

WEDNESDAY

March 10, 2004



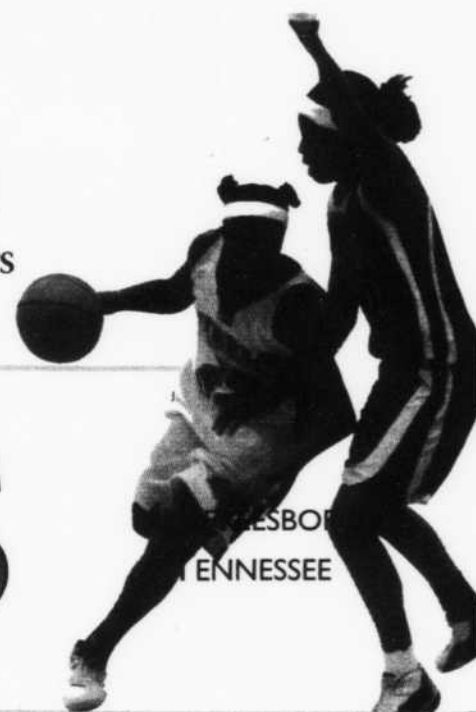
This week's poll question at
www.mtsusidelines.com:

Do you have confidence in university
President Sidney McPhee's leadership?

LADY RAIDERS WIN SUN BELT TITLE

SMITH REPEATS LAST SEASON'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In Sports, 8



The university's
editorially independent
student newspaper

Middle Tennessee State University SIDELINES

Volume 79 No. 71

CAMPUS BRIEFS

Campus Rec offers backpacking clinic

Outdoor Pursuits will provide a free backpacking clinic Thursday night at 7 in the Campus Recreation conference room. The clinic will cover the basics, but will also provide useful information for experienced backpackers. For more information, call 898-2104.

Tower to host free climbing days

Students can relieve mid-term stress on the Alpine Tower during one of the open climbing sessions Thursday and next Tuesday from 1-6 p.m. The tower is behind the Rec Center, and is free to climb for students with a valid student ID.

Albini to speak about career Friday

Influential independent recording engineer Steve Albini will be on campus Friday to speak about his career and his musical endeavors. He will also answer audience questions.

Albini is well known for his work with such bands as Nirvana and the Pixies. He has worked with more than 1,000 bands, and has produced more than 1,000 records. The lecture will begin at 2 p.m. in the Learning Resources Center, Room 221.

Campus invited to meet candidate

A candidate for the position of assistant dean of Judicial Affairs and Mediation Services will be on campus today for an open forum. Students, faculty and staff are invited to meet Randy Wiel, the first candidate for the position, between 2 and 3 p.m. in the Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building, Room 105. Those who wish to attend are asked to e-mail Jackie Victory beforehand, at jvictory@mtsu.edu.

Islamic Awareness wraps up tomorrow

Islamic Awareness Week events continue tonight, when the Muslim Students Association will present the PBS documentary *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*. Thursday, James P. Dunlap, a Muslim student at MTSU, will speak about his own decision to convert to Islam. Both events begin at 6 p.m., and will be held in Kirksey Old Main, Room 452. For more information, visit www.mtsu.edu/~msa.

Hispanic presence to be discussed

Contemporary attitudes about the presence of Hispanics will be discussed Thursday at 8 p.m. in Keathley University Center, Room 316.

Topics up for discussion include Hispanic immigration, positive and negative sentiments toward Hispanics and Hispanics in higher education.

MTSU's Hispanic Student Association and the Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc., are sponsoring the discussion. For more information, e-mail cmb3c@mtsu.edu.

MORE BRIEFS, PAGE 2

Faculty Senate abstains from confidence vote



Photo by Seth Holland | Staff Photographer

Faculty senators debate the merits of a vote of confidence or no confidence in university President Sidney McPhee Monday during the Faculty Senate meeting. The senate voted 38-11 to abstain from that vote.

Senator's motion for campuswide referendum fails

By Lindsey Turner
News Editor

After almost two hours of intense debate, the Faculty Senate voted Monday to not hold a vote of confidence or non-confidence in university President Sidney McPhee.

The vote for a non-vote passed 38-11, with no abstentions. The senators voted for a slightly altered version of a recommendation made by the Steering Committee last week.

The original recommendation made by the committee indicated that it would be inappropriate for the senate to hold a vote of confidence while there is litigation

pending against the president.

However, at the request of Sen. Michael Linton, an amendment was made to remove the reference to pending litigation from the motion. Linton, a music professor, said he was concerned that the litigation could last for years, and that the senate may need to revisit the issue before the court case is resolved.

During discussion of a potential no-confidence vote, senators raised concerns that voting would be done based on allegations. Many felt that a vote would be inappropriate while McPhee is under litigation due to a sexual harassment lawsuit filed against him, the university, the state and the Tennessee Board of Regents by his former assistant, Tammie Allen.

"The matter is out there, somewhere else, way above us," said Sen. Larry Burriss, Faculty Senate president-elect. "I think that's the forum where this needs to be heard."

But other faculty senators urged their peers to examine the results of TBR Chancellor Charles Manning's investigation into Allen's initial claim, filed in October 2003, and vote based on those findings. The board ruled that McPhee had violated their policy by seeing Allen socially and creating a hostile work environment. McPhee was suspended for 20

days and received a \$10,000 pay cut for a year.

"We can throw the word 'allegations' around, [but] President McPhee agreed to the suspension, agreed to the fine, agreed to the TBR's findings," said Sen. Ted Sherman, an English professor.

Diane Gower, a member of the Steering Committee, expressed concern that a confidence vote would be too divisive.

"I'm asking the senate to just check your own heart out here," Gower said. "Are you thinking of the university and the good of the university or are you wanting to get something at Dr. McPhee?"

Christian Haseleu, a former Faculty Senate president, agreed that a no-confidence vote would hurt the university.

"No good will come from a vote of no confidence," Haseleu said. "We do not need to rip this institution apart."

But other senators insisted that the university will remain divided, regardless of whether a vote is taken.

"The level of division will not necessarily get better if we simply pass this over," said Robb McDaniel, political science associate professor. "The hope of

See Senate, 2

Glenn allows Chapman to run Committee's decision overruled

By Austin Starchman
Staff Writer

The vice president for Student Affairs decided Monday to allow a transfer student to run for Student Government Association president, overturning a decision made Friday by the SGA Judiciary Committee.

Bob Glenn said in a Monday meeting with Matt Chapman, a student who graduated from Volunteer State Community College last year and came to MTSU in summer 2003, that his decision to allow Chapman to run might not be binding.

"Due to the currently ongoing election campaign, I have decided to allow Mr. Chapman to campaign for the position of SGA president, pending further deliberations," Glenn said.

Glenn's decision came on the heels of the judiciary committee's decision Friday to clarify an article in the SGA Constitution that requires students running for executive office to have completed 45 university credit hours.

Controversy rose over an eligibility clause in the Constitution that requires students running for executive office to "have accumulated a minimum of forty-five (45) University accredited hours, or be a graduate student at the time of candidacy."

Chapman expressed interest in running for president, but has not completed 45 credit hours at MTSU.

Election Commissioner Brittany Rogers asked the judiciary committee for a constitutional interpretation of the passage, because there was some question over whether or not it is implied that "university" means MTSU, or can mean any accredited university.

Rogers and the judiciary committee met privately Friday to pin down an interpretation of the passage. Rogers read a letter in which she stated the SGA

See President, 2

LaDuke promotes civic action in speech



Photo by Steve Cross | Photo Editor
Winona LaDuke, a Native American activist, encourages activism last night in the Keathley University Center Theater.

By Kristin Hall
News Editor

Winona LaDuke, environmental activist and former vice presidential candidate, encouraged listeners yesterday to combat environmental destruction during her keynote speech for MTSU's National Women's History Month.

LaDuke ran with Ralph Nader on the Green Party ticket in 2000, but her primary work has been to recover lands for American Indians.

A member of the Anishinaabeg tribe, LaDuke lives on the White Earth Land Reservation in northern Minnesota, where she grows natural wild rice and bottles maple syrup.

Her speech centered on how the ethical policy of the U.S.

"The largest party in America is the non-voters. But there is no social change fairy."

— Winona LaDuke
Native American activist

government has allowed serious violations in environmental and human rights.

"What do we want the world to look like 50 years from now?" LaDuke proposed.

"The idea of self-determination is that we are in charge of our future," she said.

The idea of self-determination similarly works for civic participation on all levels, LaDuke noted.

"Democracy is not a specta-

tor sport," LaDuke said. "I would also call [activism] being a responsible person."

As a mother, LaDuke said she applies to the nation the principles she tries to teach her children.

"If I tell my kids not to steal, should I not also tell my government not to steal?" she asked.

The fact that many chief executive officers, such as Kenneth Lay, and corporations like Exxon, do not take respon-

sibility for their actions worries LaDuke about the future of America.

"The question is do you have the humility to fix things when you've botched them up?" LaDuke said.

A prophecy of her tribe predicts the two paths of the modern world. One path is well worn, but scorched, LaDuke said, and the other is less traveled, but green.

This ultimately is the current dilemma of our nation, which faces rising petroleum prices and massive ecological destruction, LaDuke said.

"These teachings are significant, but aren't reflected in public policy," LaDuke said.

The current administration is not doing anything to fix the

See LaDuke, 2

BRIEFS CONTINUED

Spring Break trips still have open slots

Campus Recreation still has room on both Spring Break trips. The available trips include a canoe trip down the Suwannee River through North Florida March 20-27, and a backpacking trip up the Appalachian Trail through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park March 20-26. Call 898-2104 for details on both trips.

Pigliucci to explore intelligent design

Massimo Pigliucci, a well-known evolutionary biologist, will present a lecture tonight at 7 in the State Farm Lecture Hall of the Business and Aerospace Building. The lecture, titled "Four More Reasons Why Intelligent Design Is Not a Scientific Theory," is sponsored by the campus chapter of the Campus Free-thought Alliance and the Nashville chapter of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. The event is free and open to the public.

Registration times available online

Priority registration for summer and fall 2004 will be April 5-16, 2004. Assigned registration times are available on WebMT under "Registration and Schedule" by clicking on "Assigned Registration Time."

The printed summer schedule book is available, and the fall schedule book should be available before Spring Break. Both summer and spring courses are accessible on WebMT. Call the scheduling center at 898-5800 or 898-5094 for more information.

Lecture to focus on military, women

Jid Lee, a professor of English, will address the issue of women and the military today at 3 p.m. in the James Union Building, Room 100.

The lecture, which will focus specifically on Asian women and their encounters with American military personnel, is free and open to the public.

Student volunteers eligible for award

The Office of Student Organizations and Community Service is now accepting applications and nominations for the MTSU Community Service Award. The recipient of the award will be a student who has given freely of his or her time and talent without much public acknowledgment, and who represents the many dimensions of community service, volunteer work, public service, charitable service and leadership roles in student organizations.

To apply, come by the Office of Student Organizations and Community Service in KUC, Room 326-S. The deadline to apply is Friday.

Student art exhibit seeking submissions

The Student Art Alliance is accepting submissions for the spring 2004 student exhibit. Submissions can include two-dimensional, three-dimensional, video and performance art are welcome. Submissions are due March 19 by 5 p.m. There is a \$3 entry fee, and a limit of three submissions per artist. The art will be judged by Janice Zeitlin and Lain York of the Zeitgeist Gallery in Nashville. Cash prizes will be awarded to the winner. Applications are in the Art Barn, Room 106A, in Rick Rishaw's office. Students can turn in their entry fees and art there, as well as get more details about the show.

The exhibit will take place April 2 at 8 p.m. in the Tennessee Room of the James Union Building. ♦

HAVE INFORMATION
FOR CAMPUS BRIEFS?
E-MAIL US AT
SLINES@MTSU.EDU

Lambda plans SpringOut 2004 events

By Andrea Hinch
Staff Writer

Plans are in the works for SpringOut, the annual gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered awareness week event sponsored by Lambda.

SpringOut will be held April 5-8 and will include political discussions, games, guest speakers and free HIV testing. The events will take place throughout campus and will be free of charge.

"Our plans aren't definite yet, but we are trying to get local speakers such as Abby Rubbenfeld, a lawyer from

Nashville, and Judy Shepard, Matt Shepard's mom, to speak on same sex marriages and homosexuality in the Bible," said Andrew Cline, the organization's president.

SpringOut week will begin with an informational fair on the Keathley University Center



Cline

Knoll. It will feature businesses and organizations that help support awareness of gay culture. Nashville Cares, an organization that promotes safe sex, will be present.

The Edge of Seventeen, a film about a teenager coping with his sexuality on the last day of school in the 1980s, will potentially be shown in the KUC Theater during the week.

"We are still in discussions over what programs and speakers we will need, though the purpose of presenting educational yet fun awareness is very clear," Cline said.

Lambda is open to all students, regardless of sexual orientation.

Meetings are held every other Tuesday.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday March 16 at 6 p.m. in KUC, Room 318.

"Along with our promotion of awareness events such as this, we go on camping trips, play board games and attend related conferences such as the annual GLBT - gay lesbian bisexual transgendered - conference at the University of Albany," Cline said. ♦



Photo by Megan Allender | Staff Photographer

Matt Chapman, right, speaks to Jonathan Colvin last night aboard Chapman's campaign bus. University officials decided earlier this week that Chapman, a junior who has completed less than 45 hours at MTSU, will be allowed to run for president of the Student Government Association, pending further deliberation.

SGA: Junior will be allowed to campaign for now

Continued from 1

Election Commission's interpretation of the passage. In the letter, Rogers asks if the definition of "university" in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities handbook applies. "University" is defined in the handbook strictly as MTSU.

After Rogers read her letter, the judiciary committee entered private deliberation, eventually agreeing with the Election Commission's interpretation, the judiciary committee also requested

in a joint statement that "an amendment to the Constitution be drafted as soon as possible, in order to clarify the issue."

However, Chapman, a junior and former SGA president at Vol State, said he was upset by the judiciary committee's ruling, as well as the secrecy in which the meeting was performed.

"I wasn't informed of the meeting until 4:15 in the afternoon on Friday, nearly three hours after the meeting was held, when Brittany Rogers called me to let me know I was ineligible for candidacy," Chapman said. "I feel that, as an

interested party, all attempts should have been made to notify anyone who the decision would directly effect."

Upon hearing of the decision, Chapman contacted Glenn to arrange an appeal meeting, in which Glenn made his decision to allow Chapman to run - at least for now.

"If this were a regular student disciplinary hearing, we would have concise, clear rules to follow," Glenn said. "However, in this instance, there is a need for further deliberation, to determine the best solution." ♦

Senator: Faculty disputes whether issue is really closed

Continued from 1

a lot of people [was] that things would calm down and go away, but as time has gone on and we have not discussed it, things have gotten worse."

McDaniel said he has faith that the senators will be able to derive enough information from the facts to make a confidence judgment, as it is unlikely that more information about the sexual harassment case will become readily available any time soon.

Paul Lee, a physics and astronomy professor, said the

senate should not get caught up in trying to track down all the facts of each allegation in order to make a confidence judgment.

"Confidence is not something that is factual," Lee said. "It is emotional. It is a perception."

Philosophy professor Clarence Johnson rebutted Lee's argument, saying that the senate needs to make its judgment based on accurate facts.

"Perception is subjective and here we are going to make a monumental decision," Johnson said.

Several senators said they

had polled their faculty constituents, and that a significant portion of them wanted the senate to take a stand, or at least open up the possibility of a campuswide faculty referendum.

"I think there are many people who feel like the issue needs to be opened up and addressed in some manner," said Nancy Kelker, an art professor.

"As faculty senators, we have the responsibility to discuss matters that have this kind of gravity," McDaniel said. "The people I've talked to don't necessarily have any animosity

toward Dr. McPhee."

McDaniel said the question of McPhee's leadership is already having an effect on the university, whether or not the senate chooses to express confidence or non-confidence in McPhee.

"We all have to have a leader whom basically we trust," Linton said.

After the vote had been tallied, Sherman made a motion to enact a campuswide faculty and staff referendum on McPhee. The motion was not seconded, and was retired. ♦

LaDuke: Activist urges students to get involved in issues

Continued from 1

problems of the past, she said.

The Exxon Valdez crash in Prince William Sound in Alaska dumped 11 million gallons of oil onto the beaches and in the water 15 years ago and Exxon still has not paid the court ordered settlements, LaDuke said.

"The politically powerless are forced to bear an environmental justice," LaDuke said.

LaDuke said the issue of disposing of nuclear waste in America has created a bigger environmental problem.

A "mobile Chernobyl," as she termed it, the government is

moving nuclear waste across the country on major highways and interstates to dump in Indian reservations.

And to add to the problem, the Bush administration wants to increase the use of nuclear power in America.

"If your bathtub is filling up with water, the first thing you do is turn off the faucet," LaDuke explained in an analogy.

LaDuke's reservation built a wind turbine on its land and she has encouraged other reservations, especially in the Great Plains area, to do the same.

If wind turbines were erected on all Indian reservations, it would produce half of U.S.

energy consumption, LaDuke explained.

However, the problem is that these indigenous tribes are still struggling to regain territory stolen from the government, LaDuke said.

In 1988, after winning the Reebok Human Rights Award, she used the funds to create the Land Recovery Project.

The project is attempting to recover the 837,000 acres of land, and 90 percent is still owned by non-Indians.

"The courts ruled that the land was taken illegally, but the statute of limitations had expired," LaDuke said. "That is the story of justice in our coun-

try."

Because America is such an "energy junkie," our environment becomes prostituted and compromised, LaDuke said.

In the end, the only way for Americans to encourage change in the system is to become responsible and move beyond their level of comfort, she said.

"The largest party in America is the non-voters," LaDuke said. "But there is no social change fairy."

"It happens right here," she said and raised up her hands. ♦

Faculty, students needed for study

Research will evaluate freshman year of college

By Andrea Hinch
Staff Writer

Both faculty and students are being asked via a survey for their opinions about the first-year experience at MTSU as a part of two national research studies.

A task force of faculty and administrators, part of the Excellence in the First College Year project, determined the values by which MTSU's first-year experience should be classified through eight different principles.

These performance indicators include the university's philosophy, organization, faculty, ability to transition students, amount of diversity, process of engaging students and the improvement they develop in incoming students.

"The task force was made to look at what's done in the first year experience and to see what programs we have in place or need to have in place to make sure freshmen are successful and continue coming back to MTSU," said Maria Clayton, a member of the faculty task force.

The faculty survey, which is coordinated by Pennsylvania State University, will solicit opinions about how faculty respond to and interact with freshmen in and out of the classroom.

Through the study, curricula, services and programs are looked at to see how well students are tracked and encouraged to participate in programs available to them.

"The surveys are to see how MTSU stacks up as opposed to other colleges," said Deb Sells, chair of the Foundation of Excellence in the First College Year project. "We are going to inventory our policies and see what areas we need to continue or improve upon."

After the task force assesses the surveys, a report will be summarized and sent to the university's president and provost.

A link to an online survey will be e-mailed to a randomly selected group of students, while faculty will have their survey mailed to them.

Results from the studies, which are funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies and Lumina Foundation for Education, will be available in late spring or early summer. The final report will be available by the end of the summer or some time in the early fall. ♦

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TO THE EDITOR.

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STATE AND LOCAL

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

SIDELINES ♦ 3

Methodists will offer prescription cards

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - The United Methodist Church will offer prescription drug discount cards, a service members believe is a first for a religious denomination.

Representatives from churches across the nation voted to offer the benefit during a weekend conference in Nashville.

"We think we're pioneering," said the Rev. Mearle Griffith.

Church leaders note that Methodists are among the 40 million Americans who do not have health insurance.

"Sometimes they're substi-

tuting the purchase of their drugs for food," Griffith said. "That's the target audience."

The discount card will be offered through DestinationRX, a Los Angeles-based discounter of prescription drugs. The company agreed to waive its usual fee of \$90 to \$120 and offer the card free to members of the United Methodist Church.

The benefit is needed because the average age of Methodist members is 57 - the oldest of any denomination in the country, Griffith said.

Individual Methodist congregations may open the benefit to members of other churches. DestinationRX requires only

that members of other churches register through a United Methodist church.

The program hopes to offer a take on an ecumenical look.

"If the people they help are Baptist or Catholic, that's OK," Griffith said.

DestinationRX is a privately held company that negotiates discounts on prescription drugs at 25,000 drug stores nationwide, including major retailers such as Eckerd, Walgreen and CVS.

DestinationRX also operates an Internet site where cardholders can get discounts on other drugstore items such as contact lenses and pet supplies. ♦

T-shirt company receives complaints

By Nona Kempton
Staff Writer

Controversy generated over a message on a T-shirt caused a national retailer to pull the offending item from their store shelves, a company spokesperson said.

Urban Outfitters, a Philadelphia-based retail chain that caters to young consumers, removed a shirt bearing the message "Voting is for Old People" after receiving complaints from many organizations including Rock the Vote, Mobilizing America's Youth and a political group from Harvard.

The shirt is a creation of Vintage Vantage, a T-shirt company founded by John Foster-Keddie, which continues to offer the shirt for sale at their Web site www.vinatagevantage.com.

"We have no interest in discouraging anyone, much less young people, from voting," Urban Outfitters said in a public statement released Friday. "Thus we regret the misunderstanding that has occurred, but we appreciate the emotional debate that both the T-shirt and [designer] Mr. Keddie have created."

"Banned in the USA!" Keddie said in a statement featured on his company's Web site. "In the grand tradition of performance-enhancing steroids and 2 Live Crew, our voting shirt is deemed obscene and yanked from stores across



Courtesy Urban Outfitters

the country. We vow not to let this minor setback thwart our efforts to poison the minds of young Americans and overthrow democracy."

Keddie could not be reached for comment.

Critics, including Dan Glackman, Harvard Institute of Politics director and former agriculture secretary in the Clinton administration, have blasted the message of the shirt as sending "the wrong message at the wrong time."

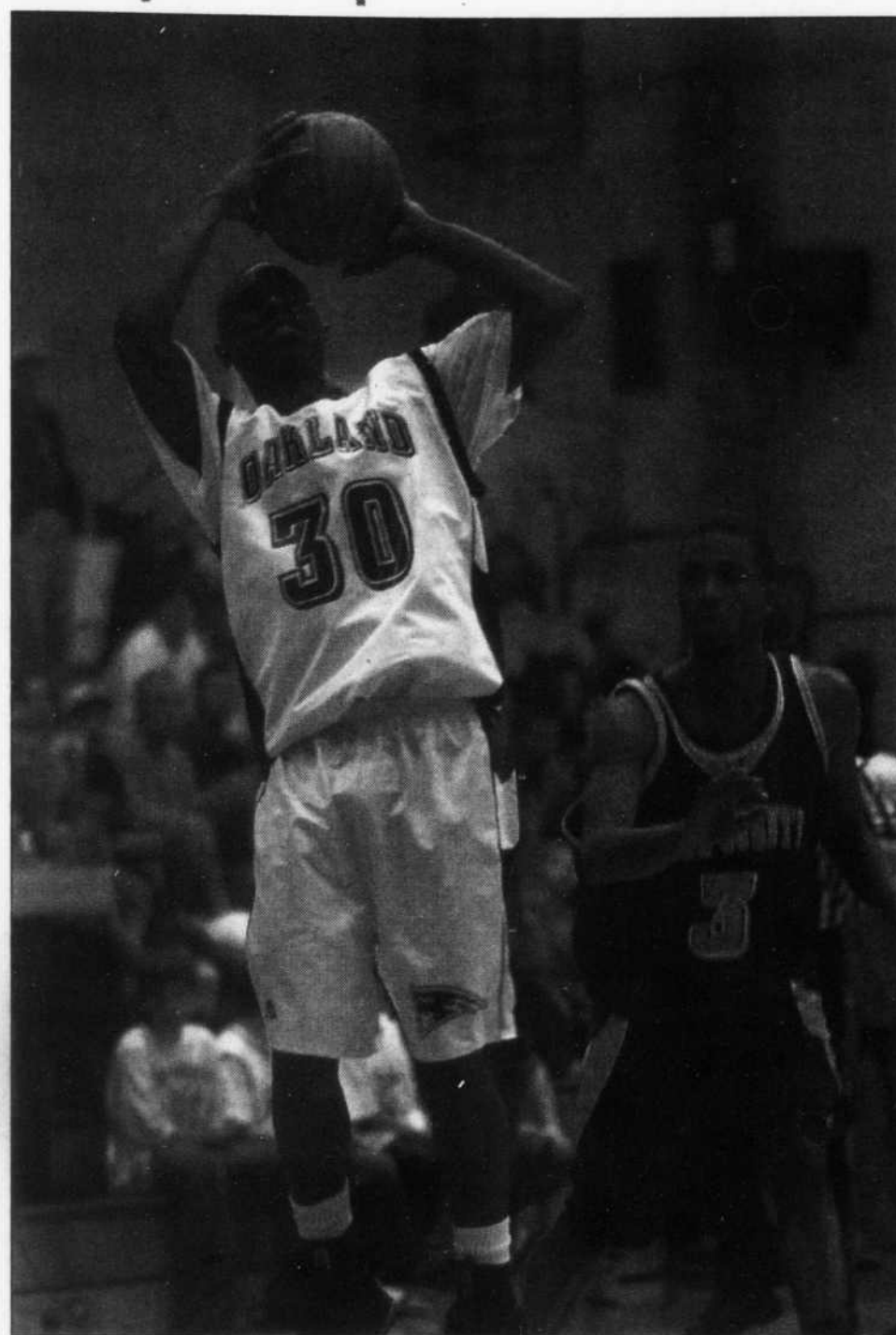
In a letter to Richard A. Hayne, Urban Outfitter's CEO, Glackman suggested the retailer could sell shirts with slogans "that send the right message to America's young people."

"You might consider 'Voting Rocks,'" the letter said.

Mobilizing America's Youth, a political group

See T-shirt, 4

Hoopin' it up



Photos by David McComb
Staff Photographer

Oakland High school's basketball season ended with a 71-59 loss to the Rhea County Golden Eagles in the sectional on Monday night. A full report will be in tomorrow's edition of Sidelines.



Teacher of the Year revamped

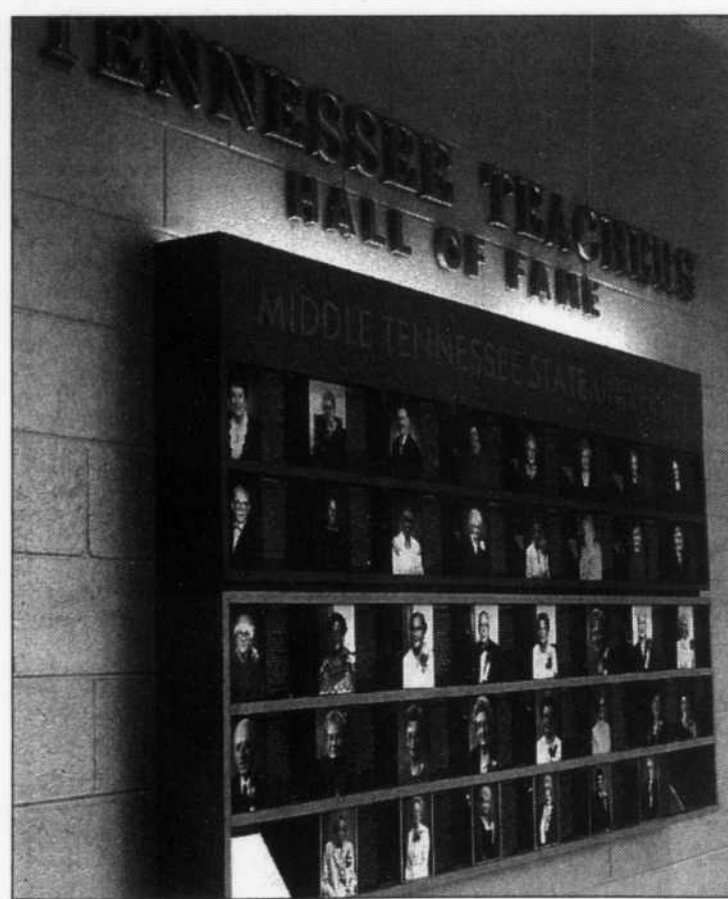


Photo by Josh Jordan | Staff Photographer

The Tennessee Teachers Hall of Fame wall, located in the Ned McWherter Learning Resource Center, highlights some of the previous winners.

Niswonger Foundation to become sole sponsor of awards program

By Melissa Bowman
Asst. State and Local Editor

The Tennessee Department of Education and the Niswonger Foundation have formed an alliance to revise the state's Teacher of the Year award.

The revisions include adding \$5,000 awards for winners from each of the state's three grand divisions. Two runners-up from each division will receive \$1,000 each. The criteria for award recipients will also be revamped to include things such as communication skills and student outcomes.

Oliver Thomas, Executive Director of the Foundation, said this is the first statewide venture in which the Foundation has taken part.

The Foundation has not had anything to do with the Teacher of the Year program in the past, but a connection of Thomas' made the agreement possible.

"I knew the commissioner of

education, and I knew her interests in improving the quality of education in the state," Thomas said. "We share a lot of the same goals."

Thomas feels that the future of education is not just the responsibility of the state or school systems; the community should work together for "the good of education" for the entire state.

"Tennessee ranks toward the bottom in education funding, in graduation rates [and] in some areas of student achievement," Thomas said, "and unless all of us take responsibility for the future of K through 12 education in Tennessee, the future will be bleak indeed."

Thomas hopes that the new incentives will motivate teachers to excel.

"We've got a lot of fantastic teachers in Tennessee, and this is a way to recognize some of them and encourage others to

See Teacher, 4

Gordon wins statewide award

Staff Reports

Rep. Bart Gordon (D - Tenn.) was recently named Legislator of the Year by the Tennessee Association of Marriage and Family Therapy.

TAMFT is an organization which represents nearly 300 Tennessee marriage and family therapists.

"I am very honored to receive this award," Gordon said in a press release issued last week. "Since first coming to Congress, I have strongly supported initiatives that help parents, promote stable families and increase the ease of adoptions. These kinds of initiatives are helpful in making sure families have the support they need."

Janice Barkley, former TAMFT president and chair of the awards committee, said Gordon was selected in part because of his work on Head

Start program funding, the Medicare Mental Health Modernization Act and the Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act.

"Congressman Bart Gordon was selected for this award because of his work on behalf of families through the Family Medical Leave Act and reform of international adoption laws," Barkley said.

"His work on legislation to aid families have included bills allowing penalty-free withdrawals from IRAs for adoption expenses, the Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act and the Child Support Improvement Act to help single-parent families collect child support from a non-custodial parent living out of state."

Gordon is a member of the School Health and Safety Caucus and the Congressional Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus. ♦

Congressman encourages Music Row Dems to stay positive

By Maura Satchell
Staff Writer

Middle Tennessee Democrats were emboldened by the words of guest speaker Congressman Harold Ford, Jr. (D-Memphis) at the nearly packed Belcourt Theater in downtown Nashville last Friday.

Ford, national co-chair of the Kerry campaign, told attendees at the monthly meeting of Music Row Democrats to remain positive in the upcoming election season.

"If we lay out a positive

vision and practical ideas and solutions, we can win," he said.

He said that Democrats can silence false allegations from Republicans with facts. For instance, charges that Kerry, a Massachusetts liberal, is a poor fit with the South are unfounded. Kerry is eager to woo Tennessee voters and sees Tennessee as a priority-win state and a good fit for Kerry's ideals.

"If anyone should be ashamed to meet southern farmers and ranchers, it should be George Bush," Ford said comparing records of the candi-

dates.

When the issue of legalizing gay marriage in Kerry's home state is cited as a strike against him, Ford suggested reminding detractors that while Kerry supports legalizing civil unions for same-sex couples, it was Republican judges on that circuit court who decided that case, and that Massachusetts has a Republican governor.

When opponents mention Bush's charges that Kerry has taken stands on both sides of certain issues, Ford said Dems should point to Bush's own

three-year record as President where he has reversed positions on far-reaching issues such as the reasons to go to war in Iraq, campaign finance reform, the creation of the Homeland Security department, corporate governance rules and other issues.

When tax cut advocates insist that the surplus earned during the Clinton administration is our money, Ford said to remind them that the massive \$7 trillion deficit is ours as well, and it is now our children's and our grandchildren's too.

"Some people in Washington brag about taxes going down, but locally, property, car, sales and state income tax go up in many states," he said.

Finally, if Kerry is accused of being soft on defense, Ford said to point out that Kerry voted against some defense spending bills that were not appropriate, and those programs ended up being dismantled in the end anyway.

"He made a great point that I never considered before," said Lisa Zhito, a Christian music journalist. "We get mad at all

the stuff Bush and this administration are pulling over on us now ... If this is how they are acting when they know they will be up for re-election, just imagine how much worse they will be when they won't be facing a re-election in four years. The hubris, the callous disregard for people's rights, it's only gonna get worse, people."

Ford is considered a rising star in the Democratic Party. He earned national attention during his speech at the 2000

See Democrats, 4

'Boro resident stabs boyfriend

By David Paulson
Staff Writer

Lena Burns, 44, of Murfreesboro was arrested last Friday for attempted first degree murder after allegedly stabbing her boyfriend in the chest outside their Vaughn Street Apartment.

According to police reports, Burns and boyfriend Melvin Willford, 50, were in a heated argument on their front porch. Neighbors came outside to settle the argument and found Willford bleeding from the chest, saying, "She stabbed me."

None of the neighbors had witnessed the actual stabbing.

Police were advised that Burns had taken Willford to the Middle Tennessee Medical Center emergency room. Police found the vehicle used to transport Willford in the ER's parking lot.

"We located the vehicle outside of the ER and treated it as part of the crime scene," Officer

Matt Baldwin reported.

Police located Burns and Melanie Wade, a witness who had traveled in the car with Burns and Willford to the ER. Burns and Wade were taken to the Police Department to be interviewed.

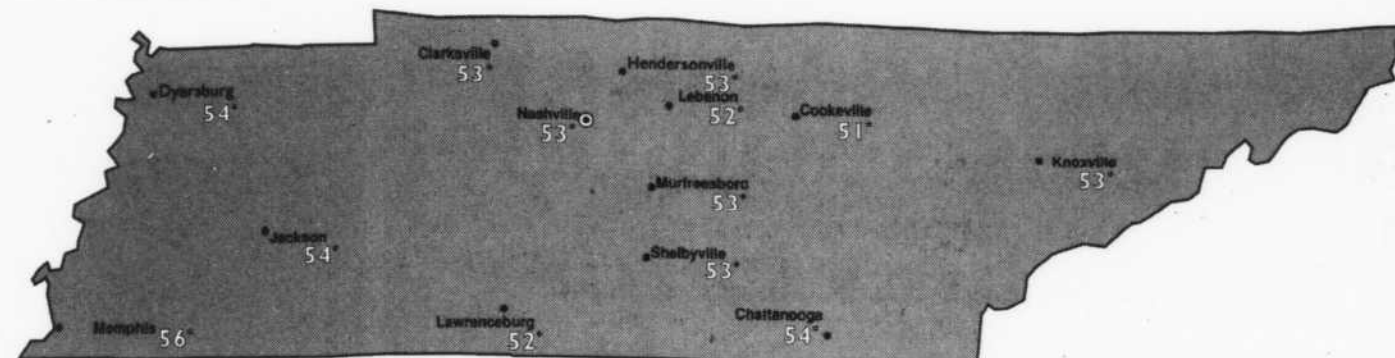
"At the conclusion of the interviews, there was enough probable cause to believe the suspect committed the aforementioned offense," the arrest report stated.

Police collected blood stained clothes belonging to Willford and took photographs of the crime scene. Baldwin reported that he "observed blood drops on the front porch and door step" of the apartment.

Willford was reported to be in critical condition and undergoing surgery at MTMC. Burns was transported to Rutherford County Jail with a \$25,000 bond. Her court date is set for April 7. ♦

Tennessee Weather – Wednesday's Highs

From the Associated Press



Thursday



Friday



Saturday



Sunday



Monday



T-shirt: Petition for boycott signed by several hundred

Continued from 3

with offices in Berkeley, Calif., and Washington, D.C. planned to organize a national boycott of the retailer if Urban Outfitters did not remove the shirts from their stores.

"It was time for someone to say 'we are going to boycott,'" said Selena Shilad, MAY's national press secretary. "A lot of people came out with statements against the shirt, but no one wanted a call for action. We featured a petition on our Web site in support of a boycott that received thousands of hits and several hundred signatures in only 48 hours."

Rock The Vote, a national organization dedicated to registering young voters, was also among the shirt's critics.

"We think the message on

this shirt is out of step with reality," said Jay Strell, an RTV spokesperson, "especially this year when the issues are enormous and young people have been turning out in record numbers [at the polls] and are engaged in the campaign."

Strell said that RTV did not, however, call for a boycott of Urban Outfitters stores. The RTV Web site states that one of the primary goals of the organization is to "confront censorship and promote the right of free expression."

"We fully support freedom of expression," Strell said, "and it was young people expressing their opinion that got them [Urban Outfitters] to respond by removing the shirts."

Removing the shirts may not be enough for MAY. The organization's executive direc-

tor David Smith has called on Urban Outfitters to "take steps to correct this misguided decision [to sell the shirts]. Urban should place voter registration forms in each of their stores to spread the positive message about youth voter participation."

Shilad said that Urban Outfitters has not yet responded to Smith's request.

The retail chain was contacted several times for comment and did not return the calls.

Urban Outfitters, which operates 60 stores in the United States and the UK, has pulled other controversial clothing from their shelves in the past, including a shirt discontinued earlier this year that bore the slogan "Everybody Loves a Jewish Girl" surrounded by dollar signs. ♦

Democrats: Organization's membership now more than 500

Continued from 3

Democratic Convention and later by tossing his name into the race in 2003 to replace Congressman Dick Gephardt as the House minority leader. Ford is a blue dog Democrat and is positioned as a centrist on many policy positions. At 33, the constitution bars Ford from being considered for Kerry's running mate.

The Music Row Democrats organization is a three-month-old organization founded in Nashville "by a group of

Nashville music industry leaders who were fed up with feeling as if they had to apologize for being Democrats, particularly when they knew that Republican policies were negatively affecting the lives of the working class people who make up much of the audience for their music," according to the organization's Web site.

The organization has seen its membership numbers expand exponentially since it was founded in December 2003. The organization now has more than 500 members.

Bob Titley, co-founder of the organization and artist manager said the organization has grown rapidly, parallel to a nationwide surge in discontent that he has witnessed first-hand.

"Something is happening in this country concurrent with the direction of the country," he said.

He said that members display courage and that by uniting, their voices will be heard.

"When the American people speak, politicians are forced to listen." ♦

Teacher:

Continued from 3

become more like them," he said. He also believes that the introduction of awards for each grand division of the state will make the competition less intimidating.

"I think if a teacher thinks that he or she has to compete against every teacher in the state, it's a little daunting," he said.

He also hopes that the incentives will encourage young people to look to teaching as a profession.

The Niswonger Foundation was begun by Greeneville businessman and philanthropist Scott Niswonger. Its more than \$20 million endowment provides schools with programs depending on the community's need. Since it is a private operating foundation, it is involved with the programs it supports.

"We may put in [an] instrumental music [program], and we will hire the band director and buy some of the instruments ... We may even build the band room," Thomas said.

Thomas said that he would like to see the Foundation involved in more statewide projects. ♦

Vote

Carry Smith

SGA Senator of the Liberal Arts College

March 16th-18th

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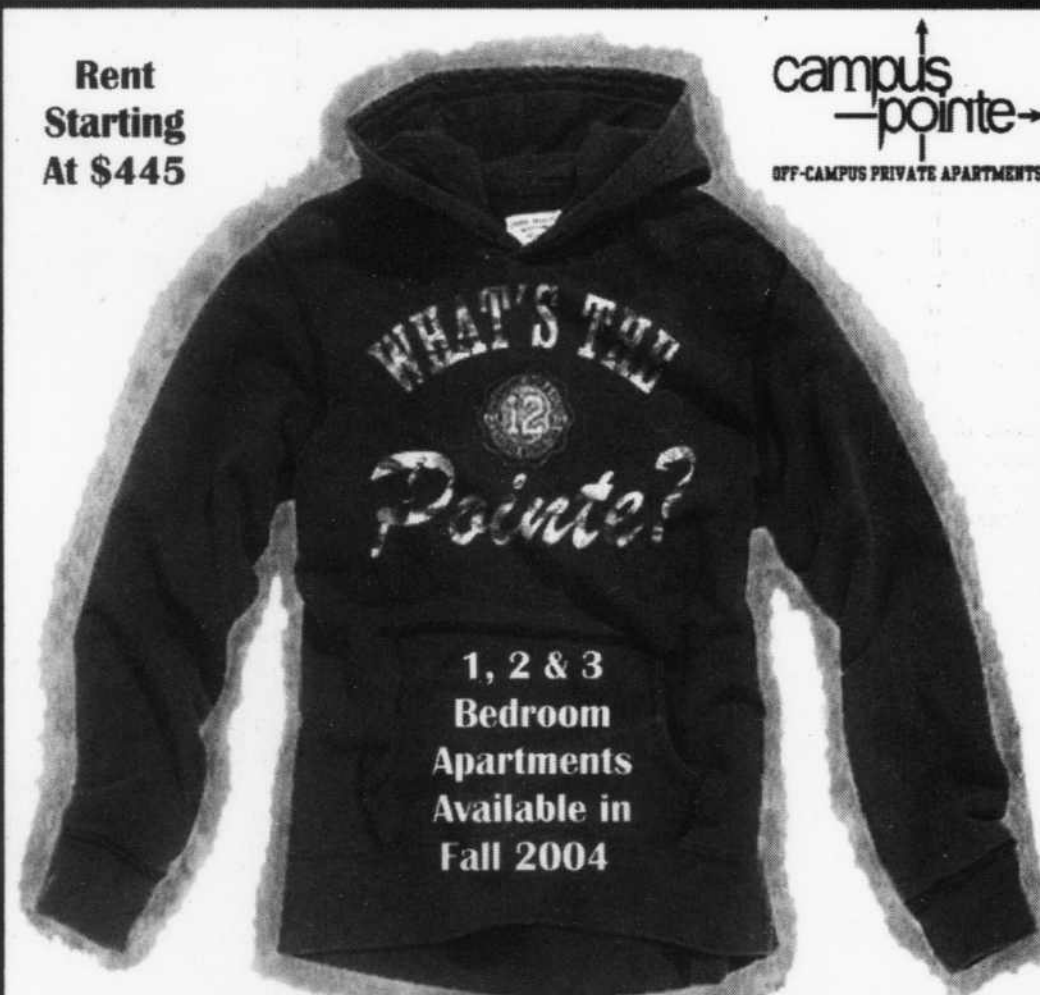
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OPINIONS

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

SIDELINES ♦ 5

From the Editorial Board Faculty Senators ought to take stand

As representatives for the faculty of this campus, the senate has an unspoken duty to shed light on issues that concern faculty members as well as the university population in general.

By voting not to vote, the senate has sent a message to the entire campus that they're unwilling to take a stand for the university, and, to some eyes, gives the unfortunate appearance they condone the president's behavior by refusing to condemn it.

Faculty Senator Ted Sherman made a motion to make the vote a campus-wide faculty and staff confidence vote, but no one was willing to second that motion. At least he was willing to make a public statement about his concerns for the university rather than succumb to vague notions of "tearing the campus apart."

What does it take for someone to take a stand? We commend the 11 faculty members who supported the vote, but we also feel at least one of them should have seconded Sherman's motion to allow the vote to take place and include the entire faculty and staff of MTSU.

Refusing to take a stand promotes the "sweeping under the rug" notion the Tennessee Board of Regents and McPhee have been more than willing to abide by already.

Many senators and President-elect Larry Burriss felt the board did not have enough information to make an educated decision about McPhee.

But our editorial Monday pointed out, there are bigger issues and a definitive pattern regarding McPhee's leadership of the university.

There's no need to the Faculty Senate to speculate, debate and posture over whether or not McPhee harassed Allen. The critical issue – and what should have been the point of debate in yesterday's meeting – is if McPhee has been handling the responsibilities of the office of the presidency appropriately. We believe there is overwhelming evidence he has not.

Discussing McPhee's ability as a leader wouldn't compromise this university, but the ostrich-like behavior of many Faculty Senators will. ♦

From the Opinions Editor Arm yourselves; there's no more oil

It's finally happened. After increasing gas prices and depleting supplies, we're finally running out of oil.

Brace yourselves – it's not going to be pretty. We've become so dependent upon oil that it'll be virtually impossible for us to function without the precious crude that used to flow as freely as the money it brought in.

According to an article in the *New York Times*, Shell oil officials knew of the shortage in 2002 but refrained from releasing that information. Whether they acted illegally has yet to be determined.

Traveling will be different. We'll most likely have to ride bicycles or travel on foot, unless we can whip up some of those electric cars.

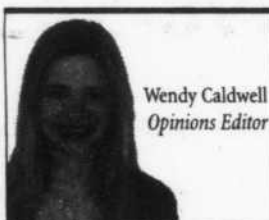
Surviving will be another matter.

Once word of the shortage becomes known to the public, panic will set in.

What would you do for enough oil to fill your tank to get to work or enough natural gas for the logs in your living room?

Our survival instincts are strong. It wouldn't take many days of walking to work in the snow as the grandparent days, before people start some kind of oil revolution.

Fighting in the streets and hiding out in abandoned buildings will be



Wendy Caldwell
Opinions Editor

our American 28 *Days Later*, sans zombies. It's time to dream of a childhood arsenal a little more seriously.

In the 1950s, M. King Hubbert theorized that world production of oil would peak at a point known as the Hubbert Peak. Because oil is considered a finite resource, after we reach the peak, production will decrease until we run out of oil.

What a lovely thought. All that cheap Middle Eastern oil we've become so heavily dependent upon will eventually go away, and theories suggest this peak will occur once half of the oil on the planet (past and present) is gone.

Estimates pinpoint the midpoint depletion at various times, but the general consensus is that it's already come and gone.

So that's it. We're running out of oil. Life as we know it will change forever.

No wonder we're so gung-ho about starting wars in the Middle East – that's where our future lies, deep under the sand, until we extract it all. ♦

Bush should win in November

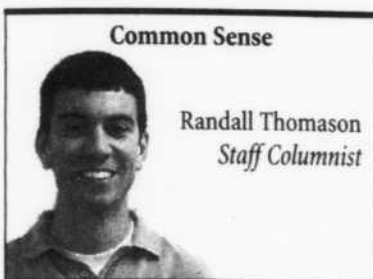
President George W. Bush is in trouble.

There's absolutely no doubt about it, if you take the word of all the major media outlets and television talking heads.

And why wouldn't he be? Because as we all know, life in America is awful right now: Sarcastically speaking, nobody can find a job because of Bush. The lucky few who are employed are being stripped of their overtime pay by Bush. While wealthy Americans are paying no income taxes, Bush is taking every last dime from the poor and giving it straight to Halliburton executives.

These mindless accusations only scratch the surface of the rhetoric we've heard for the last five months as the Democrats sifted through nine presidential candidates.

Bush has let the Democrats have their fun; the vicious attacks against him went largely unanswered for all that time. One would think John Kerry should have a substantial lead in the polls over Bush after weeks of an uninterrupted commercial from the media as he laid hold of the Democratic nomination. But



Common Sense

Randall Thomason
Staff Columnist

that's not the case.

All of the attacks from and positive press for the Democrats have only pulled Kerry into a statistical dead heat with Bush, and now the president is finally set to launch his own campaign.

In historical terms, Bush's chances of re-election are very strong.

Yale economist Ray Fair uses an economic model that projects the popular vote of each presidential election.

Fair is a liberal who opposes Bush, so his numbers can't be dismissed as GOP propaganda. Based on his economic model, Fair has calculated a projected Bush landslide, predicting the president to win 58 percent of the popular vote in November.

While liberals proclaim the inspiring message that the

American economy is doomed under Bush's leadership and can only be saved with higher taxes and more government involvement, actual economic numbers favor the president.

The unemployment rate, which Democrats would have you believe is soaring through the stratosphere, is actually a very healthy 5.6 percent. Don't believe that's a good figure? It's exactly the same figure CNN termed "low" in July 1996, according to transcripts on their Web site.

Obviously, Bill Clinton was president in 1996, so CNN was obligated to be positive about the economy. It's amazing that suddenly the unemployment rate is alarmingly high according to the media now that a Republican is in office.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average is likely to climb to more than 11,000 by election time, which is more good news for Bush considering that more than half the population now hold investments of some sort.

All of this economic prosperity is amazing when you consider the nation's economy was seemingly brought to its knees in the wake of

the 2001 terrorist attacks.

None other than Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan praised Bush's economic plan and tax cuts and made clear to Congress that the tax cuts should remain in order for the economy to continue to grow.

Is Bush's re-election a slam dunk? Absolutely not.

Certainly a lot can happen between now and November, but every voter should contemplate this: In order for Bush to lose the election, bad things have to happen to America. Democrats have placed themselves in the precarious position of having to wish harm on their own country in order to regain power.

Take into consideration the free commercial the Democratic party got out of the primary process.

Bush is still in strong position for re-election and he has yet to even begin his campaign with any earnestness. All signs still point to a second term for W. ♦

Randall Thomason is a junior mass communication major and can be reached via e-mail at rthomason@raiderrepublicans.com.

Prudish influence harms America

Janet Jackson revealed more than just a breast during this year's Super Bowl halftime show. She revealed just how much influence the conservative prude has upon America.

It's an election year, and as MTV and Howard Stern have already seen, somebody is out to win the good guy award.

The Federal Communications Commission recently fined Clear Channel Inc. a whopping \$755,000 for segments considered obscene by a morning radio disc jockey, Todd Clem, also known as Bubba the Love Sponge.

The segments involved Clem describing the male and female genitalia and discussing sexual acts between both humans and cartoon characters.

FCC commissioner Michael Copps said he believes Clear Channel stations should be hauled before a license-revocation hearing. And he's not the only one with "the fear."

MTV recently suffered a backlash when they were denied requests to film a reality show at Laguna Beach High School. The school had originally agreed to allow the network to film but pulled the plug after the Super Bowl incident.

Since then MTV has pulled some of the more controversial videos from its lineup. Videos including Britney Spears' "Toxic" and Ludacris' "Splash Waterfalls" were bumped back and are only played



Gagflex

Jason Johnson
Staff Columnist

after 10 p.m.

The statement heard over and over is "What if the children were watching?"

What if they were? Would the breast instantly create monsters or just uncomfortable questions? Well, just in case they weren't watching, the two-second clip was replayed constantly on other television programs.

What the children know now from hearing everyone discuss the taboo topic is the human breast is filthy, and don't ever look at the dirty, filthy breast because it will corrupt you.

Maybe somebody should tell all those tribes people featured in National Geographic magazine to put on some clothes, because they, too, are being filthy.

Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* has been praised for its brutal accuracy, but the film won't show a taboo topic, that Jesus was probably as Michelangelo depicted, nude when crucified.

Law professor Douglas Linder wrote in his essay "The Trial of Jesus," "The humiliation of being hanged nude in a promi-

nent place added to the punishments intended deterrent value."

Attorney General John Ashcroft was so uncomfortable with the nude body that while taking a picture in front of Lady Justice, he asked that a curtain be placed over her stone breast.

According to dictionary.com, the definition of a prude is "one who is excessively concerned with being or appearing proper, modest or righteous."

One of the biggest problems with the prudes, who set the standard of decency is they also set the standard for entering public office, thereby hindering the chance to make some very important changes that could be made if less conservative people were in office.

As this year's election comes closer, we'll come to find out who is the nicer person by noting who can speak at the most churches.

We will find out who's braver by checking war records and debating over who is more willing to become a martyr.

We'll see who's happier by presenting a smiling happy family, and we'll see who can satisfy the larger public by talking in circles and avoiding controversial topics. ♦

Jason Johnson is a junior journalism major and can be reached via e-mail at jjc2n@mtsu.edu.

Vote in November; every vote matters

Considering this is the first column I've written in more than a month, I decided to fill it with liberalism. Therefore, those who think the media is still controlled by the left should stop reading now, as I will have nothing significant or intelligent to say.

Because this is an election year, it should prove to be more interesting than most. Regardless of which side of the political fence you fall on, it's important to take part in the political process (Unless you're Republican, then you can abstain from voting if you want).

The sad thing is, in this country only about half of those eligible to vote actually do in the presidential election. These numbers drop off even more sharply in a non-presidential election year.

Why is it the citizens of the most powerful nation in the world choose not to vote? Many people feel as though their one vote won't affect the outcome of the election in a country of 270 million people.

Seems reasonable, right? Wrong.

In fact, the last election was decided by 537 Floridian votes. Not only that, but this number quickly dwindled under the recount. If the Supreme Court hadn't stopped the recount, it's plausible the election would've turned out much differently.

Even the Supreme Court decision was split 5-4.

Whether you're Democrat or Republican, you have to acknowledge the fact that less than 1,000 people decided the fate of a nation of 270 million.

If a few more people had made it to the polls that day, the course of



John Miller
Staff Columnist

the nation over the past three-plus years could've been very different.

However, this isn't the first time the fate of the nation has been decided by such a small margin. Women fought for the right to vote for many long years in this country.

The 19th Amendment narrowly passed Congress in 1918 by one vote in the House and Senate. If one person had changed his mind, women wouldn't have received the right to vote when they did.

What's even more interesting is that Tennessee became the state that ratified the amendment, making it law. Lawmakers at the time thought Tennessee would vote against the amendment.

However, one representative from East Tennessee changed his vote because of his mother.

With that, women received the suffrage they'd fought so long for by one vote.

As we can see, one vote really can make a difference.

That's why I encourage everyone to register and vote this fall. Even though I prefer one party to the other, it's important for everyone to take part in the political process that guarantees all of the freedoms we as a nation enjoy. ♦

John Miller is a senior political science and French double major and can be reached via e-mail at bigharf@comcast.net.

SIDELINES

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Women in CONSTRUCTION

By DeAnna Withrow
Staff Writer

This week, the National Association for Women in Construction is sponsoring its seventh annual Women in Construction Week.

Women in NAWIC chapters across the nation, including some at MTSU, will celebrate this momentous week with a variety of activities, including construction fairs, membership drives and community service activities – all designed to promote construction and the value of women's contributions to the industry.

"Our members need to share their experiences of working in the construction industry and how rewarding it has been," National NAWIC President Luci Roberts urges in the groups press release.

Founded in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1955, NAWIC is an international association serving approximately 5,500 members in nearly 200 chapters in the United States and Canada. NAWIC also has affiliates in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

The Association's diverse membership is comprised of business owners, engineers, architects, tradeswomen, estimators and other construction-related personnel.

Heather Brown, a professor in the engineering technology and industrial studies department at MTSU, was first introduced to NAWIC as an undergraduate when she was awarded one of the many scholarships given out by the organization each year.

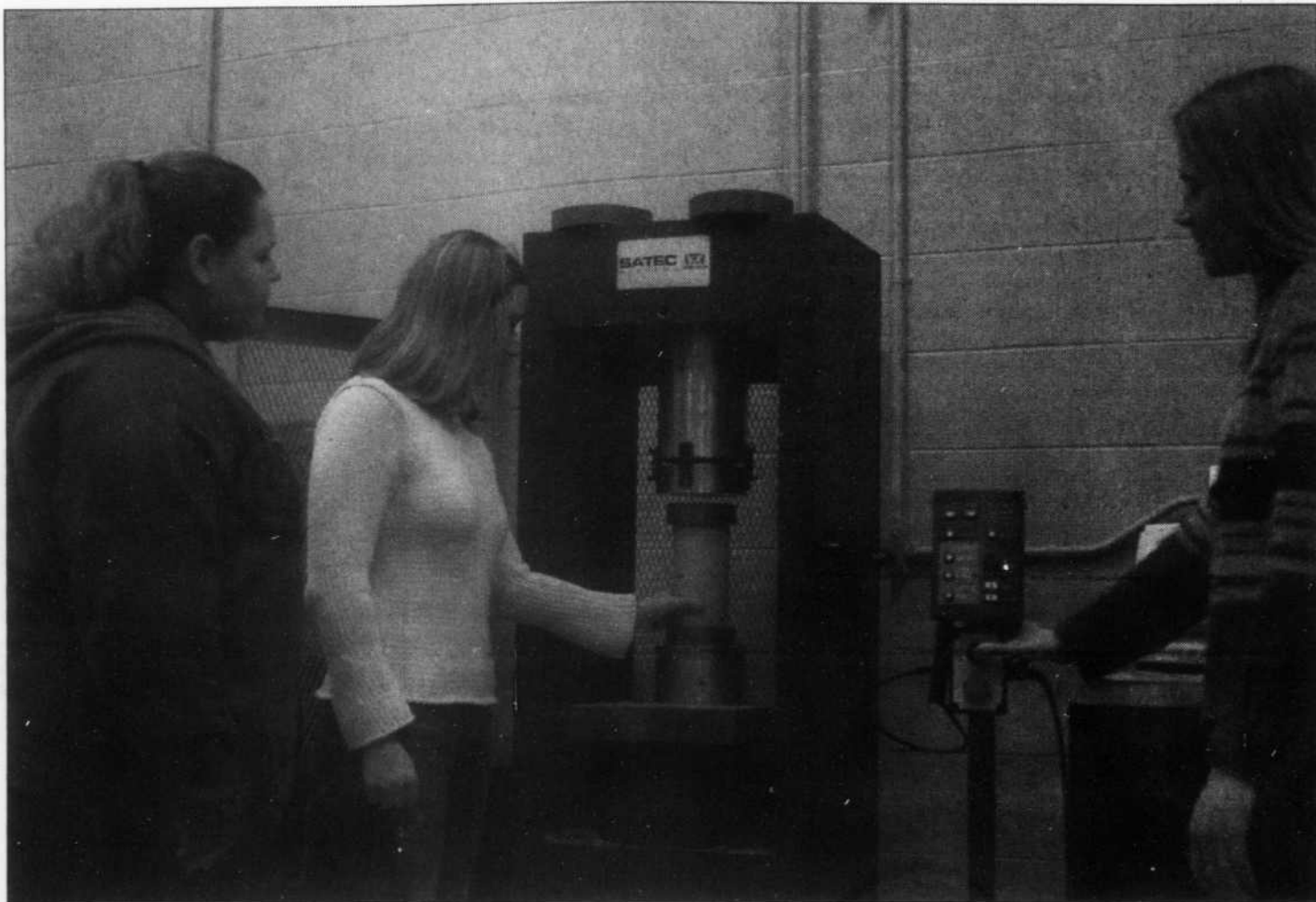


Photo by Josh Jordan | Staff Photographer

Students Amy Koonce and Jessica Ramm and Professor Heather Brown operate a concrete cylinder machine.

"I went to a banquet to accept the award and I got to meet this huge forum of women that were in construction that I didn't even realize were out there," Brown says.

Brown has a Ph.D. in civil engineering and has been working in construction for the past eight years.

"The construction industry is still predominately a good ol' boy industry, but there's plenty

of room for women, too," she says.

According to Brown, there are 250 students enrolled in the concrete industry management program at MTSU, and only ten of them are women. There are 60 students enrolled in the construction management program, and only four are women.

These numbers might still be low, but the number of women working in the construction

industry is on the rise.

From 1995 to 2002, the number increased 18 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"The industry is changing," Brown says. "It's more technical now than it used to be 30 years ago."

"There are a lot of new construction methods out there that many of the older generations don't know about or are

weary to adapt to," she says. "It's the responsibility of all our students to take things to the next level, women included," she says.

Part of NAWIC's efforts addresses how to deal with common attitudes and perceptions about women in the industry.

"We're not here to change anything," Brown says. "We're just here to be a part of a grow-

ing, stable industry. We're not trying to make any huge movements, but we are definitely trying to make a statement about our capabilities."

Brown advises, though, that certain characteristics are necessary for a woman to survive in this male-dominated industry.

"You definitely have to have a certain kind of personality in order to be in that kind of arena all the time," she says. "There must be a willingness to adapt to an age-old industry."

Andrea Greenway is majoring in the concrete industry management program at MTSU.

"I first heard about it when a guy in one of my classes started talking about concrete management," Greenway says.

After a few conversations with friends and Brown, Greenway changed her major with only one year left to complete a degree in child development family studies.

Since she is an art lover, Greenway says decorative concrete became her new passion.

"I'm excited about it," she says. "I'm ready to graduate so I can start to work."

Brown admits that, even though she does her best to mentor women coming through the program, it's nice to know that she can also refer them to organizations like NAWIC for further support.

For information about MTSU's Student Association for Women in Construction, contact Amy Koonce at 904-8060. ♦

Video game addicts discuss their obsessions

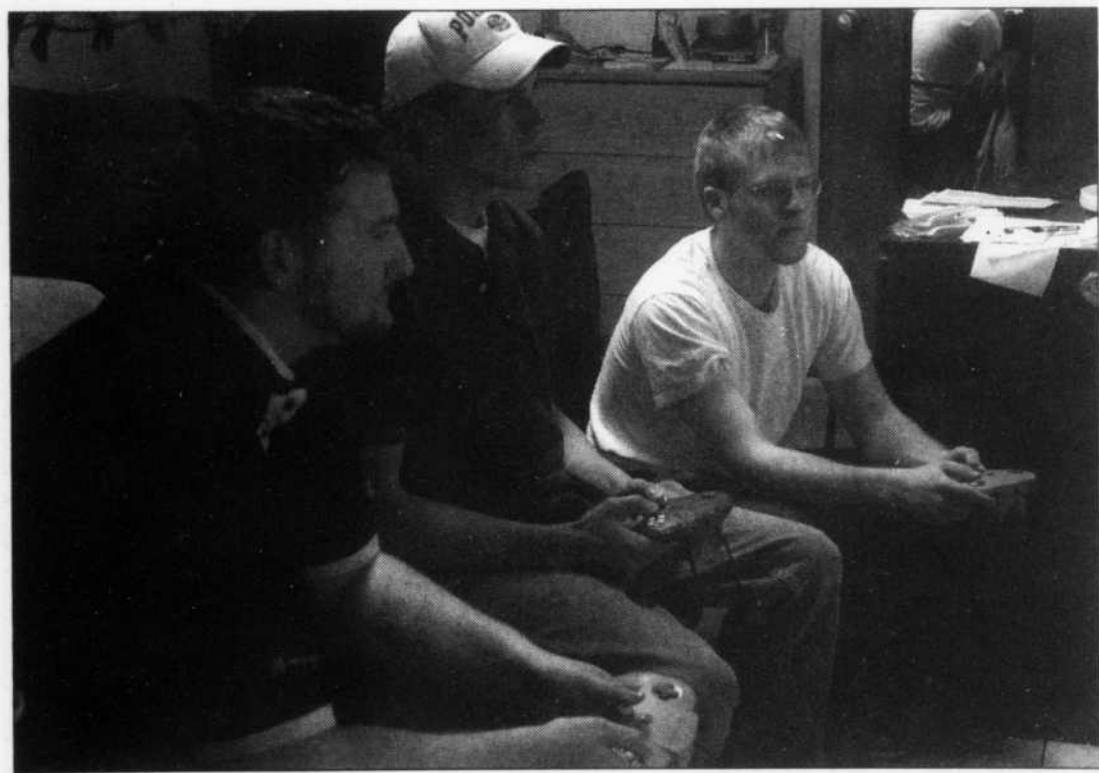


Photo by Seth Holland | Staff Photographer

Seth Agee, Bryan Young and Derek Englett focus on their latest gaming obsession.

Murfreesboro offers unique outlet for players

By Adam Parker
Staff Writer

"Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, A, B, A, B, Start." As cryptic as it sounds, many college-aged students know what this means.

After their friend told you the code, they sat impatiently through the rest of the school day, nervously chewing their pencils, just itching to go home.

This was the day that you would finally win Contra, a popular video game of the late '80s.

Those who understand this scenario know that our society would be incomplete without video games.

Video games and mainstream culture have been inseparable since the introduction of Computer Space, the first video game ever, in 1971.

Video games, which combine the competition of sports

with the comfort of television, allow people to be competitive without ever leaving the couch.

While many athletes prove their dedications to a sport by devoting their time, sweating and acquiring countless bruises in the name of competition, Rob Leonard brings that same burning passion to video games.

Leonard has played ever since the Atari 2600's heyday in the late 1970s.

"It's a good escape from everything," Leonard says.

When he isn't at The Underground Gaming and Internet Lounge, Murfreesboro's only commercial video game club, he plays his Xbox for hours on end at home.

"I really enjoy coming down here," Leonard says.

"Two or three days a week, I get an all day pass and come down here. I spend about 12 hours. I come down here from

11 to 11," Leonard says.

But Leonard can't play video games for 12 hours straight.

"I smoke, so I have to go outside to smoke," Leonard says.

Between all day passes (which cost \$20 during the week, and \$30 on weekends) and renting games for his Xbox, Leonard estimates that video gaming is a \$200 to \$300 per month habit.

The Underground is located on the town square, alongside Maple Street.

Customers pay to play (usually \$6 an hour) at the front desk one of the 24 computers, or one of the two Xboxes.

"The lounge area is an addition that most game centers do not have, and I insisted that we have it; just a place for people to chill. So I like that area a lot,"

See Video games, 7

Student Ambassadors show pride in school

By Abby Sliger
Staff Writer

You've seen them on campus. You've seen them at games. You've seen them in their blue blazers. They are the MTSU Student Ambassadors.

The purpose of this organization is to "serve as official hosts and hostesses for the university" according to Katy Riddle, assistant director of alumni relations and sponsor of the Student Ambassadors.

Currently, there are 14 Student Ambassadors, and the deadline for applications for the 2004-2005 year was March 5.

"Student Ambassadors is a great opportunity," Riddle says. "It allows students access to places they may not normally be. The ambassadors also get to meet people, especially alumni who helped shape the university."

Student Ambassadors offer help at presidential, alumni, donor, athletic and academic events all over campus, according to the Student Ambassador Web site, mtsu.edu/~alumni/services/ambassadors.html.

Frequently, they greet people at the door, hand out nametags and help when needed at the function.

During football season, the ambassadors greet the president's guests and assist them to the President's suite. Student Ambassadors are also trained to give tours to potential donors and represent the university, Riddle says.

"You really have to love this place to become a Student Ambassador," Riddle says. "Ambassadors have lots of school pride and show it."

Last year, between 60 and 70 students applied to be Student Ambassadors, Riddle says.

The competition is fierce, since there are only 15 positions

to be filled. Students who were an ambassador the year before are not guaranteed a spot the following years since the Alumni Office is looking for the best of the best, Riddle points out.

The office also looks for a diverse group of students. This year's group had at least one person from each college on campus and represented a variety of other organizations, she

"You really have to love this place to become a Student Ambassador. Ambassadors have lots of school pride and show it."

Katy Riddle
Assistant Director of
Alumni Relations, sponsor
of Student Ambassadors

adds.

This year, the interview process will be different. Instead of interviewing all the applicants, the applications themselves will be a main factor.

"We are going to put more of an emphasis on the application this year. The top applicants will be interviewed," Riddle says.

The interviews will take place at the end of March.

In 1978, the year the group was established, the organization was a part of the News and

Public Affairs Office.

In 1997, they joined the Alumni Office.

"The move put the Student Ambassadors more in line with what other universities use their ambassadors for," Riddle says.

To stay an active member, the ambassadors have to work so many events, and each event counts for points. By the end of the semester, a certain amount of points has to be acquired. The student also must maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average.

Since they are an organization, the ambassadors must attend meetings and mandatory functions, Riddle says.

Junior Lindsey Huffman has been a Student Ambassador for a year. She says she has met Jennings and Rebecca Jones and John Bragg.

"One time a lady asked us what we did as Student Ambassadors," Huffman says. "We gave her a long description of what we do – turns out she was the lady who started the program."

Riddle herself was a Student Ambassador when she was an MTSU student. She says she got to meet Charles Sarver, who came up with the nickname "Blue Raider."

Huffman's favorite parts of being a Student Ambassador are being involved and getting to meet people, both alumni and other ambassadors. She has met university President Sidney McPhee and all the vice presidents.

This helps her to gain more loyalty to MTSU, she says.

"You have to be involved in other organizations beforehand, otherwise, what do you have pride in?" Huffman says.

"You can have pride in your academics, but being involved also gives something to discuss

See Ambassadors, 7

Video games: Gamers spend big bucks

Continued from 6

owner Charmaine Fessler says.

Most people regard video games as a home entertainment medium, with the exception the occasional video game club such as The Underground provides.

This is especially true since the collapse of video arcades in the late 1990s.

As soon as the technology gap between arcade games and home video games disappeared, serious gamers had no reason to

leave the living room.

The video game industry saw revenues of \$11.2 billion in the year 2003, the majority of which was split between games for the Microsoft Xbox, Sony Playstation 2, Nintendo Gamecube or the IBM compatible personal computer.

Currently, most gamers are playing the Playstation 2 which, although technologically primitive compared to its competition, has the most, and best games. ♦

"The lounge area is an addition that most game centers do not have, and I insisted that we have it; just a place for people to chill. So I like that area a lot."

Charmaine Fessler
Owner, Underground Gaming
and Internet Lounge

Ambassadors: Involvement important

Continued from 6

The Student Ambassadors also have an event called "Golden Raiders" around Homecoming.

This is when graduates of 50 years come back and talk with them.

Included in the Golden Raiders are the people who had

the professors that the buildings are named after, according to Riddle.

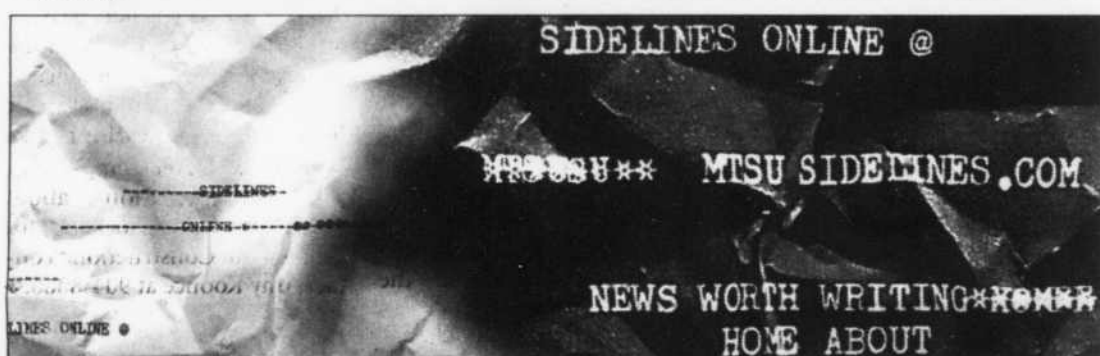
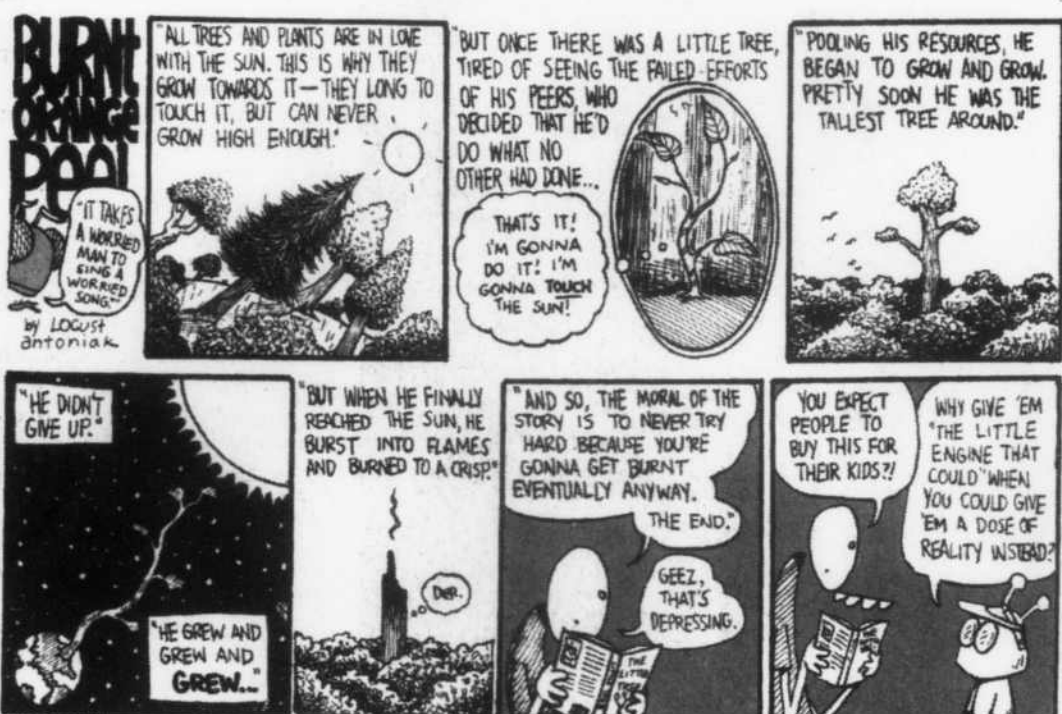
Ambassadors also have to get along with each other since they usually work events in pairs.

Though the application process is highly competitive, Riddle encourages people to keep applying.

Riddle also wants to remind

students that the Alumni Office is a resource for them.

Not only do they want to stay connected with graduates, the Alumni Office wants students to let them know if they can help in any way, Riddle says. ♦



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Dear Emily



Dear Emily,
Help!

Here we are, only halfway through the semester and I'm already pulling my hair out! I'm so stressed out with school, my job, friends, family, homework, roommates and volunteer work – not to mention the different campus events and clubs I'd like to participate in if I ever get a spare minute...

I'm trying to juggle everything and I'm afraid I'm going to end up dropping something. Is it even possible to stay on top of it all?

Thanks,
Overloaded

Dear Overloaded,

I know exactly how you feel, and so do a few thousand of your fellow students here at MTSU.

Contrary to popular belief, the college life is no piece of cake. It's not always the big party high schoolers dream about. It's an enormous commitment in which much will be expected of you.

The trick is to view it not as a juggling act, but rather as a balancing act.

Let me explain.

Juggling everything means that you're giving each commitment equal time in your hands, regardless of its importance in relation to your other responsibilities.

Now picture a set of scales. Balancing means that the more important commitments hold more weight, as in, they receive more of your time and energy (one side of the scale), while the lesser commitments fill the remainder of your time (the other side of the scale).

Sounds simple enough, right?

The hard part is deciding which activities are the most important, and exactly how much time to devote to each one.

School is an obviously heavy responsibility. It's the reason you're at MTSU.

But even so, try to remember that life is bigger than school.

A friend of mine once told me that, to determine if something is really a big deal, ask yourself, "in five years, will this matter?"

Chances are, in the big scheme of things, one test, project or paper will not make or break your entire career.

Save yourself the stress of worrying about things that aren't significant in the big picture. Sometimes you just have to do the best you can and then move on. You won't always be able to stay on top of everything, but that's OK.

I don't have superhero powers – you probably don't either. We're only human.

Next, the time allotment for your job is pretty easy to determine. There's not too much room for weighing your options there. Do what you've got to do.

The key to spending time with friends and family is quality over quantity.

Set aside a specific time in which you will fully concentrate on whomever you're spending time with – without distractions.

As a wise man once said, "Wherever you are, be all there."

As for the volunteering, clubs and activities, only you can determine what's truly important to you. Remember, you can't do everything in one semester.

That's not to say you can't try a wide variety of activities during your entire time at college, only that you can't do everything all at once.

Learn to say "no" to obligations you can't afford to have. Don't commit to something you know you won't have time for, even if it's for a worthy cause or if it's an enjoyable activity. You'd be hard-pressed to find many bad activities around campus.

Besides, if you're involved in too many activities, you can't be an effective participant in any of them because you'll be spread too thin.

Just because something's good doesn't mean it will be beneficial to you, especially if you already have enough on your plate!

Everybody's different, so prioritize and find what's really important to you: making straight A's throughout college? Making lots of friends? Saving money? Getting a variety of experiences? Figure it out, then allow ample time for that endeavor.

Finally, don't forget to enjoy your college experience. Take time to relax and savor the moments. You only get a few years, so make the most of them.

Try to keep everything in perspective and don't stress over the things that won't matter in the long run.

Don't drive yourself into the ground by overloading with responsibilities, but do try to engage in a variety of things so you won't look back with any regrets. ♦



Political correctness
doesn't exist on Talk Radio.

SPORTS

8 ♦ SIDELINES

Wednesday, March 10, 2005

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

MT Men lose to Cajuns in semifinals 70-66

By Jared Hastings
Staff Writer

BOWLING GREEN, KY. - After defeating Western Kentucky University in the first round, the Blue Raiders ended their Sun Belt Conference Tournament play with a 70-66 loss to the University of Louisiana-Lafayette in the semifinals Monday.

After struggling offensively in the team's 76-62 victory over WKU Sunday night, senior Tommy Gunn scored 13 of his game-high 20 points (he also grabbed six rebounds) in the second half, helping his team back from a 14-point second-half deficit.

With the weight of 20 Blue Raider turnovers, however, MT could not overcome a hot-shooting ULL team that hit 10 three-pointers in the game.

With his eyes down, the usually soft-spoken Gunn was even more so in describing

the Blue Raiders loss.

"We had some lapses down the stretch," Gunn said. "They were able to convert, and that was the deal. The team that converted was the team that won."

Just like Sunday night, the Blue Raiders found themselves down by double digits early, as the top-seeded Ragin' Cajuns opened the game by hitting nine of their first 11 shots in building a 21-7 lead.

"I felt we came out and really won the first five minutes of the game," Ragin' Cajun head coach Jesse Evans said. "Defensively, we did some things really well. I think that's the critical thing, how well we defended."

Middle Tennessee cut the lead to 10 or fewer points five times in the final minutes, but each time ULL had an answer. With the Blue Raiders trailing by nine and holding for the last shot of the first half, Dwayne Mitchell stole the ball from Bryan Smithson and Brian Hamilton laid it in to extend the

Ragin' Cajun lead back to 11 at the intermission.

Gunn's alley-oop from Smithson cut the lead to 46-41, but ULL guard Brad Boyd came back with one of his four three-pointers on the game, and after a Blue Raider turnover on the next possession the Ragin' Cajun lead was back to 11.

Following a Michael Cuffee three-point shot that cut the Blue Raider deficit to six (56-50), Dwayne Mitchell's dunk put ULL back on top by eight. But Marcus Robinson's layup combined with Gunn's steal and pass to Cuffee for a one handed tomahawk slam cut the lead back down to four with eight minutes remaining.

After drawing a charge on ULL's Brian Hamilton, Gunn took a wrap around pass from Robinson and drained a fade away three-pointer from deep in the right corner

See Loss, 10



MT guard Mike Dean puts up the jumper against a WKU defender Feb. 26. MT beat the Hilltoppers 73-59.

Lady Raiders win Sun Belt title

Smith repeats last season's accomplishments

MT Media Relations

Middle Tennessee (23-7) got its dance card punched for the NCAA Tournament with a 79-57 win over Western Kentucky (18-13) in the Sun Belt Tournament Championship game Tuesday.



Givens

Lady Raider guard Patrice Holmes led six Middle Tennessee players in double figures with 18 points. She also added six rebounds and two steals and was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player for the second

straight season. Chrissy Givens added 12 points on 5-of-6 shooting.

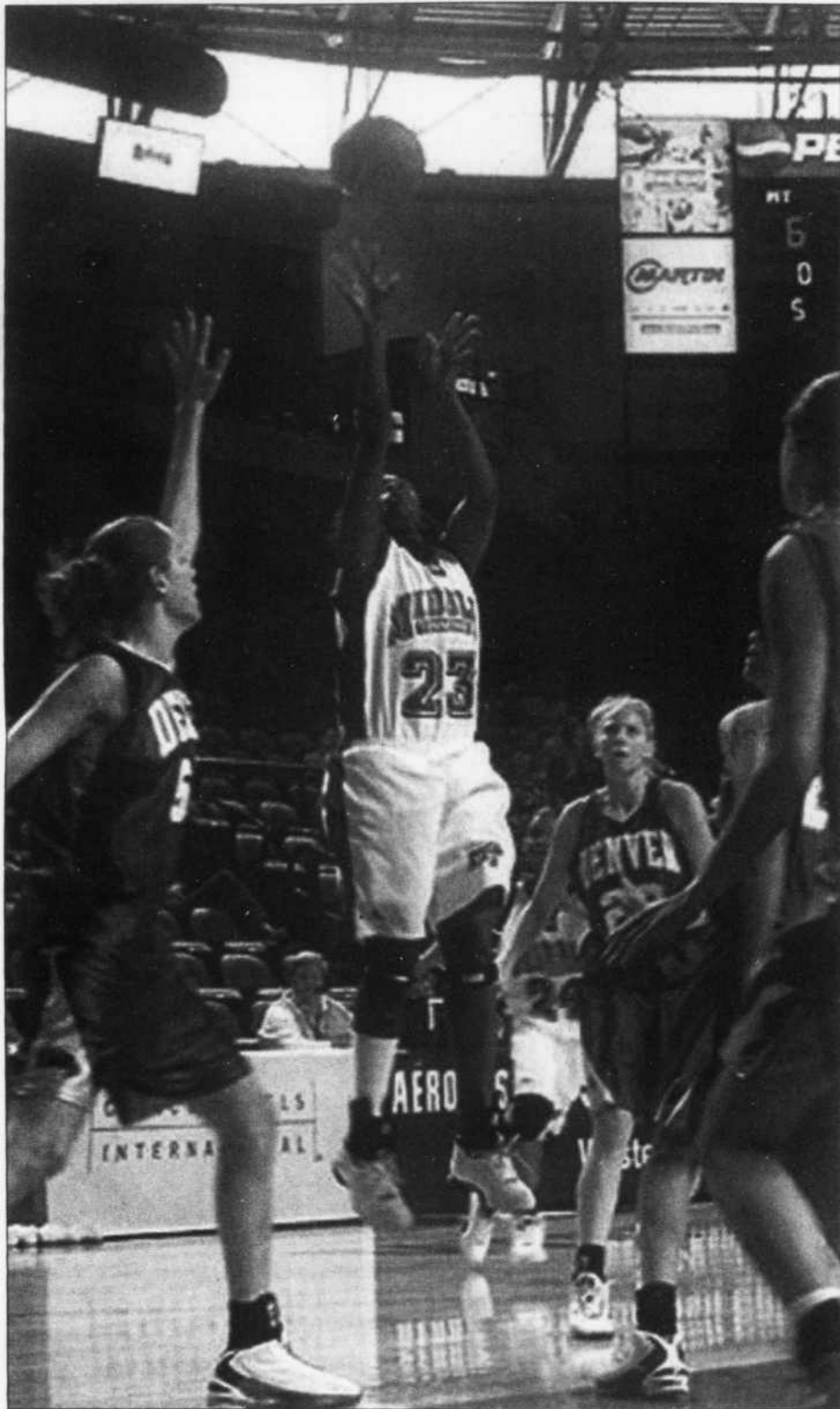
Middle Tennessee shot a scorching 55 percent from the field, including a 61 percent clip in the second half. The Lady Raiders were also 17-of-18 from the free throw line (94 percent).

The Lady Raiders never trailed in the contest and had a double-figure lead for much of the game. Middle Tennessee opened the game with a 9-0 advantage before Western Kentucky scored.

The Sun Belt Tournament title is the first for Middle Tennessee and it will be the teams first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 1998.

Freshman Krystle Horton and sophomore Tia Stovall were named to the Sun Belt All-Tournament Team. Other selections included Carla Bartee and Tiffany Porter-Talbert from Western Kentucky and Sinnamonn Garrett from New Mexico State.

The Lady Raiders will find out where they are seeded in the NCAA Tournament on Sunday March 14. ♦



MT guard Patrice Holmes shoots in the lane against Denver Feb. 15. Holmes led the Lady Raiders in the SBC tourney with 63 points.

Photo courtesy MT Media Relations

Teamwork key to conference victories

By Jared Hastings
Staff Writer

BOWLING GREEN, KY. - Funny how history has a way of repeating itself.

Patrice Holmes continued to be the best player in Sun Belt Conference tournament play, freshman Krystle Horton continued to be a force in the post and, as a result, the Lady Raiders found themselves back in the SBC tournament championship.

The team was facing rival Western Kentucky University after MT's win over the University of Denver at E.A. Diddle Arena Monday.

Holmes scored 23 points, and Horton tallied 16 to go along with her game-high 10 rebounds as the Lady Raiders overcame an early 10-point deficit and held off a Denver rally for the 64-61 semifinal victory.

"We really didn't show any emotion in the first five minutes of the game," Holmes said. "As the leader and the captain of this team, I felt like it was up to me to take over and get our team into the game."

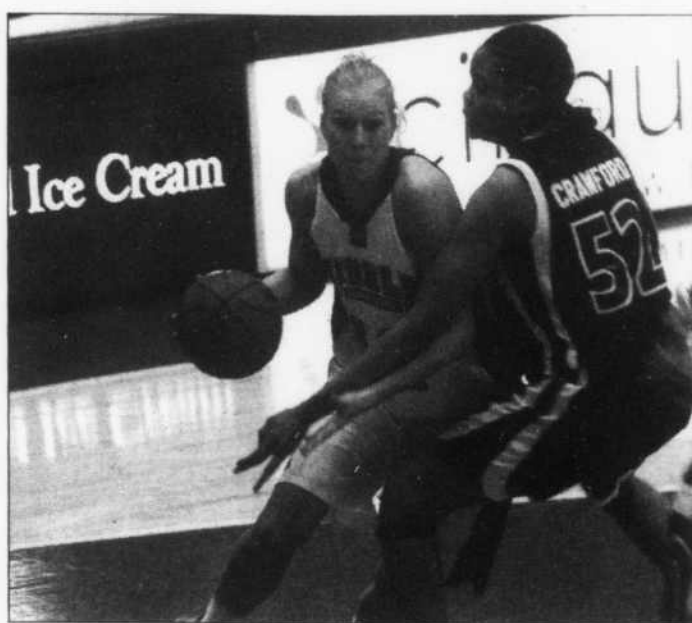
Ragan Neblett led the Lady Pioneers with 18 points, while Stephanie Hart added 10 points and seven rebounds before fouling out with 2:02 remaining.

"It was a real battle out there and a very physical game," Hart said after playing her final game as a Lady Pioneer.

After knocking out top-seeded University of South Alabama, Denver came out strong. The deliberate Denver offense found open passing lanes and controlled the tempo, frustrating the Lady Raiders' pressure defense. Neblett's three-pointer with 12:48 to go in the first half gave the Lady Pioneers a 16-6 lead.

"I can't tell you how proud I am of my kids," Denver head coach Pam Tanner said. "I told them that in the locker room, and I told them that at the end of the game. They were an inspiration, and they played their butts off and didn't quit until there was zero-zero on the clock."

But MT outscored the Lady Pioneers 23-11 over the final 12 minutes of the half, and



MT guard and forward Ditte Jakobsen drives to the basket against Arkansas-Little Rock Feb. 21.

File Photo

Horton's layup as time expired gave the Lady Raiders a two-point halftime advantage.

A 16-8 run by MT extended the lead to 10 with just more than 12 minutes remaining in the game, and a pair of Patrice Holmes free throws extended the lead to as much as 14 with 3:23 remaining, but Neblett hit two three-

pointers and was fouled on a third, hitting all three free throws, and Kaitlyn King's three-pointer with 53 seconds left cut the deficit to three.

But the Lady Raiders were able to convert 7 of 10 free throws in the final minute to persevere the win. Neblett's

See Repeat, 10

Baseball squad wins using keen offense

By Matthew Adair
Staff Writer

Middle Tennessee completed its sweep of Southeastern Louisiana University Sunday by outpacing the Lions for a 14-8 victory.

The Blue Raiders' pitching suffered slightly in the final away contest against SLU as MT rotated through five pitchers before game's end. Starter Steve

Kline threw for 3 2/3 innings, his shortest pitching stint since April 25, 2003, when he played for the same length of time against Western Kentucky University, giving up two runs on four hits before being relieved by Danny Borne. Borne played for his first win of the season after striking out two.

"Steve had good stuff today but really lost command once he got in the stretch," MT head coach Stephen Peterson said. "With the way the game was going, I didn't want to extend anyone on the staff. Danny came in and did a good job, and we helped out the pitching staff with the way we swung the bats."

After losing the advantage in points to SLU in the final innings of the game, Peterson chose to bring in closer Chase Swing for the second time in the series and the third time of the year. Chase earned the save for the Blue Raiders as he forced the final four outs to secure MT's win.

What MT lacked on the mound, however, it made up for at the plate. Five Blue Raiders scored multiple hits in the game, including Eric McNamee, Jeff Beachum and Shane Kemp, all with three hits each. Brett Carroll and Chase Eakes each got two hits. McNamee and Beachum also scored three times, while Kemp drove four runs home.

The Blue Raiders looked poised to score in the first when Derek Phillips drove the ball deep to center. SLU's Russell Taylor, however, dove out and caught the hit to close out the inning.

MT came back to score twice in the third. Michael McKenry set things up with a walk and came home three batters later when Beachum fired the ball

into right center for a double. Kemp followed up with a second double, scoring Beachum to put the Blue Raiders ahead by two points.

SLU's Ryan Spencer brought Jimmy Bertelson to the plate in the bottom of the third for the Lions' first run. SLU then tied the score 2-2 in the fourth when Colby Tyler scored on a groundout from Jeff Janzen.

The Blue Raiders regained the lead starting in the fifth, loading the bases with two singles and a hit batsman before Kemp was hit by a pitch, bringing home a walk. A two-run single to left from Phillips brought Beachum and McNamee for a 5-2 Blue Raider lead.

MT maintained its progress in the seventh, opening the inning with a home run over the fence by Eakes, his third hit for the season. Three additional runs widened MT's advantage to 9-2 after Beachum and McNamee scored on a double by Carroll, and Chuck Akers hit a sacrifice fly to bring Kemp home.

The Lions attempted a comeback for the second time in the three-game series, scoring four runs in the bottom of the seventh on a grand slam by Trent Hebert to bring SLU within three points of the Blue Raiders. MT's Eakes opened up the lead again with a double to right center to put MT up 10-6.

MT closed the game with Carroll reaching home on a double by Ryan Darnell, and McNamee scored Darnell with a single to center. Kemp gave MT its final two points of the game with a two-run single to left center, turning the game over to Swing to hold on to the Blue Raider lead as the Lions took the bat one final time.

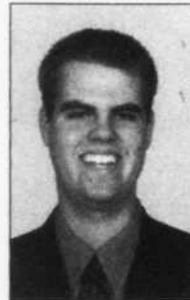
"I was very impressed today. We swung the bats and kept pressure on [SLU]," Peterson told MT Media Relations. "We moved runners and executed and went the other way. Offensively, this was the best day we've swung the bats this season."

MT continues its eight-game road trip in Lipscomb University on Tuesday before moving on to face Belmont at Nashville's Greer Stadium on Wednesday. The Blue Raiders return home this weekend to host 2003 College World Series participant Southwestern Missouri State in a three-game contest March 12-14 at Reese Smith Field. ♦

Upcoming Baseball Games	
♦ Lipscomb	Mar. 9
♦ Belmont	Mar. 10
♦ Southwest Missouri	Mar. 12-14
♦ Samford	Mar. 16-17
Home games are in italics.	



Kline



Swing



Kemp

Blue Raiders to face Bruins



Photo by Steve Cross | Chief Photographer

MT junior Travis Horschel pitches against Purdue-Fort Wayne Feb. 22. The Blue Raiders beat IPFW in the three game series.

By Jon Leffew
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee baseball team will look to cap off an eight game road trip on Wednesday, making the short trip to Nashville to take on the Belmont University Bruins.

MT made the most of last weekend's games in Hammand, La., by sweeping the three game series with the Southeastern Louisiana Lions.

with nine straight victories, but have since lost three of five.

Jacksonville handed Belmont its most recent loss last weekend, winning the final game of a three-game series 14-6.

However, the Bruins did win two of three against Jacksonville, holding the home team to five runs in the two Belmont victories.

The Bruins have been in several low-scoring games during the season, holding opponents to 3.9 runs per game at home.

This group of talented pitchers, which has an earned run average of less than five runs per game, has helped this team with eight of 11 home games this year.

Brad Dobner leads the team with a .381 batting average, with Jason Warpool (.360), Josh Brummett (.341) and Dan Soukup (.333) not far behind.

In addition to a proven pitching staff, the Bruins have several veterans to step up to the plate.

Brummett leads the team with five home runs on the season, while Soukup has four.

Soukup recently tied the Belmont record for career home runs with a blast against Jacksonville and is second on the team in on-base percentage (.441) and runs batted in (12).

The Blue Raiders will look to avenge an 11-8 loss from last year and prepare for Wednesday's game against the Bruins, which is set to begin at 3 p.m. ♦

Blue Raider head coach Steve Peterson was impressed with his team's offensive performance during the final game with the Lions.

"I was very impressed today," Peterson said. "We moved runners and executed and went the other way. Offensively, this was the best day we've swung the bats this season."

Peterson will look to see the same effort against in-state rival Belmont.

The Bruins opened their season

MT netters win at home defeating Sycamores 7-0

By Colby Sledge
Assistant Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee men's tennis team defeated a short-handed Indiana State University squad 7-0 Monday in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

ISU brought only five players to the match due to injuries, forcing the Sycamores to forfeit the No. 3 doubles match and the No. 6 singles match before play even began.

"We competed really well, especially given the fact that our guys were playing a spot higher due to Andrey Kumantsov's injury," ISU head coach Ryan Ray told ISU Media Relations. "We played much better outdoors and continued to show progress. A number of the matches were close, but we were unable to come away with third-set tiebreakers."

Kumantsov, the Sycamores' No. 1 singles player, sustained an injury to his right ankle in practice over the weekend and was unavailable for the match against MT, the first match he has missed this season.

In his absence, ISU's only victory came against MT's Trevor Short and Kirk Jackson in No. 2 doubles. Boyd Michau

and Dewald Linde defeated the Blue Raider duo 8-2.

MT's Brandon Allan and Kai Schledorn defeated Ivan D'Argence Arceo and Aaron Phillips 8-5 in No. 1 singles, giving the Blue Raiders the doubles point by virtue of the Sycamores' forfeit at No. 3.

In singles play, Andreas Siljestrom won his third straight match at No. 1 as he defeated D'Argence Arceo 6-1, 6-4.

Trevor Short, who started the season at No. 1 singles, defeated Michau 6-3, 7-6 (2) in the No. 3 match.

Anant Sitaram won his No. 4 match against Linde 6-2, 6-4 in the only other two-set match.

Schledorn took on a rested R.J. Nagel in the No. 2 match and escaped with a 6-4, 4-6, 11-9 victory.

Jackson also went to three sets against Aaron Phillips but pulled out a 4-6, 7-5, 10-8 win.

The Blue Raiders evened their overall record to 5-5, while the Sycamores dropped to 1-5.

MT will travel to the National Blue-Gray Tennis Classic in Montgomery, Ala., Thursday. ♦

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Lady Netters travel to Ole Miss

By Michael Bailey
Staff Writer

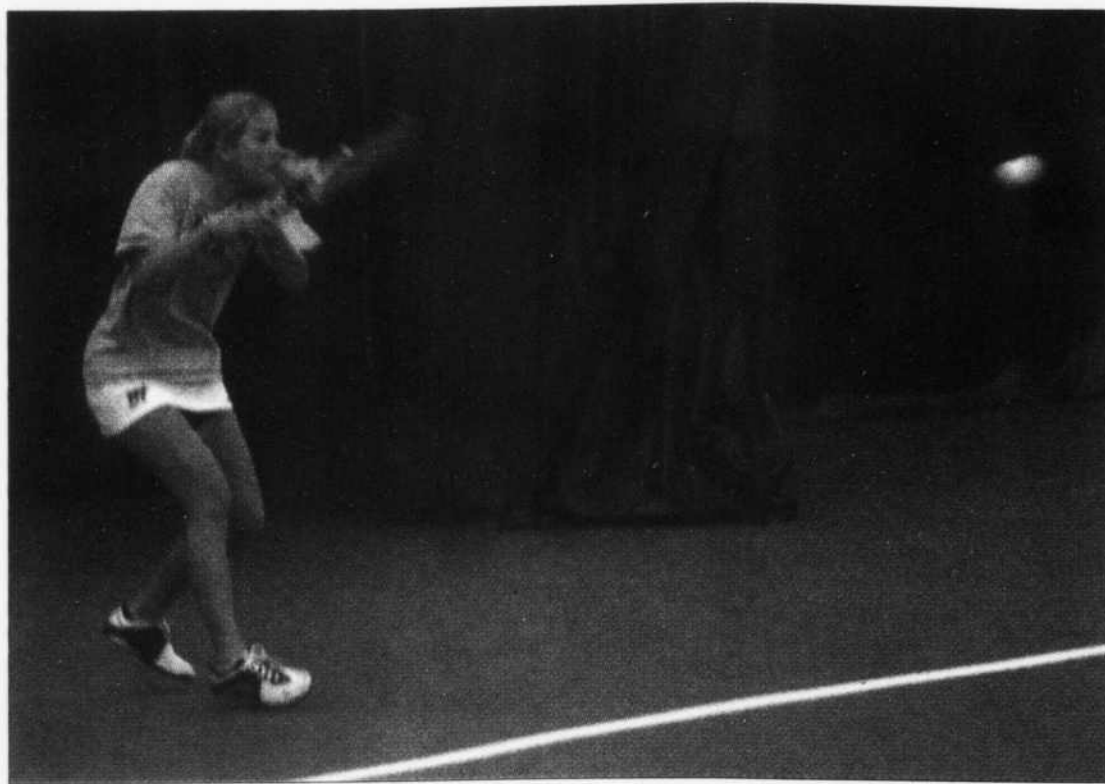
The Middle Tennessee Lady Raider tennis team is going South on Wednesday. The Lady Raiders (7-2) will depart for Oxford, Miss., to take on the University of Mississippi (7-5) for an important match against a top 50 opponent. But the Lady Rebels' reputation does not keep MT head coach Randy Holden from looking up at his team's chances.

"They are a strong team all the way down their bench," Holden said. "We have a good chance to win; however that does not mean it will be automatic."

Holden has good reason to be optimistic heading into the match. The Lady Raiders have won four matches in a row, dating back to Feb. 15.

"Right now, we are very confident in our abilities," Holden said. "The win against Murray State [on March 5] was big because it was the first time we had played in two weeks. We are getting back into the swing of things."

Holden is leaning on two well-traveled veterans to carry the torch into Oxford. The German duo of Jennifer Klaschka and Manon Kruse has earned victories against the likes of powers Georgia Tech and the University of Kentucky.



MT junior Jennifer Klaschka volleys the ball to her Murray State opponent on Mar. 5.

Although Kruse and Klaschka notched individual victories in these matches, MT lost the contests, making the matches the only two blemishes on the Lady Raiders' record to date.

"Our top three can match up with anybody," Holden said. "We need the others to follow suit."

Recently the Nos. 4-6 seeds have been taking care of busi-

ness. Carlen Venter, Emily Vest, Laura McNamara and Jacqui Williams have contributed victories to complement Kruse and Klaschka's trailblazing feats.

"Early on, some people were not used to playing under fire, but they are beginning to find their way and build confidence," Holden said.

Considering their recent success and elevated level of assurance, Holden views the oppor-

Photo by David McCombs | Staff Photographer

tunity on Wednesday a golden one for his squad when they take on the Lady Rebels, who have lost five of their past six contests.

"They play a tough schedule in the SEC," Holden said. "With that schedule, you are going to go through some tough stretches. Hopefully, we can catch them on one of those off days and put ourselves in a position to upset them." ♦

Repeat: Women do it again

Continued from 8

three at the buzzer provided the final margin.

"I thought we did a really good job on the offensive boards," Lady Raider head coach Stephany Smith said. "In some of the time and score situations late in the game with some really young people on the floor, I thought we executed well."

Sunday the Lady Raiders took the first step toward an SBC Tournament title and a berth in the NCAA tournament by routing the University of North Texas 81-66.

Holmes and Stovall combined for 22 first half points as the Lady Raiders outscored the Lady Eagles in the opening period, taking a 42-15 lead in the locker room.

Reigning SBC Defensive Player of the Year Keisha McClinic continued her school-record thievery, getting four steals to go along with her five points and six first-half rebounds. The Lady Raiders forced 16 UNT turnovers, scoring 14 points off those turnovers in the opening period. The MT defense held North Texas to 26.9 percent from the field in the first half.

McClinic finished with five points, seven rebounds and five steals.

"I just try to anticipate the pass, and when it's there I try to make plays," McClinic said.

As of Sunday, McClinic had a school record 99 steals.

Freshman guard Chrissy Givens scored 11 of her career-high 18 points after intermission as 9 of the 10 Lady Raiders that saw action scored. Givens also added three assists and four rebounds. Horton scored 12 points in 27 minutes of action.

Down 27 at the half, the Lady Eagles did not go quietly, forcing 16 Middle Tennessee turnovers and shooting 57 percent in the final 20 minutes. Jill Medlock's three-pointer with 1:07 remaining cut the Lady Raider lead to 76-66, but Givens hit 3 of 4 free throws down the stretch, and UNT was unable to score in the last minute.

"It was a tale to two halves for sure," Smith said. "North Texas was much more aggressive in the second half, and we were much more passive. We're glad that we're advancing, but we have yet to put together a 40-minute basketball game together this season, but all in all, I'm pleased."

With the win Monday, the Lady Raiders gained a rematch of last year's tournament final with third-seeded Western Kentucky. WKU is 2-0 against the Lady Raiders this year, winning in double overtime in Murfreesboro before taking a 79-71 victory Feb. 26 in Bowling Green. ♦

Loss: Blue Raiders come off strong win against Hilltoppers, lose to conference leader ULL

Continued from 8

to bring MT to within one, but it was as close as the Blue Raiders got.

"We really got some pressure on the ball," ULL senior guard Antoine Landry said. "Once we did that, we were able to create some turnovers and get some transition baskets to put ourselves back up."

The stifling Ragin' Cajun defense held the Blue Raider offense scoreless for the next 4:07 until Bryan Smithson's three made it 65-60 with just more than 1:30 to go.

MT had a chance to cut it to a one-possession game with 1:03 to go, but

Hamilton corralled the rebound to seal the win.

"I am really proud of the team," Blue Raider head coach Kermit Davis said. "You could tell how deep and athletic they [ULL] are. They are a team that, if they're fortunate enough to win [in the finals], could win some games in the NCAA tournament."

Hamilton was 8 of 9 from the field, leading the Ragin' Cajuns with 17 points and three rebounds. He also had three of ULL's 14 steals.

Michael Cuffee had another strong performance for the Blue Raiders, scoring 15 points on 5 of 10 shooting from the field. Marcus Robinson, starting in

place of injured leading scorer Mike Dean, scored 13 points and a grabbed a game-high nine rebounds.

The Blue Raiders got to the second round after defeating host Western Kentucky University 76-62 Sunday.

"This means a lot," Gunn said Sunday. "Western has a good team and we knew they were going to come out and play hard and the environment was going to be in their favor. Tonight our team dug down and a lot of people stepped up."

After falling behind by as many as 10 early on, the Blue Raiders used a 27-6 run to close out the final 10 minutes of the first half to take a 37-27 lead into

the locker room. MT held a double-digit lead for most of the second half and fought off each WKU run to hold on for the win.

Cuffee scored 16 first-half points, including three three-pointers as he continued to be a dominant force against the Hilltoppers.

With the Blue Raiders clinging to a six point lead with just less than five minutes to play, Cuffee drove the baseline, banked it in off the glass and drew the fifth foul on WKU center Nigel Dixon. To that point, the 6-foot-11 inch, 320-pound Dixon had been a force in the paint, scoring 14 points and collecting 10 rebounds for his 12th

double-double of the season.

"When Mike [Dean] got hurt on Thursday, I knew that I would have to come out and step up big tonight," Cuffee said. "Coach put me out on the perimeter, and I just did what I was capable of doing and played hard."

For the Blue Raiders, the win was the first against the Hilltoppers in Bowling Green since the finals of the 1982 Ohio Valley Conference tournament, WKU's final year in the OVC.

Middle Tennessee finishes the season 17-12 overall, with a 9-7 mark in the SBC. Louisiana-Lafayette improved to 19-8 overall, 14-3 in SBC action. ♦



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