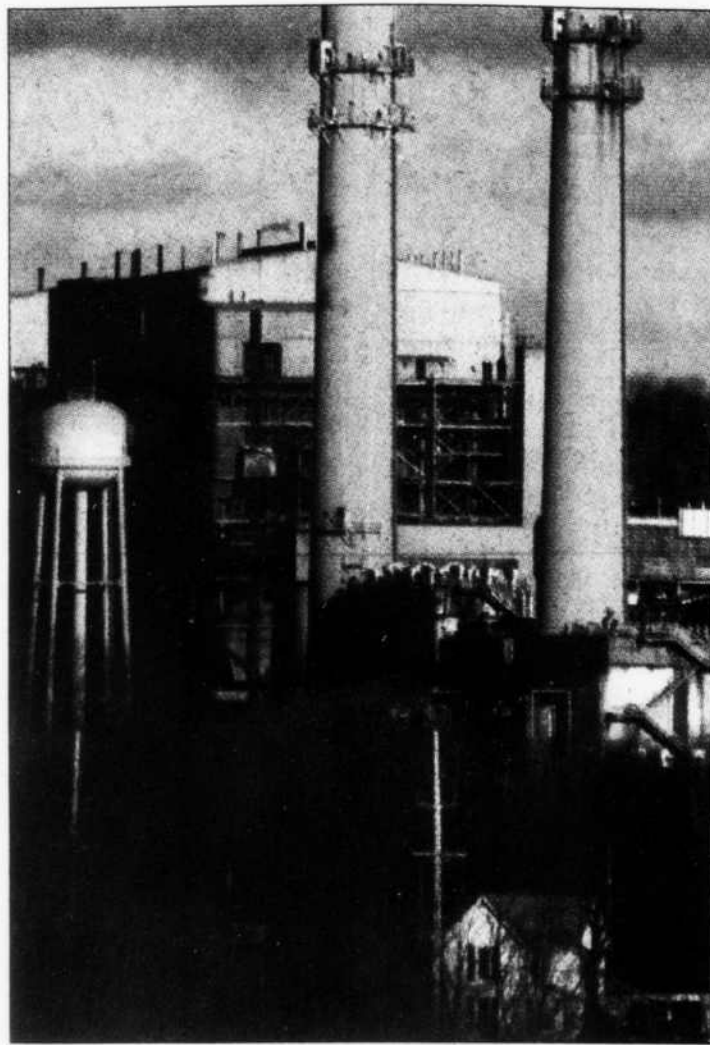


PHOTO COURTESY MORGUEFILE.COM

since 9/11," he said. "It is the responsibility of the licensee to protect the plant."

That includes the use of security forces, some private, some contracted.

Congressman responds

Even so, Congressman Bart Gordon opposes the plan.

"I don't care if it's high-level or low-level nuclear waste. I don't want the United States to become the world's nuclear

dumping ground," Gordon said.

"If this license were to be approved, it could lead to a substantial increase in the amount of radioactive waste that's being processed in Tennessee and transported through the state," he said.

Gordon fears Tennessee could become a site for nuclear waste disposal, as well as processing.

See PAPER, 3

Sisco awaits evaluation

By Daniel Potter

Community News Editor

A former MTSU student charged with attempted murder will undergo psychiatric evaluation before his case proceeds in court.

Kevin R. Sisco was charged in September, 2007 with attempted first-degree murder in the beating of Ashley Manis at Jim Cummings Hall, the dorm where she and Sisco both lived.

Earlier this month, the prosecution offered a plea agreement, and Sisco's defense was set to formally accept or reject that offer last week. That date has now been pushed back, said Assistant District Attorney Paul Newman.

"They've reset it for April 21, which gives them time to have that evaluation done," Newman said. "Generally when they do that those take at least 30 to 60 days."

In the meantime, the offer stands.

"There has been a plea offer made and it has not been withdrawn," Newman said.

Newman could not go into detail about the Sisco case specifically, but he said such an evaluation raises several possibilities for any case.

"In general, when the mental health defenses are raised, they take a couple of forms. One of them is competency," Newman said. Competency concerns a suspect's ability to help his or her attorney prepare for the trial.

"It's very rare that you have an incompetent client," Newman said.

"Insanity defense in Tennessee is based on a right-or-wrong test," Newman said, meaning whether a suspect is able to tell right from wrong as demonstrated by his her actions.

"The third and final one is what they call diminished capacity, and that deals with specific intent to commit crimes. In order for it to be first-degree murder you have to be able to premeditate," Newman said.

The outcome of the psychiatrist's evaluation could dictate such matters as reduced charges or sentencing.

The mental evaluation will be paid for by Sisco's defense, "so it's not a state expense," Newman said.

Sisco's defense attorney is Guy Dotson Jr., who could not be reached for comment.

INSIDE

MTSU gives student second chance

Ginger Eades looks to the future after suffering chronic depression.

See FEATURES, 4

English should be used, not abused

Good writing is accessible to all, not exclusive by virtue of technical jargon; pretentious intellectuals say nothing

See OPINIONS, 6

SBC Basketball Tournament preview



With the conference tournament a week away, Sidelines breaks down the stories of the 2007-08 season

See SPORTS, 7

Local Forecast

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Campus News

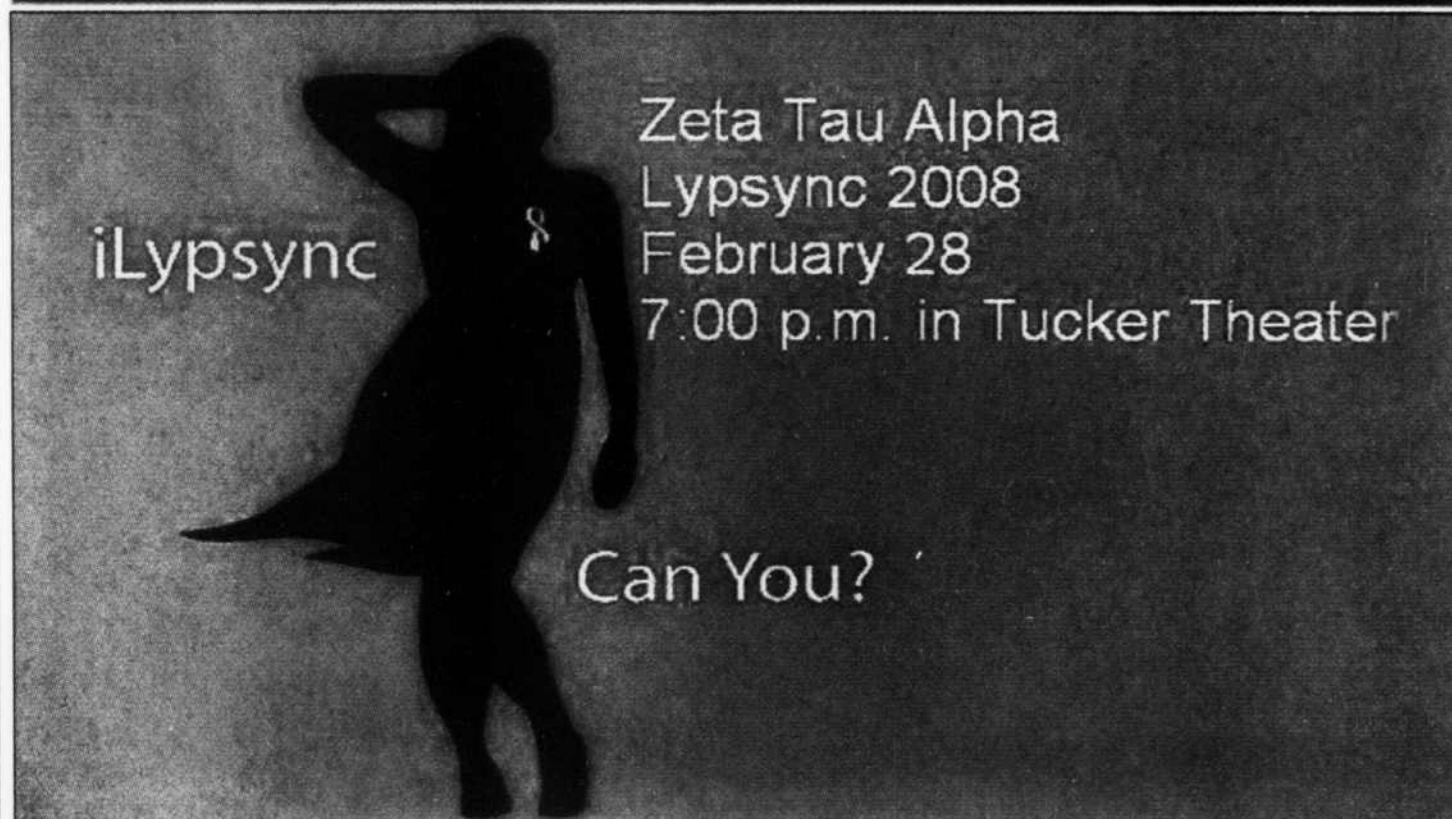


IMAGE COURTESY TRACHE HENSON

Zeta Tau Alpha lypsync competition for breast cancer awareness and research.

Sorority lip-syns for breast cancer

"I want to see the new girls walk away knowing they can change lives."
- Elizabeth Karg, fundraising chair for Zeta Tau Alpha

By Tiffany Gibson

Assistant News Editor

Zeta Tau Alpha will host a lypsync competition on Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. in the Tucker Theatre to raise money for breast cancer research.

As part of the sorority's philanthropy, breast cancer is something Zeta Tau Alpha sisters feel strongly and passionately about.

"This is an event we [Zeta Tau Alpha] have been doing since 1992," said Tracie Henson, president of Zeta Tau Alpha, junior English major. "The goal of the eighth annual lypsync is to raise \$7,000 to send to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation."

In order to spread the word about the contest, Zeta Tau Alpha sisters have and will be selling tickets and t-shirts in the Keathley University Center as well as taking donations for breast cancer research. T-shirts are \$12 and tickets are \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door.

Student organizations that wish to par-

ticipate in the competition are required to have a team of five to 15 people and pay a fee of \$60.

Organizations that will be participating in this event are split into two categories based on gender. The female organizations participating include Alpha Chi Omega, Alpha Delta Pi, Alpha Omicron Pi, Chi Omega, Kappa Delta and Elephant Magnet. The male organizations participating are Pi Kappa Alpha and Sigma Phi Epsilon.

Despite Zeta Tau Alpha's recognition as Greek, Elizabeth Karg, fund raising chair from Zeta Tau Alpha and sophomore art history major, said she does not want the Greek stereotype to stop people from coming to the event because it is open to everyone including the community.

"It's going to be good clean entertainment with a worthy cause and it's never too late to emphasize a cause like this," Karg said.

Since the event is identified as a family event, the music teams choose to lip-sync must be approved, with no profanity displayed in the lyrics or performance of the

teams.

To determine the winners, judges made up of Zeta Tau Alpha alumni, MTSU dance teachers and community members will score the teams. Vulgarity will penalize the teams and could possibly keep them from achieving the first or second place trophy.

In addition to the entertainment, pamphlets will be distributed at the event along with self-examination kits, shower cards and pink ribbons.

Emmy Crytzer, Zeta Tau Alpha member and sophomore fashion and merchandise major, felt strongly about joining Zeta Tau Alpha because of their philanthropy advocating breast cancer awareness. Crytzer's grandmother was diagnosed and unfortunately did not survive her battle with breast cancer.

"It's important to realize early detection and knowing the money will help others including myself or my sisters someday is a good feeling," Crytzer said. "It's \$7 to save someone's life."

Marxist activist Paul D'Amato to deliver lecture on campus Thursday

By **Johnathon Schleicher**
Staff Writer

Have you ever wondered about the ideas of socialism? Are they still around today? What does it mean to call someone a Communist?

You can find out on Thursday, Feb. 28 at 4:30 p.m. in room 220

at the Peck Hall building.

Paul D'Amato, a Karl Marx activist and associate editor for the International Socialist Review, will be lecturing "The Meaning of the Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx in the 21st Century," which is based on his new book "The Meaning of Marxism."

Jase Short, a member of the

student group Solidarity, said the ideas of Karl Marx are present today.

"The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx are just as applicable today as they were in the 19th Century," said Short.

"Rather, the globalization and War on Terror themes which dominate our perception of world events today were very

pragmatically outlined by Marx some time ago."

Despite the controversial topic, Short said MTSU is coming across no resistance to the lecture.

"Whatever one might think of Karl Marx's ideas, his work has had a profound effect on the disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology and philosophy,

as well as a profound effect on [many] important intellectuals," Short said.

According to Short, D'Amato has a special touch in lecturing about the ideas of Karl Marx. "His kind of voice is not present in academia often anymore," Short said.

"Marx is mentioned in political science, sociology, philoso-

phy, economics, history, etc. classrooms, but often the Marx mentioned is a cartoon caricature presented by people who have never really read Marx or have only read 'The Communist Manifesto' or one other work of Marx," Short said.

A question-and-answer session will follow after the lecture.

WASTE: NRC taking comments

Continued from page 1

"It sets a bad precedent," Gordon said.

"EnergySolutions has stated publicly that it wants to process more foreign waste in Tennessee. If granted, we can expect to see more and more of these applications," Gordon said.

"The import-licensing structure we have in place was not established so that the U.S. could process and dispose of the world's low-level radioactive waste," Gordon said. "No one expected or intended this

to become a commercial practice."

Representatives for EnergySolutions could not be reached for comment.

Those wishing to comment on the application can contact the NRC by e-mail at hearing-docket@nrc.gov or by mail at Office of the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications.

Campus Briefs Feb. 25- March 9

Campus Recreation

Campus Recreation will host National Intramural-Recreation Sports Association Regional Basketball March 14 through March 16. Registration will occur March 7 in the Recreation Center with a fee of \$200. A captain's meeting is waiting to be announced.

For more information about Campus Recreation activities visit mtsu.edu/~camprec or call 898-2104.

Dramatic Arts

The T. Earl Hinton Music Hall of the Wright Music Building will host the MTSU Wind Ensemble on Feb. 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Jazz pianist, Geri Allen, will perform on Feb. 26 at 7:30 p.m.

MTSU Women's Chorale performance will take place on Feb. 28 at 7:30 p.m. in the T. Earl Hinton Music Hall of the Wright Music Building.

For more information regarding these events, visit mtsu.edu/~music or e-mail Tim Musselman at tmussel@mtsu.edu or call (615) 898-2493.

'Enchanted' at KUC Theatre

'Enchanted' will be at the Keathley University Center theatre on Monday, Feb. 25 through Thursday, Feb. 28 at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Cost of admission will be \$2.

Rutherford County Blood Drives

A blood drive will be available on Monday, Feb. 25 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Patterson Park Community Center. The Patterson Park Community Center is located at 521 Mercury Boulevard in Murfreesboro.

MTSU Keathley University Center will host a blood drive Thursday, Feb. 28 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Between the times of 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Friday, March 7 Eagleville School will host a blood drive. Eagleville School is located at 500 Highway 99 in Eagleville.

The Lions Club Building located on Highway 96 in Lascassas, will hold a blood drive on Saturday, March 8 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Questions or concerns regarding these locations or requirements to give blood should be directed to Joette Phillips at (615) 346-7810.

June Anderson Women's Center

A presentation entitled "Super Tips for Supervisors" will be given on March 4 at 12 p.m. in the James Union Building Dining Room C. Robbie Snapp, Bonnie McCarty and Barbara Sensing will be speaking.

For more information on the June Anderson Women's Center please call (615) 898-2193.



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LEBANON
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615-443-2355
MT. JULIET
401 S. Mt. Juliet Rd.
615-773-1900

MURFREESBORO
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SMYRNA
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Classifieds

EMPLOYMENT

PT WORK Good pay, flex scheds, sales/svc, no exp nec--we train, all ages 18+, condition apply. 832-8448 CollegeIncome.com

IMMEDIATE OPENING: Female helper needed to assist active disabled woman. Job duties: assistance with meals, dressing, recreation. Must be: reliable, responsible, trustworthy, able to

Continued from last column

lift light-weight wheelchair, valid driver's license, good driving record. Hours: MWF 4pm-8pm; Sat 12-8pm. Good pay/perks. Email: pchelper@comcast.net or call 615-439-0480.

Now Hiring Cashiers and Stockers
GFS Marketplace
www.gfsmarketplace.com
Job Fair February 27 to 28, 9am to 6pm: Holiday Inn Murfreesboro 2227 Old Fort Parkway

Continued from last column

Summer camp counselors needed in Nashville area. Camp Whippoorwill needs lifeguards and general activity counselors. Bus transportation provided. 615-799-9925 email: whippoorwill@starband.net

Retired Christian nurse relocating to area soon seeks employment as p/t companion for senior overnight/extended childcare

Continued from last column

for traveling parents. Please call 731-589-8292 or email pcsam@yahoo.com

FOR RENT

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Continued from last column

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FOR LEASE

FOR SALE

Why rent? Own your own home! Newly renovated

Continued from last column

townhome w/ large yard and all appliances included, priced under \$120k. Call 615-480-0001

ROOMMATES

OPPORTUNITIES

Get Paid to do Research! Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Committee (UR-SCA) Proposal Deadline

Continued from last column

March 18, 2008. For more information visit: http://www.mtsu.edu/urc/urca_urs.html

SERVICES

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY - \$650. Julie Lampley Photography offers wedding packages starting at \$650. Servicing the Greater Nashville Area, contact us at (615) 799-9618 or julie.lamplsey@gmail.com

Continued from last column

and see galleries at www.pbase.com/jlamplsey

POLICIES

Sidelines will be responsible only for the first incorrect insertion of any classified advertisement. No refunds will be made for partial cancellations.

Sidelines reserves the right to refuse any advertisement it deems objection-

Continued from last column

able for any reason. Classifieds will only be accepted on a prepaid basis. Ads may be placed in the Sidelines office in Mass Comm, Rm 269. For more information, call the business office at 615-898-5111. Ads are not accepted over the phone. Ads are free for students and faculty for the first two weeks.

Marketplace of MTSU

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Cast your ballot

Student Government Association Elections 2008 - MORE ON PAGE 7

Student Government President



Steven Altum

Junior, political science major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
"Together we can accomplish anything"

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
BOLT, College Democrats, Sigma Alpha Lambda Leadership Fraternity, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, SGA Legislative Liaison, Habitat Blitz Build Executive Committee

LIST OF GOALS:
* Seek funding for science building
* Quicken the pace on the construction of the new student union building.
* Work to lower cost of food on campus.
* Create a campus beautification commission to clean up campus.
* Work to allocate the Green Energy Funds for recycling, solar power, etc.
* Get incoming involved on campus
* Work to raise sports game attendance
* Seek to fix Rec Center parking lot



Matthew Hurtt

Junior, history and political science major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
"He's fighting for us!"

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
SGA Senate, Baptist Collegiate Ministry, Pro-Life Collegians, Raider Republicans, 88.3 WMTS, History Club

LIST OF GOALS:
* Funding for the science building.
* Fight for more responsive SGA and active student body.
* Fight for more marketable degrees.
* Work with campus/city police to increase and improve safety measures on campus.



Sondra Wilson

Senior, history and political science major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
"Empowering One Student at a Time"

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
SGA Senator for the College of Liberal Arts, Alpha Delta Pi, African American Association, Jr. Panhellenic, Rowdy Raiders

LIST OF GOALS:
* Unify the diverse student body.
* Focus on informing students about events, services and resources available to students.
* Increase of state funding for MTSU.
* Improve relationships between the alumni, community, legislators, faculty, administrators and the student body as a whole.

Vice President and Speaker of the Senate



Jimmy Crytzer

Junior, electronic journalism major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
"Do Work Son!"

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society, NSCS Honor Society, Student Government Association, Interfraternity Council Associate Executive Officer, Interfraternity Council Judicial Board- Vice Chairman, Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity.

LIST OF GOALS:
* Raise awareness of the SGA and what it can do for our campus.
* Emphasize joining campus organizations
* Inform new students how to get involved.
* Strengthen bond between diverse groups
* Help establish a campus philanthropy
* Work for funding to better our campus
* Emphasize leadership positions available on campus and how they are beneficial
* Integrate organizations and make a "social network" for MTSU leaders.



Brandon McNary

Senior, history and political science major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
[none]

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
Up til Dawn, SGA, Sigma Nu

LIST OF GOALS:
* Make the senate more visible on campus.
* Have the senate go out and seek students rather than the students seeking the senators.

Election Commissioner



Nathan Haynes

Senior, marketing major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
[none]

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
IFC president, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Student orientation assistant, SGA Senator at Large & Speaker Pro Tempore, Society for Aspiring Student Affairs Professionals

LIST OF GOALS:
* Increase voter turnout
* Work on diversity of candidates
* Concentrate on enforcing a fair and ethical electoral act

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING?

I am running because I am passionate for student involvement and wanted to serve on the Student Government as an executive officer, specifically in the position that runs the process of electing our future leaders.

DO YOU SUPPORT A SPECIFIC CANDIDATE?

Although I will vote, I am unbiased for campaign purposes because my position is uncontested.

The Election Commissioner is the only SGA executive member to stay unbiased. I feel that being next in line for the position I should go ahead and lead by example.

Vice President of Administration and Public Affairs



Jamie Boyd

Junior, elementary education major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
"Help me, Help YOU!"

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
National Society of Collegiate Scholars- President, Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society, Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society- Legal Council, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, SGA-Senator for the College of Education

LIST OF GOALS:
* Unite the campus.
* Get everyone involved.
* Bring in more community involvement opportunities.
* Help everyone to the best of my ability.
* Improve and continue working on our current community service programs.
* Welcome every new freshman and every new transfer student to MTSU and make them feel welcomed and comfortable.



Wil Shultz

Sophomore, public relations major

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN:
"Got Wil Power?"

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT:
Up-Til-Dawn, SGA, Student Orientations Assistant, Raider Republicans

LIST OF GOALS:
* More student involvement with SGA.
* Extensive promotion of Road Rallies and boost student participation.
* Help grow SGA involvement with Habitat for Humanity.

MTSU's Student Recognition Awards

Applications are now being accepted for the following university-wide awards:

- ♦ President's Award
- ♦ Provost's Award
- ♦ Robert C. LaLance, Jr. Achievement Award
- ♦ Community Service Award

These awards recognize four undergraduate students for exemplary character and achievements in scholarship, leadership and service.

DEADLINE TO APPLY:
March 14, 2008 by Noon

Contact:

Dr. Colette Taylor
Associate Dean for Student Life
Keathley University Center 326-S
(615) 898-5812
cmtaylor@mtsu.edu

Applications and award descriptions may be found at
www.mtsu.edu/~mtleader.

Senator Elections

Liberal Arts:

1. Chris Richardson
2. Brad Craig
3. Alex Lewis
4. Megan Robinson
5. Carlissa Shaw

Mass Communication:

1. Patrick Mertes
2. Jasmine Gray

Business:

1. Matt Rasberry
2. Jessica Utley
3. Edgard Izaguirre
4. Jesse Cooper
5. Heather Rawson
6. Rebecca Cathey

Education and Behavioral Science:

1. Trenton Hughes
2. Mary Alice Porter
3. Jeremy Anthony
4. Chad Hardy
5. Richard Lee Billings
6. Daniel Roberge

Basic and Applied Science:

1. Thomas Koch
2. Michael Borella

At Large:

1. Erin Johnson
2. Jimmy Musicce
3. Jimmy Richardson III
4. Marcy Videau

Undeclared:

1. Jennifer N. Lee

VOTE ONLINE

Go to PipelineMT to cast your vote in the SGA election.

FEB. 26 - 28

FEATURES

Do you think more attention should be paid to mental illness on college campuses?

- a) Yes c) Unsure
b) No

Go to mtsusidelines.com to answer

For some, MTSU offers a SECOND CHANCE



At 38-years-old, Ginger Eades attended her first class at MTSU. After a lifelong struggle with mental illness, she is looking forward to graduate and law school.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MARK BELL

Ginger Eades is reborn with a little help from the university

By Mark Bell
Staff Writer

Her MySpace reads: "I've got more faults and flaws than one could ever aspire to count on [her] phalanges."

But Ginger Eades, a 38-year-old criminal justice major, has overcome many of her own "faults and flaws" to get where she is today.

Ginger, originally from Alabama, came to Tennessee in 1996 after attending The University of the South in Mobile.

She moved to Winchester with her father, John Eades, a former psychologist and expert on gambling addiction (now a pastor at a United Methodist Church), her mother, Karen, and her sister, Dana.

Her first year in Tennessee was rough.

Ginger, according to her mom and dad, had already attempted suicide twice while living in North Carolina for a short period and ran away when she first came to Tennessee.

"She had been diagnosed with chronic depression, but she started getting better, a little bit better each day," Mr. Eades told *The Worldwide Faith News* in October 2002. Then one day, according to Mr. Eades, "she said 'daddy, I want to go for a walk.'"

Mr. Eades paid no attention as Ginger slipped out the door.

And just like that, Ginger was gone, lost within a 385-acre wilderness.

She was lost for more than a day, with her family fearing that she would commit suicide due to missing her dosages of Xanax, anti-depression medication and numerous other medications in their home.

Luckily, with the help of the Tennessee Highway Patrol and more than 100 volunteers, Ginger was found safe and sound.

"The miracle was that her life changed," Karen Eades told *The Worldwide Faith News*.

After that incident, Ginger felt that she needed to do something with her life to get it back on

track, and her sister encouraged her to return to school.

"My sister, Dana, definitely encouraged me to go back to school," Ginger says. "She's probably been the most encouraging, along with my Mom."

After getting advice from a friend at the Murfreesboro Vocational Rehabilitation Center, Ginger decided on MTSU. In 2004, at the age of 34, she attended her first class.

Ginger, like many other non-traditional students at MTSU, is hardworking and earns great

"The miracle was that her life changed."
-Karen Eades

grades.

She's involved in a number of campus organizations including the Tennessee Coalition to Abolish State Killing, of which she is the current vice-president.

"I don't condone killing of any type," Ginger says.

Her daily struggles with what she calls "a florid case of ADHD," panic attacks and depression are only part of the problem. Ginger also has a number of bone disorders. The culmination of her mental and physical illnesses lie in the 10 prescriptions she must take daily.

Last semester, Ginger was forced to withdraw from MTSU temporarily due to her illnesses. She returned for the spring 2008 semester.

Ginger, like many other disabled students, takes advantage of a disabled student discount at MTSU.

This allows disabled students like Ginger to attend MTSU at a discounted rate of about \$75 per semester. She received the discount after showing proof of her social security disability insurance.

"If it weren't for the discount, I wouldn't really be here," Ginger says.

She attributes a lot of her success to the "wonderful Student Support Services" on campus.

"They've been very supportive, especially Susan Johnson," Ginger says. "They've kept me focused with classes."

"They help me register and do the things I can't figure out, and let me know what direction I need to go in."

Johnson, a counselor in Student Support Services, holds an equally positive opinion of Ginger.

"She's overcome so much and has never given up on school," Johnson says, "She is a role model for all the students like her."

Ginger received an award for being Student Support Services' "Rising Star" for the 2005 through 2006 academic year.

"They put a plaque in the office and I was really excited," Ginger says, smiling.

Ginger says she also appreciates the help she receives from Disabled Student Services, specifically the help from John Harris, the director.

"John is wonderful," she says. "I've gone in his office crying so many times saying 'John, I cannot do this,' and he is always so positive."

If everything goes as planned, Ginger says, she will graduate in fall 2008.

This will be a great accomplishment for a woman so troubled earlier in life.

"I owe it to all of the wonderful people that have helped me at MTSU," Ginger says. "I hope hearing my story may deter someone else that is feeling hopeless like I did from executing a permanent solution to a temporary problem."

After graduation, Ginger is looking forward to law school.

"After MTSU, I plan to attend law school at University of Tennessee," Ginger says cheerfully. "I want to fight for a more restorative justice. I want to do victim offender mediation."

She is also attempting to get her manuscript, "Am I Crazy? Please Write Back!" published. The manuscript details her battle with mental illness.

Political briefs



Huckabee overstays his welcome at 'SNL'

NEW YORK (AP) - Even though Mike Huckabee is still battling for the Republican presidential nomination despite long odds, he said Saturday he won't "overstay his welcome."

Then he did precisely that, lingering on the "Weekend Update" set of "Saturday Night Live" despite repeated cues to leave the stage.

The former Arkansas governor appeared in a "Weekend Update" segment in which he described his confusion over whether it is mathematically impossible for him to win the nomination over front-runner John McCain. After anchorman Seth Meyers explained the numbers, Huckabee responded: "I'm not a math guy, I'm more of a miracle guy. So at this point I'm gonna focus on the miracle part."

However, he said: "Mike Huckabee does not overstay his welcome. When it's time for me to go, I'll know. And I'll exit out with class and grace."

Ralph Nader will run for presidency

WASHINGTON (AP) - Ralph Nader on Sunday announced a fresh bid for the White House, criticizing the top contenders as too close to big business and dismissing the possibility that his third-party candidacy could tip the election to Republicans.

The longtime consumer advocate is still loathed by many Democrats who accuse him of costing Al Gore the 2000 election.

Nader said most people are disenchanted with the Democratic and Republican parties due to a prolonged Iraq war and a shaky economy. He also blamed tax and other corporate-friendly policies under the Bush administration that he said have left many lower- and middle-class people in debt.

"You take that framework of people feeling locked out, shut out, marginalized, disrespected," he said. "You go from Iraq, to Palestine/Israel, from Enron to Wall Street, from Katrina to the bungling of the Bush administration, to the complicity of the Democrats in not stopping him on the war, stopping him on the tax cuts."

Nader, who turns 74 later this week, announced his candidacy on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Lobbyist story may damage McCain

WASHINGTON (AP) - John McCain sought to minimize damage to his man-of-character image and his presidential hopes Thursday, vigorously denying and denouncing a newspaper report suggesting an improper relationship with a female lobbyist.

"It's not true," the likely Republican nominee said of the report that implied a romantic link with telecommunications lobbyist Vicki Iseman and suggested McCain pushed legislation that would have benefited her clients.

"At no time have I ever done anything that would betray the public trust," said McCain, a four-term Arizona senator and a hero of the Vietnam War. He described the lobbyist as a friend.

McCain and his wife, standing together at a news conference, said they were disappointed that *The New York Times* ran its page one article, and his campaign referred to a "smear campaign" and "gutter politics" in the midst of the presidential race.

The allegations in the Thursday report in the Times — and a story in *The Washington Post* — contradict core themes of McCain's campaign — that he would bring honor and integrity to the White House as well as a record of changing business-as-usual Washington ways.

Even the suggestion of marital impropriety — though rejected by both McCain and his wife — would seem to risk further damaging his acrimonious relationship with the social conservatives whose support he desperately needs in the general election campaign against a fired-up Democratic Party.

The ins and outs of animal rescue

Murfreesboro has organizations for the growing problem, but MTSU does not

By Dawn Johnson
Contributing Writer

Among all the different organizations at MTSU, there are none dedicated to animal rescue. Some students said they would like to have an organization like this and would consider joining or helping out with such an organization.

Many people love pets and would, perhaps, be willing to volunteer for an organization like this. Some students say it would be easier if this could be more accessible for them.

"I think we should [have an animal rescue organization on campus] because I know a lot of people that love animals and would definitely get involved," says Morgan White, a senior studying sociology. Students might volunteer if an organization was on campus for them and notified students of any ongoing events.

"Rescuing an animal is only half the battle though," says Joseph Trukovich, a senior liberal studies major. "If you are talking about wild animals, then I think it would be a great idea. To help recover, heal and release animals that have been wounded. [With] domesticated cats and dogs running amok, you have larger issues at hand. Finding homes for pets is difficult.

"There are students out there, I'm sure, that would love to help. It is just a matter of laying out the framework for the organization, creating the objective, and making a mission statement."

Rock 'N Acres Animal Rescue, located in La Vergne, is a no-kill, private-run rescue program.

Founded in 2002, it takes in animals that need a home and help. When space is available, it will

take just about any kind of animal, including birds, reptiles, dogs, cats, livestock, horses, farm animals, fowl and rodents.

RNA focuses on saving dogs, cats and other animals that may be euthanized in county pounds or abused and neglected, and those that are running scared in the middle of nowhere.

RNA also take in several "owner surrenders," which is an alternative to placing a pet in a pound.

RNA always need foster homes for their pets. All veterinary expenses are paid, all citizens need to provide is food, water and love. (For more information, visit their Web site at rnapetrescue.com or call 615-406-1793.)

There are many similar organizations in Murfreesboro, but none associated with MTSU.

"I don't know if an organization is needed, but it would be good for an organization already on campus to maybe host an event like this," says Nathan Wallach, a senior video production major. "There are so many organizations out there already for animal rescue; I think that it would be good if someone just asked them to come on campus and host an event. A fraternity or sorority would be good for this, but not just a one time thing, maybe once a month could help collect animals or host an animal drop-off for unwanted pets."

Spaying and neutering your pets, most shelters would agree, is very necessary. Animal shelters have pets coming in daily, this helps to discour-

age mating and the over-crowding of shelters.

Spaying and neutering also helps your pet live longer and healthier. According to the American Humane Association, spaying eliminates the constant crying and nervous pacing that is a sign that a cat is in heat.

"There are students out there, I'm sure, that would love to help. It is just a matter of laying out the framework for the organization, creating the objective, and making a mission statement."

-Joseph Trukovich

Castration stops the mating drive in males, reducing the urge to roam, which, in turn, reduces the risk of fights, injury, poisoning, accidents and contracting diseases. If you have more than one pet in your household, all the pets will get along better if they are neutered.

Even if you do not own a pet, all of us are effected by animal overpopulation. Tax dollars are spent to round up lost, abandoned and unwanted pets. And when homes cannot be found, tax dollars may be spent to euthanize these animals.

Health issues such as transmittable diseases-including rabies, animal bites, and attacks-are other problems non-pet owners may face. Animal waste and property damage are among some

problems people may experience.

According to Tennessee law, if the dog or cat being adopted has not been spayed or neutered, the agency "shall require a deposit of not less than \$25 from the new owner prior to the adoption in order to ensure that the dog or cat is spayed or neutered." Usually these shelters will require more money to go towards shots and other necessities.

Animal cruelty and neglect is another reason so many animals end up in shelters. According to RNA, the definitions of cruelty and neglect encompass a range of behaviors harmful to animals, from neglect to malicious killing. It can range from simple neglect to outright physical violence against an animal.

Animal neglect is the failure to provide an animal with the most basic of requirements of food, water, shelter and veterinary care.

According to AHA, the Tennessee penalty for animal cruelty is considered a "misdemeanor, with a maximum 11 months and 29 days confinement and/or maximum \$2,500 fine. The offender also must surrender the animal or all animals. Also, the court may prohibit custody and ownership of animals for a reasonable time."

So, you want to be a writer?
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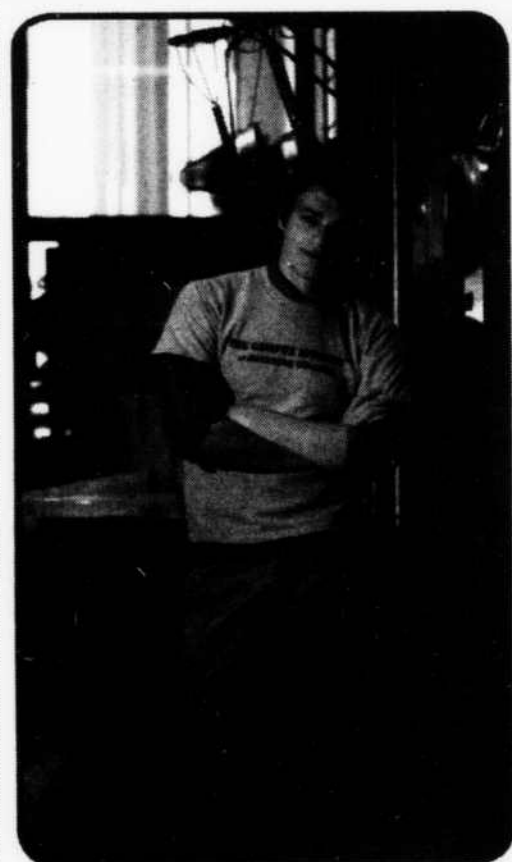
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OPINIONS

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.

From the Editor:

Congratulations to Sidelines for recognition at journalism conference

In lieu of an editorial board, I decided to write a short piece completely and shamelessly promoting our newspaper.

This past weekend, three editors, our advisor and I attended the Southeast Journalism Conference in Oxford, Miss.

Despite the ill-conceived notions of a "Deliverance" themed town, the trip was quite nice, the food amazing and the best part, Sidelines won four awards.

Three of the four categories were in the "Best of South" competition. Sidelines placed for editorial writing, graphic design and feature writing. The second category was the on-site competition, in which we placed for news writing.

Congratulations to the incredibly hardworking staff of the paper. For the long hours, lack of sleep and true dedication to the betterment of your craft, none deserve these honors more than my devoted staff.

I especially want to congratulate Steven Chappell, our advisor. With the 2009 SEJC being held at Belmont University, Steven was elected to be the vice president for the conference.

While at the conference, we had a chance to meet some of our neighborhood friends from Belmont, Tennessee Tech University and University of Memphis. Even Union University was present, despite the devastating tornado damage suffered by their campus.

The most interesting tornado meeting our peers was finding out that we share the same problems with the love we call college journalism.

It seems that a few dedicated students are the ones to carry the student newspaper and we decided that it isn't fair. It isn't fair to ask a few students to carry the burden of thousands.

We also thought of ideas to get students involved. Instead of ripping a copy of the newspaper to shreds in a mass media class, then throwing away the critique while walking out the door, come and drop off the critique to Sidelines.

If we don't know what's wrong, we can't fix it. And while we spend a good 10 plus hours every Wednesday and Sunday in the office in addition to countless hours outside production, we cannot always catch everything.

But despite the errors that unfortunately creep into the paper, we try. And our effort paid off this weekend. Congratulations Sidelines and your staff for all your accomplishments.

Faces in the Crowd

Student government elections are on PipelineMT from Tuesday to Thursday. What do you think?



Joubay

"I think it's a good idea for student life around campus. It shows students what is going on."

-Yuan Joubay, freshman undeclared



Adams

"I don't really have an opinion, but I know Matt Hurtt, so I am going to vote for him."

-Drew Adams, senior English



Singh

"I would recommend that the people know more about the elections. We do not know much about the candidates. They have pictures all around, but I don't know their backgrounds. What are their commitments to the students?"

-Prashant Singh, graduate MSPS biotech



Harness

"I don't really have an opinion on it. I see all these signs and quotes like 'I'm fighting for you!' What are they fighting for? I don't know the issues."

-Nick Harness, sophomore political science



"And Friends"

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John Kroes

Orwell valued clear writing

Convoluted writing may obscure weak ideas but it hampers democracy, doesn't even make you sound that much smarter

I have held the English language at gun-point many a time. I have made it do terrible things that it would regret and be ashamed to talk about later.

I have also been reamed by professors, friends, family, co-workers and random crazies for it.

This has made me a better writer.

Everyone is guilty of this crime to some degree, but I have a bone to pick with those who use the beaten corpse of the English language to spout political prose out of every possible orifice – the stench is an indicator if you need specifics.

It's easy to say or write whatever you please and I'll be the first to admit from experience that the English language is an easy hostage to exploit.

[Cue transition into the actual point of this column.]

People are getting up on their Christ-philosophy pedestals and enfilthing political philosophy wherever they go with all the wrong words.

Trust me, that is very hard to get out of furniture.

The worst part about it is that they use the English language as a vessel for dubious purposes and make it do things that it never should.

I see them playing it fast and loose with loaded terms about politics. It's getting tiresome – it's so laden with the mangled remains of what used to be the English language in an attempt to sound more educated.

This always has the opposite effect and makes an otherwise smart individual sound like a chimp with a thesaurus.

Terms and phrases like "Orwellian," "monger," "toe the line," etc. are becoming common place in situations where much simpler wording would "do the trick."

Before anyone starts getting too wild with the term "Orwellian," they should first take a look at a little piece Orwell wrote other than "1984" and "Animal Farm." It's called "Politics and the English Language."

Please, do a favor for yourself and everyone you talk to about politics. Go read this.

If you have already read this, please – go read it again and this time, turn off "Futurama."

The gist is that people should use discretion with their word choices concerning politics because the language is like spicy food – too much is never a good thing; a couple hours later, you don't know what's going to come out.



A rough trick named Jim

By Christin Pepple

Staff Columnist

Besides that, Orwell also mentioned that we let clichéd phrases and preset word patterns dictate how we speak and that the longer we let the same words control our speech, the more we are influenced by them instead of by original thought.

In "Politics and the English Language," Orwell said, "A man may take to drink because he feels himself to be a failure and then fail all the more completely because he drinks. It is rather the same thing that is happening to the English language. It becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts."

He also said, "If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought."

Sooner or later, we get out of college and we aren't allowed to say whatever comes to our minds. Suddenly it matters and we no longer have the beautiful excuse of youth or lack of education to cloud our judgment.

In his work, Orwell also said, "This mixture of vagueness and sheer incompetence is the most marked characteristic of modern English prose, and especially of any kind of political writing. Prose consists less and less of words chosen for the sake of their meaning and more and more of phrases tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated greenhouse."

Orwell suggested that any "scrupulous writer" must ask themselves at least four questions before they begin to write and then two after said writing is done.

1. What am I trying to say?
2. What words will express it?
3. What image or idiom will make it clearer?
4. Is this image fresh enough to have an effect?

5. Could I put it more shortly?

6. Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly?

George Eliot said, "Blessed is the man, who having nothing to say, abstains from giving wordy evidence to the fact."

That is one of the reasons that I rarely write opinions columns, and rarely discuss politics with innocent bystanders on this campus just trying to get to their Spanish midterm.

I put full stock in what Frank Lloyd Wright said: "I'm all in favor of the hands of dangerous weapons out of the hands of fools. Let's start with typewriters."

Everyone should know what they are saying before they say it and choose their words carefully. It makes me ashamed to have to even say that in a college forum, but there comes a point when you have to know when to stop talking, save a little face, maybe look somewhat uneducated, but abstain from giving wordy evidence that you are ignorant and that your taxpayer-funded education was a waste.

Orwell would be both horrified and flattered if he stepped on to a modern-day college campus, but I think mostly appalled; Kierkegaard once said, "People demand freedom of speech to make up for the freedom of thought which they avoid."

It's time to start thinking a tad more and backing off the speech bit until said thinking is done.

Orwell said, "One cannot change this all in a moment, but one can at least change one's own habits, and from time to time one can even, if one jeers loudly enough, send some worn-out and useless phrase—some jackboot, Achilles' heel, hotbed, melting pot, acid test, veritable inferno, or other lumps of verbal refuse—into the dustbin where it belongs."

I know that I am wrong when I, pardon my English, attempt to wax poetic with all the wrong words.

I have so many charges of kidnapping and forcible coercion that I could be on a top 10 most-wanted list somewhere; therefore, I really don't have much room to cast any stones.

But Orwell does have the room, and if you take a minute and read "Politics and the English Language," you'll see that the rock fight has already started without you.

Christin Pepple is a sophomore journalism major and can be reached at slnews@mtsu.edu.

SIDELINES

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Who do you support?

Student Government Association Elections 2008



By Steven Altum
Guest Columnist

SGA should be open to all students of MTSU. This seems to be a popular sentiment when SGA elections come around. However, I do not feel that SGA is open to all students.

Over the last year the executive stipend has been cut. This is how much the executives get off on their tuition and the wage that they are paid for working through the semester.

This may seem to be a positive move on the surface, but when you examine it you will find that it is, in fact, limiting the number of students that can hold office in SGA. Being an executive officer is a full-time job and the pay is very little, so many students at MTSU cannot afford to be an executive. Most of the students depend on the money they make at their jobs to pay for rent, food, and other needs.

One of my main goals if elected to be president of SGA is to raise the executive stipend and make SGA more open to all students at MTSU. It is clear that many of the students that attend school here are here on financial aid and work part-time jobs. It is not fair that they should be punished for, not just the few.



By Lyn Wilhoite
Guest Columnist

There is a finally a person who will take the title of SGA President seriously.

Matthew Hurtt is one of the most dedicated human beings that I've ever come into contact with. He is not running for a specific group on campus; he wants to better every current and future student's experience at MTSU.

His plans are realistic. Hurtt's battle for adequate funding, greater student involvement, and more marketable degrees is one that deep down every student wishes to wage on his or her own.

These are issues that everyone notices, but only one person will truly put forth the effort and time.

Hurtt is one of the only candidates that I can recall setting up a Web site, www.matthewhurtt.com, solely for the purpose of an SGA Election.

He has what it requires to overcome the struggles that come with these issues.



By Gretchen Jenkins and Paul Fulcher
Guest Columnists

Sandra Wilson is a unique, charismatic student, one that is few and far between. Not only is she the most qualified student leader at MTSU, but perhaps the most qualified student leader in the state of Tennessee.

Having served in the past as Student Body President at Columbia State University, the Student Regent to the Tennessee Board of Regents and as the Student Commissioner to the Higher Education Commission, it is easy to see that her record of leadership is not lacking.

She originally piloted and successfully fought for the funding of a new science building through TBR. Sandra served as one of eight elite members on the U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings's policy for retaining and regaining college students and helped to pass MTSU's student-wide initiative for clean energy in 2006.

Sandra has established a tremendous rapport with campus administration and is widely known and respected throughout the state. An active participant in numerous campus organizations, a proven voice within the SGA and an active supporter for academic and campus policy, it is without hesitation that we give Sandra Wilson our highest recommendation for the office.

Smoking ban unjust, unfair to younger people

Governor Bredeesen slighted working Tennesseans by restricting our right to light up in public



Pravda
By Michael Cannon
Staff Columnist

On Oct. 1, 2007, a dark cloud descended upon the homely town of Murfreesboro, replacing the gray cloud of cigarette smoke that was there before.

We all knew that this day was coming. Although we tried to relegate its existence to some far off future, on that somber fall day we all reckoned with fate as an old man reluctantly resigns himself to the inevitability of death.

This infamous day marked the end of an era: citizens were now prohibited from smoking in all enclosed public places within the State of Tennessee with a few exceptions including private homes, private residences and private motor vehicles unless used for child care or day care, and non-enclosed areas of public places.

With this stunning jargon blitz, the Tennessee state government dragged us one step closer to totalitarianism. We all awoke that day to find that our glorious homeland had undergone a frightful social transformation. The blood-curdling screams emanating from dorm rooms and surrounding restaurants were seared upon our collective memory forever.

The sole vanguard of Southern hospitality and the embodiment of man's aspirations for freedom, Tennessee, had fallen to the dark armies of extremely bored, fundamentalist legislators. These villainous mercenaries have exacted much sadistic pleasure from depriving the Tennessee masses of their inalienable right to self-inflicted health problems.

This act of legislative terrorism was the culmination of a concerted campaign against civil rights and poor people. We were first alerted to the threat during the late '90s and early 2000s, when a wave of smoking bans swept the globe.

However, just as Americans felt safe from the Nazi war machine that enveloped Europe 70 years ago, we too thought we were safe in the South, where we possess a proud tradition of vice, from moonshine to fried foods. This false sense of security gradually withered away however, and was decisively shattered in year of last year, with the advent of a 62-cent cigarette tax increase.

This event awoke us to the imminent threat to our civil rights, just as the attacks on Pearl Harbor opened our ancestors' eyes to the menace of fascism. When drafting this Draconian decree, lawmakers were certainly aware that poorer people have much higher rates of smoking than those well above the poverty line. As such, this bill should be viewed as a brazen assault on our state's poor and destitute.

This tax essentially forces many poor folks to choose between satisfying a nicotine addiction or eating lunch that day. Smoking is not like biting your nails. Addiction is a disease and you cannot just instantaneously end the habit. These foul villains are aware of this fact and use it to their advantage.

The revenue from these taxes is being used to fuel Lord Bredeesen's nefarious plot to make a more hilarious joke out of our state's public

school system. Rather than taxing people who work for living and suffer from a disease, perhaps we should look into levying fees on such oceans of untapped tax revenue such as Brentwood and Belle Meade.

This is unlikely, however, as the aforementioned lawmen tend to cohabitate in these dark lands to the west. Therefore, it is quite logical to conclude that the government's anti-smoking campaign is merely a microcosm of a larger war against working, freedom-loving southern folk carried out by a state government dominated by wealthy white men who have no real sense of what an average person's life is like. This enables them to extort us without conscience.

Despite the glaring injustice of this action, we grudgingly accepted it. We thought the worst was over, but we could not have been more wrong. Only five months later, the blanket ban on smoking would force fear into the hearts of millions of peaceful Tennesseans.

As citizens are now aware, we can no longer smoke in most public places, including restaurants. These past months, we have all had to deal with the severe psychological stress and separation anxiety that has resulted from losing the right to smoke in Waffle House. Sunday morning hangovers will never again be the same.

This law outlines some truly oppressive restrictions. However, one of the few exceptions to smoking in public buildings is bars and venues. There is a catch though. The bar must become 21 and up only. This aspect of the bill is particularly unsettling for me, as teenagers such as myself now find it much harder to enjoy Murfreesboro's thriving music scene.

Furthermore, once you think about this section of the law for two seconds, the complete stupidity of our "representatives" becomes hilariously clear. Okay, so I am 19 and can legally

go buy cigarettes and chain smoke in an enclosed space all day if I so desire. However, I am not allowed to go to a venue where people are smoking in a large room. Through some goofy reasoning, exposure to second smoke from 21-plus people in a bar endangers my health so much more that it necessitates a law. To put it plainly, this makes no sense whatsoever.

Then again, I am kind of a small guy and if some older bar-goer smokes more tobacco than he can handle, he might attack me in a fit of nicotine-induced rage...

This ban on public smoking is also a blatant falsification of historical facts. There is a universal consensus amongst scholars that 20th century French philosophy would have never developed without smoke-filled Paris cafes serving as the breeding ground for movements such as existentialism. So next time you pick up your favorite Albert Camus novel, remember that it would not exist without smoking.

These lines are essentially a call to action for all freedom-loving southerners to band together and defeat the great menace that is corrupting our progressive and advanced society. Phil Bredeesen, together with his cohorts, should be removed from office and tried for their crimes against the people.

The only punishment appropriate for this treacherous act is to tar and feather them with nicotine patches on the steps of the capitol building. Only then will justice, democracy and freedom be reborn in our state. The struggle of the smoker is the struggle of humankind and we must preserve to the bitter, cancerous end.

Michael Cannon is a sophomore sociology and philosophy major and can be reached at mrc3g@mtsu.edu.

Sudoku puzzle and solution

	8						7	
	9	7	3		6	5	2	
5		4				6		8
			8	7	5			
				3				
			6	9	1			
8		2				4		3
	5	3	4		8	7	6	
	6						9	

HEY MILKY, WHAT'S GOIN' ON - HUH?!!

OH MY GOSH! WHO DID THIS?!!

I CAN'T BELIEVE MILKY'S GONE!!

RELAX...

NO USE CRYING OVER SPILT MILK.

"Lunchtime"

patrickthebeaver@yahoo.com

Martin Fox

Think you have something to say?

Complain to me, baby.

slopinio@mtsu.edu. Mass Comm 269.

SPORTS

Senior Day at the Murphy Center
WBB vs. Troy Saturday 3 p.m. WMOT 89.5 FM
MBB vs. Troy Saturday 7 p.m. WGNS 1450-AM



Tournament Preview



The Mitchell Center in Mobile, Ala. will serve as the tournament site for SBC tournament games starting with the second round.

March Madness is just around the corner and the Sun Belt Conference is ready to have their annual conference tournament. Although the conference teams don't finish the season until this weekend, we decided to reveal our preview ahead of schedule. The big stories in the tournament are felt on a national standpoint.

On the women's side, Middle Ten-

nessee is currently involved in a season full of departures and surprising losses. Through it all, they were able to defeat Western Kentucky and then-eighth ranked Louisiana State University in front of the Murphy Center crowd. Western Kentucky has encountered a season to remember and seem to be on a collision course of a conference tournament title. Crystal Kelly

broke the conference record for points scored in a career and she will have her jersey retired later this week.

The West division race is incredibly cloudy, with Arkansas-Little Rock in first place at the moment. This weekend will determine who will gain a bye into the quarterfinals of the tournament.

History has been made in SBC men's

basketball. New Orleans' senior guard Bo McCalebb has set numerous scoring records. This season, McCalebb, the conference preseason player of the year, became the SBC's career leading scorer.

There is a legitimate possibility that two teams, South Alabama and WKU, could receive at large bids for the NCAA tournament. Each has won

more than 20 games and both are currently 14-2 in conference play.

In the West Division, as of Sunday, there is a three-way tie for first place between Louisiana-Lafayette, UALR and North Texas. The team that wins the division will receive a first round bye while the other two teams will have to play first round games.

Men's Tournament

By Chris Martin

Assistant Sports Editor

Top 3 seeds

1. South Alabama (East Division 22-5, 14-2 SBC)
2. UALR (West Division 17-10, 9-7)
3. Western Kentucky (East Division 22-6, 14-2)
4. Middle Tennessee (East Division 13-14, 10-7)

Prediction for the tournament

1. Middle Tennessee – It's hard to bet against the Blue Raiders after they have won four conference titles in a row, even if they are second in the conference behind Western Kentucky. It's even harder to bet against Amber Holt, who seems to be able to take over a game at any moment. The major concern for this team would be if they could stay focused on each game instead of impending matchups down the road.

Dark Horse: Western Kentucky – On the front cover of the Lady Toppers' media guide is the phrase "The Time is Now." So far, WKU has proven this point by ending MT's conference-winning streak and having the best record in the Sun Belt. They have been tabbed numerous times to win the conference tournament. This year may be their best chance.

Players to Watch

Tyrone Brazelton (WKU)

Courtney Lee gets all the love in Western Kentucky, but Brazelton is the glue guy for the Hilltoppers. Lee is an amazing scorer, but one man does not make a basketball team. Brazelton has quietly put up a great season. He is 15th in the SBC in scoring average (13.3) and third in assists per game (3.96). To have a chance at taking home the tournament trophy, WKU is going to need big performances out of Lee and Brazelton.

Carlos Monroe (FAU)

Florida Atlantic is probably not on anyone's short list of potential tournament winners, but they do have the best big man in the SBC. Monroe gets buried in the Sun Belt headlines by the likes of Courtney Lee, Bo McCalebb and Demetric Bennett, but Monroe probably means more to his team than any other player in the conference. He is sixth in the conference in scoring (15.6) and first in rebounding (9.0). FAU may not win a game in the SBC tourney, but Monroe should put up gaudy numbers.

Josh White (North Texas)

It seems fitting to pick a darkhorse player from one of the darkhorse teams. North Texas is one of two SBC teams that hold a win over South Alabama. White is the leading candidate for conference freshman of the year. He's the Mean Green's leading scorer with a 14 point average and is also the SBC's leading 3-point shooter with a 45.8 percentage. The guard-heavy Mean Green will rely on White to knock down jumpers in order to advance.

Coach of the Year (Regular Season)

Ronnie Arrow, South Alabama

Arrow's first year at the helm has been a huge success. South Alabama is currently on top of the SBC standings and is poised to take the No. 1 seed in the tournament. Although Arrow stepped into a favorable situation after former coach John Pelphrey's departure to Arkansas, his coaching ability has really shone this season. Having seniors Demetric Bennett and Daon Merrit is definitely nice, but a season sweep of Western Kentucky is an amazing display of coaching ability.

Women's Tournament

By Richard Lowe

Sports Editor

Top 3 seeds:

1. Western Kentucky (East Division 21-7, 14-2 SBC)
2. UALR (West Division 20-7, 12-4 SBC)
3. Middle Tennessee (Next best record 18-10, 13-4 SBC)

Prediction for the tournament

One of the excitements of March is the unpredictability of the conference tournaments. Seeing a mediocre team make a run through the conference tournament and earn a bid in the big dance is what makes March Madness so appealing.

With that said, the SBC tournament is not going to have a Cinderella team sneak into the big dance. South Alabama's path is just too favorable. Regardless of what happens the rest of the season, the Jaguars are guaranteed a first round bye, so all their games will be played on their home court. USA's only two conference losses have come on the road, and since every game they play in the tournament will be a home game, it is just too difficult to pick against USA.

Players to Watch

Amber Holt (MT)

If you are sitting on this campus and have never heard the name of Amber Holt, you really live a sheltered life. Since the moment she arrived on campus last year, Holt has grown into a fan favorite. Her accomplishments speak for themselves: Leading scorer in the nation, all-time single game points holder, and five-time player of the week. Is a conference player of the year award in her future?

Crystal Kelly (WKU)

As much as Middle Tennessee fans want to throw in her face that she has never beaten the Blue Raiders in the Murphy Center and she has never won a conference tournament title, Kelly has her share of accomplishments. She is the all-time leading scorer in Sun Belt Conference history. If she can lead her team to a tournament title, her legacy will be cemented.

Nikya Hughes (UALR)

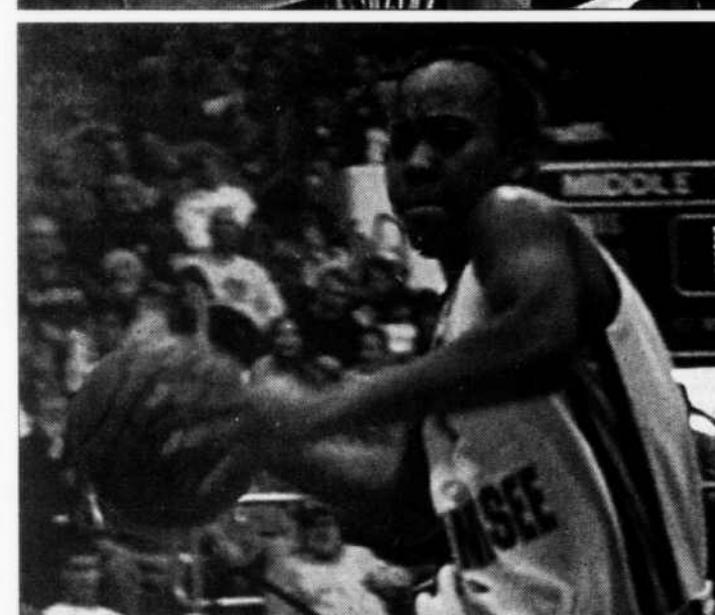
The west division race is so cloudy that it is hard to pick one person out as the "star." Even though she leads no categories in the conference, the junior has helped her squad gain the first place position in the west. LaQuetta Ferguson would have easily been in this position but an injury has her sitting out of the tournament this season.

Coach of the Year (Regular Season)

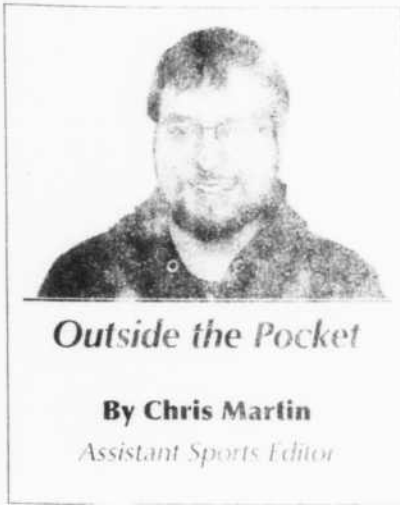
Mary Taylor Cowles (WKU)

This was hard to choose because no one coach stood out over the others. Cowles would win by default because she has the conference's best record. The problem I have with that is the fact that WKU has no significant out of conference wins. Even though MT has the strongest out of conference win (vs. then-#8 LSU), their conference losses prevent Insell from winning the award.

Dark Horse: This might be the year that Joe Foley from UALR, Cindy Russo from FIU, or Brian Boyer from ASU could get their hands on the award.



Don't be surprised if MT surprises



Outside the Pocket

By Chris Martin

Assistant Sports Editor

For spectators, college basketball's blessing has also turned out to be its curse—the NCAA tournament.

Many fans don't watch a basketball game until early March, when the conference tournaments begin, and some

don't tune in until the big dance starts. As with the NBA, the end-of-the-season tournaments make the regular season almost pointless.

However, for Middle Tennessee, the insignificance of the regular season is surely a blessing.

The Blue Raiders had a rough start to the season. In November and December, they got off to a 4-8 start that included a loss to San Jose State (12-14) and a 109-40 embarrassment at No. 2 (soon to be No. 1) Tennessee. To make matters worse, three of the four wins came against Florida International (9-17), Lipscomb (11-15) and NIAA opponent Tennessee Wesleyan (who isn't even a good NIAA team as its 10-18 record would indicate).

Looks can be deceiving, though. According to kenpom.com, MT played the 46th most difficult nonconference schedule in the nation. To compare,

Texas played the 47th hardest out-of-conference slate with opponents such as Tennessee, UCLA, Michigan State, Wisconsin and St. Mary's.

It's not surprising MT's nonconference docket is ranked so high, just look at the teams the Blue Raiders played—Tennessee (25-2), Memphis (26-1), Houston (20-6) and Belmont (20-8). In fact, of MT's 10 non-Sun Belt Conference opponents, seven have winning records.

To make matters worse for the Blue Raiders, junior guard Calvin O'Neil, a starter, was lost for the season due to injury after playing only one game.

Since trudging through an arduous stretch of early season contests, MT is 9-6. That shows this young team—there are no seniors on the roster—is just now beginning to peak and its best basketball has yet to be played.

Consider this: of the 13 teams in the

SBC, MT has the third-best conference record, trailing only South Alabama and Western Kentucky—both of which could receive at-large bids to the NCAA tournament if neither wins the SBC tournament. The Blue Raiders boast a 10-7 conference record despite being 13-14 overall. Taking into account the fact they played all of their nonconference schedule at the beginning of the season (their last non-SBC game was a 78-75 loss to Austin Peay on Dec. 29), that surely would indicate improvement.

Despite having the third best conference record, MT is tied for only the sixth best overall record in the SBC. That would further suggest that this team is going to be underrated come tourney time.

Given the fact MT has beaten South Alabama and nearly knocked off WKU, the Blue Raiders are going to be

a force to be reckoned with in the SBC tournament. One big caveat for the Blue Raiders is the location of the SBC tournament—Mobile, Ala. South Alabama has lost on its home court just once this season. However, while the path to the SBC title won't be easy, it is definitely a goal that can be achieved.

That's one of the beauties of college basketball. A team with the third-best conference record and sixth-best overall record can string together a four-game winning streak and be dancing in the tournament.

They don't call it March Madness for nothing.

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

Tiger rules the world again, winning Match Play for fifth straight win

By Doug Ferguson

AP Golf Writer

Not even the most unpredictable tournament in golf could keep Tiger Woods from an inevitable victory.

There seems to be no stopping him.

Stewart Cink barely put up a fight Sunday in the Accenture Match Play Championship, where Woods broke a scoring record for the fourth straight tournament, collected his fifth straight victory worldwide and didn't so much as crack a smile when someone asked him if a perfect season was within reach.

"That's my intent," he said. "That's why you play. If you don't believe you can win an event, don't show up."

Relentless as ever, Woods made 14 birdies in 79 holes in the high desert of Dove Mountain to overwhelm Stewart Cink for an 8-and-7 victory, the largest margin in the final match in the 10-year history of his fickle event.

Woods captured his 15th World Golf Championship, holding all three world title for the first time.

And his 63rd career victory moved him past

Arnold Palmer and into fourth place alone on the PGA Tour's career list. His next victory will tie him with Ben Hogan.

Golf is not a fair fight at the moment.

"I think maybe we ought to slice him open to see what's inside," Cink said. "Maybe nuts and bolts."

Cink was only the latest victim in a winning streak that dates to Sept. 3, 2007, a date worth remembering.

Woods won the BMW Championship the following week at 262, breaking the tournament scoring record in five years. He won the Tour Championship by a record eight shots, and the Buick Invitational by the same margin, another tournament record.

This is the third time Woods has won at least four straight PGA Tour events. He also won in Dubai three weeks ago on the European tour by coming back from a four-shot deficit.

He has won six of his last seven PGA Tour events, 16 of his last 30 over the last two years.

The confidence in his game is so high that Woods started this season by saying the Grand Slam was "easily within reason." For now, he has a Triple Crown of the World Golf Championships, a sweep that included an eight-shot victory

in the Bridgestone Invitational at Firestone and a two-shot victory in the CJ Championship at Doral.

Woods' four winning streak was at seven last year when Nick O'Hern beat him in the third round of the Match Play. Given the fickle nature of this format, even Woods said it was the toughest tournament to win this side of a major.

Turns out the hard part was just getting to the final match.

Woods rallied from three down with five holes to play in the opening round against L.B. Holmes by winning four straight holes with three birdies and a 48-foot eagle. He twice watched Aaron Baddeley putt from inside 12 feet to win a third-round match, beating the Australian in 20 holes. And he was stretched in 18 holes in the semifinals against defending champion Henrik Stenson.

"I played 117 holes this week," Woods said. "I could have easily played 16 and then been home. That's the fickleness of match play."

But the final was no contest.

He built a 4-up lead after the morning round of 66, and Cink never got any closer.

Cink didn't win a hole until No. 12, and the only hole he won in the afternoon came at the par 5 10th when he rolled in a 36-foot eagle putt.

Woods had an eagle putt from 35 feet, and the ball spun around the cup.

"Even the minuscule amount that I upstaged him there. At him being 8 up. At I still thought he was going to make it," Cink said. "He lipped it out, and I thought, 'Hey, come on. At least give me a moment to shine here.' And he said, 'Sorry, dude.'"

The next stop for Woods is the Arnold Palmer Invitational.


"Anytime you're associated with Arnold and what he's done with the game of golf, it's always a positive thing," Woods said about going 1-up in career victories over the King. "I could never have foreseen my victory total being this high, my game improvement being as much as it has been, my knowledge of the game."

Woods' record in the WGCs is simply ridiculous: This is the 10th year of this series, which was designed to bring together the best players in the world. Identifying the best? That was never a serious question.

Woods is a staggering 15-of-26 in official WGC events, three of those in the Match Play Championship. Darren Clarke (Match Play, Bridgestone) is the only other player with multiple WGC victories.

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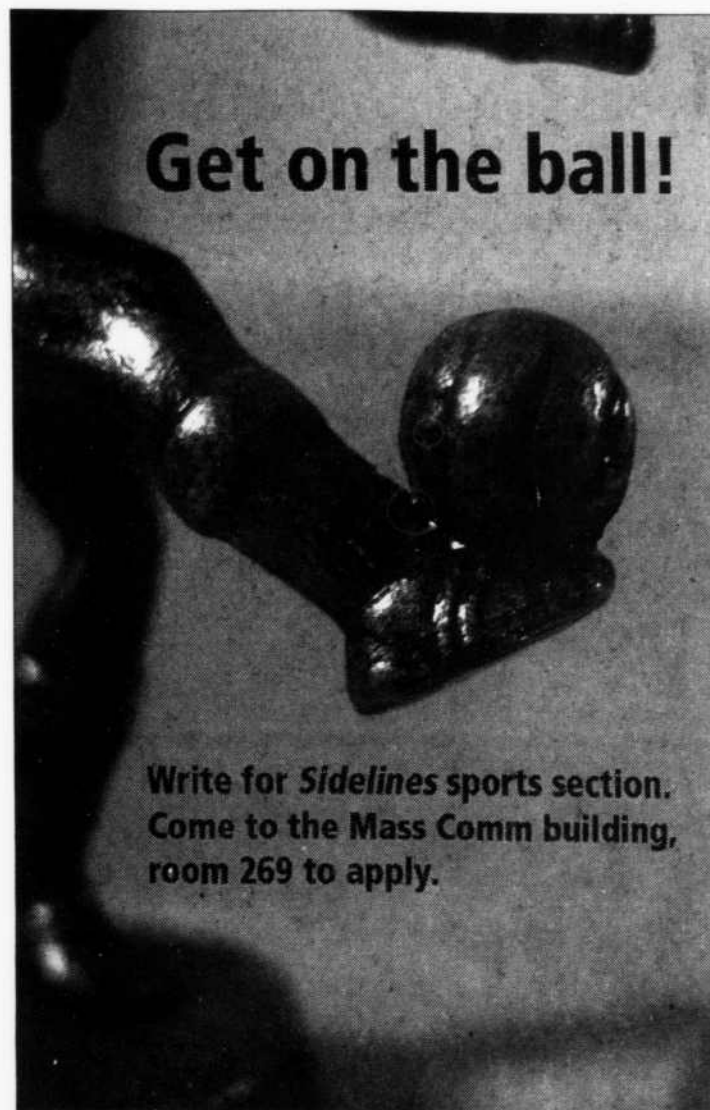
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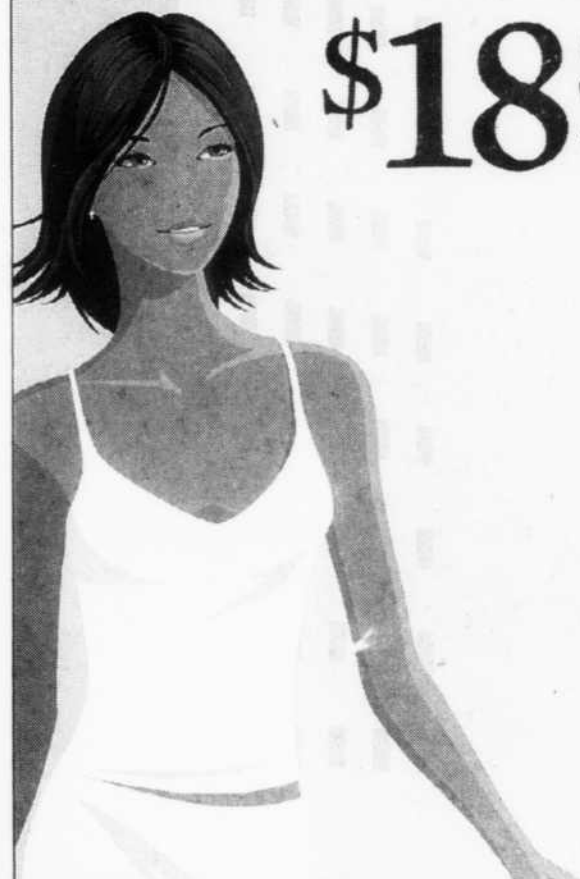
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