

SIDELINES

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Editorially Independent ~ Thursday, Oct. 4, 2007

SGA votes on gun resolution

By Andy Harper
Managing Editor

The Student Government Association votes today on a resolution to have MTSU students who have gun permits to carry firearms on campus.

The resolution, called the Student Defense Resolution, asks the MTSU administration to petition the general assembly in favor of allowing faculty, students and staff of MTSU that have firearm permits to carry on campus.

Matthew Hurtt, junior political science major and senator for the College of Liberal Arts, is sponsoring the Student Defense Resolution.

"We are basically asking the administration to petition to allow students, faculty and staff, who have reached 21 and obtained a permit, to carry fire arms on campus," Hurtt said.

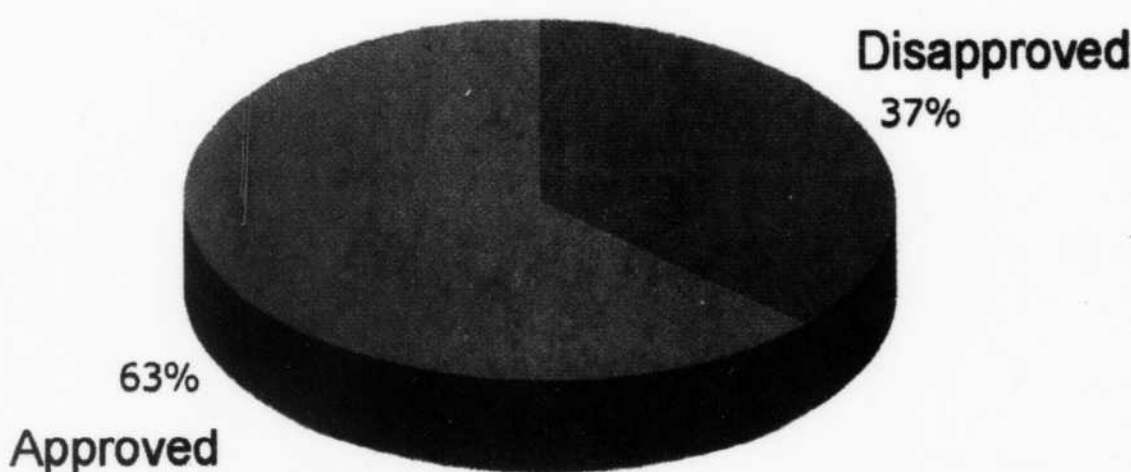
Diedra Stamper, an employee of On Target in Murfreesboro, is speaking on behalf of the resolution.

"Diedra is a state certified firearms expert," Hurtt said.

Leading the dissenting opinion on the resolution is Lemon Keith, senior journalism major and senator for the College of Mass Communication.

"I'm opposing the resolution, not because I believe it is right or wrong, but because the students I represent don't agree with it," Keith said. "The survey that Matt Hurtt

Hurtt's responses to gun resolution



The above poll was conducted by Matthew Hurtt, SGA senator for the College of Liberal Arts. The results showed 21 was the average age for those who disapproved and approved of the Student Defense Resolution. The average classification for those who disapproved is sophomore status and for those who approved is junior status. 112 students were polled in this survey, 65 approved and 47 disapproved.

Data compiled and submitted by Matthew Hurtt / Graphic by Andy Harper - Managing Editor

conducted was not inclusive enough of the student body."

The survey was done with 500 students, Hurtt said. The students were asked if they were for or against guns on the MTSU campus.

"It's a non-scientific poll and roughly 63 percent of the students were favorable for guns of campus," Hurtt said.

He said that for the first hundred students surveyed, they filled out questionnaires. "But it became too complicated, so I switched to tally

marks," he said.

Speaking against the resolution is Buddy Peaster, chief of police at MTSU.

"Chief Peaster will talk about some of the security measures MTSU is thinking about doing," Keith said. "Right now, campus is thinking about doing security cameras. The only problems are where to put them and finding people to monitor them."

Administration has not been amenable towards the resolution,

Hurtt said.

A few faculty and MTSU police officers have expressed approval, however.

"The administration says it would drastically change the college dynamics," Hurtt said. "It is hard to believe that MTSU as a whole would interfere with the working of the student government."

The SGA will meet on Oct. 4 in the Keathley University Center, room 322 at 4:30 p.m. to vote on the firearm resolution. ♦

Returning to normal UM reopens after fatal shooting

By Woody Baird
Associated Press

Students at the University of Memphis returned to class Tuesday without knowing whether the fatal campus shooting of a football player was a targeted or random attack.

University officials had said they believed the Sunday night attack was specifically aimed at Taylor Bradford. But no suspects have been identified and police later said they could not yet determine the motive for the shooting outside a university housing complex that led officials to cancel classes Monday.

"We really don't know whether it was a random act or whether or not this individual was targeted," City Police Director Larry Godwin said.

Bradford, 21, apparently was shot near his apartment complex Sunday night, then crashed a car he was driving into a tree a short distance away on campus, authorities said. They have not determined whether he was shot before or after he started driving.

Police were responding to the crash when they found Bradford slumped over in the car.

"It wasn't until the paramedics got there that they determined there was a possible gunshot wound," said Bruce Harber, director of university police. He was apparently shot once, police said, though an autopsy was pending.

University President Shirley Raines said authorities quickly determined Bradford's killer or killers were not a threat to other students but still banned all outsiders from campus housing throughout the night.

In an e-mail alert to faculty, students and staff members early Monday, the university said "the initial investigation indicates this was an act directed specifically toward the victim and was not a random act of violence."

The university, which is primarily a commuter campus and has more than 20,000 students, still decided to cancel classes Monday.

Witnesses saw two unidentified men running from the area where investigators believe the shooting occurred and other witnesses reported hearing gunfire, said Godwin, the city police director.

He said investigators

had no evidence that Bradford was involved in any illegal activity.

"Everything I've heard about him ... he was just a good kid," Godwin said.

Bradford, a 5-foot-11, 300-pound defensive lineman, was a junior who transferred to Memphis last year after two seasons at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. The Nashville resident was to play for the Tigers this season.

Monday afternoon, several football players and others tied a large red ribbon to the tree Bradford struck with his car and put up a large poster board for friends and acquaintances to leave personal notes.

"Our entire football team is deeply saddened by the loss of Taylor," Memphis head coach Tommy West said. "He was well respected and a popular member of our team."

The Memphis Tigers hosted Marshall University on Tuesday night, and a moment of silence was planned before the game.

Bradford lettered in three sports at Antioch High School in Nashville, and held school records in shot put and discus. ♦

Sobriety checkpoints come to MTSU Oct. 6

News Release

Submitted by the Office of News and Public Affairs

The Department of Public Safety at MTSU will set up field-sobriety checkpoints on or around campus in the early morning of Saturday, Oct. 6, from 12 a.m. to 2 a.m.

This will be the third such checkpoint over the last year. MTSU police are joining local and state law-enforcement agencies, at the urging of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Governor's Highway Safety Office, to help make Tennessee streets and highways safer for everyone. The goal is to reduce alcohol- and drug-related fatalities to 35 percent in 2006 from a baseline of 41 percent in the year 2000.

A grant awarded to MTSU's Public Safety department, financed with funds administered through the Tennessee Department of Transportation and the Governor's Highway Safety Office, assisted in providing the necessary personnel and time to make this effort possible.

"Our goal is to reduce the number of impaired drivers by being proactive," commented MTSU's Associate Chief Roy Brewer.

Even when the grant funds run out, Brewer said the department will continue

with the checkpoints now that it has acquired the necessary equipment and training for its officers.

"These checkpoints have prepared us, and the precedent has been set to continue," Brewster said.

According to a 2004 report from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System, a Web-based encyclopedia, Tennessee ranks 11th for overall alcohol-related fatalities on the highway.

Additionally, with MTSU's enrollment increasing 2 to 3 percent each year over the last several years, Public Safety records indicate there also has been a steady rise in the number of alcohol-related incidents and arrests on campus.

Brewster said that it takes more than enforcement measures to protect the community from drunk drivers. He said that the Department of Public Safety has many educational programs that they present to interested groups on campus such as Drunk Goggles.

"We have been fortunate that with the university's growth, we have not had a fatality crash on campus as of yet. We are aware of numerous fatality crashes off campus involving MTSU students. If being more visible on campus can save just one life, our efforts will be worth it," Brewster said. ♦

Forensic anthropologist to speak tonight in BAS

By Christin Pepple
Campus News Editor



Doug Owsley

Doug Owsley, forensic anthropologist, will speak tonight at 7 p.m. in the State Farni Lecture Hall in the Business and Aerospace Building at MTSU.

Owsley works in the National Museum of Natural History in Washington D.C. as the divisional head of physical anthropology.

His lecture is titled "Written in Bone: Forensic Files of the Seventeenth Century Chesapeake," in which he discusses work on uncovering data on the first European colonists to settle in the United States.

"I am very excited about him being here. MTSU is fortunate to have that caliber of a speaker come to campus and lecture," said Connie Huddleston, coordinator of the College of Liberal Arts.

Owsley has assisted law enforcement in examining remains in unsolved cases and has been the subject of a documentary on The Discovery Channel and on ABC's "20/20."

He has worked on cases of forensic identification such as casualties of Desert Storm, skeletal remains of a colonial and Civil War soldier and the Kennewick Man, a 10,000-year-old skeleton found near the Columbia River in Washington.

Hugh Berryman, a professor of sociology and anthropology at MTSU, became a personal friend of Owsley after attending the same graduate school.

"Doug Owsley is one of the top people in the forensics field," Berryman said. "He has done cutting-edge research and has broken a lot of ground in the legal and scientific world."

After his lecture, Dr. Owsley will be open for questions on his subject or his career in general, which is a great opportunity for students on this campus to learn more about this man and his contribution to history," Huddleston said. ♦

Faces in the Crowd

After last week's
attempted murder, do
you feel safe in
Cummings Hall?



Ellis



Longston

"There's somebody behind the desk all the time checking IDs. I have no reason not to feel safe. For me it has not made any long-lasting effects."

-Tyler Ellis, freshman business agriculture student

"I feel safe... They pay more attention to who comes into the building and check IDs. They are more strict."

-Erica Longston, freshman pre vet major



Moore



Barrett

"I feel pretty safe around here. They are taking the necessary precautions to make it safer."

-CJ Moore, freshman RIM major

"I think after the fact, I feel safer now because they are looking for things. They should have been before, but now they can see and stop certain things from happening."

-Chris Barrett, freshman RIM major

Information gathered by Johnathon Schleicher

Students talk about
Ashley Manis

See Features, 5

Editorial: Keep guns
off campus

See Opinions, 4

Blue Raiders host
first BCS opponent

See Sports, 6 & 8

LOCAL FORECAST

Thursday



HI: 89°
LO: 62°

Friday



HI: 87°
LO: 64°

Saturday



HI: 85°
LO: 67°

Sunday



HI: 86°
LO: 66°

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2007 Homecoming Candidates

Students can now cast their vote for Homecoming King and Queen online on Pipeline at mtsu.edu

Homecoming Queen



Blake Broshears:

Once 2007 Homecoming is over it becomes part of MTSU history, and I want to be part of that history.

Broshears



Lauren Simpson:

I am running for Homecoming Queen because I feel that a well-rounded individual should represent Middle Tennessee State University.

Simpson



Emily Porter:

If I were elected Queen, I would do my best to be an example of student involvement on MTSU's campus and in the community.

Porter



Megan Stacey:

I'm not the prettiest candidate or the most popular, but being Queen should be more than that. I am dedicated to this school and its students.

Stacey



Noel Roberts:

I love MTSU and all that it stands for, so to be awarded with such an honor would be surreal to me.

Roberts



Cassie Venable:

As a student who is already involved in campus activities, I would do my best as Queen to familiarize my fellow students with all that MTSU has to offer.

Venable



Megan Ryan:

If I were selected Homecoming Queen, I would work toward creating unity at Middle Tennessee.

Ryan

Freshman Senate candidates

Adam Tschida
Undeclared

Justin Hart
Theatre

Andrea Kehoe
Journalism

Kristopher Smith
Business Administration

Beverly Bibal
Marketing

Mary Crouse
Pre-medical

Brandon Batts
Undeclared

Star Custer
Chemistry

Brittini Blackwell
Chemistry

Zach Kennedy
Political Science

Joseph Heyden
Public Relations

Graduate Senate candidate

Leslie Merritt - Educational Leadership

Homecoming King



David Angel:

I am running for Homecoming King because I think it would be fun to wear that crown. That'd be tight! I'll share it with you!

Angel



Chris Williams:

As King I will continue to do what I have been doing - staying involved and striving to get others involved too.

Williams



Danny Bounds:

I am running for the position of Homecoming King to represent my fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated.

Bounds



Matthew Smith:

If elected Homecoming King, I could help students find out what they're missing!

Smith



Casey Brown:

Above all else, as cliché as it sounds, I bleed Blue more than anyone else at this university. It would be an honor to represent MTSU as Homecoming King.

Brown



Josh McKenzie:

I am running for Homecoming King because I feel that this position exemplifies an all-around positive representative of our university and I hope to fulfill that honor.

McKenzie



Brandon Butler:

I have witnessed and participated greatly in the past three years and truly know what it means to bleed blue. I would be honored to represent the MTSU student body.

Butler



Justin Lane:

It is my hope, that by being selected, I would have the opportunity to uplift and foster the most important attributes that make MTSU - our spirit, our scholastics, and our athletics. GO BLUE!

Lane



Andy Harness:

Being Homecoming King seems like a great way to show even the small-town guys can win a Homecoming competition.

Harness



Braeden Kehoe:

I'm proud to see the outcome of the hard work I've put in over my college career and I would truly be honored to be the 2007 Homecoming King.

Kehoe



Erik R. Heller:

I would do nothing to embarrass this university, and I would only help to add to the growing reputation MTSU is developing if I were elected.

Heller



Ross Johnson:

I feel that I could serve well as the 2007 Homecoming King because it is another way for me to continue my involvement by serving as the face of the campus.

Johnson



Matt Holt:

I maintain the highest expectations for MTSU and would be honored to be named Homecoming King of the university I have supported my entire life.

Holt

Classifieds

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Spring Break '2008 Sell Trips, Earn Cash, Go Free! Best Prices Guaranteed to Jamaica, Mexico, Bahamas, S. Padre and Florida. Call for group discounts. 1-800-648-4849 www.ststravel.com

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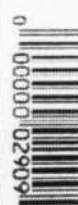
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CRIME BRIEFS

Sept. 27, 12:59 a.m.
Theft - Under \$500
Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building
Victim came to report a missing cell phone.

Sept. 28, 2:05 a.m.
Alcohol Consumption - Under 21
Baird Lane Lot
Clay Howard

Sept. 28, 8:58 a.m.
Vandalism - Under \$500
Smith Hall
Subject came to advise there was some vandalism done to room 312.

Sept. 28, 10:07 a.m.
Non-aggravated Assault
Monohan Hall
Individual called to request an officer in reference to a dispute between two coworkers. Advised that the dispute was over but still requested an officer to file a report.

Sept. 28, 10:42 a.m.
Alarm - Fire Present
Boutwell Dramatic Arts
Smoke detector - full fire alarm - went off in the second floor copy room, room 201. Terry Logan, maintenance, was notified.

Sept. 28, 12:09 p.m.
Miscellaneous
Trespass Warning
Keathley University Center Courtyard
Unknown individual called from a service phone to advise that someone was burning the Holy Bible in the KUC Courtyard. Female suspect was found to be a non-student. A trespass warning was issued to the suspect.

Sept. 29, 1:01 a.m.
Traffic - Driving on Suspended License
Nicks Hall Lot
Lashawndra Shanice Nelson

Sept. 29, 3:43 a.m.
Simple Possession of Marijuana

Old Main Circle
Demetrius L. Green

Sept. 29, 2:52 p.m.
Traffic - Hit & Run
Abernathy Hall Lot
Victim advised someone hit her parked red Mercury Cougar.

Sept. 29, 8:14 p.m.
Drunkenness - Public Intoxication
MTSU Blvd.
James R. Vietmeyer

Sept. 29, 8:14 p.m.
Drunkenness - Public Intoxication
Driving on a Suspended License
MTSU Blvd.
Ryan L. Vietmeyer

Sept. 29, 8:30 p.m.
Theft - Under \$500
Peck Hall
Victim advised that someone in a pickup truck stole his black leather couch from the tailgating area and drove off at a high rate of speed. License plate of suspect vehicle is believed to be 567 PDS.

Sept. 29, 9:25 p.m.
Theft - Under \$500
Saunders Fine Arts
Victim reported his bicycle had been stolen.

Sept. 29, 9:56 p.m.
Miscellaneous
Peck Hall
Report of an audible fire alarm coming from a Peck Hall mechanical room.

Oct. 1, 11:07 a.m.
Theft - Under \$500
James Union Building
Shawn at ID office called to report theft of money from that office.

Oct. 1, 8:29 p.m.
Theft - Motor Vehicle Parts
Greek Row
Victim advised the license plate on his vehicle was stolen on Greek Row.

Oct. 1, 11:37 p.m.
Possession of a Weapon on School Grounds
MTSU Blvd.
John Devoe Colley Jr.

Oct. 2, 9:24 a.m.
Theft - Under \$500
James Union Building
Victim called to advise that her wallet was stolen from her office.

Oct. 2, 6:05 p.m.
Theft - Under \$500
Business Aerospace Building Lot
Theft of a bicycle was reported.

Oct. 3, 8:04 a.m.
Miscellaneous
Boutwell Dramatic Arts
Individual called to advise a white female in room 101 was having seizures. Subject was transported by Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services.

CAMPUS ALERT!

On Oct. 2 at around noon, a male subject in the Jim Cummings Hall annex parking lot approached a female.

The male subject exposed himself to the female and made several sexually explicit comments to her. The subject is described as a white male in his early 20s; he was wearing a gray t-shirt, cargo shorts and a baseball cap.

Campus Police have advised students to take extra precautions:

- Use the University Escort Service (call ext. 2424)
- Do not walk alone, especially at night
- Stay away from dark, poorly-lit areas

If you have any information about this crime please call the Department of Public Safety at 898-2424, or you may call Crime Stoppers at 893-STOP.

Congress asks FDA to improve recall alerts

By Amanda Warner

Staff Writer

The U.S. Congress is working on a new bill that would require the Food and Drug Administration to find better ways to let consumers know about food issues, such as recalls, safety and contamination. Earlier this year, the FDA conducted a pilot program to better educate consumers about recalled food products, according to its Web site, www.fda.gov.

In the past month alone, there have been numerous food recalls across the country. Cheese, water for infants, raw cream and tofu were among the foods that were recalled in September.

Raw cream was the most recent recall, and had been manufactured in California. The cream was allegedly contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes*, an organism that can cause a serious and occasionally fatal disease in children, the elderly, or those with a weakened immune system, according to an FDA news release from Sept. 21.

"Food safety issues have become a priority since a number of recalls were issued over the past year because of contaminated food," Tennessee Congressman Bart Gordon stated in a news release.

The new bill Congress is working on will require the FDA to post the recalls online so that specific information, such as the product name or the date of recall, is easy to find. This will be required for both human and pet food.

The FDA finished its six-month pilot program for

recalls on Aug. 12. According to its Web site, some of the typical food risks that the FDA feels it must let consumers know about include *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, soy and fish ingredients.

The on-campus dining service, Aramark, is also concerned about the safety of the foods they use. According to Melissa Scruggs, an Aramark marketing specialist, "Aramark's top priority is to ensure that the food we serve is of the highest quality within the safest environment possible. When an alert is issued by the FDA, we immediately stop using the recalled product and do not use it again until the FDA proclaims the product is safe and consumer confidence is restored."

New information about recalls and safety hazards can be found on the FDA's Web site. There are links to press releases, recalls and alerts, drug safety and patient safety news.

There is also an option in which viewers can choose to receive multimedia news via mp3 player or cell phone by receiving a podcast. Viewers can sign up to receive e-mails when the FDA releases a new recall.

Also on the Web site is a link for recalls and product safety. By clicking on the link, viewers can see a list of recent press releases of recalls.

Another way the FDA has made identifying food recalls easier for consumers is by posting photos along with the press releases. For now, the photos are only on recalls that pose a significant risk to humans. ♦

Johnson City sex stings result in 40 male arrests

Associated Press

An undercover investigation into public sex in Johnson City parks has led to the arrest of 40 men in two weeks.

"Our parks are for family use. People should not be exposed to this while they are out there with their family or trying to enjoy the walking trails," Johnson City Police Chief John Lowry said. "They are not built nor maintained for sexual activity, be it

homosexual activity or heterosexual activity."

The investigation in the Winged Deer and Buffalo Mountain parks began after police received complaints from the public.

"Part of this took place off the paved trails. There's a thing out there (at Winged Deer Park) they've evidently termed the 'Man Cave,'" Lowry said. "It's a good way off the paved trail. It's underbrush that's grown up and

resembles a cave."

As part of the investigation, undercover officers would strike up conversations with men approaching a trail leading to the Man Cave. Some of those conversations led to proposals for sex and several men exposed themselves or groped the officers, police said.

The suspects from Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina ranged in age from 26 to 85. ♦

OPINIONS

From the Editorial Board: Keep guns off campus

The Student Government Association will hear a proposal today from Liberal Arts Senator Matthew Hurtt attempting to make it legal for students and faculty to carry guns on campus. The rationale behind this resolution is that MTSU will become safer once students are able to defend themselves using firearms, assuming they have the proper licenses and permits to own and carry a weapon. The resolution cites the massacre at Virginia Tech, invokes the Second Amendment and points out that those who "enter a college campus ... with the intent to physically harm other innocent persons will disregard established laws ... in order to carry out such actions."

All in all, it doesn't sound like too bad of a proposal, unless you actually take into account the behavior of college students and the reality of guns and their owners. The people who want to carry guns on campus may want to do so in order to protect themselves, but what this really means is that they will be using them, or tempted to, out of fear. A walk to your car alone at night could turn into, something deadly if someone else walking nearby suspects you have less than noble intentions. In arguments and fights, how many people would be tempted to solve the disagreement with their sidearm than with words? People are also more likely to survive a fight that uses fists than one that uses firearms.

Hurtt's attempts to gain support for his resolution runs dangerously close to capitalizing on tragedy, citing examples of and seeking support from groups dedicated to events such as the Virginia Tech Massacre, the death of University of Memphis student Taylor Bradford and the attack on MTSU freshman Ashley Manis.

However, if the gun legislation's support is motivated by fear, how would the guns be used on campus? Making it legal for students to carry guns on campus will not automatically train these students to use them responsibly, in emergency situations and it will not teach them how to use their weapons without hurting innocent bystanders. Gun owners will not suddenly be possessed of a sixth sense that will allow them to identify and prevent danger to themselves and others with no risk. Who could consider these risks and believe the benefits outweigh the dangers?

In short, this is a proposal that would endanger more than it protects. It seems it's just another example of blind ideology trumping common sense.

'Gray area' key

What defines a good leader? What qualities are important to be a true and noble king? What should we, the American people, demand from those whom we vote into power, thus giving them the authority to pass laws and make decisive rulings with our voices on their lips. What attributes do we as a society hold dear to our hearts?

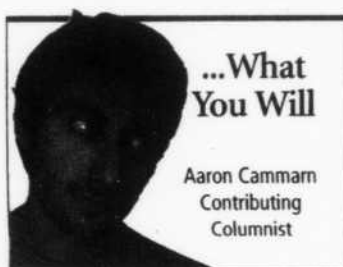
Is it faith? Is it honesty? Could it be that we are so enamored with political theatre that we haven't a clue what we truly value? What has happened to our society? We have become so skewed ideologically that our proverbial pendulum has swung from one side to the other without even the slightest pause in the middle grey area of reason?

Some place the blame on that almighty corrupter of minds, the television. Prior to this invention, future political leaders were the kids who sat in the front of the class - those quiet, geeky sorts who always knew the answers and actually studied.

Post-television however, our leaders seem to be those children who sat in the back of the classroom, those outgoing, attention seeking, theatrical sort who knew how to entertain and manipulate the masses with their clever tongues.

Never was this so apparent as the infamous televised debate between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. Viewing the debate, one has no doubt that Kennedy was the obvious victor. Nixon became sweaty and pale, obviously uncomfortable, while Kennedy remained cool and collected, even handsome. Conversely, upon reading a transcription of the debate, it would not be unreasonable to say that Nixon was the frontrunner, having appeared more articulate and matter-of-fact in the discourse.

To further unravel this quandary we must delve into a sample of societal hierarchy: the college campus. Here at MTSU, we have quite the varied population with regard to a relative equilibrium of Democrats to Republicans, liberals to conservatives and apathetic to fundamentalist. Thus, we can obtain a fairly balanced view of where we stand



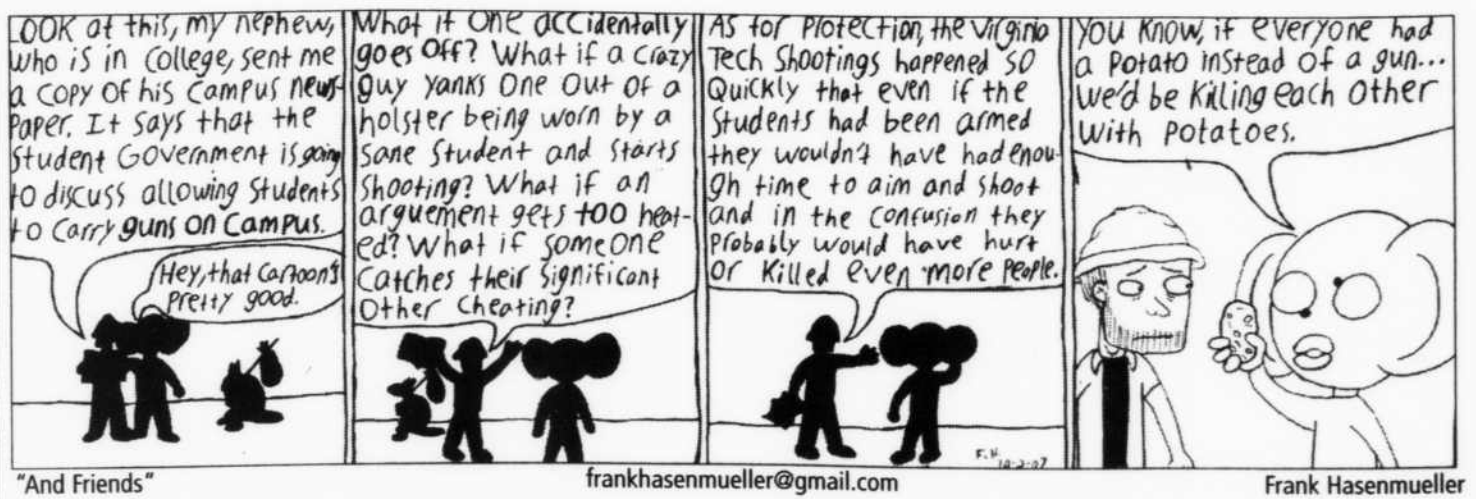
as a whole. Using a black-to-white gradient, it seems we fall somewhere in the central grey area. This is an area of proper discernment that allows issues to be weighed through the eyes of others and remedied with a general compromise. Contrary to the generalized southern stereotype, Tennessee is happily quite progressive in nature, seemingly split down the middle of political contention and populated with some worldly minds; especially in the greater Nashville area and the college communities.

Thankfully, most educators tend to toward the grey area with a slight liberal bias, which is preferable when dealing with the advancement of our young, impressionable minds.

The opening that has been torn in the raincoat of our prospective leadership collective has prevented the influence of the average American from being heard in Washington. The original principles of this country are drowning in a torrential downpour of depraved marketing schemes and opportunistic ploys, which have jaded rational thinking and proper discernment. This cannot be allowed to continue.

Friends, let us make amends for any past trivial pursuits of need-less tenor. Allow our voices to be truly heard in the White House by making an informed decision based upon a leader who represents best the visage of American peoples. Let us unite under a flag of reason, which flutters in the breeze of a free society, unbiased by personal vendetta and relieved of this smothering rain of obstinate righteousness so that once again, we may comfortably recline in the shade of the gray area.

Aaron Cammarn is a sophomore English major and can be reached at akc2u@mtsu.edu.



"And Friends"

frankhasenmueller@gmail.com

Frank Hasenmueller

Put down games, pick up reality

Two babies in Nevada almost starve to death due to their parent's lack of responsibility and addiction to video games; yet scientists are considering documenting video game addiction as a mental disorder.

Michael and Lana Straw refused their 22 month-old baby boy and 11 month-old baby girl food because of their obsession with the Internet and the online video game Dungeons & Dragons. Apparently the couple believed their actions were affected by some magnetic force pulling them into the video game, but this is nonsense.

First of all, the couple should have not used the Internet or a video game as a scapegoat because, ultimately, it was their choice to starve and mistreat their children. It is astounding to see how vicious a person can be, to leave two innocent children lying on the floor in agony while living out some fantasy in an electronic box.

When officers arrested the couple, they found the children in critical condition. The little girl had to have her head shaved because it was drenched in dried cat urine while the little boy suffered from muscle deficiency. The couple appeared shameful and then admitted their dependence on video games to authorities. Of course, having admitted their 'problem' they launched a media frenzy criticizing video games.

People have a tendency to blame objects around them for their mistakes. However, one should not buy into the whole addiction or mental disorder theory because basically it boils down to common sense and free will. Regardless of addiction, those parents should have known better than to leave their children in such an appalling state. Video games are



Open Mouth,
Insert Foot

Tiffany Gibson
Contributing Columnist

exactly what they appear to be: a source for entertainment. There is no hidden agenda or secret code written into video games that instructs people to abandon their children.

Of course, many might argue that money was a contributing factor as far as food goes, but ironically, Michael Straw had just received an inheritance of fifty thousand dollars. Instead of supplying his family with warmth and assurance he spent the entire amount on computer equipment to satisfy his self-indulgence. His wife, Lana, was not complaining though, because apparently she was also obsessed with virtual reality. Hands-down, Michael and Lana Straw have to be the most selfish and irresponsible people on the face of this planet.

The theory that there were other factors, such as song lyrics, movies or television to blame in the past, fuels the argument that people in general seem to be taking their 'victim' mindsets too far. An example that usually comes to mind is Marilyn Manson's 'corrupt' lyrics having an effect on high school students, which ultimately lead to the Columbine Massacre. After this horrifying incident occurred, people began to perceive Manson as

an enemy. In this case he, was identified as the unrelated force that 'supposedly' sparked Columbine. Parents and political leaders were criticizing Manson on every aspect of his career as if he personally stood in front of the two boys and told them to pull the trigger. The mistake the media made was by targeting him instead of the participants, which is essentially the key to breaking this chain of ignorance circling the nation.

As long as people can create excuses, they do not have to take responsibility for their actions, and as long as the media continues to give them a slap on the wrist they will never learn nor will our future generations.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross once said, "We need to teach the next generation of children from day one that they are responsible for their lives. Mankind's greatest gift, also its greatest curse, is that we have free choice. We can make our choices built from love or from fear."

Kubler-Ross' philosophy of free will is exactly the type of reality in which we should live, and need to accept, because falsely accusing something or someone of manipulating one's mind is preposterous.

Michael and Lana Straw were not June and Ward Cleaver, but they were a traditional family that chose to ignore the children to whom they were accountable. No video game or Internet site caused them to forget actual reality and focus on virtual reality. It was intentional neglect, because video games, song lyrics or movies should never be recognized as conveying subliminal messages.

Tiffany Gibson is a freshman English major and can be reached at tdg2w@mtsu.edu.

Letters to the Editor

Don't take pianos for debt relief

To the Editor:

The current standing with MTSU and the Country Music Hall of Fame regarding their late donor Robert W. McLean sets creditors seeking charges on the University and the Museum. The Hall of Fame's issue isn't quite as difficult to solve as the situation with MTSU due to the fact that the Museum's donation was for a piece of memorabilia and not a functioning learning tool for hundreds of students year-round. The donation, which bought a 1928 Gibson L-5 acoustic guitar once owned by Mother Maybelle Carter, can be reimbursed simply by selling this highly sought after musical instrument. This is, although rather disappointing, a reasonable recovery for the Country Music Hall of Fame to settle with. If auctioned off, the demand for this instrument could easily bring enough to reimburse creditors and then some. If someone or a group of people in Nashville feel that the guitar must remain at the museum as a historic piece of memorabilia, it should follow that those individuals put up the value of the guitar to pay creditors which in turn will secure the instrument's safety and protection at the Country Music Hall of Fame.

This method of a third-party reimbursement could also be used in the settlement of MTSU's McLean School of Music situation. McLean pledged a donation of \$1.5 million toward a gift of 54 Steinway pianos, a donation for which the school in turn would refer to themselves as "The Robert W. McLean School of Music." Furthermore, the school would attain the prestigious status of an "All-Steinway School" which is an achievement only 7 conservatories and 49 colleges and universities world-wide are able to claim. Just as with the Hall of Fame, it is the intent of McLean's creditors to charge MTSU for this fraudulent donation. However the source of reimbursement may not be as easy to find.

A request to sell these pianos would be foolish considering the wear and tear these instruments have sustained, after five years at a university. Also, the impact this loss would have on the music department would be devastating. These pianos were the saving grace to MTSU's piano students and faculty. Due to the fact that instrumentalists and vocalists also rely greatly on piano accompaniment, these new, world-class Steinway pianos have and continue to expose students to the kind of sound quality that they will work with for the rest of their lives. Before this donation, the School of Music had one decent stage piano and a few extremely exhausted relics for practice. Now, if one visits the various dormitories on campus, one is likely to run into these horribly dilapidated instruments which were distributed at the time of McLean's donation.

The second option for settlement would be to place the reimbursement of the donation into MTSU's yearly budget. This is still rather unreasonable considering the school acquires money from

tuition and donations - obviously. If one merely glances down this line of finance, one quickly realizes that the source from which the debt would be repaid would be the students and the state. Everyone knows that college kids are the epitome of poor and starving. For creditors to ask these seekers of knowledge and higher learning to be responsible for a dishonest man's chicanery, not to mention the risk that they took in the first place, would be a greedy and irresponsible choice on their behalf. The only reasonable answer to this dilemma lies in the same form as that of the Country Music Hall of Fame. McLean's name still appears at the school entrance, on the Web site, and on every letterhead and envelope sent. This gives the school a bad rap. A rap implying that it associates and is funded by dishonest and fraudulent people.

The name Robert W. McLean should have been taken off the school property as soon as McLean failed to appear in court. It stands that the school must be renamed, and as a sign of gratitude for the individual or organization that steps in and settles McLean's debt to the creditors, their name should replace McLean's across the board. It would be easy for someone who just lost their nest-egg to quickly charge anyone and everyone that had anything to do with the situation. However, to attack an institution of higher learning and all of its attendees would be an unforgivable mistake.

Heath Howell
Senior, music theory-composition major

Guns on campus not the answer

To the Editor:

I just don't know what the world has come to. I never would have thought that any one would consider allowing students to have guns on a college campus, even if they have a permit. No state in the United States has a law that allows guns on campus, so why should anyone at MTSU even think of a proposal to do so? I want to feel safe when I come on campus. But then again, who doesn't? If I get in an altercation with a random person on campus, does that give me a right to shoot him? Of course not. Even if I had a gun, I would not bring it to campus due to the fact that it is not my position to bring one. Yes, a gun can be an easy answer, but when used unwisely it can come with a harsh penalty. I would hate for this gun legislation to be enacted because it can cause others to have a lapse in judgement.

The MT Police are here to protect us from harm, so let them do their jobs. And let us do what we came here to do, get an education.

Terrance Eubanks II,
Senior, liberal arts major

SIDELINES
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An editorially independent newspaper

Middle Tennessee
State University
1301 East Main Street P.O. Box 8
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Editorial: (615) 904-8357
Advertising: (615) 898-2533
Fax: (615) 904-8193
www.mtsusidelines.com

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FEATURES

Student attacked, story unresolved

Friends release details about the attack in Cummings Hall

By Sarah Lavery

Features Editor

They were finally able to identify her by her toenails. Ashley Manis' bright blonde hair was red with blood, but her tanned skin didn't look like it belonged to a redhead.

At the hospital, Ashley's mom recognized the deep-red color of her daughter's pedicure — something they had gotten together earlier in the semester. Freshman Amy Nickol was able to recognize her tiny feet and legs.

But the rest of her 5'2" frame didn't look much like the Ashley she knew before the brutal attack in Cummings Hall on Sept. 25.

Amy says she and Ashley knew each other in Memphis before they made the move to Middle Tennessee. The two had been friends for nearly a decade.

"Ashley was the kind of girl that everyone knew," Amy says. "She was never angry and never picked favorites among her friends. But I also always felt I had to look out for her."

On the night of the incident, Amy says she saw a slightly intoxicated Ashley outside of Cummings. She jokingly warned her friend that another strike, after her arrest for underage consumption just weeks before, would mean more serious consequences.

Ashley just giggled and walked away.

Freshman Emily Payne befriended Ashley during the first week of classes. They lived right across the hall from each other on the second floor of Cummings; they ate dinner with each other nearly every night.

She says they ate at McCallie Dining Hall on Sept. 25. Ashley hadn't made any plans for later, but Emily told her to call if she wanted to hang out.

She never saw her that night.

Amy had just gotten out of the shower in her Corlew dorm room when she heard the sirens. She walked over to the site of the noise — Cummings Hall — and watched medics push a stretcher into an ambulance.

Just another student who drank too much, she thought. Nothing new.

Her friend was barely alive, but Amy would have to wait until the early hours of Wednesday morning to find out why.

Kristin Marshall had already heard the rumors about a girl in the dorm who had to be taken to a local hospital. She also hadn't seen her roommate Ashley that night, but didn't think much of it.

Kristin saw the stretcher outside of the building but didn't immediately recognize the girl. Her hair looked dark, nothing like her roommate's bright blonde.

But then, right after midnight, a police officer knocked on her door.

Ashley was taken by Life-Flight to Vanderbilt University Hospital after spending a short time at Middle Tennessee Medical Center.

Amy and Kristin made the 40-mile trip to Nashville in less than 20 minutes.

Her parents still had to make the four-hour drive from Cordova, Tenn. Amy and Kristin, joined by a few of Ashley's other MTSU friends, were the only ones pacing the waiting room in Vanderbilt until nearly 5 in the morning.

They still didn't know the whole story. Amy had already heard numerous versions — that their friend had tried to injure herself, that she had taken too many pills, that she was in critical condition — but the only thing they knew for sure was that Ashley was in trouble.

Amy recalls a casual relationship between Ashley and her alleged attacker, freshman Kevin Sisco.

The two had been arrested on campus together two weeks before — Ashley for underage consumption, Kevin for possession of brass knuckles and a knife.

Emily never heard her friend mention anyone named Kevin Sisco. She says there was definitely no romantic interest between the two, and when they were arrested together, Ashley simply said to her friend, "It's not my fault."

The girl Emily had befriended the first week at MTSU wasn't a drug user. A girl who liked to drink, perhaps, but not the type to do anything more extreme.

"If she did drugs," Emily says, "she hid it from me really well."

What exactly happened in Room 420 on Sept. 25 remains unclear.

Family and friends waiting at the hospital were told that Ashley's attacker struck her in the head with a lamp. She was knocked unconscious, but her attacker did not stop there. The end of a broomstick was used to stab Ashley



Photo submitted by Amy Nickol

Freshmen Kristin Marshall, Ashley Manis and Amy Nickol pose for a picture outside of their dormitory, Cummings Hall. Taken two weeks before the alleged attack on Manis, the students were relaxing after the beginning of the semester.

repeatedly all over her body, eventually puncturing her liver. The cord from the lamp was wrapped around her neck, causing her lungs to collapse.

Ashley's blonde hair was soaked red.

Lt. Jim Fanguy of the MTSU Police Department would not confirm or deny any of this information, but says these are details that would be addressed in trial.

The call to 911 was made by Kevin himself, who told the operator: "This girl I'm with, she's on all kinds of pills and stuff and has been drinking [She's] acting crazy and tried to kill herself."

What police said they saw in room 420 didn't look like self-inflicted harm, however. Kevin was arrested almost immediately for attempted first-degree murder and remains in jail on a \$300,000 bond.

Students who lived in Cummings Hall with Kevin paint the picture of a loner, a quiet kid who kept to himself when he

wasn't partying.

"He was extremely nonsocial," says freshman Doug Hansen, who lives just four doors down from Room 420. "I've barely heard him speak. But he should have been kicked off campus before the attack. When they found weapons in his room, why would they let him stay here?"

Even though he was quiet, Kevin's behavior still made some of his neighbors nervous.

Freshman Tyler Hudson, who lives on the fifth floor of Cummings, recalls seeing him on an unusually cold night for September. Sitting on the steps outside of Cummings, Kevin sat alone, wearing nothing but shorts.

"They found weapons in his room," Amy says. "He was a ticking time bomb, and he did explode."

A week after the attack, the students standing outside of Cummings Hall look like they want to forget, laughing, smoking

cigarettes, waving at familiar passers-by.

But the incident has altered a few things about the dormitory. The front-desk receptionist asks to see IDs with more zeal than usual. All students, even residents who come in and out multiple times a day, must show identification to get back to their rooms.

Things have definitely changed.

Ashley will not be returning to MTSU, Amy says, although her condition has been improving. She will return to her home right outside of Memphis.

As of yesterday, Ashley was expected to be moved out of the Intensive Care Unit within the week. Doctors are hopeful she will recover with little or no brain damage.

And, according to friends who have been spending most of the last seven days at the hospital, Ashley remembers very little about the night of Sept. 25.

Or her attacker. ♦

New history chair settles into landmark position



Photo by Patrick Casey | Staff Photographer

Amy Staples has just settled into her new role as chair of MTSU's history department. A member of the faculty since 1998, Staples is the department's first female chair.

By Katy Coil

Staff Writer

When she was appointed chairwoman of the history department at MTSU at the beginning of this semester, Amy Staples made history herself. She became the first female chair of the department.

Having the distinction as the first woman to occupy her position, Staples feels honored.

"To be the first person selected after a national search, it just shows how women in this profession have become more prevalent in current years," Staples says. "It's great to see how things have changed and it is gratifying that the university level as a whole is working towards more diversity."

However, it was not Staples' gender that fellow department members found the most surprising.

"I polled colleagues and they said it wasn't different that I was a woman but that I was young," she says.

Staples has been a member of the MTSU faculty since 1998. Her professorship at MTSU was her first job out of school. She says the historic event of her reaching the position of chairperson was some time in the making.

"I think it takes a while for societies to change," Staples says. "The '70s was when women started going into grad school, then into the professoriate, the into administration. As a historian, I'd say societies take a slow time to change."

Staples knows a thing or two about societal change. Her specialization is in post-1945 United States history.

"I specialize in it because it's so fascinating to me," she says. "Civil Rights, Women's Liberation, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, so much going on. It's wonderful to see human beings changing. By and large, the period has seen strides in individual freedom."

Staples believes that MTSU is a great

atmosphere for change and diversity.

"MTSU is a very diverse school with not a lot of tradition, not a lot of 'we don't do that,' not a lot of administrative blocking. I've always loved the flexibility and openness at this campus," she says.

As the new chairperson, Staples hopes to exploit the potential within the history department.

"This is a really dynamic department. A lot has been happening in the 10 years since I've been here," she says. "The department has shifted to more research-oriented and the amount of books coming out of the department is amazing."

Staples herself has big plans to expand the department.

"We've been working on fundraising for the department," she says. "We began discussion with the University of Tennessee for an electronic textbook project, which is in its development phase. We have a Ph.D. student who is the managing editor, we've written the first eight chapters for the pilot program, and there is going to be a trial run marketing the book next fall. Proceeds will go to an undergraduate development fund which will help the half of the history majors that go onto student teachings as well as undergraduate research."

Another part of the department Staples takes pride in is the Ph.D. program for Public History, which began during the Fall 2005.

"The new Ph.D. program for Public History is another big change. It's in its third year and we'll have our first Ph.D. student, Tara Mielnik, to graduate in December," Staples says.

Staples' favorite aspect of the department is the dedication of its teachers.

"I think the best thing is we have a great set of teachers who love what they do and that's been a constant. We love what we do. The majority of our teaching is at the undergraduate survey level. I have colleagues say it's fun to teach students sur-

vey, to show them that history is fun. They're always excited about teaching history. It's almost evangelical," Staples says.

Staples' own history with teaching goes a long way back.

"I always wanted to teach," she says. "My mother and grandmother were both teachers. I got my certification to teach high school history at New York State. During my junior year, my advisor began talking to me about grad school. I figured out during college that I loved to research, to find out why people in the past did what they did, and that I could combine those two loves."

She credits her own love of history with an enthusiastic history teacher.

A high school history teacher made it the subject interesting, and made a lasting impression on her student. This teacher showed Staples that history deals with human beings and all their complexities," she says.

She believes an understanding of history stays with students for the rest of their lives.

"I think especially in the second half of survey, we provide students with a historical context for the rest of their lives. They have to understand the precedents and processes that go along with their lives," Staples says.

She hopes that students will continue their appreciation for history in the future.

"I hope they will like and read history and have a like and appreciation for it. As they look back on it, they will realize they've learned a lot. I hope students would all say they've learned important things during their history classes," she says.

One day, when her time as chairperson is looked back on in a historical context, Staples knows what she wants to be said about her:

"I would hope they would say the department grew by leaps and bounds and that I helped that happen." ♦

SPORTS

MT to host first BCS team

Blue Raiders hope to win second game in two weeks

By Chris Martin and J. Owen Shipley

Staff Writer and Sports Editor

Middle Tennessee will be hosting a BCS-conference opponent for the first time Saturday, when the Blue Raiders take on the Virginia Cavaliers.

The Blue Raiders (1-4, 1-1 Sun Belt) have never played a team from one of the six BCS conferences (PAC-10, SEC, ACC, Big Ten, Big East and Big 12) at home, though MT played Louisville in Nashville at L.P. Field last year.

"I think it's a great opportunity for our football team and for our university," MT head coach Rick Stockstill said. "This is the first one from one of the major conferences coming in here, and it won't be the last. [Director of Athletics] Chris Massaro has done a great job of ensuring that and getting more teams like them to come here. They are coming to our place and it's a tribute to a lot of hard work by a lot of people to get Virginia here."

Massaro's first two days on the job at MT were spent with a student group assembled by Bob Glenn, vice president for Student Affairs and vice provost for Enrollment Management. Glenn put the group together to prepare Massaro to take over the athletic department. Massaro understood that playing a "name" school at home was a priority for a variety of students at MT.

Massaro then worked out a deal with Temple to clear a date in 2007 which could be used to play a BCS opponent. In return MT had to play a 2005 game against NC State in order to get UVA to come to MT. The deal took, according to Massaro, "quite a bit of work."

The Cavaliers (4-1, 3-0 ACC) are currently tied for first place in the Atlantic Coastal Conference and are riding a four-game winning streak. Their defensive line features NFL draft prospect Chris Long, the son of NFL Hall-of-Famer Howie Long. Long has six sacks in five games this season to go along with 31 tackles including seven for loss.

"He is an outstanding football player," senior tight end Clinton Corder said. "He is everything you look for in a football player. He is quick, fast, strong, he plays with a quick motor and he has 'first-round pick' written all over him."

Long is not the only star on Virginia's roster. Running back Cedric Peerman leads the ACC in rushing with 566 yards over five games. Peerman is also UVA's third-leading receiver and has scored five touchdowns on the season.

"Peerman is the fastest tailback we will have faced and the most elusive back we have faced," Stockstill said.

Peerman will be running against a Blue Raider defense which has had trouble stopping the run. MT has allowed an average 209.6 yards rushing per game, and opposing teams have averaged 4.9 yards a carry. Before holding FIU to 72 yards rushing, the lowest rushing total against the MT defense was a 198 yard effort from LSU.

Middle Tennessee vs. Virginia

Oct. 6

Kickoff: 6:07 PM CST

Stadium: Johnny "Red" Floyd Stadium (30,788)

Location: Murfreesboro, TN

Radio: 106.7 The Fan, WGNS 1450 AM, 89.5 FM

(Charlie McAlexander, pbp/Chip Walters, color)

TV: CSS

(George Plaster, pbp/Pat Sperduto, color)

Internet: GoBlueRaiders.com

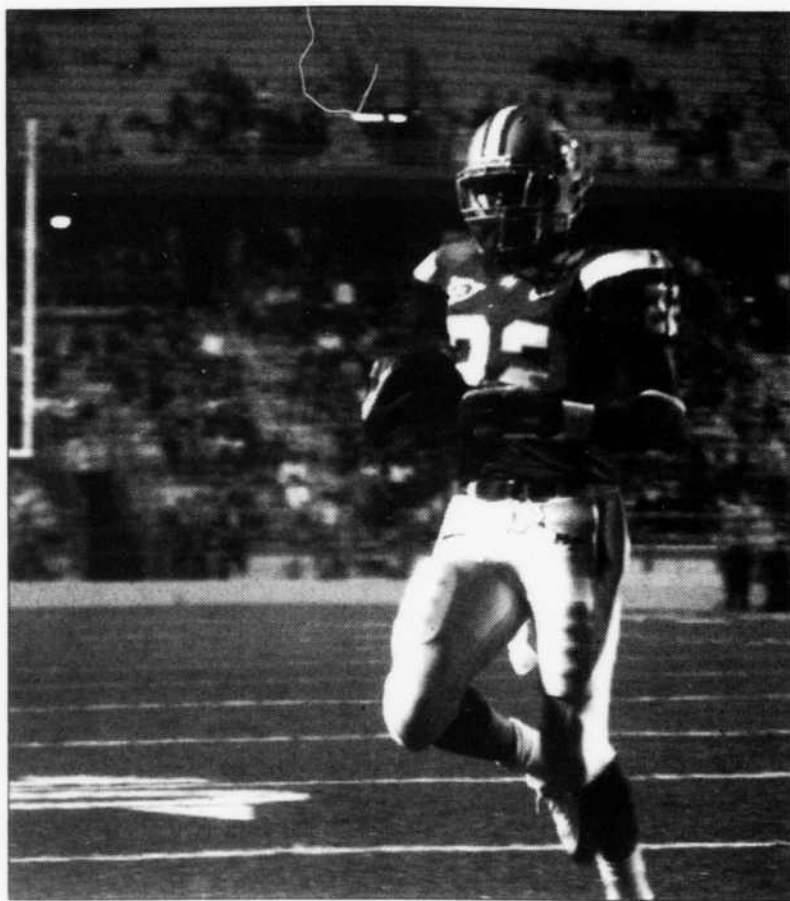


Photo by Jay Richardson | Staff Photographer
Junior DeMarco McNair was the only player other than true freshman Dwight Dasher to score a TD in MT's 47-6 victory over Florida International.

UVA also features a large offensive line that includes former top prospect Eugene Monroe at left tackle. Monroe, who in 2005 was the top offensive line prospect, according to rivals.com, is one of four starters who weigh at least 298 pounds.

"They are very athletic and they run well," senior defensive end Tavares Jones said. "The biggest thing is, we need to focus on our assignments and make them use their feet. Hopefully we can get some pressure on their quarterback."

The Blue Raiders are coming off a 47-6 win over SBC conference foe Florida International. In that game, true-freshman Dwight Dasher continued to play big, racking up 293 total yards and scoring five touchdowns in just over two quarters of play. Dasher has also not committed a turnover this season.

"I thought our offense did a great job on third downs. Obviously protecting the ball is important, and we did that. [Dwight] is only played seven quarters as a college quarterback. He's going to continue to get better each day, each week," Stockstill said.

Dasher isn't the only freshman to play well this season. Safety Jeremy Kellem, MT's leading tackler, has been a key playmaker on defense for the Blue Raiders. Through five games, Kellem has 25 tackles, two forced fumbles, a fumble recovery, an interception, a blocked punt and three pass breakups.

"The thing that makes Jeremy stand out the most is that he's a very intelligent football player," Stockstill said. "He's got good football common sense. He's got a nose for the football. The thing that differentiates Jeremy from other freshmen is that he's a very smart football player."

MT may be without key performers sophomore WR Desmond Gee and senior DE Erik Walden. Stockstill announced both were questionable for the game at a press conference on Tuesday. Stockstill also announced that DT Jonathan Presley will miss the remainder of the year after suffering an achilles injury. ♦

I am Sportacus



J. Owen Shipley
Sports Editor

Dwight is simply Dashing

I would like to begin this column by telling you what headline I wanted to use - apparently "Dwight Dasher MT's new BFF" did not meet *Sidelines'* journalistic standards.

I know, I laughed too. I also agree that my replacement is the worst headline I've ever written. Honestly, who cares about AP style at a time like this? Associated Press be damned, this is important.

The Blue Raiders slaughtered FIU last week. The season might not be over.

Here at Middle Tennessee State University, we have the distinction of not only being a state school, but a directional one.

MT is also one of those upstart schools who only recently entered the Football Bowl System.

The FBS is littered with the wreckage of programs, once mighty in I-AA, that now exist only to fend for away-game money. Like so many drug addicted leeches, they fight for the right to lose games for money. According to MT Director of Athletics Chris Massaro, the going rate for an away game against a top-tier team is now around \$650,000. By contrast, MT is only paying Virginia \$200,000 to travel to Murfreesboro.

Clearly the cost of traveling to a small school isn't \$450,000 less than traveling to a burgeoning metropolis like, say, Norman, Oklahoma. The difference in payments clearly means that MT has not yet reached the status of a big-time program.

The Sun Belt Conference is in no danger of receiving a BCS bowl any time soon.

Last but not least, two weeks ago, the Blue Raiders lost to WKU.

If MT football before Saturday had been an 80's movie, than "Holding out for a Hero" would have been their theme song.

Enter Dwight Dasher.

The short, stocky, true freshman quarterback has completely turned MT's season around and he didn't even need a montage to do it. All he needed to do was throw for what I'm sure was the most accurate first half in my lifetime.

Seriously, 5 TDs in two quarters? A 235.6 passer rating against a conference opponent? Seventy-five percent of MT's total offense in the last two games? And not a single turnover?

These numbers scare me. Recently I heard someone say "Superman wears Tim Tebow pajamas."

I admit, it made me chuckle. Florida's sophomore quarterback recently looked unstoppable against UT but he also lost last weekend to Auburn.

After Dasher had already put 47 points on the board (40 of which he scored himself), Tebow was losing badly to a team whose head coach was already packing up his office. Auburn should not have beaten Florida. They just shouldn't have.

To put it simply, if I ever hear that joke again, I'm going to respond "maybe he does, but Tim Tebow wears Dwight Dasher jammies."

He's a Manning-Vick hybrid, a dangerous runner, and a precision passer. He's shockingly good and overwhelmingly modest.

Let's put this all in perspective: there are fliers for Pizza Hut that have been around this campus twice as long as Dasher.

When MT played the Blue-White game last spring, he was still sleeping through algebra class and worrying about senior prom.

During that same game, I was in the press box, pulling out my hair and wondering what in God's name MT would do if Joe Craddock got WKU.

Well I got my answer against GTU. We would start a true freshman too short to play at a bigger school but, honestly, too talented to be here this soon in Stockstill's tenure.

Dasher is a freak of nature and he still doesn't even know most of the plays.

If you saw the first half of the Western Kentucky game you probably noticed that he hasn't even been around long enough for the coaches to know what plays to call.

They still hadn't figured it out by the fourth quarter yet he almost won that game single-handedly. Sometime after the FIU game, offensive coordinator G. A. Mangus told me the secret of that last-ditch drive against Western:

"We just kept calling the same play over and over," Mangus said.

Last week Mangus and Dasher showed that they are starting to work together. Who knows what they will be capable of this week?

And that is why Dwight Dasher is my new bff, because he has added the phrase "who knows" to any discussion of MT football in a positive way.

With him behind the center, MT could beat anyone.

J. Owen Shipley is a senior English major at MT. He can be reached at Myspace.com/IamSportacus.

MT Volleyball 17-1 to date

Blue Raiders ranked, undefeated in SBC

By Clarence Plank

Staff Writer

Middle Tennessee's Blue Raider volleyball team will end their home stand with Arkansas-Little Rock and Arkansas State this weekend at the Alumni Memorial Gym.

The Blue Raiders (17-1, 4-0) are coming off consecutive wins in the Sun Belt Conference and now face a hot UALR team who has been working very hard during the off season to get back on top of the SBC.

MT has been preparing for them in practice for most of the week and they have been working on improving their game after the Blue Raiders' win over North Texas.

"We really didn't play a good game on Friday, but then again we haven't lost a game in the conference," head coach Matt Peck said. "We're going to try to work through some things that Coach Peck said. One thing we've got to continue to play well all the time against every opponent, not just when we think the team we are playing is a good team."

The Trojans (12-5, 4-1) come to MT after defeating New Orleans 3-0 for their first win over the Privateers since 2004. UALR finished the game with 47 kills and 11 blocks to win their third straight.

This weekend, the Trojans will face MT and Western Kentucky, who are both undefeated in SBC play. UALR currently leads the Western Division, with Denver a very close second at 2-2. The Trojans lead the series 8-5.

Though Coach Peck is 5-0 against UALR since coming to MTSU four years ago, this is the best year that UALR has had since coach Peck became MT's head coach.

"Traditionally, they have been the best team in the conference" Peck said. "They have won the conference championship a number of times, but I think a lot of teams have caught up with them. This year has been a good year for them, though. We're expecting them to play well."

"Right now Little Rock is having a lot better success than Arkansas State," Peck said. "Little Rock is a tall team and they have a lot of international players that are generally experienced players. So, we have to play well against them."

Arkansas State will face Western Kentucky before coming to MT and the team has suffered some setbacks with injuries as of late. They are coming off a much-needed win over Louisiana-Monroe on Sunday.

"Arkansas State has had a lot of injuries so I don't even know who they're going to put on the floor against us," Peck said. "This makes it



Archive Photo
Junior Ashley Adams, no. 7, has been described by Coach Peck as being "perhaps the premier outside hitter in the Sun Belt."

very difficult for us to scout their team and come up with a gameplan." The Indians' defense is currently ranked 9th in the nation with 19.18 digs per game. They currently lead the SBC in digs.

MT is one of three schools that are currently undefeated in conference, joined by Florida International and Western Kentucky.

The Blue Raiders face Arkansas-Little Rock at 7 p.m. Friday night at the AMG and play Arkansas State on Sunday at 1 p.m.

MT is currently ranked no. 26 in the latest American Volleyball Coaches Association poll with 74 points, just two points behind #25 Colorado State, who received 76. ♦

The SUPP Overall Top-25			
No.	Team	Fraction	Pts
1.	USC	0.9418	777
2.	LSU	0.8897	734
3.	California	0.8267	682
4.	Ohio State	0.8061	665
5.	Wisconsin	0.7345	606
6.	Boston College	0.6315	521
7.	South Florida	0.6158	508
8.	Florida	0.6085	502
9.	Oklahoma	0.6061	500
10.	Kentucky	0.5927	489
11.	Georgia	0.4885	403
12.	West Virginia	0.4533	374
13.	Oregon	0.4412	364
14.	South Carolina	0.3733	308
15.	Texas	0.3406	281
16.	Virginia Tech	0.2909	240
17.	Hawaii	0.2848	235
18.	Missouri	0.2812	232
19.	Arizona State	0.2267	187
20.	Cincinnati	0.1855	153
21.	Rutgers	0.1685	139
22.	Purdue	0.1673	138
23.	Clemson	0.1321	109
24.	Nebraska	0.1248	103
25.	Kansas State	0.0836	69

Also receiving votes:
Florida State 0.0485
Miami 0.0424
UCLA 0.0376
Michigan State 0.0352
Georgia Tech 0.0339

graphic supplied suppoll.com
One of the biggest upset weekends in recent history has left all the major polls in turmoil after five top-ten teams ended the weekend with losses. After upsetting Western Virginia, South Florida entered the top ten for the first time ever.

Massaro brings high profile teams to MT

Blue Raiders host Virginia in first game against ACC opponent at Floyd Stadium

By Richard Lowe
Assistant Sports Editor

When Chris Massaro was hired in the spring of 2005 as the director of athletics, high expectations were placed on the university. Alumni and current students demanded higher attendance, more success on the field, and quality facilities for this campus, and Massaro was up for the challenge. In less than two years, renovations have been made on Johnny "Red" Floyd Stadium, the Charles Murphy Center, Reese Smith Field, the Blue Raider Softball Field, and the Blue Raider Soccer and Track Stadium.

To obtain success on the field, Massaro hired new women's basketball, football, men's tennis, softball, and men's golf coaches to lead their respective teams. Two of those coaches have won the conference championships in their first year on the job.

Soon, attendance will no longer be an issue with the upgrade in scheduling for the Middle Tennessee football team. They will host the University of Virginia, their first BCS opponent inside of Johnny "Red" Floyd Stadium. Scheduling these types of games at home bring more credibility to the university and Sun Belt Conference as a whole. Massaro says, "It gives [MT] validation to have a school of the academic stature that UVA has [on the schedule]. To be included in the same breath as them is what you want as a university. Athletically and academically, it's quite an honor."

Playing high-profile teams at home brings credibility to the home fans, but the visiting teams can add to that as well. If the visiting team leaves with a good impression then it can lead to other high-profile teams coming into town. Massaro stated, "We want Virginia to leave here saying 'Wow, this school is on the move.'"

Last year, the Blue Raiders hosted the University of Louisville but that game took place in Nashville at LP Field. Virginia will be the first in a string of high-profile teams visiting Murfreesboro in the coming years. Currently on the future football schedules are Maryland (2008), Memphis (2009), and Georgia Tech (2011).

One team that Blue Raider fans have been looking for on the schedule for a couple of years now is Vanderbilt University. Last time the Blue Raiders faced off against the Commodores, MT came out victorious. Recently, Vanderbilt made comments about struggling to fill up their schedule with the new NCAA mandate of adding a 12th game to the college football schedule. Massaro responded to those comments in a local newspaper by explaining that MT will do whatever it takes to add Vanderbilt to the schedule, pending a fair deal being put in place. "We've even left a game open just to get them on it," Massaro says. "It's disappointing to me that we can't get it done and put them on our schedule sooner than later."

Many reasons are given from both schools' athletic departments and fans about why these teams can't agree on schedule placement, but Massaro believes there are benefits to getting the negotiations completed. He declared, "I think it's a good game for everybody, but I don't run Vanderbilt, I run Middle Tennessee. I see it as a game that would be great for college football fans in this area and it will help grow each school's fan base."

For now, though, the Blue Raiders will be taking the field this weekend against the first-place team in the Atlantic Coast Conference in a game that is sure to boost attendance and excitement in the Middle Tennessee community. If the night were to end with a Blue Raider victory, or even a competitive showing, the boost could end up permanent. ♦

Coldplay-action

Chris Martin
Staff Columnist



MT finally gets off of life support

September 20, 2007, 9:29 p.m.

Middle Tennessee's football season is in critical condition after a 20-17 loss at the hands of Division I-A newcomer Western Kentucky.

Red-shirt junior Matt King's game-tying field goal misses wide; the 2007 football season is on the verge of being lost.

The Western Kentucky game was supposed to be a guaranteed win for MT. Instead, it was a fan-base-crushing loss.

A football team like MT can get over two consecutive losses to top-25 teams. A loss to a team like WKU that wasn't even officially a D-IA team yet? That was too much.

MT's heart didn't stop, but it slowed to dangerous levels. Life support seemed to be the only option.

"We'll get them next year," was beginning to be the only positive way to look at 2007.

The 0-4 start was enough to make any MT fan grow concerned about the health of the season.

The Raiders' season did look promising after nearly upsetting Louisville in Papa John's Stadium.

But they had to follow that game with a trip to no. 2 LSU. Injuries sustained in that game made a winning season seem impossible.

To make matters worse, that close game against the Cardinals began to look much less impressive after Louisville proceeded to lose its next two games. That one of those losses was a 38-35 embarrassment against Big East bottom-feeder Syracuse did not help.

The 44-0 blowout at LSU could have been the killing blow but MT had too much heart to give up.

After scoring 42 points against Louisville, MT's offense limped home with a shut-out.

It seemed that only one thing could turn the Raiders' season around: a much-needed win against Western Kentucky. Beating WKU would have kept the fans in the stands and the dream alive. Unfortunately, MT's starting QB was injured and the Hilltoppers were better than anyone would have guessed.

The second that kick sailed right, MT's season was over in the minds of many.

Rick Stockstill's SBC co-champion Blue Raiders were, at best, on life-support.

September 29, 2007, 7:36 p.m.

Led by true freshman Dwight Dasher, MT is winning 44-0 and they just intercepted an FIU pass.

Dasher has 5 TDs, the Golden Panthers are averaging around 1.3 yards per play and the season is back on track.

A few minutes from now, red-shirt junior Matt King will line up, nod his head, and nail a field goal for MT's final score of the night.

47-0.

Let that sink in because any number smaller than that would have just been a win. Any number bigger would have been beating up on a weak opponent.

MT was proving that they could play mistake-free football and still show more class than their opponent.

Minutes after King's kick, Stockstill told his team that the game was over. It was time to take it easy on FIU.

And at that exact moment, MT's season was released from the ICU and given walking papers.

Chris Martin is a sophomore journalism major. He can be reached at cgm2m@mtsu.edu

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The Housing and Residential Life Office is currently accepting housing CANCELLATIONS for the Spring 2008 semester from students who are graduating from MTSU and will be taking no additional classes and from students who are not returning to school at MTSU after the Fall 2007 semester.

The deadline for submitting CANCELLATIONS for prepayment refund is Monday, October 15, 2007. Requests for cancellations must be submitted in writing to the Housing Office in the Keathley University Center, Room 300 or mailed to Box 6, MTSU, faxed to the Housing Office (615-898-5459) or emailed to housing@mtsu.edu by the deadline. For additional information contact Housing and Residential Life, 615-898-2971.

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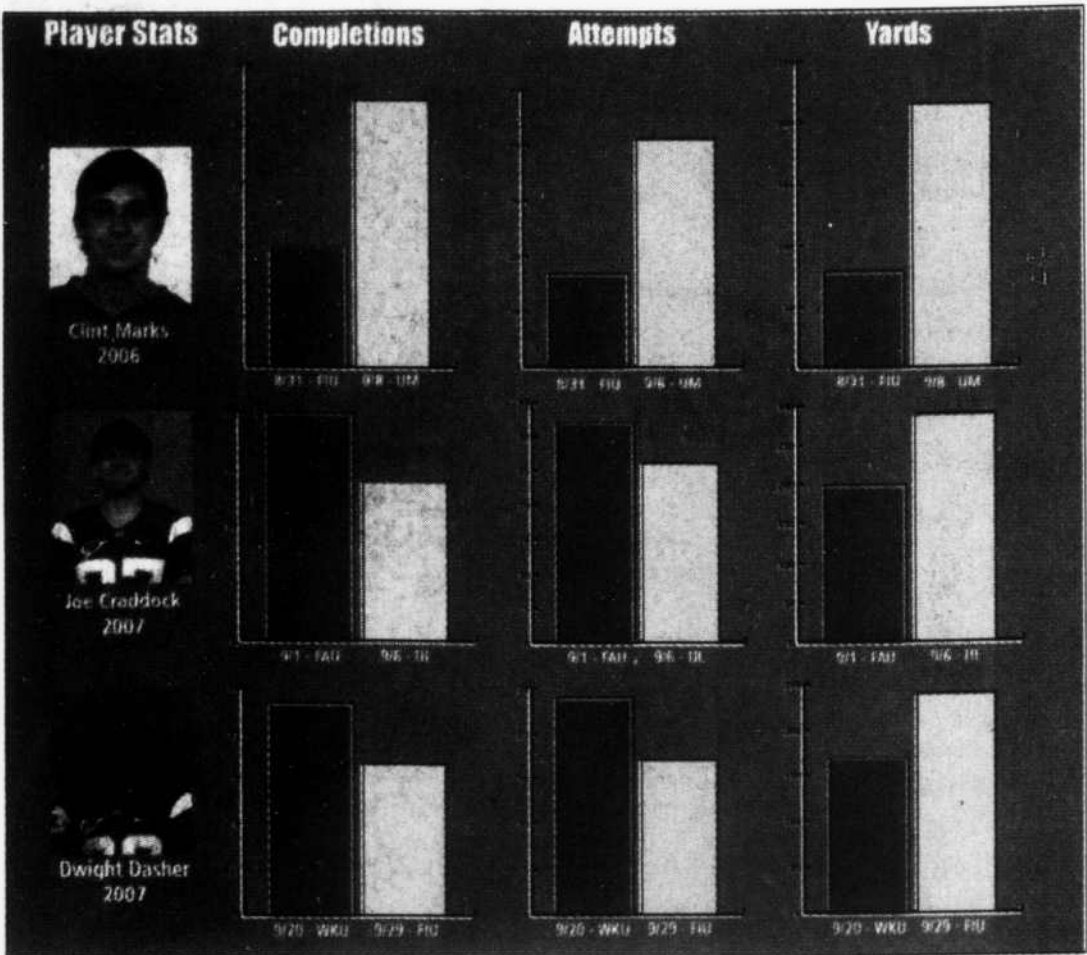
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Graphic by Matthew Adair | Production Manager
As starting quarterbacks under head coach Rick Stockstill, Clint Marks, Joe Craddock and Dwight Dasher took just two games to be able to succeed in offensive coordinator G.A. Mangus' system.

Soccer club beats Vandy, ties UK

Staff Report

The Middle Tennessee Women's Soccer Club beat Vanderbilt and tied Kentucky at the new Sports Complex this weekend.

This was the second time that MT and 4th ranked Kentucky has played. The soccer club rode the success of their 1-1 tie over the Wildcats and to beat 8th ranked Commodore 1-0.

"Both teams are ranked very high in our region and they are two tough teams," head coach Wendy Windsor said. "The win over Vandy was a pretty impressive win for the club."

Kentucky and Vanderbilt came to MTSU this weekend as part of a double-header at the new Rugby fields off of Main Street. The Blue Raiders knocked off Vandy 1-0 after going the distance with Kentucky.

"We actually tied Kentucky 1-1 with plenty of opportunities to win the game," Windsor said. "We couldn't capitalize on anything."

Last week Coach Windsor challenged the team to keep improving each week and they did.

"We have a lot of freshmen this year the difference

between last weekend and this weekend I think they are really coming together. They are starting to gel with the other classmen and the classmen are starting to gel with them. It's impressive to see just how far they have come in just a week."

The soccer club is more like a travel team for the university as well the other sport clubs and they are here to represent the university and all the other 30 different sports that exist on campus.

"The club sports are a lot more competitive," Windsor said. "We have practice and try-outs and the talent level is a little bit higher. It gives students an opportunity. Let says that for some reason they don't want to compete at the NCAA level. This gives people another competitive outlet."

The club has been in existence at MT for the past four years and went to the quarter-finals in their regional tournament two years ago.

MT plays another club team out of Nashville this weekend before going on fall break and then they play in their regional tournament on Oct. 19-21. Once they come back they face Tennessee and Western Kentucky here at the Sport Complex on Main Street on Oct. 28. ♦

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