



Szabo:
Emotion on
the court

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Sudan

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Middle Tennessee State University

SIDELINES

VOL. 81 NO. 66

mtsusidelines.com

Golden Dragons soar onto MTSU

Chinese acrobat troupe to perform at Tucker Theatre

By Dana Owens
Staff Writer

The Chinese Golden Dragons will make their return to MTSU's Tucker Theatre to entertain students with mind-boggling acrobatics.

The internationally recognized acrobats were brought to campus two years ago with great success, according to Greg Feiling, coordinator of Student Programming.

"It was an amazing show, we had a lot of good feedback from everybody," Feiling said.

The first show's great response caused student programming to bring the acrobats back when they passed through Nashville. The Golden Dragon Acrobats have been the only show of this sort in the recent past of MTSU, Feiling said.

The Golden Dragons utilize acrobatics, dance, elaborate costumes and theatrical techniques in their performance. Feiling said students could expect out-of-the-ordinary balancing, agility, flexibility and contortionist acts.

Feiling said his favorite act of the last show was when the acrobats stacked chairs nearly to the ceiling of Tucker Theater resting on only four wine bottles. One of the acrobats then balanced on the whole structure with one arm.

Opryland also has a Chinese acrobatics program, but the Golden Dragons are a nationally touring group.

The acrobats that perform in Nashville are very traditional where as the Golden Dragons make use of modern music and movements, according to Art Fegan, the Nashville-based agent of the troupe.

"We try to incorporate the modern with the traditional," said Fegan, who is also president of Art Fegan Entertainment, Inc.

The Golden Dragons are more westernized with their use of music which includes pop, French opera and new age music, compared to traditional string music of the Chinese circus.

"The Chinese circus is the oldest folk art form on the planet," Fegan said. "This is really the root of all circus craft."



The Chinese Golden Dragon Troupe shown performing their incredible acrobatics. The troupe will be at Tucker Theatre Tuesday at 7 p.m.

He said the kind of acrobatics seen in Cirque du Soleil, which, will preform in Nashville May 9 and 10, originated with Chinese acrobats.

The art of acrobatics began over 27 centuries ago when Chinese peasantry began using everyday objects such as bowls and umbrellas to demonstrate strength and agility. Though the acrobats were origi-

nally looked down upon by in the feudal system of China, it has since gained a great deal of popularity.

When China turned to communism in 1949, the People's Republic encouraged all forms of traditional Chinese culture, including acrobatics. Currently, they are well respected and comparable to prima ballerinas or opera singers in Western culture, Fegan

Photo © Chinese Golden Dragon Troupe | All rights reserved

"They are considered a fine artist just about everywhere in the world except for the U.S.," he said.

Fegan called the acrobats "Olympic-caliber" athletes and compared the selection process of the ath-

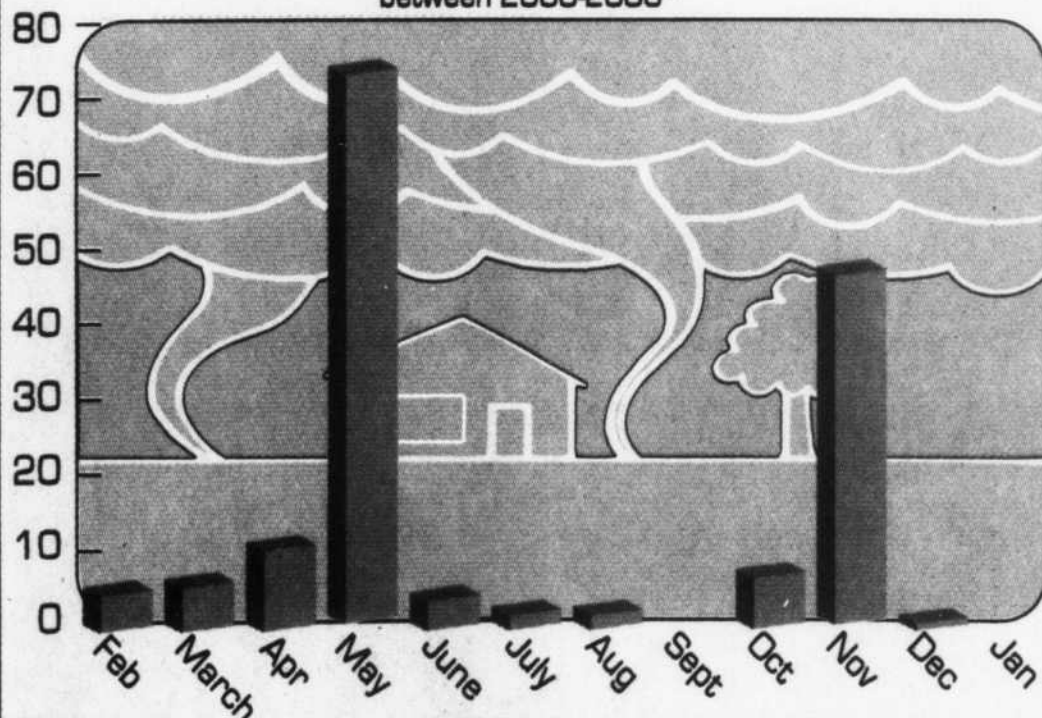
See Acrobats, 2

It's almost that time again; tornado season. Here is some interesting information that you might not be unaware of.

FYI:
Tornadoes

Since 2000...
257 injuries 33 deaths
\$147.692 million in property damages
8 twisters spotted in Rutherford Co.

Monthly tornado totals
between 2000-2006*



*based off information provided by NOAA Satellite and Information Service

Disaster drill becomes reality

Homeland Security drill turns serious after severe weather

By Michelle McCrary
Staff Writer

The words "this is an exercise" were uttered into mobile phones as volunteers portrayed concerned citizens and victims of disasters plaguing state officials in four Middle Tennessee counties April 7 and 8.

The drills in Davidson, Sumner, Wilson and Williamson Counties simulated disasters, such as a collapse of the Tennessee Tower, a train derailment, a chemical explosion resulting in the release of hazardous materials and the release of a biological weapon at the Tennessee State Fairgrounds, causing outbreaks of whooping cough, tularemia and pneumonic plague.

The greater Nashville Homeland Security emergency preparedness drill, the largest in the nation on a local level since Hurricane Katrina, was a test of state emergency officials and their effectiveness in responding to disasters like these in the event that they ever took place.

But, by mid-day, tornado warnings across the mid-state prompted the simulation to be put on hold, forcing volunteers and state officials to seek shelter as the impending severe weather.

"It's sort of like mixing reality with simulation," said electronic media communications professor Bob Pondillo about when the tornadoes and severe weather began mixing into the simulated disasters.

The words "this is not a drill" were heard uttered in the exercise room of the control center where volunteers were crowded in the doorway looking at storms on the radar as they spread over Davidson and Sumner counties.

The weather led to the cancellation of the day's

simulated events, and by that time, tornadoes were on the ground in Sumner County, leaving behind mass destruction, nine confirmed deaths and hundreds more homeless.

Pondillo was one of several MTSU faculty members participating in the exercise by calling county and state officials and then relaying information to on-site news teams made up of students.

"I wish we could do this every year," Pondillo said of the drill. "For [students] to be under the pressure like this is incredible. It really is like organized chaos."

Students from MTSU and Belmont University were able to gain real experience in their field of study by acting as simulated media providing breaking news coverage via satellite as the disaster drills began to unfold.

Dara Roach, a junior broadcast journalism student portrayed a broadcast journalism production assistant for the day.

"I've never been through an experience like this," Roach said. "I was running around like crazy making sure facts were correct for the simulated broadcasts."

As phone calls to sources all over the state were placed, simulated field reports began to show not only the scheduled drills but also the oncoming storm.

"It was chaotic and realistic up to a point," said journalism professor Kent Flanagan of the simulation. "People didn't know the information or what was going on."

In addition to the reports, the broadcast news accounts showed how hundreds of state officials were attempting to keep control of the situation.

"Simulations like this require that everyone gets involved," Flanagan said. "It requires calling lots of sources to flush out the correct information to provide to the public, but at the same time the media has to be careful not to over report their numbers."

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Tuesday Wednesday Thursday



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LO: 55°
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CAMPUS

U.S. Senate Candidate

Former Mayor of Chattanooga Bob Corker spoke about his policies and political position in his bid for the senate seat being relinquished by Republican Sen. Majority Leader Bill Frist.

FEATURES

Heffington tease head goes here

For a man who spends a good deal of his time in foreign lands, global studies program director Doug Heffington somehow manages to find and explore unique cultures in the states.

SPORTS

Blue and White game

The Rick Stockstill era officially began with the "Blue-White Spring Game" on Saturday, in which the Middle Tennessee Football team was divided into two competing squads at Floyd Stadium.

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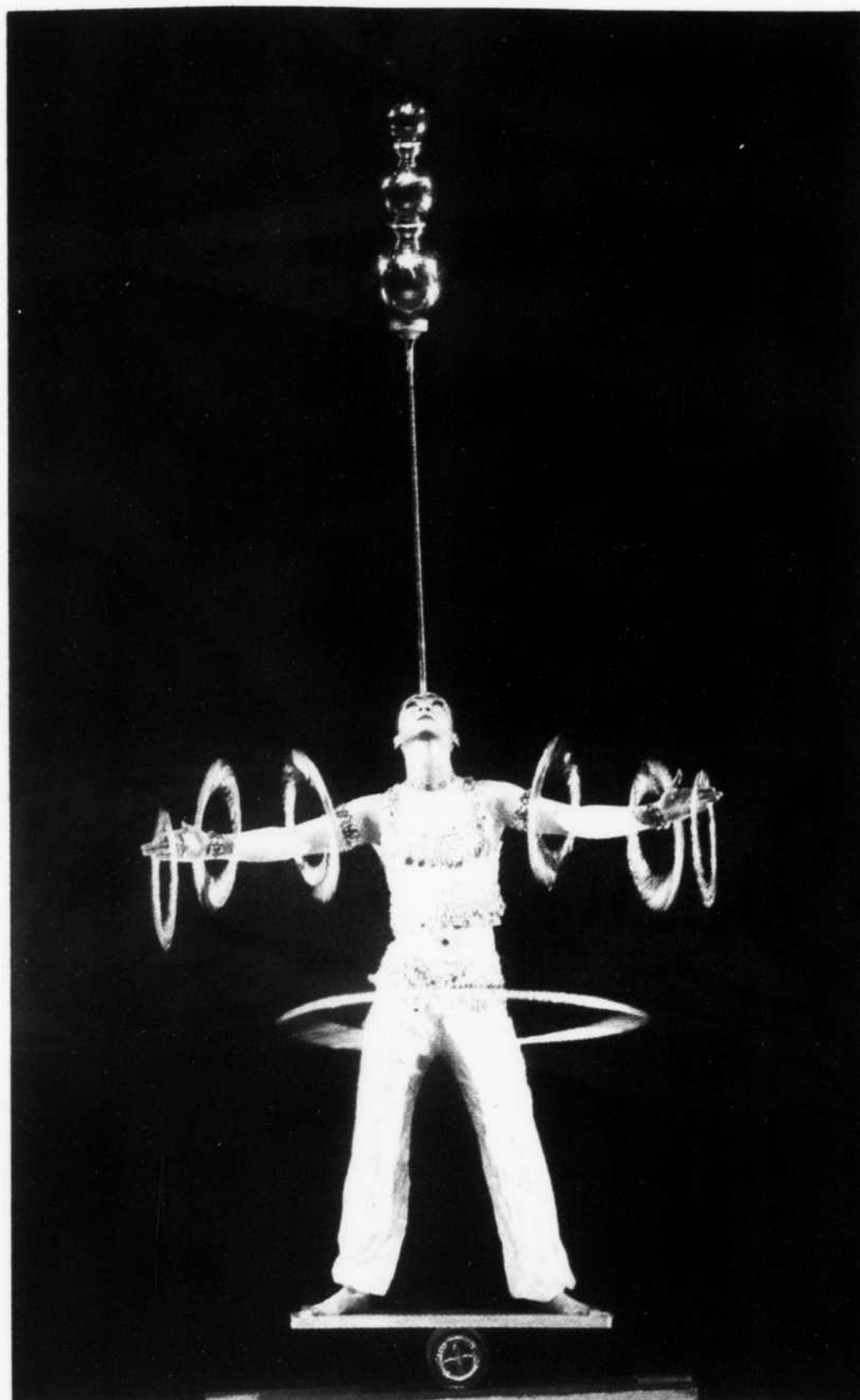
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Sidelines is the editorially independent, student-produced newspaper of Middle Tennessee State University. Sidelines publishes Monday and Thursday during the Fall and Spring and Wednesday during June and July.

Return of the Acrobats



Acrobats:
"Return to
Tucker Theater"

Continued from 1

letes to that of selecting gymnasts. At an early age, they are sent to a boarding school for years rigorous training.

The 24 on-stage acrobats that perform with this particular show are from the Cangzhou, Hebei province in China.

Danny Chang, director and producer of the troupe, was trained at his family's school in Taipei. By the age of 10, he was performing with the Golden Dragons, the school's touring group. Chang has since received two Distinguished Skill in Performance Awards from the Republic of China's Ministry of Education.

Chang tours with his wife, Angela Chang, who is has been the choreographer and costume designer for the troupe for over 20 years.

This is the troupe's 28th continuous year of touring in the United States, and they have performed in more than 65 countries. They will be coming to MTSU after several performances in Kansas and then will make their way through the South.

The show will be Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Tucker Theater. Tickets cost \$3 in advance and \$5 at the door, but Feiling recommends students purchase ahead of time due to the shows' popularity.

Photos © Chinese Golden Dragon Troupe | All rights reserved

A performance by the Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats, who are in their 28th year of touring. The troupe has performed in more than 65 countries worldwide.



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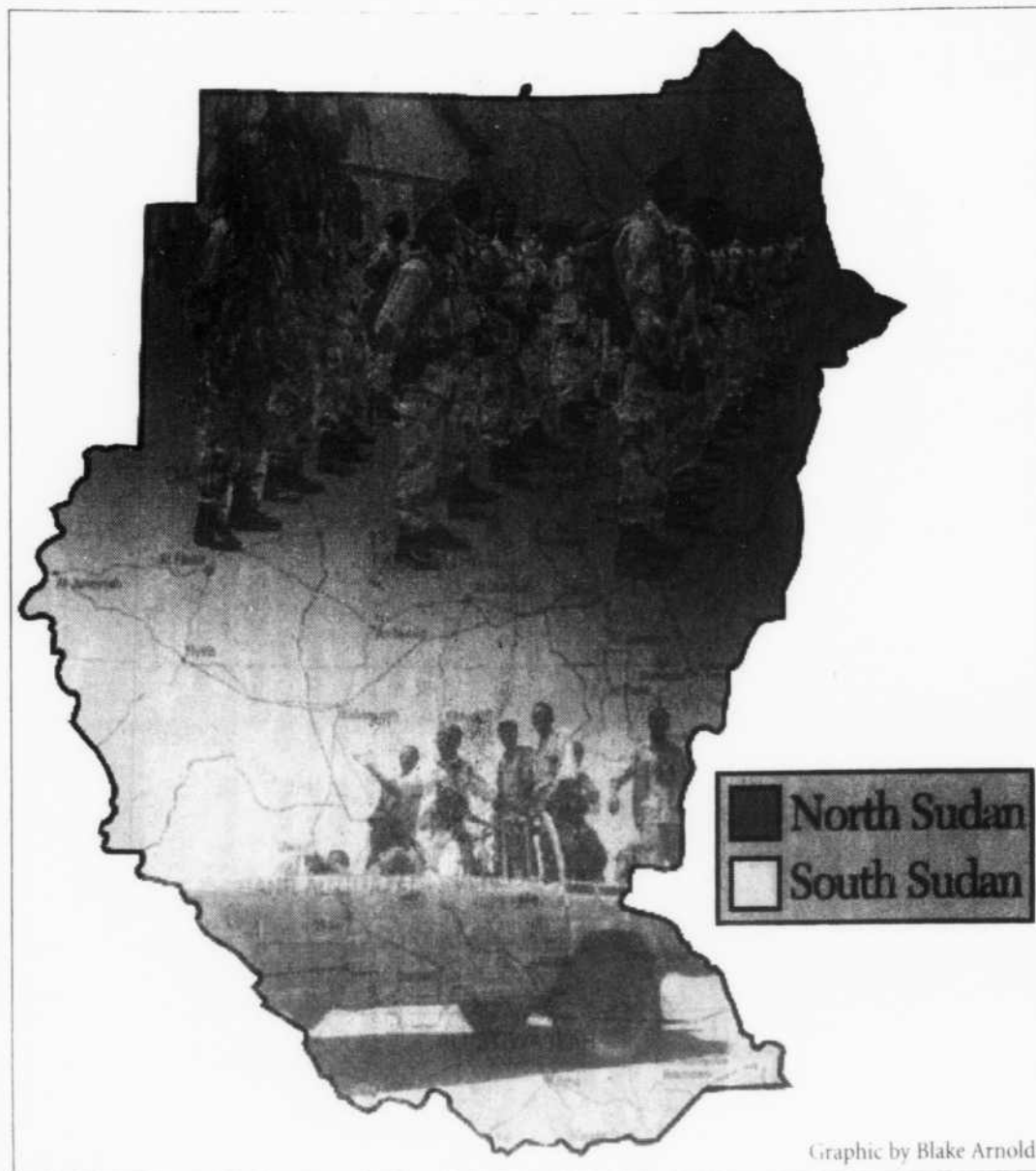
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NEWS

Sudanese rep speaks to students



Graphic by Blake Arnold

By Jenn Howerton

Assistant News Editor

In efforts to address the complex issues in Sudan, Sudan People's Liberation Movement representative Ezekiel Gatkuoth spoke to MTSU students April 6 at the request of the South Sudanese Student Organization.

After a brief description and history of the country, Gatkuoth focused on the civil war that has been raging between the North and the South since 1955. The South Sudanese were forced into the bush, the savannah wilderness in the southern half of the country.

Because of several breaks in the peace agreements during the 80s, the South does not trust the North. It is

used to breaking treaties, Gatkuoth said.

He stressed the idea that it is not solely based on religious lines, although it remains a major issue.

The North, which is predominantly Muslim, has been "trying to exterminate [his] people" by using counterinsurgency tactics, he said.

"They have been trying to destabilize the South because they consider us to be 'tribalist' and scattered," Gatkuoth said. "We are trying to make sure that all of our people are united."

Ultimately, he said, the "partner to the North" wants to make Sudan a Muslim state so it can "expand the Islamic ideology" further into Africa.

Oil is also a major factor in the conflict. Most of the oil

"Some of us in the South are not Christians. For their rights to be protected, there must be a secular constitution."

-Ezekiel Gatkuoth

Sudan People's Liberation Movement representative

fields are located in South Sudan, but the revenue tends to stay in the North. Although the Sudanese National Petroleum Commission does require that 50 percent of the profits go to each half, the South does not trust that is actually happening, Gatkuoth said.

However, the main focus for the southern half of Sudan is secession. In 2008, the National Census Bureau of Sudan will complete its census of both regions, and the citizens of South Sudan will hold a referendum in 2011 to decide if they will remain a part of the whole nation or form their own country, Gatkuoth said.

Although there is a possibility that the civil war will escalate if South Sudan secedes, Gatkuoth hopes that the North will see the ramifications for retaliatory action.

"Then the world will see who is at fault," he said.

Although South Sudan is still considered a part of the main country, it has its own functioning local government in Juba. The president, Salva Kiir, also serves as the vice president in the national government located in Khartoum, so he spends much time traveling between the two cities.

In response to the multi-religious nature of the region, Southern Sudan is cool.

"Some of us in the South are not Christians," Gatkuoth said. "For their rights to be protected, there must be a secular constitution."

He then turned to the struggles of the South Sudanese, who are primarily black Africans, following Christianity, traditional African beliefs or Islam.

There is a lack of infrastructure, such as an education system or roads, in the southern half of Sudan.

The ruthless fighting that has ravaged the state has forced many officials to place education on the back burner.

Because only two percent of the children in the South actually attend school, illiteracy runs rampant. Gatkuoth estimates that over two decades have been lost to this lack of education.

This ignorance has affected the area, especially in technical knowledge. Therefore, the construction of roads by Sudanese is a near impossibility. Gatkuoth joked that there have been no roads in South Sudan

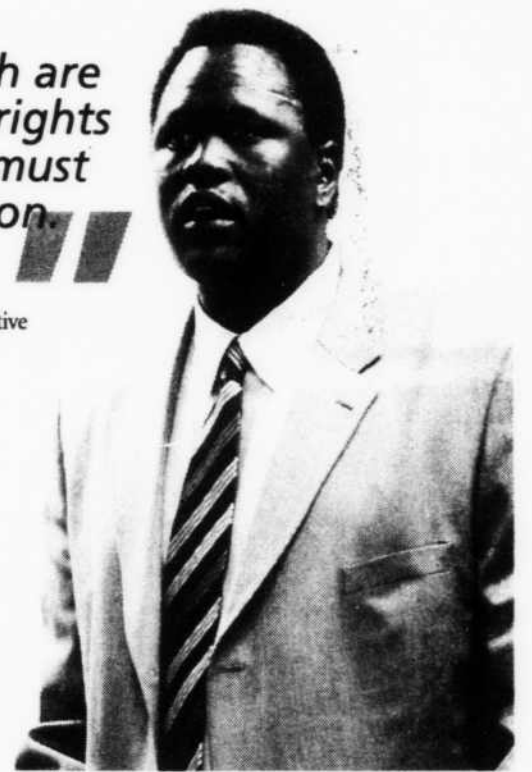


Photo by Adam Capps | Staff Photographer

Gatkuoth shown during his speech to students

"since creation."

Also, the South wants to bring the refugees that have been displaced by the war back into Sudan, but they are scattered across the world. Some merely moved over to surrounding African countries, such as Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria and Ethiopia. Others have gone as far as Western Europe and the United States. The education that these people have received out of the country will be invaluable to South Sudan.

Gatkuoth then called the Sudanese students that attend MTSU to come back to South Sudan to help their country. He said that many students who study abroad actually are planning on returning to their homeland, if money permits. Getting a college education is very difficult.

"There are no high schools in the bush, so you have to get a GED," John Garang Awan said.

Although this is the equivalent of a high school diploma, it does not qualify them for many scholarships. They have to work multiple jobs and take out loans in order to pay for college.

Karen Case, the SSSO advisor, said she was impressed with the twenty or so Sudanese students at MTSU.

"I see them choose their career paths and courses and can't help but see something in their eyes," Case said. "They have a burning desire to help their country."

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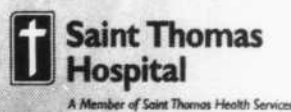
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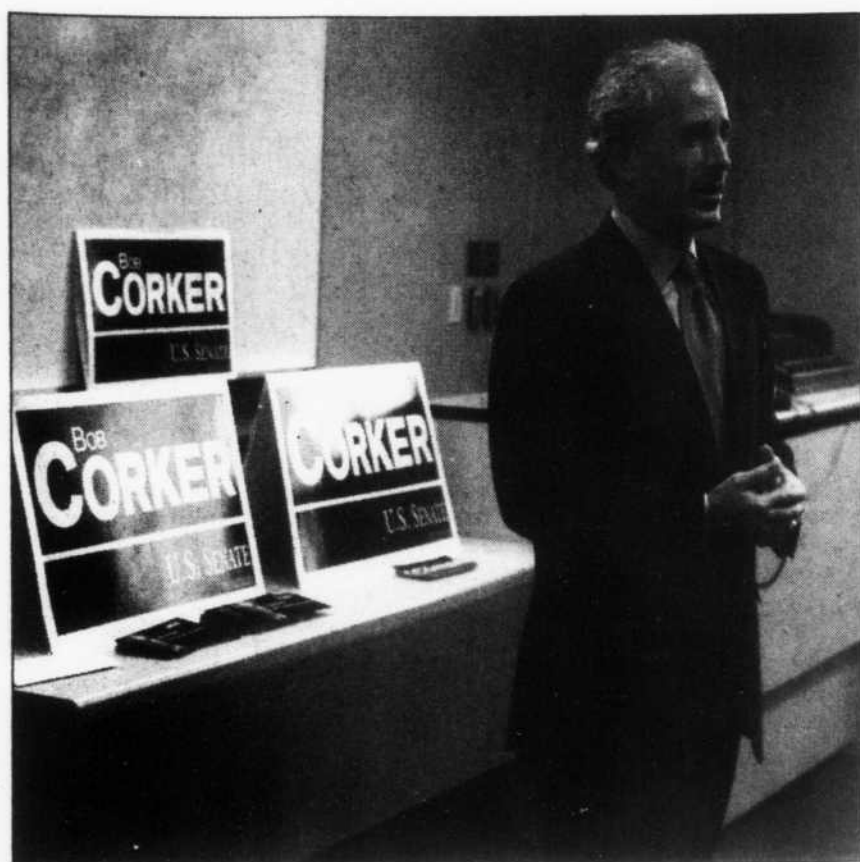
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Senate candidate explains goals



Bob Corker explains his political goals if elected to the U.S. senate seat in the coming election.

By Wesley Murchison
Staff Writer

Former Chattanooga Mayor Bob Corker spoke Thursday about his policies and political position in his bid for the U.S. Senate seat being relinquished by Republican Sen. Majority Leader Bill Frist.

"I am running for the United States Senate because I want to take an opti-

mistic and conservative vision to Washington," Senate candidate Corker said to a room full of MTSU students and faculty members.

During the speech, Corker outlined his four principles as part of his "Blueprint for Tennessee." He emphasized the conservatism behind his four principles that include free markets, ensuring the security and safety of citizens, faith and family values, and, this week's focus, smaller gov-

ernment.

"I've been using conservative principles to create positive results in this state all of my adult life," Corker said.

Corker is one of three primary candidates running on the republican ticket along with Ed Bryant and Van Hillary.

Both opponents have criticized Corker by labeling him as a moderate conservative who is soft on abortion and more akin to Democratic front runner Harold Ford, Jr.

In his speech, Corker said he will work to stimulate economic growth by creating "paying jobs and raise the standard of living for all."

"We [need to] make sure for instance that this is the place for innovation; we really make sure that our youth are absolutely prepared for the future; we make sure to focus heavily on alternative fuels and energy so that we are not so dependent on oil in the Middle East," Corker said.

Corker talked about his experience and successes as commissioner of finance where implemented his fiscal policies of limited spending and cutting social programs.

"I was able to put in place with others a wonderful welfare reform package where

I am running for the United States Senate because I want to take an optimistic and conservative vision to Washington.

—Bob Corker
Senate Candidate for Tennessee

we took our rolls from 96,000 down to 57,000 almost over night," Corker said. "We did it by giving people the opportunity to be trained and actually be dependent upon them instead of state of Tennessee."

Corker did not address the issue of the Iraq war directly, but rather about this second principle of safety and security he focused it on combating local crime.

"What that [safety and security] meant to me as mayor was just fighting common criminals," he said. "We were able to do that by focusing on repeat offenders we lowered violent crime by 51% in four years."

"But what that means on the national level though is making sure we have the world's best military," Corker said. "But it also means making sure we have streamline Homeland Security that actually works."

Corker also included in his principle of security the issue of immigration that is currently under a national debate.

"The debate right now is to create the same solution that actually secures our borders but at the same time causes there to be needs here in our country for people to work here legally," he said.

Most of his speech was centered

around his last principle of small government where he spoke about how the decentralizing of the government has gone "way to the wayside" in the Republican Party.

With Aug. 3 as the deadline for the primary elections, Corker has five months to campaign. He said during the speech that he has spent his time travel to 69 of the 95 counties in Tennessee and plans to visit 6 more before the general election campaign begins.

The visit to MTSU was the first of four stops on his campaign trail to universities. Next he will be visiting Vanderbilt, Carson Newman and University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

At the end of the speech, Corker took questions from students and faculty. The visit was planned and organized by Raider Republicans and MTSU Economics Club.

Jessica Reeves, a member of Raider Republicans and junior public relations major, said that she liked his speech but would wait to here the other republican candidates before making her decision.

If Corker wins the primary he might be racing against Harold Ford Jr. who is expected to carry the democratic ticket.

All hail breaks loose



Adam Casto holds golfball sized pieces of hail after friday's harsh weather

Applications for Collage staff due Friday

Collage, MTSU's literary and visual arts magazine, is now accepting applications for staff positions for the fall 2006 semester.

Positions include assistant editor, designer, online editor, visual arts editor, literature arts editor, assistant visual arts editor, assistant literature arts editor, visual editorial review staff and literature editorial review staff.

Applicants must be full-time students and maintain a 3.0 GPA or better, but they do not have to be honors students. Other requirements include a

minimum of one reference, samples of work or proof of ability, and two letters of recommendation, with at least one letter from an MTSU faculty member or current professor.

The letters and proof of ability do not have to be provided until the applicant is asked to come in for an interview.

"Collage provides students with a wonderful opportunity to experience magazine production in a non-classroom setting," said Editor-in-Chief Jessi Torres. "It has given me valuable tools that I know I will use long after graduation. I encourage

students from any area of study to apply."

Staff members are rewarded with benefits including the experiential knowledge of magazine production and copies of the magazine to add to their portfolios. Additionally, Collage working hours may be used as an on-campus practicum for some majors.

Interested students may pick up an application at Room 224 of the Honors building, or they may e-mail Torres at collage@mtsu.edu. Applications are due by Friday, April 14, 2006.

Corrections:

Thursday's photo of Coach Rick Stockstill with a pie on his face was taken by Greg Johnson. *Sidelines* regrets the error.

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FEATURES

Prof training future world citizens



Photo by Casey Brown

Global studies director Doug Heffington, right, and his students recently visited the Gullah Islands of South Carolina to study the indigenous culture of the Gullah people.

By Mary Rose Fox
Staff Writer

For a man who spends a good deal of his time in foreign lands, global studies program director Doug Heffington somehow manages to find and explore unique cultures in the states.

At the beginning of April, he took a group of students to the Gullah Islands near South Carolina and Georgia. There, he and about a dozen students went for a weekend trip to the islands, visiting such places as the islands of Tybee, St. Helena and Hilton Head.

The Gullah Islands are a rare side of American culture. Heffington said on the islands, roughly 98% of the residents are of African descent and most speak the language of Gullah.

"It really is in some ways Sierra Leone, that west coast of Africa—a transplant to the New World because they were kind of abandoned on these islands."

The trips Heffington takes with the global studies students can last anywhere from a weekend to a month and range from the Gullah Islands of

Georgia and South Carolina to Latin America. When he travels to Latin America through MTSU, he visits Ecuador, Guatemala and Costa Rica. He says he's out of the country a minimum of two months out of the year.

Heffington came to MTSU in 1992 after getting his degree at the University of Ohio and doing his dissertation in New Mexico. He said he came to MTSU in part because it was much closer to his home state of Arkansas. He was here for the conception of the global studies minor, and is excited to be a part of the dawnning major.

Global studies started as a minor at MTSU in the mid '90s, with a federal grant. Heffington explained that, although global studies may sound like international relations, it is much different. International relations is a politically oriented minor, but global studies is not defined specifically, meaning students are allowed the academic freedom to explore the concentration of their choice. Students can focus on any number of courses under global studies, such as history, language, geography or politics.

He said that global studies makes students more

aware of global issues like global warming and deforestation. "They really seem to feel that they have a stake in not just their future, but future generations."

He added that some students with the global studies minor have gone on to graduate school, but many have gone to work for nonprofit organizations and the Peace Corps. "If anything else, I think that global studies helps them realize just how much they are connected to the world," he added.

Although they might be confused for vacationers, Heffington said his trips are educational. He makes sure that students grasp as much of another culture as they can. He tends to spend three to four weeks in Costa Rica at a time with his students, and he makes sure they don't just visit tourist spots.

"We do San Jose a couple of times," Heffington said, but most of the time, his group is out experiencing places like farms, packing plants and sawmills.

"This is how Costa Ricans live; they're not all in San Jose," he added. The challenge for me as an instructor and for these students is to see as much of Costa Rica—Tucuman and Costa Rica—as we can. The

same can be said about Brazil, France or Germany."

He's already planning out different trips for his students. "I'm also working right now to develop a global studies trip for students in Toronto," he said.

He wants to take MTSU students there because over the last few years, Toronto has been labeled the most culturally diverse city in the world. "Their Chinatown is as big as Nashville," he said, adding that about 49% of the residents of Toronto don't consider themselves culturally Canadian, but closely linked to the countries they or their parents came from.

"The world is a cultural mosaic, that's all there is to it," Heffington explained. "There's stuff everywhere if you take the time to look at it."

Clearly, he appreciates how diverse the world is, and as far as his students are concerned, Heffington said they have started to really see and understand the world.

"They look at things more globally, more interationally," he said. "They're more connected. They start to think, 'You know, I really am a global citizen.'"

Lalo Davila—MTSU's salsa sensation

By Jessy Yancey
Staff Writer

Although it's silent, Lalo Davila's office screams percussion. Its walls are covered with drumheads on plaques and other awards for his craft, and a section by the door is full of autographed photos of musicians. It's a busy room fit for a busy man.

Davila is the director of percussion studies and is nearing the end of his 19th year at MTSU. Originally from Corpus Christi, Texas, he loves music of all genres, whether it be salsa, classical or gospel.

"I stress to my students that, in this day and age, if they want to survive and be able to actually make a living playing music, then it's important for them to learn all styles of music," says Davila. "It's important for them to be composers as well. I've written numerous pieces."

In addition to his compositions, Davila has literally written the book on percussion, a textbook called *Contemporary Rudimental Studies and Solos*. His second book, *Play at First Sight*, will be released in June.

"It's a book about becoming a better sight reader of rhythms," he explains, sipping coffee from a plastic foam cup. "Being able to recognize the rhythms quicker and being able to perform without hesitation."

Davila first learned to play drums by ear, with no outside

instruction.

"I've been playing since probably the sixth grade, if not even earlier than that," he recalls. "Actual training through the school [began in] seventh grade."

His received his first drum set the following year, although it didn't survive much practice.

"It was kind of junky, so it didn't last very long," he says.

Davila didn't get a brand-new drum set until his sophomore year at the University of North Texas, which has one of the largest schools of music in the nation—although, he jokes, no recording industry.

His time at UNT was very beneficial. Not only did it help him land his current job, his percussion instructor also turned Davila on to other genres of music.

"My teacher got me started in playing orchestral music when I was 19 years old," he says. Beginning with the Corpus Christi Symphony, Davila has since played with all of the Nashville professional groups.

"When I moved to Nashville, I was contacted by the Nashville [Symphony]," he says, twisting a red coffee stirrer. "I'm real excited because I pretty much have played with all of the Nashville professional groups."

One of Davila's more unique experiences was performing with the Nashville Ballet a little over a year ago when they decided to do a ballet with a salsa theme.

"It was a lot of

fun," he says, grinning behind his salt-and-pepper beard. "Typically they play with recordings, but they actually hired a whole band to play, and they danced to our music."

Salsa music is one of Davila's favorite genres because it brings together different styles of music.

The term itself is a mixture of a variety of ingredients, like the salsa that you go eat at a Mexican restaurant," he explains. "Salsa, in musical terms, is a combination of a variety of styles in Latin music."

For instance, cha-cha, mambo, bolero and merengue are all Latin styles of music that fall under the generic term salsa.

"It's kind of like rock music," he says, speaking so quickly he hardly takes a breath.

"If you say, 'I'm gonna go historic, rock music,' I say, 'Well, when kind?'"

Davila performs salsa music with his Nashville-based salsa band, *Orquesta Lalo*.

"We've been playing for the last 14 years," he says, "whereas I was one of the first to play in Nashville."

The band has performed with great artists such as Bob Finkel, Tim Fiddell and Larry Carlton.

"We only play every once in a while," he says. "We're so busy doing other things that when we do a gig, it's because we're all in town."

Davila travels extensively and has performed in cities across the United States, as well as in Mexico, Cuba and Japan. The latter was his "favorite experience of all time," where he performed with the Grammy-winning gospel band Take 6.

"I had never been to Japan before," he says. "It was just awesome performing with these guys and experiencing Japan." As they did a two-week tour, Davila was

The one [musicians] that I idolize the most are the ones that are most humble, that have not let stardom get to them and change them.

—Lalo Davila,
director of percussion studies at MTSU

able to visit several cities in which he said the performance halls were beautiful and the audiences were fantastic.

Ten years later, Take 6 member Cedric Dent also works at the M T S U M e l e n School of Music.

Although Davila hasn't been out of the country since he went to Paris about a year ago, he and in May, some of his students will be performing in Monterrey, Mexico.

Davila is of Mexican descent, and his unusual

name, Lalo, is actually a nickname for Gerardo. Although he plays many different genres of music, he says that almost all of the drummers he idolizes "will end up being Hispanic," such as Tito Puente, the Puerto Rican "King of Mambo." His list also includes Gregg Bissonette, who is best known for playing with Steve Vai and David Lee Roth.

"The ones that I idolize the most are the ones that are most humble, that have not let stardom get to them and change them," he explains.

Yet, Davila himself has had a taste of stardom. He conducts clinics for major drum companies (Evans, Pearl and Zildjian, to name a few) and has performed with many popular artists including Sixpence None the Richer and Clay Walker. He's been featured in several commercials for products ranging from movies ("Chicken Little") and video games ("Super Mario Sunshine") to a credit card.

"Ellen DeGeneres, she did a commercial with American Express, and I've got like two-and-a-half seconds on it," he says. "Towards the very end of that commercial—right after the ice cream truck goes by—there's a little bit of salsa music—that's me."

He also performed on saxophonist Kirk Whalum's album *Hymns in the Garden*, which was nominated for a Grammy.

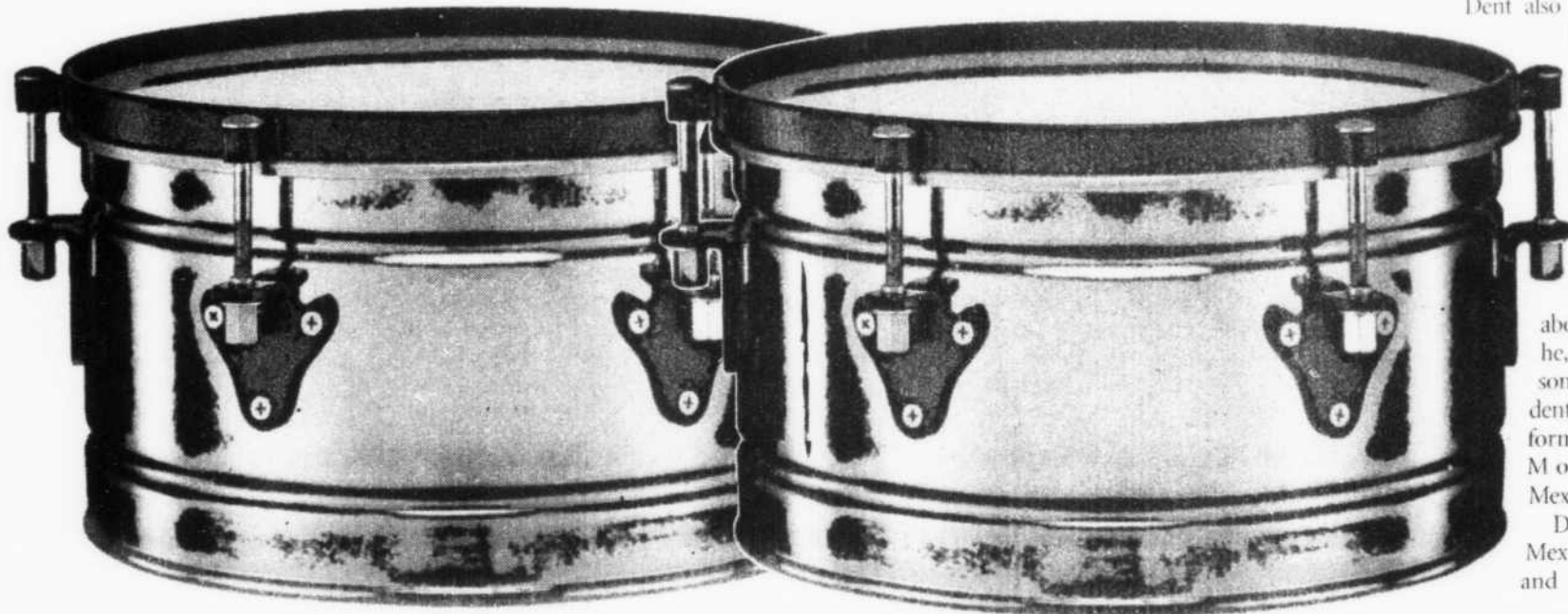
Still, Davila doesn't let his success intimidate his students. He said he believes they can see what their teachers have done and look to them for guidance and direction.

"If you could be anybody that you wanted to be, figure out who that person is and figure out how that person got there," he says, adding that he followed the same path to get to where he is today. He points out that it's kind of like the Web site MapQuest.

"You have a starting position, and you have an ending goal in mind," he says. "You figure out how you're gonna get there."

Davila believes this advice doesn't just apply to musicians but to students of all majors. They just need to keep one thing in mind:

"Do not settle for mediocrity."



OPINIONS

'Race card' abuse hurts America

By Matthew Hurtt

Hurtt Pride

Poker seems pretty popular among high school and college students these days. High school math teachers everywhere are using a simple deck of cards to explain complex computations and permutations to their befuddled students, while college tournaments are organized to pay for books and classes. However, others are using cards in a different manner — in particular, several well-known American individuals decided to play the "race" card recently.

Georgia Congresswoman Cynthia

McKinney showed Washington, D.C. her poker face a couple weeks ago when she got into a scuffle with a police officer. Crying wolf, McKinney exclaimed the officer was, in fact, a racist. She later apologized, but it just goes to show, some people will try to use racism as an excuse for anything.

I am not saying that there are not racist individuals anywhere in America. I am, however, saying that some people utilize their ethnicity each and every time they interact with someone who does not share their racial background. It is not fair for Cynthia McKinney to take all the blame because other well-known black

Americans tend to stir the pot more often than the Georgia Congresswoman.

Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton are notorious for reminding the American people of this "race war" that is taking place. This war only exists to those who constantly remind Americans that black persons are being wronged — every day of the week. Jesse Jackson and the NAACP called for the postponement of the April 22 elections in New Orleans, citing the disenfranchisement of thousands of displaced black Americans.

As an aside, those displaced individuals could go back to New Orleans and rebuild their damaged city. There is little

motivation, however, since our wonderful federal government has taken to insuring the comfort of those who live "on the dole." The only people (so far) who have returned to New Orleans are the affluent white Americans who actually care about their homes.

On a related note, I would go to Louisiana to help rebuild if I was through with college. There is money to be made in that area, and anyone with any determination would do well to relocate there, if only for a year or two.

The point is, it is people like Cynthia McKinney and Jesse Jackson who keep the black population in an up rage about

something that is not even a problem. If anyone should be complaining about race, it should be middle class white males who are not receiving the same treatment as other groups. Affirmative Action and quotas are a reality — you need only to look at MTSU hiring practices to see that.

So as we play the hand we are dealt, let us remember that if we play the race card, we run the chance of looking like a joker.

Matthew Hurtt is a freshman History/Political Science major, and can be reached best at mch2x@mtsu.edu

TV, video games have psychological impact on children

By DeAnn Currey

Staff Writer

Research shows that children are spending more and more time in front of the TV playing video games rather than participating in extracurricular activities. Studies show 9 out of 10 children are playing video games, while boys are spending an average of 13 hours a week playing video games. Girls spend, on average, just five hours a week on games.

It seems as if parents encouraging children to play video games and spend more time in front of the TV because it is an easy babysitter and a way to keep their children busy and out of their hair for an extra few hours each night.

Sitting a child in front of a TV screen may be an easy fix for parents but what kind of effect does it have on a child? According to www.scienceforkids.org, scientists have discovered that playing video games can change the way a per-

son acts, thinks and feels.

There are several effects that playing endless hours of video games can have on children. Obviously the exposure to violence is a major concern, but other concerns include the lack of social activity and the creation of stereotypes towards the opposite sex.

According to the American Psychological Association, playing violent video games may make children become less caring and helpful to their peers. Children are spending more time playing violent video games at the age when they should be learning healthy ways to interact with other people and how to deal with conflicts peacefully.

As graphics improve, children are exposed to more realistic violent acts. "There's also evidence that people become less sensitive to violence after a while. In other words, you get so used to seeing it that you eventually think it's not such a big deal," child psychologist John Murray says.

If a younger child is going to play video games sev-

eral hours a day, then they should be encouraged to play games that are more educational and age appropriate.

Violence is not the only concern with video games, but also the lack of social activity with other children. Kids are locking themselves in their bedrooms for hours on ends instead of interacting with other children their own age. This could cause children to have problems interacting with children at school and other places.

Video games also portray male and female characters in two totally different lights. For example, most video games have male figures as the main characters. The males are often portrayed as heroic and powerful, while female characters are often portrayed as either a helpless princess that needs her prince to come save her or a very sexy and seductive person that is only in the game for the male's pleasure. These are not the ideas that children should get of the opposite sex.

Parents need to take responsibility in what their children are playing and be more aware of the negative effects that playing so many hours of video games can have on their children. According to a poll on www.scienceforkids.org, 55 percent of parents say they do not pay attention to the rating of a video game when purchasing it or renting it for their child.

To me that is just absurd. How hard is it to look on the back of the box and see what the game is rated? It should be common sense to anyone that you would not let a young child play a game with the rating of "Mature."

Parents need to be more aware of the games their children are playing. Maybe instead of sitting your child in front of the TV each night, you should give the child more one-on-one attention.

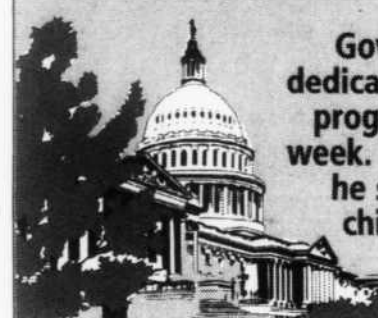
DeAnn Currey is a junior Mass Communications major and can be reached at jdc3v@mtsu.edu.



Photo courtesy of Whitehouse.gov

After this photo was taken, First Lady Laura Bush said, "I thought you ran for president because you wanted to get away from all that your predecessor had done to the office." (This was not a real quote)

Unbuckling the Beltway



Governor Phil Bredesen dedicated the new reading program for children this week. These are comments he should have told the children in attendance:

- 1.) "The name of this program is 'Books From Birth.' What's ironic about that is the executive director of the program is pro-choice."
- 2.) "How many of you kids have had to read a book for a class, and you told your parents you had finished reading the book but really hadn't? I have. I still do that as governor, too—only with budgets and clemency requests."
- 3.) "Disproportionately, some of you will end up using your reading skills in a prison library."
- 4.) "I didn't always know how to read. My wife insisted that I learn how to before I ran for governor. In all our 25 years of marriage, it's the best advice she has ever given me."
- 5.) "More of you could read if only we had an income tax."

Opinions Editor's note: This section takes the news and exaggerates it, or makes it up completely. Outside of this box, you're free to think for yourself.

Letter to the Editor: Democrats need to identify, defend family values

There are thousands of southern families today that are suffering due to our economy.

Two wage earners and no health insurance; one wage earner with two jobs and no health insurance; jobs lost due to outsourcing or plant closures; and, children that are not able to have the benefit of preventive medical care because of the lack of vital health insurance.

Families are not able to send their children to college due to the increase in tuition, and the reduction of federal help for students. Children growing up and must move away, breaking up the extended family due to lack of jobs in their rural area.

These issues are all family values of the most important category. The Republican Party has defined "family values" as only abortion and gay rights. This is to benefit the party's agenda of support for the wealthiest

Americans at the expense of

working families.

The Democratic Party MUST make family values a much broader area of concern.

Families that are struggling are not sitting around the kitchen table saying, "We have these problems because some young woman chooses to exercise her rights and decides to have an abortion."

These families are not concerned that people of the same sex wish to exercise their natural desires to be together.

Rather, families are suffering because the true "family values" of economic opportunity, good health care, educational opportunity, and a healthy environment are given away by the Republican Party. The Republican Party decides to support tax breaks for the wealthiest of Americans—borrowing money from foreign countries to support those tax breaks.

The Republicans also insist on paying for an unjustified war that

takes money

Away from our own needs here. Those needs include rebuilding the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, providing health care for Americans, improving education, and working toward a country that is energy independent.

The United States should be able to produce our own energy needs and not worry about oil from the Middle East and other countries. The research and development (R&D) and the jobs created from energy independence alone would

Local, state and federal Democratic Party candidates must address these issues in the south. "We The People" that live there need you—now more than ever.

Sincerely,
Bill Martin
Lewisburg, TN.



You got something fresh to say, kid?

Share your opinions with our new opinion man, Tim. slopinio@mtsu.edu

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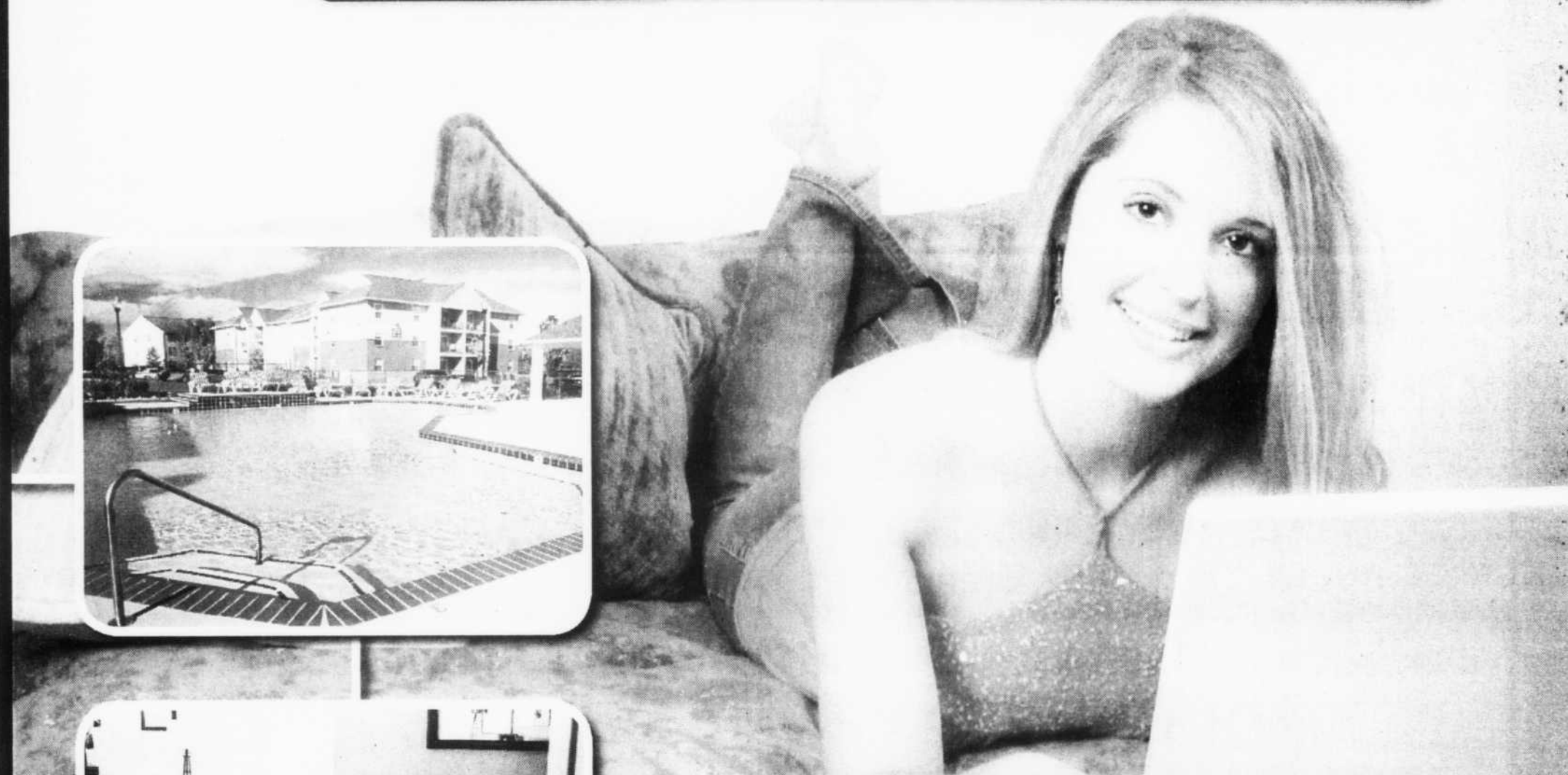
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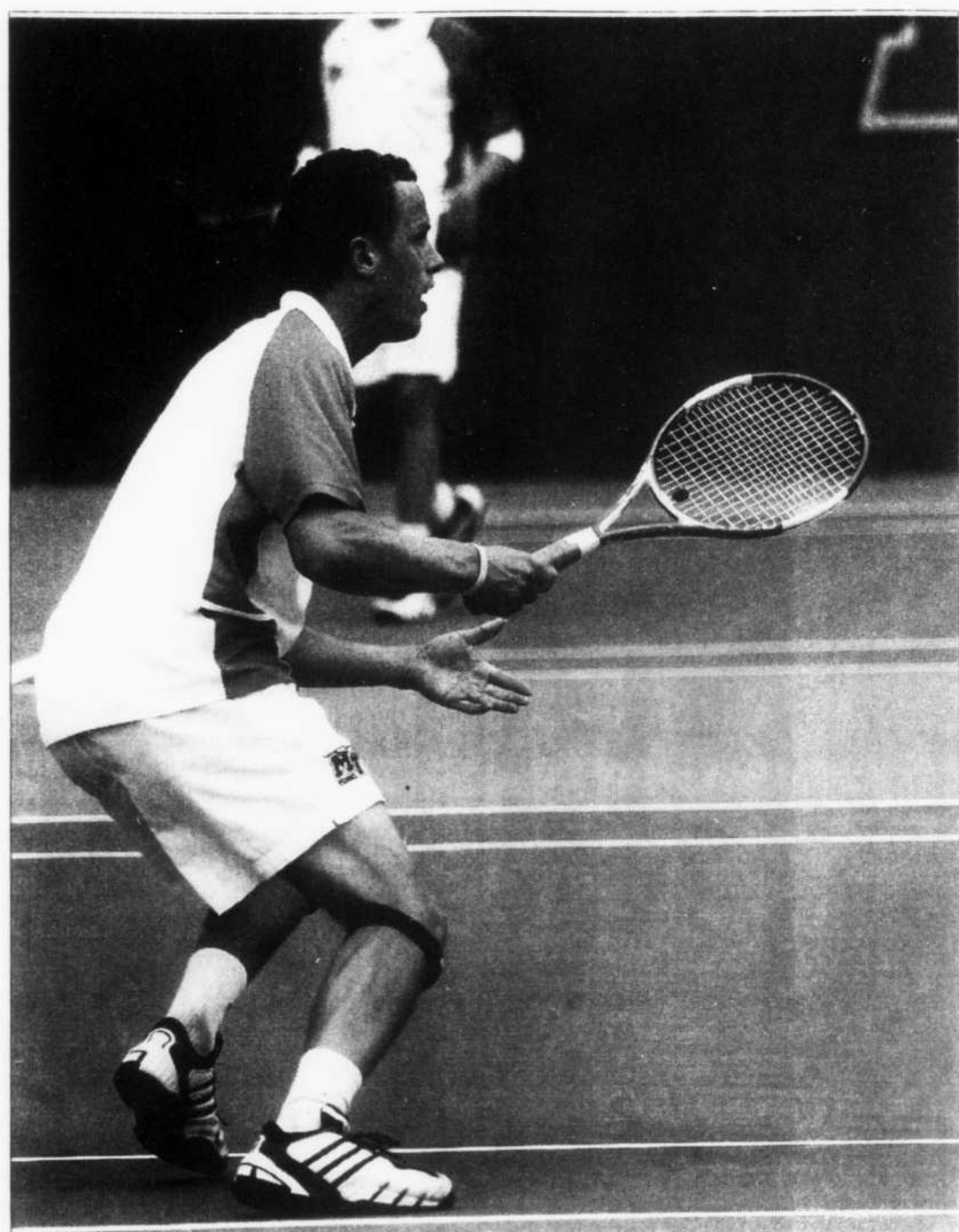


Photo by Joe Harvey / Staff Photographer
Kai Schledorn attempts a volley against UALR Saturday. Schledorn posted a 6-1, 6-4 victory at No. 1.

MT tennis wins SBC Shootout

Sunday, April 9

MT 4

ULL 2

Saturday, April 8

MT 4

UALR 0

Next game vs. Memphis,
April 15

By Casey Brown

Assistant Sports Editor

With the Sun Belt Tournament fast approaching, Middle Tennessee men's tennis appears to be peaking at the right time.

The 31st-ranked Blue Raiders defeated Arkansas-Little Rock 4-0 Saturday and No. 41 Louisiana-Lafayette Sunday to win the Sun Belt Shootout at the Rick Boldin Tennis Center.

With the wins, MT improved to 9-0 at home, having won seven of their last eight overall.

"This tournament was huge," head coach Dale Short said, "I was worried that I had put too

much emphasis on this weekend because the guys came out and played nervous, but we gutted it out, and I'm proud of that."

"Losing to Lafayette would have threatened our entire season," Short continued.

The Blue Raiders made an early statement with easy wins in the first completed doubles matches against UALR on Saturday. At No. 1 the fifth-ranked duo of Andreas Siljestrom and Marco Born defeated Eduardo Autran and Ivan Milivojevic 8-1.

MT clinched the doubles point when Brandon Allan and Kai Schledorn picked up an 8-4 victory over Edson Abrao and Dinko Halachev at No. 2. Greg Pollack and Morgan Richard of MT led German Perez and Rain Roigas 6-5 when play was stopped.

The Blue Raiders continued to dominate in singles play, winning the first three matches for a clean sweep.

Siljestrom, who had recently been battling a slump that saw the junior drop 19 spots in the ITA rankings, made short work of Autran, winning 6-0, 6-3 at No. 1.

Schledorn upped the MT lead to 3-0 with a 6-1, 6-4 defeat of Roigas at No. 3. Born then closed

out the match at No. 2, outlasting Halachev 6-3, 3-6, 6-1.

When play was suspended Pollack held a 6-0, 5-4 lead over Perez at No. 6. Richard was down one set to Milivojevic but leading 6-5 in the second, and Allan had split sets with Abrao.

MT then squeezed out a hotly contested win in the finals Sunday, defeating ULL 4-2.

The Blue Raiders started slow, losing a tight doubles point. Siljestrom and Born fell 8-4 to Amanjot Singh and Dusan Tabek at No. 1.

Allan and Schledorn answered with an 8-4 win over Shaun Ellison and Robin Ley at No. 2. With the point on the line, Pollack and Richard fell 9-8 (5) to Evghenii Corduneanu and Arlen Domoney.

The Blue Raiders rebounded in singles play. Born, Allan and Rishan Kuruppu defeated Singh, Tabak and Domoney, respectively, to give MT a 3-1 advantage.

Ellison answered with a 6-4, 7-5 defeat of Pollack at No. 5 to close the gap to 3-2.

Siljestrom clinched the match for MT with a 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 win over Corduneanu at No. 1.

The Blue Raiders will conclude the regular season against Memphis at the Boldin Tennis Center April 15 at noon.

White team earns steak and shrimp dinner

By David Hunter

Sports Editor

The Rick Stockstill era officially began with the "Blue White Spring Game" on Saturday, in which the Middle Tennessee Football team was divided into two competing squads at Floyd Stadium.

The White team, led by running back Eugene Gross, won the game 14-7. Gross scored both touchdowns for the White team from six and 65 yards out. He finished the game with 158 yards rushing.

"I'm just giving it everything I have," Gross said. "Knowing my assignments and just play hard."

The White team offense had a total of 358 yards with an average of 6.1 yards per play. They were also 8 for-11 on third down conversions.

"Well, we had a good day as an offense," MT quarterback Patrick Jackson said. "Eugene ran the ball real well and that opened up the passing game."

Jackson finished the game going 16-of-23 for 200 yards and two interceptions.

The Blue team got the ball first, but Reggie Doucet picked off quarterback Clint Marks' pass at the White seven-yard line.

The White team moved the ball in 14 plays and 93 yards, when Gross popped it in from six yards out to make 7-0 with 5:57 left in the opening quarter.

On the fourth possession, the Blue team found the end zone when Marks connected with tight end Stephen Chicola from eight yards out to tie the score at seven after a 12-play, 75-yard

drive with 4:04 left in the half.

On the very next play, since there were no kickoffs, Gross took the hand off and raced 65 yards for his second touchdown of the day. That score put the White team up 14-0 and led them to the victory.

"I think Eugene has had a great spring," MT first-year head coach Rick Stockstill said. "He didn't show me anything today that I really hadn't seen. I think Eugene is a very unselfish player. I think Eugene is by far the best player on that football field. I thought he had a great game today. I thought he made some great runs."

The Blue team had one more chance by driving the ball to the White 27 with less than a minute left. However, Marks was intercepted by Lonnie Clemous to end the game.

The win by the White team meant a steak and shrimp dinner, while the Blue team got hamburgers.

Blue quarterback Marks was 17-of-24 for 261 yards and was picked off twice.

White team member linebacker J.K. Sabb had seven tackles, one sack and one pass breakup.

"I just try to go out there and make plays," Sabb said. "It's the last game of the spring and we got to do our thing."

Wide receiver Jonathan Grigsby had five catches for 85 yards.

On the Blue side, Sean Mosley had three sacks, and Taron Henry had four catches for 112 yards, including catches from 50, 36 and 23 yards as the deep threat.

"I ran a lot of deep balls, and broke a lot of hitches," Henry said.

The other big news came before the

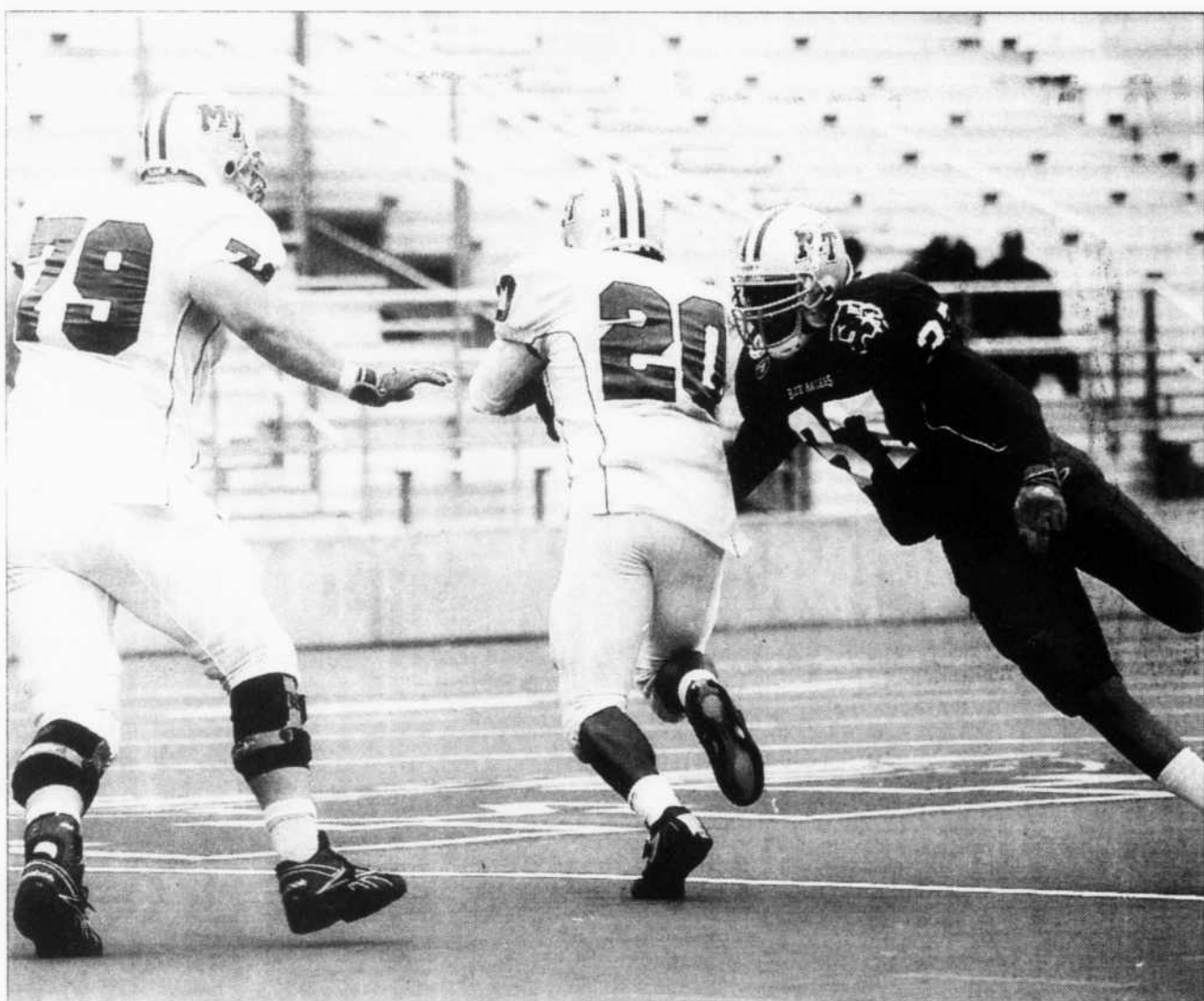


Photo by Joe Harvey / Staff Photographer
Eugene Gross, MT running back, runs past Anthony Glover, safety. Gross scored twice in the white team's 14-7 victory.

game when announced that this was the last game on the artificial turf. Athletic Director Chris Massaro. A donation of \$100,000 each was made by Mark and Anna Pirtle and Joey and

Debbie Jacobs to put in a new synthetic surface by the season opener.

"I told our team about the check presentation that would occur before the start of the game and the players

started cheering and just would not stop," Stockstill said. "Just go out there and stand on it for two hours. It's not a comfortable playing field. I think it means a lot."

Baseball loses two of three against New Orleans

Saturday, April 8

MT 5

New Orleans 8

Friday, April 7

MT 8

New Orleans 7

Next game vs. Austin Peay,
April 11

By Russell Luna

Staff Writer

The word consistency is something that baseball head coach Steve Peterson is still trying to get his team to learn after the Blue Raiders (13-12, 3-2 SBC) split their first two games out of three in New

Orleans (16-17, 3-5 SBC), with an 8-7 win Friday and an 8-5 loss on Saturday.

Michael McKenry led the Blue Raiders offensively Friday afternoon as Middle Tennessee picked up their third win in the Sun Belt Conference, defeating New Orleans in an 8-7 battle.

McKenry nailed a two-run bomb in the first to help Middle Tennessee jump on the board early. The Privateers tried to sustain a rally in the third and fourth innings as they narrowed the lead to 4-3.

A lead off walk by Chase Warren, followed by a double by McKenry ended Privateer starting pitcher Matt Eichholz's day (2-2). A Todd Martin grounder to center field would drive in two runs making the score 6-3 going into the bottom of the fifth.

LaVergne alum Matt Scott (5-1) pitched 6 and 2/3 innings allowing three runs on seven hits, while walking two and striking out five before finishing the evening. Despite his valiant effort, the Blue Raiders would encounter bullpen trouble going into the latter part of the game.

"Matt Scott threw outstanding," Peterson said to MT Media Relations. "He got in and out of trouble and we had to take him out because of a blister

something that's never happened to him before. Our bullpen self-destructed, but we were able to get big outs. It was huge to get this opening series win."

New Orleans made a threat in the eighth inning when they narrowed the lead to 6-5 off of three hits, including two that remained in the infield. A two-out single by McKenry and a wild pitch allowed Jeff Beachum and Wayne Kendrick to score in the ninth inning for Middle Tennessee, making it an 8-5 advantage.

The Privateers weren't finished as they tried to make a comeback in the bottom of the ninth. A Greg Wolfe single helped narrow the New Orleans deficit to 8-7, thus ending Alan Woodward's night.

Woodward finished the evening, allowing four runs on five hits, striking out five. Shay Horseman struggled on the mound, as he was able to get only one out. Langdon Stanley (who got his second save of the season on Friday) faced a 3-1 pitch to force a fly out to end the game, thus giving the Raiders the win.

Saturday afternoon's affair was another great night for Michael McKenry. The senior catcher went four for five, including scoring a couple of runs along with two runs batted in. Despite an

excellent effort by McKenry, the Blue Raiders struggled offensively.

Middle Tennessee stranded 11 runners in the game, including nine in the last five innings. MT scored three runs midway through the contest to narrow the lead to 5-3 at the end of six.

Wolfe's single set up a bases-loaded jam for Middle Tennessee; a sacrifice fly by Anderson off of Chad Edwards made the score 8-5 and gave the Blue Raiders their second conference loss of the season.

Tommy Sterritt (0-1) received his first loss of the season, allowing one run off of two hits. Starter Tyler Copeland pitched three innings, allowing three runs on three hits and striking out three in his no-decision effort.

Privateer Matt McKissick earned his first win in 2006 after pitching 1 and 2/3 innings, allowing two runs on one hit. Justin Garcia received his second save of the season for New Orleans.

Middle Tennessee wrapped up the series Sunday afternoon by losing 13-6. The Blue Raiders will play a couple of non-conference opponents (Austin Peay Tuesday and Belmont Wednesday-both games are slated for 7 p.m. starts) before hosting Western Kentucky this weekend.

SPORTS

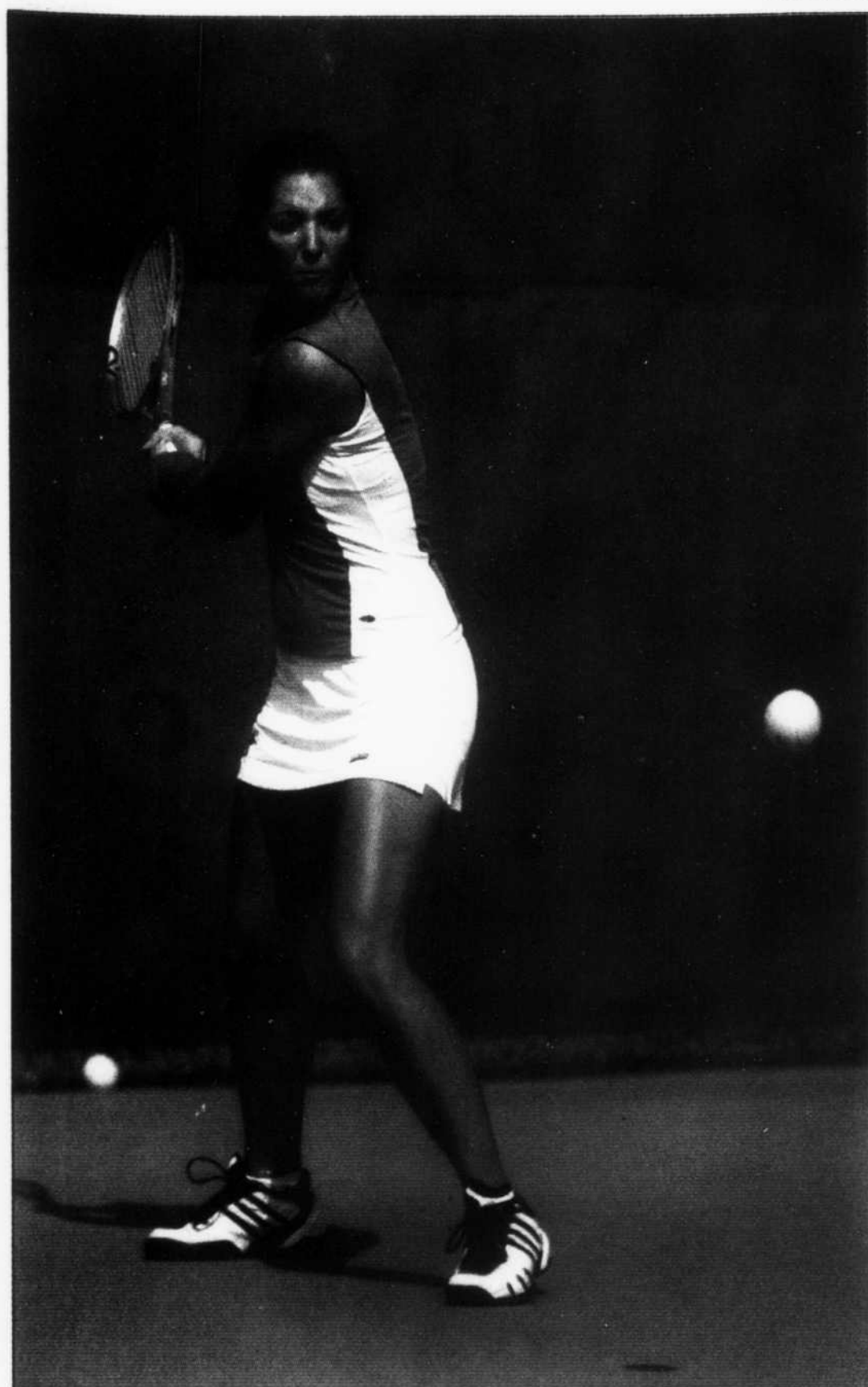


Photo courtesy of Media Relations

Claudia Szabo strikes the ball during a match. Szabo's emotional approach shows on the court.

Fiery Szabo heats up court

Australia native frequently lets temper flare over calls

By Casey Brown
Assistant Sports Editor

In the Land Down Under, the only things hotter than the temperature are the tempers.

At least, that is, if Claudia Szabo is any indication. The sophomore from Morwell, Australia plays in the number two position on the MT women's tennis team, but ranks first when it comes to colorful language and interesting gestures.

"I'll tell people what I think, definitely," Szabo says with a laugh uncharacteristic to those who see her only on the court.

Tennis, particular of the female variety, historically has been portrayed as a sport of quiet elegance, peppered with the occasional unconventional, McEnroe-esque character.

John McEnroe, meet Claudia Szabo.

She feels that her conduct between the lines is a product of her origins and only out of place in the context of American tennis.

"I can get away with a lot more in Australia as far as code violations, swearing, that kind of stuff," Szabo says. "It's a lot more common over there."

Unfortunately, her opponents aren't usually accustomed to such behavior.

Szabo has some sort of altercation with the opposing team during virtually every match, to the point that such confrontations have become commonplace, even expected.

When prompted to recall a particularly heated exchange, Szabo has little difficulty.

During a match last season with Texas Christian, words almost evolved into blows as a disputed line call turned ugly.

"I called it out, the referee called it out, the two of us were arguing for about ten minutes," Szabo says. "So finally she tells me to shut up."

Anyone familiar with MT tennis would recognize

this as a mistake. Szabo would go on to lose a close decision, but then the fireworks began.

"I shook her hand and said, 'No one tells me to shut up, mate,'" Szabo says. "We nearly got into a fight. Laura [McNamara, the assistant coach] had to pull me back from her."

Szabo insists she doesn't enter matches looking for fights, but instead her demeanor is a necessity.

"If I keep stuff inside, it just eats away and eats away until I explode, and it's a disaster," she says.

Szabo asserts that wearing her emotions on her sleeve "just works" for her. As an added incentive, such conduct tends to intimidate the opponent, a fact not lost on her.

Though it may seem hard to believe, Szabo says her behavior this season is tame compared to the past. She credits coach Alison Ojeda for the turnaround.

"She has taught me a lot, and I have to restrict a lot of what I do and say on the court, but she still gives me a little leeway because she understands what kind of person I am," Szabo says.

Could this passion translate into other endeavors off the court?

Despite a desire at times to reclaim her social life, Szabo maintains that tennis is her life.

"I've thought about it before," she says, "you know how easy it would be to just go to school and sleep?"

"I like to stay out late and party, but when you have to be up at 7:30 every morning for conditioning, you have to sacrifice."

Ultimately Szabo recognizes that her competitive drive and her caustic nature are an important element in the success of the team.

"Losing sucks, and I don't want to ever experience it," Szabo says.

Whether or not Szabo does lose, you can bet the opponent will be able to tell what she's feeling—as will everyone else in her path.

Juan Walker: 'A Weapon'



Photo courtesy of Media Relations

By Clarence Plank
Staff Writer

Juan Walker from Picayune, Miss. is Middle Tennessee's not-so-secret weapon, but he may be able to give the track team the edge they need to win events.

Not much is known about the standout transfer from Lindenwood College to Middle Tennessee, who is a decathlon athlete who can give his all to help his team win events.

"Juan has got a load of ability and therefore he can cover a wide variety of events," Coach Dean Hayes said. "It kind of makes it a little tougher for him but for one he can do so many things, but for us as a team situation he makes it a lot better. Because he can score a lot of points because he competes in a lot of different events."

Walker does compete in a lot of events during the season, including competing as long jumper, triple jumper, hurdler and sprinter.

"He's real complete, and he works hard," Hayes said. "He's just solid is what it comes down to. He

will be willing to do anything you want him to do."

When Juan has his down time he is usually relaxing by listening to music while working out. He listens to slow music to help him calm down before meets. Sometimes he can be found hanging out with the other tracksters at the Keathley University Center or spending time during the week going to class and doing homework. It's just a typical day in the life of a student who dreams of being in the Olympics someday.

"I'm working hard trying to get to that level," Walker said. "I'm thinking about the maturity part. Would I be mature enough to compete on that level?"

Juan is majoring in liberal arts and wants to be a personal trainer, maybe living on the West Coast in the future.

Juan's best day of competition was at the Blue Raider Invitational on campus back in January. He won both the long jump with a distance of 25-3.75 and triple jumped 49-1. Juan also won the 55-meter dash in 6.34 during the indoor season.

Even though Juan may have his ups and downs as he competes from week to week, he still is ranked fifth in the nation in the long jump with a distance of 25-8.

"He puts pressure on the other team when you're in a championship situation because you never know what event he's going to show up in," Hayes said. "He's a weapon because he can do so many different things."

As a jack of all trades in track and field, it is just another day in his life. Juan does enjoy watching baseball, which is his favorite sport, next to basketball.

MT tracksters finish busy weekend

By Clarence Plank
Staff Writer

Over the weekend the Middle Tennessee track and field team were very busy as they competed in different states as split teams. One half of the Blue Raider track team was in Texas for the 79th Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays in Austin, Tex., Friday and Saturday.

Juan Walker finished fourth in the long jump with a distance of 24-10 and Linnie Yarbrough set a personal-best of 13.83 in the 110-hurdles this season. Walker also set a personal best with 14.09 and made the event finals in the 110-meter hurdles.

VanTonio Fraley ran in the 100-meter prelims, but failed to make the finals. The team of Walker, Fraley, Yarbrough and Daryl Terrell were able to qualify for the event finals on Saturday with a time of 39.83 in the 4x100-meter relay. A team of Terrell, Sean Waller, Orlando Reid and Jermaine Barton finished fifth with a qualifying time of 3:08.04 in the 4x400-meter relay.

The women's team of TraMayne Gillyard,

Tiffany Owens, Shanna-Kay Campbell and Veronia Patterson in the 4x400-meter relay failed to make the event finals.

The team of Campbell, Gillyard, Candice Robertson and Stephanie Tamgho finished ninth in the 4x200-meter relay. Stephanie Tamgho finished ninth in the long jump with 19-1.25, trying her personal best of the season.

Saturday Yarbrough finished second in the 110-meter hurdles and nearly beat his personal best time with 13.73. Yarbrough was beaten by George Mason's Richard Phillips, who won with a time of 13.71. Walker did not compete in the finals in this event.

The men's 4x400-meter relay team of Terrell, Waller, Reid and Barton finished third in 3:08.02. A team of Walker, Fraley, Terrell and Reid finished with a NCAA-regional qualifying time of 40.15 to finish fifth in the 4x100-meter relay.

In the 4x200-meter women's relay a team of Campbell, Gillyard, Robertson and Tamgho finished ninth with a time of 1:39.16.

The other half of the track team competed

at the Ole Miss Invitational in Oxford, Mississippi on Saturday. Jonathan Guillou finished third in the 1500-meter and team-mate Pete Senatus finished fourth in the 400-meter hurdles. The men's 4x100-meter relay team of Jonathan Oliver, Samuel Adade, Senatus and Derek Carey finished fifth.

James Thomas broke his school record with a mark of 178-6 in the hammer throw and finished sixth. This was the third time this season that he has broken his own record. He also finished ninth in the discus with a distance of 143-11.

Tavaris Leak finished ninth in the long jump and Julius Defour tied for eighth in the high jump.

In the 400-meter Antranette Stringer finished seventh, and Sierra Douglas finished ninth in the triple jump.

This weekend the track team will split up again to travel to Knoxville, Tenn. for the Sea Ray Relays and other squad will head up to Nashville, Tenn. for the Boston-Moon Invitational.

Stiner, Reed hit homeruns in Sunday loss

Sunday, April 9
MT 4
WKU 7

Saturday, April 8
MT 3
WKU 7

Next Game at Memphis,
April 12

By Erika Davis
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee softball team (10-28-1, 1-1 SBC) split a doubleheader with Western

Kentucky (20-18, 1-1 SBC) in Bowling Green Saturday, winning the first game 5-4 but dropping the second by a 7-3 score.

Middle Tennessee pulled out the win despite playing with a limited roster. In the first game sophomore Ashley Katinas pitched six innings, allowing four runs on 10 hits.

In the bottom of the sixth inning, WKU's Amanda Ford-Fietz hit a three-run homer to centerfield to expand the Hilltoppers lead to 4-0.

Facing that deficit in the top of the seventh inning, MT's Muriel Ledbetter hit a leadoff home run that began the Blue Raider rally. Martha Davis and Melissa Weiland followed the homerun with back-to-back singles.

With the Blue Raiders down to their last out, Trish White stepped

in as a pinch hitter. White took a two-strike pitch over the wall in left field to tie the game at four.

In the eighth inning MT catcher Brandi Bochner hit an RBI single, scoring Ledbetter and providing the decisive run.

The pitching staff appeared to tire in Game 2, as Katinas gave up five runs before White replaced her in the third inning.

WKU scored one in the first before Rebecca Horesky hit a grand slam, making it 5-0 Hilltoppers.

In the fifth inning MT attempted a rally, putting together two runs. WKU was too much for the Blue Raiders to handle, however, as the Hilltoppers scored twice more in the bottom of the inning.

With the loss Katinas dropped to 2-6 on the season.

On Sunday, the Hilltoppers

knocked off the Blue Raiders in the final game of the series 7-4.

WKU got on the board first with two runs in the bottom of the first. However, MT in the top of the second answered back with Ledbetter scoring on a RBI single by Weiland. WKU made the score 3-1 with a run in the bottom half of the inning.

The Hilltoppers added two more runs in the third, one in the fourth, and one in the fifth.

MT's Shelby Stiner connected on a homer in the fourth, and Kristine Reed added a two-run homer in the seventh. Weiland went 3-for-3 with a RBI in the loss.

The Blue Raiders falls to 10-29-1, while WKU improves to 21-18.

The next game for the Blue Raiders is Wednesday at Memphis beginning at 2 p.m.

Women's tennis team breaks losing streak

Sunday, April 9
MT 5
Memphis 2

Next match vs.
UAB,
TBA

Staff Reports

The Middle Tennessee women's tennis team ended their six-match losing streak with a 5-2 victory over Memphis, yesterday.

MT improved to 7-12 on the season, and had a full team for the first time in two weeks.

The team won all three doubles matches and four singles matches.

Pooja Kommireddi won twice on the day with a win in No. 3

doubles with partner Elvira Yusupova and No. 6 singles.

Kommireddi's 25th singles win of the season put her tied for sixth on the all-time single-season list.

Kommireddi tied Elina Durchman and Tanja Buchheim, Yusupova, Ann-Kristin Siljeström and Kelly Adams all won their singles and doubles matches.

The duo, Marlene Chemin and Claudia Szabo, won their doubles

match. However, both of them lost their singles matches.

The next match is either Friday or Sunday against UAB and against Marshall on Saturday at 9 a.m. Both matches will take place at the Buck Bouldin Tennis Center here on campus.

These are their last matches before the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

The SBC Tournament starts April 21 on the campus of South Alabama.

Letters to the Editor

Sidelines welcomes letters to the editor from all readers. Please email letters to:

SLopinio@mtsu.edu

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Exposure



Mellow Mushroom makes 'Boro debut

INSIDE:

Inside Man
Basic Instinct 2

'Take Me Out'
begins run at
Tucker Theatre

+*Calypso Cafe*
+DVD Plus

the editor roars...



What up Murfreesboro? Are you chillin'? I hope so, because the 'Boro is about to heat up, literally.

Personally, I couldn't be more excited about the upcoming change in weather.

So in celebration of the spring, we have brought you a guide to dinner and a movie in Murfreesboro.

With articles on DVD Plus, "Inside Man" and "Basic Instinct 2" plus reviews on Mellow

Mushroom and Calypso Cafe, you have a few different possibilities to mix and match for your evening out.

Is it going to be Mellow Mushroom and then Inside Man? Or rent a flick from DVD Plus after a meal at Calypso Cafe?

The possibilities are endless...

Well, no, I guess they aren't quite endless. In fact, they are quite finite.

So use your imagination. We love ya, Murfreesboro!

By Phillip C. Buck
Exposure Editor

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Calypso Cafe

Cinema guide

Joseph Schmickrath
breaks down the box
office with reviews of
Inside Man and
Basic Instinct 2

Mellow Mushroom

The heady pizza shop
makes its debut in the
Boro

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Erica Hines
John Hreha



thursday april 6

Liquid Smoke - DJ & Jazz

The Boro - The Easy Kill, Evervigilant,
Pigdog, and Bobby Holland of Ethan Swim

Bluesboro - Pimpin Ain't Easy

friday april 7

The Boro - MTSU Jazz Orchestra

Wallstreet - Victor Furious and the
Murder of Men, Belianto, Crank Sanatra,
and Finding Steve Cunningham

saturday april 8

The Boro - Fluid Ounces

Wallstreet - Skyhi and Monday's Off

Bluesboro - Joe Harvey

sunday april 9

Grand Palace - The Ponys and The Mattoid

concert calender

Stone River's "Hidden Treasure:" DVD Plus

By Kristen Teffebeller
Exposure Columnist

After a long day of school or work, you may not want to go out on the town. The most comforting option is to rent a movie, curl up on the couch and escape into Hollywood fantasies. Corporate video store chains are an obvious choice but the cost and late fees can be a little too high, in another scenario, the desired title is either out of stock or isn't carried by the company.

The solution to the video chains is tucked behind Coconut Bay Cafe on Old Fort Parkway: DVD Plus, where you can buy, sell or trade only DVDs. Owner and operator Ferrell Smith stocks 5000 widescreen titles in the genres of classic, comedy, horror and adult.

His prices are easy on the wallet, too. A four-day rental of a "classic" title costs \$2.99 and a new release

goes for \$3.99; the fourth and eleventh rentals are free. Titles for sale are located on the counter and sell for \$6 a pop or five or \$25.

Is there a movie you have to watch for a class?



Smith probably has it in his inventory.

"I try to carry titles that professors want to students to watch," he said. "I'm always open to helping a professor out."

His most popular titles include "The Boondock Saints," "Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels" and the director's cut of "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil." If he does not carry a particular movie, customers can request it. Once he finds it, Smith could have it in "about a week," he said.

A native of Gallatin, Smith runs the store seven days a week from 2 p.m. until 10 p.m. He closes at 9 p.m. on Sundays, but will stay open later if needed.

"As long as people are in the store, I'll stay open," Smith stated. In addition to running the first DVD-only store in Tennessee, Smith has numerous skills and professions under his belt. He majored in psychology and political science at Middle Tennessee State University and graduated with honors in 1987. Smith went on to work for the Human Services Department before opening up his own state-licensed adoption agency, Heaven

Sent Children, in 1989.

"I was elected constable for two terms," Smith said. "I mainly helped out the sheriff's department by serving papers, but I worked a couple of wrecks, a fire and broke up a fight."

After purchasing a computer for home studies, Smith realized the computer industry would become massive. He left the adoption agency to open a computer store, eventually owning six stores in Rutherford and the surrounding counties within 12 years. While running the computer store chain, he created and produced computer "how-to" videos. Then, two years ago, Smith decided to sell the chain.

"My last shop was located next to Wall Street," he said. "I couldn't compete with Wal-Mart."

The sale of his computer shop allowed him to open DVD Plus. Smith admitted he had "always wanted" to open a video store, even

when he ran the computer business. But his abilities and knowledge do not end there. Smith also has a pilot's license, preacher's credentials (which allows him to perform weddings) and is a published author.

His first book, a science fiction/fantasy story titled *Dark Ascension*, is available through Amazon.com and various bookstores, including DVD Plus. Smith has a second novel in the works, titled *Shadows of Perfection*, which will be available later this year.

Although he said "nothing too interesting" has happened at DVD Plus, Smith revealed that anything can happen in the world of retail. One night while working at a convenience store, a man walked in dressed in a straightjacket, blue jeans and no shoes. The man's two girlfriends had discovered his cheating ways and took revenge.

DVD Plus story continued on page 4

88.3 WMTS hosts fundraiser yard sale

By Meghanna Thompson
Exposure Columnist

Saturday, April 8th, MTSU's student run radio station, WMTS, is to host two fundraisers this April. Audio equipment, CD's, books, DVD's, clothing and miscellaneous items will be put up for sale.

All who attend the sale, location set at 2220 East Main Street in Murfreesboro, will receive free snow cones and stickers. WMTS t-shirts will also be available for those who attend, provided a purchase is made.

The yard sale will begin at 8 a.m. and will end at 2 p.m.

The Bluesboro will be hosting the second fundraiser for the station, with several local bands performing in support of the station. On Tuesday, April 18th, The States, Belize and New Madrid will begin the entertainment at 9 p.m.

For more information about the WMTS benefit yard sale or the benefit show, log on to the WMTS webpage at wmts.org and stay tuned to 88.3 for all your music needs.

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'Take Me Out' begins run at Tucker Theatre

By David Wheatley
Exposure Columnist

While the New York Empire don't exist outside of "Take Me Out," part of the MTSU CenterStage Series and a Tony Award winning play, you may find this fictitious franchise more engrossing than last year's pennant race.

The wonderfully brave cast and crew of "Take Me Out" have put together an outstanding and thoughtful performance taking on the challenges of a baseball team whose star player has recently outed himself.

Josh Proctor has an energetic and boisterous performance as self-proclaimed narcissist and Empire's centerfielder, Darren Lemming. A product of interracial marriage, Lemming has faced a lifetime of people trying to

peg his identity. After announcing his homosexuality, the Empire's social dynamics shift and the world reacts according to their own preconceived notions. Lemming is distraught at the notion that his identity could be based on a single word.

Jordan Turman has a quiet role for most of the play as Shane Mungitt, the team's newly transferred closing pitcher. But Turman shines in the third act as Mungitt's seemingly benign intolerance (and ignorance) becomes rage. On the other end of the spectrum, Kippy Sunderstrom, played eloquently by Brian Morgan, is the Empire's most intelligent player, whose importance is found in relaying to us the layers of complication under each character's surface.

William C. Fancher plays Mason Marzac, Lemming's

business manager and full-time loner. Fancher delivers a monologue regarding the public's love of baseball with such emphasis and command that it's almost a show-stealer if not for the excellent cast around him.

Scenic Designer Scott Boyd uses an approach that is simple, effective and cleverly minimal, and never distracts from the dialogue or action on stage. Most of the play is set in the Empire's stadium, whether in the locker room, in the manager's office or on the diamond, and the way he has integrated those elements is well planned.

Director Deborah Anderson must be exceedingly pleased with the production that she and her staff have produced as the performance was well-composed and poised.

Richard Greenberg's script uses the game of baseball as an apt foil for his characters. The first act is full of references to the numerology behind the game: Three bases, three outs, three strikes, nine players, etc. His focus on the rule, order and symmetry of the game, as well as Marzac's espoused belief that baseball is a perfect exercise in democracy and equal opportunity, is mashed against the grain of imperfect and asymmetrical characters. The result is a marked emphasis on the follies of humankind.

Take Me Out is continuing to run Thursday, April 6 through Saturday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m. in the Tucker Theatre. Tickets are \$8 general admission, \$6 for MTSU employees and free for MTSU students (with a valid ID).

DVD Plus continued from page 3

"One of the girls worked at Centennial [Medical Center]," Smith chuckled. "The girls waited for him at home, put the straightjacket on him and took his wallet."

Smith released the man, who had walked five miles to find someone to let him out. Once free, Smith said the man walked back home so he could recover his wallet and return the jacket.

DVD Plus is beginning to gain more business, thanks to newspaper advertisement and new signs. Smith believes the current mall expansion may "bring in more business," but still thinks of the quiet store as "a hidden treasure."

"As long as there is a need for DVDs in Murfreesboro," Smith said. "I'll stay here."

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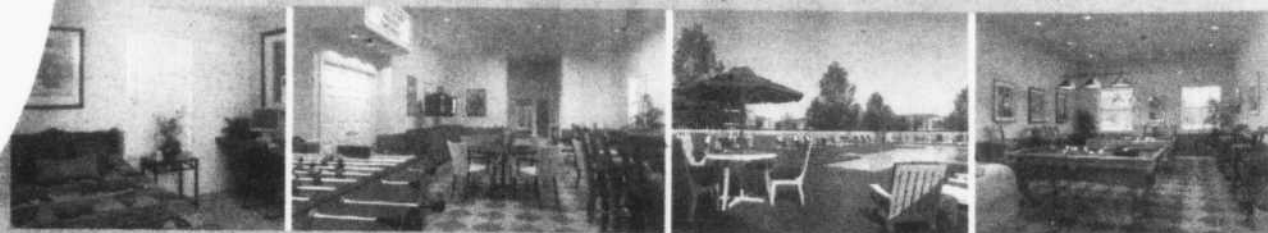


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Inside Man: Delivering the goods

By Joseph Schmickrath
Exposure Columnist

Those wary of another racially or politically charged film by director Spike Lee needn't be worried about "Inside Man," an intelligent heist picture that keeps you guessing and forces you to pay attention to every detail.

Lee is in new territory with this type of genre filmmaking, more mainstream than his works of the past. But it doesn't matter, because Lee's filmmaking skills behind the scenes shine through. It also doesn't hurt to have two Academy Award winners and two nominees on your side. Denzel Washington, Jodie Foster, Clive Owen, and Willem Dafoe are all first rate. Each gives a respectable quality to their characters, even though at times their characters aren't respectable.

The story by Russell Gewirtz involves Dalton Russell (Owen) staging a heist of the Manhattan Trust Bank. Detective Keith Frazier (Washington) and Detective Bill Mitchell (Chiwetel Ejiofor) of the NYPD are assigned the case, but must first let Capt. John Darius (Dafoe) of the Emergency Services Unit do his job before they can intervene.

As the heist turns to a hostage situation, bank chairman Arthur Case (Christopher Plummer) fears a dark secret from his past being released from a safety deposit box inside. He assigns Madeline White (Foster) with the task of retrieving the box from Russell, who is always one step ahead—knowing full well the contents that lie inside the box.

The cinematography by Matthew Libatique ("Requiem for a Dream") adds believability to the situation. His hand-held camera techniques

put the audience in the movie, complementing the frenzy that the detective and police force are going through to avoid hostage casualties. Also, his crane shots give a sense of scope to not only the bank but to the procedures necessary to negotiate a hostage situation of this scale.

The score by Terence Blanchard is not your typical heist music. It incorporates jazzy beats, adding even more class and originality to "Inside Man," elevating it beyond other heist movies.

Spike Lee's fingerprints on this film are very evident. For example, there is a message on civil liberty violations post-9/11. This scene involves an innocent hostage being freed, but assumed by the NYPD to be one of the bank robbers because he looks Arab. He is actually a Sikh.

There is also a scene in which Russell is talking to a young African-American hostage who is playing some mock-up "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas"-like PSP game. Russell asks the child what he thinks about him robbing the bank. The kid thinks it's cool and replies, "Like my man Fity always says, get rich or die trying." This comment on the influence of gangsta rap and the depiction of African-American stereotypes in games like "San Andreas" is vintage Lee.

The pacing and thought that went into the film are truly impressive. In fact, the dramatic moments are just as intense as the action sequences. Plot twists and ironies add suspense, never knowing when the ending is going to occur or how it is going to happen. "Respect is the ultimate currency," says Russell. Respect is indeed what "Inside Man" deserves.

Basic Instinct 2: Clothing optional



Sharon Stone reprises Catherine Tramell in 'Basic Instinct 2'

By Joseph Schmickrath
Exposure Columnist

Sharon Stone's career is waning and her vanity is on the line, so it comes as no surprise that she would reprise the role that made her career. But Stone is as seductive and sexy as ever in director Michael Caton-Jones' "Basic Instinct 2."

This is the sequel to her 1992 break-out hit, "Basic Instinct." What made that movie work was its lurid, violent and sexy nature. It was backed with an intriguing murder mystery; this time is no different.

The setting is London instead of San Francisco. Catherine Tramell (Stone) is up to no good again, needing new material for another novel. She uses all her basic instincts to lure men in to her path of sadistic rage in order to bring about another best-seller.

When Tramell is suspected of murder she is sent to Dr. Michael Glass (David Morrissey) for psychological evaluation. It would seem that Tramell has met her match, but Dr. Glass soon finds out that it is the

other way around.

Tramell is released of the charges, but Detective Roy Washburn (David Thewlis) doesn't buy her innocence and continues to investigate.

As the relationship between Dr. Glass and Tramell heats up, Dr. Glass becomes the pawn in an elaborate chess game.

While the ending is disappointing, the journey to it is well worth taking. "Basic Instinct 2" does erotic thrillers justice, bringing tension and titillation.

The compelling performance by David Morrissey is almost as good as what Michael Douglas did in the original, bringing power and vulnerability to a character that is being played right from the beginning.

There are nods to the original, which I was pleasantly surprised with. While not as good or unique as the original, "Basic Instinct 2" does manage to deliver enough for a recommendation.



Mellow's never tasted so good

By Valerie Nutt

Exposure Contributor

"Baked on the stone," my smiling waitress says, as she places a simmering pizza on the table.

No, she's not making a narcotic reference, and no, she's not trying to imply anything about her customers. She's simply stating the facts. But when I take a bite, the explosion in my mouth might as well have been drug-induced.

It's a Magical Mystery Tour. The menu says, "Now this is a trip!" Really, it's a pesto-based pizza tastefully smothered in spinach, melted mozzarella, the earthy yet refined taste of Portobello and button "shrooms," feta for some flair and just enough jalapeño peppers to wake up your mouth. And, really, it's brilliant.

Murfreesboro's own Mellow Mushroom Pizza recently started serving their stone-baked, spring-water dough pizza to our city's hungriest, to our upending, yet strangely mellow, delight.

This Mellow Mushroom Pizza is just the latest in a series of

successful franchises that began in Atlanta in the 1970s. Legend says two tireless music aficionados' Volkswagen bus broke down on their way back from a show to their jobs at a pizza place in Atlanta.

When our heroes called work to explain, their boss explained that they were fired. In retaliation the two lads started their own pizza joint, Mellow Mushroom Pizza. The rest is stone-baked history.

Every Mellow Mushroom I've had the privilege of frequenting has been a little different. The menus vary, the décor is always original and entertaining, but the staff and quality of the food has been consistent - and delicious.

Ours is no exception. With a full bar, upwards of 70 beers in stock and a stage for local music shared with a painted GM bus from Memphis circa 1949 that can comfortably seat a party of eight, the Mellow Mushroom on South Rutherford Blvd fully anticipates being a hub for all that is eclectic and artistic in Murfreesboro.

But with their enthusiastic staff, health-conscious food (they drain the fat off all their meats, which are delivered daily, prepare their food with their own natural spring water, and choose all their ingredients meticulously), and overly generous by-the-slice portions they will cater just as easily to the Sunday-afternoon church crowd.

The Shroom, as owners Paul Lindnau, Dennis Payne and his wife, Karen, call it, boasts a huge selection of vegetarian-friendly options. Their 12 specialty pizzas offer complete variety. The House Special is a perfect example of a classic supreme pizza, and the Mega-Veggie fulfills every vegetarian's dream of the perfect pizza, topped with sun-dried tomatoes, shrooms, broccoli, banana peppers, and eight other tasty vegetables. Or you can make your own pizza, choosing from three sizes and 34 ingredients.

Then there are the Monumental Hoagies, which include anything from your standard turkey and cheese to avocado, tofu or

tempeh, a soy product similar to tofu but greater in fiber and vitamins.

Mellow Mushroom boasts that their calzones, or "pizza turnovers," are the best in the Southeast, and they may be right.

With all these scrumptious and exciting options, it's surprising to see a short and unimpressive list of salads. The *esperanza* dressing does give the salad list a little pizzazz. But I was looking for a chilled antipasto, or maybe a refreshing little *Insalata Caprese*, with pieces of delectable mozzarella, sweet Roma tomatoes and fresh basil.

Sadly, at the Mellow Mushroom you won't find a desert menu. But there is a honey-basted pretzel with cinnamon sugar deftly concealed on the Munchies list. If you're in the mood for chocolate and nothing else will suffice try a bottle of *Rogue Chocolate*. It's seven dollars, but it's also 22 ounces of alcoholic, chocolate bliss.

Relaxing under a giant mushroom, listening to Bob Marley

and sampling an exhaustive list of draft beers may not be for everyone. The concept of stress-free pizza and rock 'n' roll music seems particularly lost on a family seated beside a vintage Hendrix poster.

"Why ain't y'all got chicken fingers on your menu?" Mother asks. "And how about some of them cheese-filled sticks? I want some of them too."

My waitress' smile melts. An hour and a half and two orders of sent-back food later, the family departs. Their meal was comped with grace, and they were cordially escorted from the premises.

Despite incidents typical to opening week at a restaurant (returned food, long waits, and the occasional pizza splattered all over the floor) Murfreesboro's Mellow Mushroom broke the franchise's opening week record in six days, grossing \$78,000. That's a pretty nice start for a psychedelic pizza joint.

Maybe it's just that kind of town.

Photo Credit: Adam Casto

Calypso Cafe brings the 'Boro a taste of the islands

By Jessy Yancey

Exposure Columnist

Spring break has come and gone, but you can get close to a tropical paradise in Murfreesboro through your sense of taste, thanks to the Couva Calypso Café.

Located on Memorial Boulevard near the Clark intersection, Calypso boasts a Jamaican menu that will leave you feeling full—and won't leave your wallet empty, either. With impressively fast service and an outstanding variety of Caribbean flavors and ethnic cuisine, Calypso surprisingly isn't expensive; most meals cost in the range of \$5 to \$8.

Calypso is probably most well known for its chicken, which comes with a choice of three sauces: barbecue, Jamaican curried and jerk. Roasting and revolving all day on the rotisserie makes for tender and juicy chicken, and the sauces, which range from mild to spicy, blend amazingly with the chicken's herbs and spices to add that extra zest.

One of the best things about Calypso is that it's one of only a few restaurants in Murfreesboro that caters to vegans and vegetarians. In addition to offering a variety of entrees, including veggie pitas, Boca burgers and veggie melts, customers actually have the choice of getting rice with their black

bean salad or loaded nachos, instead of the usual chicken or beef only. The black bean salad is fantastic; whether you order it with meat or rice, your tropical-colored plate will arrive piled high with fresh, leafy lettuce, tortilla chips, tomatoes, red onions, shredded cheese, sour cream and, of course, Calypso's signature Cuban black beans.

With a surprisingly sweet aftertaste, the black beans are, hands down, my favorite item on the menu. They are so popular you can order them as an entire meal, the Beans and Three, which comes with a portion of the melt-in-your-mouth black beans along with your choice of three sides, ranging from familiar (coleslaw, a house

salad) to exotic (callaloo, Boija muffins). Several of the sides, such as the spiced sweet potatoes, come topped with coconut as an added island touch.

My only complaint is that certain menu items change from day to day. Some days the jerk sauce will be spicy, but other times it seems diluted. Likewise, the muffins are different nearly every time I go, ranging from burnt to undercooked.

However, at least one item always stays consistent: the fruit tea. With free refills, it's hard to turn down the delicious concoction, even though they also offer a bucket of beer, with four imports for \$10. Naturally, Red

Stripe is on the Jamaican-themed menu.

Even the air inside the restaurant feels as if you're in the Caribbean. As soon as you walk in, your senses are overwhelmed with the sweet smell of coconut and the sound of reggae. And now it's finally warm enough to eat outside, although watching the cars zip by on Memorial isn't as pleasant as an ocean breeze. Still, for Murfreesboro, Couva Calypso Café is the nearest we can get to a tropical atmosphere—

and the food is definitely worth it.

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