

MONDAY

FEBRUARY 7, 2005

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Rainy

MT earns homemade split

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Spring Break Special Edition

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An editorially
independent
newspaper

SIDELINES

Middle Tennessee State University

2003 National Finalist
Best non-daily
university newspaper
-Society of Professional Journalists

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Murfreesboro, Tenn.

CAMPUSBRIEFS

History professor lectures on terrorism

History professor Ron Messier kicks off the Spring 2005 Honors lecture series today at 3 p.m. in Room 106 of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building. The topic will be "Is our 'focus on terrorism' in the Middle East in focus?"

Tunnel of Love informs students about STDs

The third annual Tunnel of Love will be held Tuesday, Feb. 8 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Tennessee Room of the James Union Building. The event will inform students about the nature and consequences of sexually transmitted diseases, abstinence and unprotected sex.

Students will view photographs of STDs, as well as receive literature regarding various infections.

"One Mic, One Voice" needs performers

The Middle Tennessee Association of Black Journalists and Members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. will sponsor a spoken word poetry night Feb. 15 at 8 p.m. Admission is \$3. It will be held in the Tennessee Room in the JUB.

Proceeds from "One Mic, One Voice" will go directly to UNICEF, which directly aids tsunami victims. Different types of coffees, cappuccinos and pastries will be served.

Jazz Artist Series continues Wednesday

Jim McNeely will be performing with the MTSU Jazz Ensemble and the Middle Tennessee Jazz Orchestra on Wednesday, Feb. 9 at 7:30 p.m. in the music hall of the Wright Music Building. McNeely is currently a member of the jazz faculty at New York University. The MTSU Jazz Ensemble and the Middle Tennessee Jazz Orchestra are composed primarily of MTSU students and faculty members.

Admission for students, faculty and staff members is free with a valid MTSU ID. General admission is \$12 at the door.

Heroes honored at Unity Luncheon

The African American History Month Unity Luncheon, which honors selects "unsung heroes" in the community who have spent a large part of their lives serving others, will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 10 in the Tennessee Room of the JUB.

MTSU professor plays Nashville Ballet

Lalo Davila, an MTSU professor of percussion, will be performing with his salsa band Lalo Davila y Amigos, in conjunction with the Nashville Ballet in the production Salsa - Cool! Warm! Hot!

The show will be at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center's Polk Theater on Saturday, Feb. 12 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 13 at 2 p.m. ♦

Too far?

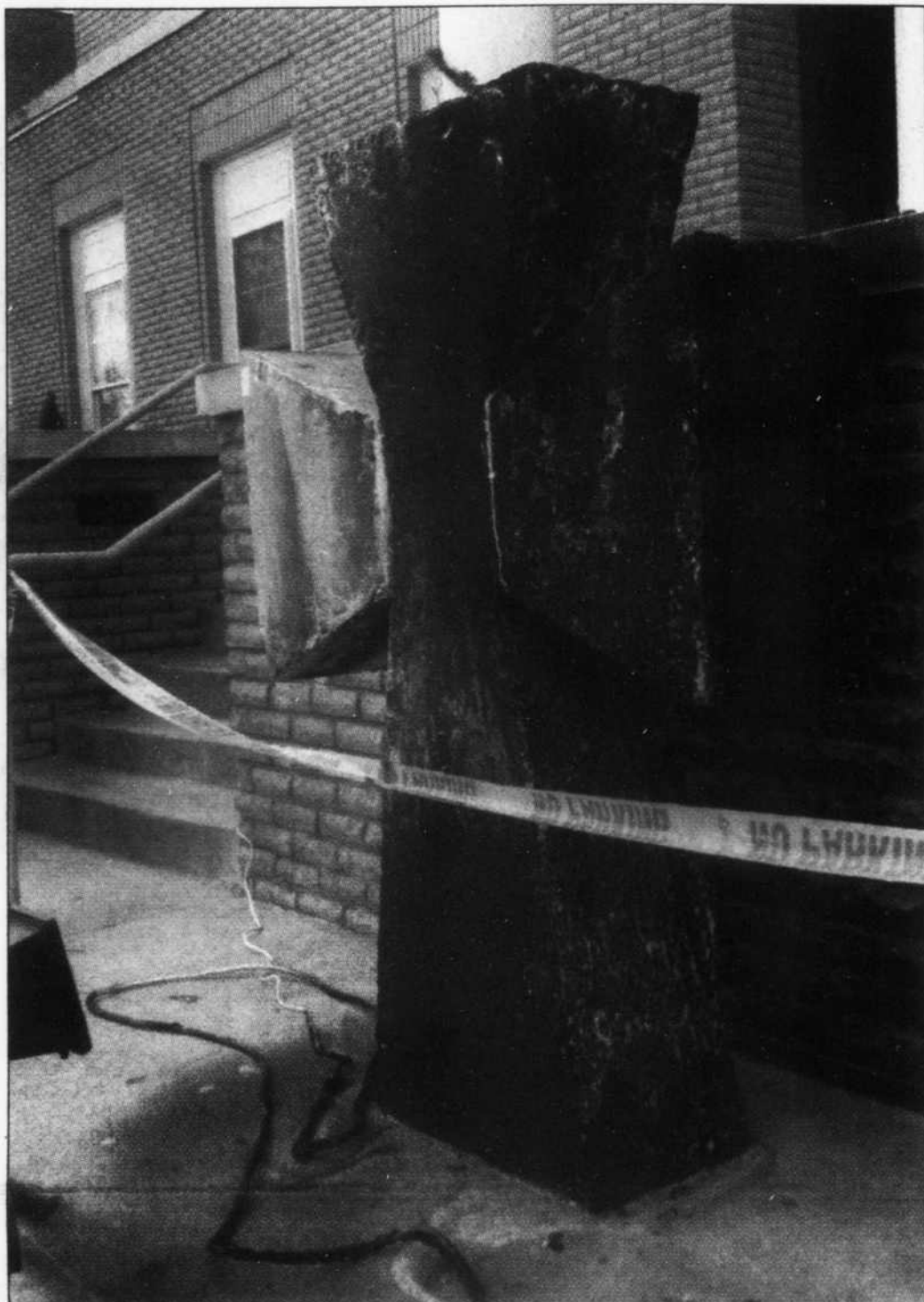


Photo by Jay Richardson | Photo Editor

A white male was seen throwing a lit gas can toward the cross in front of the Sigma Chi fraternity house Dec. 28 around 2 a.m. The suspect fled the scene.

Leaders question motive of cross-burning

By Kristin Hall
Editor in Chief

The burning of Sigma Chi's cross on Greek Row has some fraternity members asking how far is too far.

Spencer Rudolph, a Sigma Chi brother, was the first witness to the arson on Dec. 28 at around 2 a.m. According to the police report, Rudolph saw a white male throw a lit gas can toward the porch of the fraternity house and then run off in the direction of the Shell station on Rutherford Boulevard. The damage was restricted to the ornamental cross outside of the fraternity house.

The Murfreesboro Fire Department is currently still investigating the arson and could not be reached for comment.

Although no evidence found so far connects the fire to another fraternity, administrators and fraternity members speculate that it could be connected to a long history of pranks and vandalism on Greek Row.

"We're very, very serious about it," said Sigma Chi President Brett Smith, "not just

because it was our cross ... it could have potentially burned our house down. That wasn't a ha-ha prank; that's pretty serious."

Paul Fulcher is a member of Alpha Gamma Rho and the secretary of the Interfraternity Council, a governing board for MTSU's fraternities.

"I just think that is really immature and degrading that someone within the Greek community would stoop to the level of doing that to another chapter on Greek Row," Fulcher said.

Many of the Greek Row pranks are destructive: cars defaced, house lights smashed and fences torn down.

"I just know since I've lived on Greek Row, we've had cars [vandalized]," Smith said. "Last week, there was a car spray-painted on and tires flattened."

"A lot of the times it goes too far," Fulcher said of the pranks. "This went way too far."

Bob Glenn, vice president for student affairs and vice provost for enrollment man-

See Cross, 3

Student locked in dorm bathroom

By Sandi Van Orden
Staff Writer

Failure to install phones in residence hall bathrooms caused one student to be trapped for almost 29 hours during the holiday break.

"That did slip through the cracks," said Douglas Williams, executive director of news and public affairs.

"[Phones] were going to be put in through the holiday season," Williams said.

The phones were temporary in the event that a student locked himself in the bathroom while other students were home for break. It would be less likely for a student to be trapped for a considerable length of time during the normal semester, according to Williams.

On Dec. 21, a resident of Deere Hall went into the bathroom connected to her room, according to a police report. The door was locked from the outside, and she was unable to contact anyone to get her out, according to a police report filed with the MTSU Police Department.

The resident's parents called Housing and Residential Life

asking for someone to check her room because they couldn't reach her.

The student's room had been checked by Timothy Marten, a coordinator for housing and residential life, but he did not contact the police when she wasn't there, according to the police report.

"The Marten subject advised that this happens about six times a week, and Housing does not want to bother the police for such things as that," according to the police report.

Marten was not available when contacted.

When Marten entered the room there was nothing out of order, there was no known reason that he should have contacted police officers, according to Williams.

"She had to break a towel rack from the wall and she chipped away at the door until she could get the door opened, and then she went to an emergency call box to call for help," according to the police report.

Currently, there are no phones in the bathrooms of

See Bathroom, 2

Visiting author stresses American self-reliance

By Ashley Spurgeon
Staff Writer

"What's So Great About America?" was the topic last Wednesday night when conservative author Dinesh D'Souza spoke in Wright Music Hall.

With a large turnout despite competing with the State of the Union Address, D'Souza spoke about why America is the world's most-loved and most-hated nation.

"The core ideal of America is a self-directed life, which is both appealing and controversial," D'Souza said.

D'Souza said what draws many people to the United States is that it's the place to go to make money, but that's also an argument that is popular with critics.

"In America, your destiny isn't given to you, but constructed by you," he said. "It's one of the few places in the world where the ordinary citizen lives very well."

He said that many in the Islamic world have hatred for the United States because they

believe that virtue is a higher principle than liberty. But D'Souza argued that liberty is a prerequisite for true virtue, because "a coerced virtue is really no virtue at all."

D'Souza also believes the differences between the United States and Western Europe are growing.

"Europe and America opted for a different set of values within capitalism: Europeans go for security and Americans go for opportunity," he said.

He said that one weakness of President George W. Bush was his inability to respond to the verbal attacks on American culture in a direct way.

"The difference between a statesman and pundit is that a statesman has to make a decision," he said. "You weigh the options, and make a decision based on what you know at the time."

Justin Owen, senior political science major and former president of the Raider Republicans, read D'Souza's book, *Letters to a*

See D'Souza, 2

Police department report says crime rate up 9 percent over 2003

By David Driver
Staff Writer

The Murfreesboro Police Department released crime statistics for 2004 showing a 9 percent increase in crimes reported.

"Although the city has continued to grow both geographically and in population, this is the first year since 1998 that we have experienced an increase in the number of crimes reported to police," Murfreesboro Police Chief Glenn Chrisman said in a press release.

Currently, a special census is in progress to calculate the increase in population. In 2003, a special census estimated the population at 75,013.

In 2004, Murfreesboro grew by

two square miles and MTSU enrollment increased 2.6 percent from 21,744 students in 2003 to 22,322 in 2004.

"This is simply more people coming to MTSU and Murfreesboro," Lt. Alvin Baird said. "More people in the city mean more traffic and more crimes that are reported."

These statistics are a combination of the city's numbers along with numbers from the campus police.

"Some crimes were reported and never happened," Baird said. "Some were downgraded from robbery to theft or upgraded from assault to homicide. These are the number of reports we received before given to detectives for investigation."

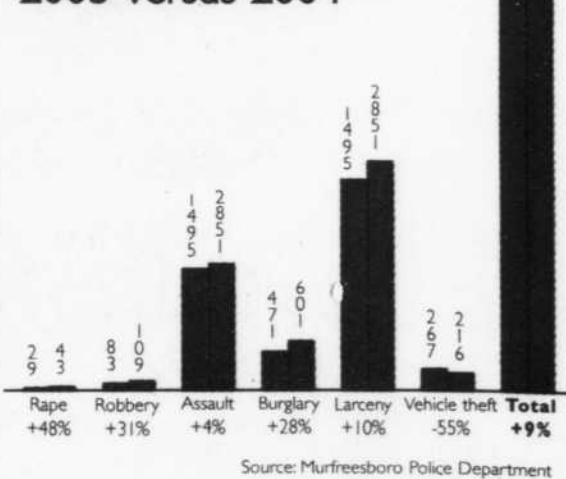
The city manager and city council will decide whether to make changes.

Baird said the police department has not added new members to the police force in years and more officers may be an answer to the increase in reports and population.

Crimes reported rose from 4,955 in 2003 to 5,380 in 2004. Homicide, rape, robbery, assault, burglary and larceny reports increased, while arson and motor vehicle theft decreased.

Two homicides were reported in 2004, up from one in 2003. ♦

Murfreesboro Police Department Annual Crime Index 2003 versus 2004



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

Should single people feel left out on
Valentine's Day?

Opinions 4 • Features 5 • Sports 6 • Classifieds 7 • Spring Break Special Edition Inside

Internet paper mills trouble professors

By Kimberly Peer
Staff Writer

Time constraints keep most MTSU professors from checking every term paper that passes through their hands, but they do take some actions against plagiarized work.

While the campus does not have software or a standard procedure for policing plagiarism, Michelle Huss of the information technology department said individual departments and deans of colleges could choose to purchase the licenses of anti-plagiarism software.

According to Turnitin.com, a Web site that offers educators plagiarism-detection services, of the more than 10,000 student papers submitted to their service, 30 percent contain unoriginal material.

Professors who use Google or other Internet search engines to check phrases might never find a match because of multiple-source plagiarism, in which students cut-and-paste words or ideas from several locations and use them in the paper.

"Searching for one phrase in each of 70 papers can take well over two hours," the Web site claims. The site also claims that "less than one percent of plagiarized papers originate from a single source."

Journalism professor Glenn Himebaugh said that during his 30 years at MTSU he has only had one case of plagiarism.

"One student a year ago ... plagiarized a story off a Web site," Himebaugh said. "I failed him in the course."

English professor Larry Gentry requires his freshmen to "do multiple drafts in and out of class, so that I usually track the papers as they develop."

"If I am suspicious, I will take a suspect passage and 'Google' it," Gentry said. "This simple approach will yield material lifted from books and articles."

Journalism professor

Alexander Nagy said he finds the Internet "an effective tool" for the short papers he assigns.

Growing class sizes have left professors with less time to grade and carefully check papers for plagiarism. Nagy said he has stopped assigning research papers during the past few years due to the time-consuming element of checking and grading.

When students submit published works or other students' papers as their own original work, plagiarism can be nearly impossible to track. Many professors agree that deterring plagiarism before it starts is the only real solution.

Nagy suggested professors require students to turn in note cards with research information along with the assigned paper. He said he issues a simple ultimatum: "no note cards, no grade."

"Perhaps teachers should require [research notes] and check it before the final version of the paper is due. This is done in many departments; I know history teachers do this," Gentry said.

Internet "paper mills" create problems for professors. "[Cutting] the time allowed to turn in the paper so the paper can't be acquired through a service" is one of Nagy's other solutions.

"Shot-in-the-dark" approaches to hunting for plagiarism like using online search engines is a popular, easy and convenient method of plagiarism control.

The speed and extensive databases of anti-plagiarism software are attractive in the fast-paced world filled with busy students and professors.

However, these methods are ineffective because of irregularities and inconsistency found in using Internet search engines and because not all departments take advantage of technology. ♦

Bathroom: Dorm renovations underway

Continued from 1

Deere Hall where the student was trapped, according to Sarah Sudak, director of university housing and residential life.

"We do not encourage students to hang over break," Sudak said.

There are fewer staff members on campus, and those staff members do not make it to all of the dorms every day, according to Sudak.

A 10-year renovation project is underway, and as each dorm

is renovated, emergency phones will be put in the bathrooms of the dorms, Sudak said.

Currently, only one dorm has had emergency phones installed.

"Gracy has been brought online," said Stephen Prichard, director of telecommunications services.

Phones are being installed at each residence hall is renovated, according to Prichard.

[Editor's Note: The resident did not want her name released regarding this article.] ♦

Students react to Bush's State of the Union

MTSU students react to President Bush's State of the Union address



William Bfee

"It is good that someone is finally talking about social security before it goes bankrupt."



Brittani Jackson

"I thought it was apparent who was for or against Bush – a sea of people clapping, and a sea of opposing people who weren't clapping."



James Nipper

"Some of his proposals seem outlandish with the money he is spending, especially in the specific area he is spending it in."



Kelley Cunningham

"I didn't think it was interesting. It didn't grab my attention – really boring."

New Quizno's in student center garners debate

By Katie Garland
Staff Writer

In the past year, the Keathley University Center Grille has undergone a transformation of sorts.

The grungy room full of booths and old tables has been gutted and rebuilt with new tables and chairs that sport the MTSU logo. New and colorful lighting has been added to create an ambiance that will hopefully be more pleasing to the patrons, said Paul Stuart, the director of Aramark at MTSU.

"We are trying to take the limited space we have and make it better for the students," Stuart said. "We continue to change and get better because the students' satisfaction is our goal. It's hard to meet, but we still try."

In addition to the facelift, the Grille has new dining options.

Students returned from Christmas break to find that the smoking section in the Grille had disappeared and the combination Freshens and Starbucks area was being turned into a Quizno's. Many students who were faithful to the wraps and sandwiches from Montague's Deli discovered a new salad bar.

Why all the changes? A recent Aramark survey revealed that the majority of the participants would prefer a coffee shop to smoking section, Stuart said.

Because Aramark is the lessee of the space in the KUC, the decision to take out the smoking section in the grille was left up to Aramark management.

"The smoking section was an under-utilized area," Stuart said. "Last semester there was hardly



Photo by Jay Richardson | Chief Photographer

Subway will now have to compete with a new sandwich joint on campus. One of these sandwiches is from Subway, and one is from Quizno's. Can you tell the difference?

anyone in there."

Senior recording industry major Kelly Bolick has mixed feelings about the removal of the smoking section.

"It doesn't make me real mad, but I don't like that they did that," Bolick said. "Especially right now. I think it's frustrating for smokers during the winter because they have to go outside and freeze. But, it still might be worth it to get a Quizno's."

However, not all students are excited about the Quizno's.

"I think it's not as good as the original... the service is slow," said freshman aerospace major Matthew Hamblen.

Though he expressed no specific complaint about the service, freshman English major

Shane Toombs said that Quizno's is "too expensive."

Stuart said Aramark decided last spring to add Quizno's to the KUC.

"We wanted to put in a Subway or a Quizno's," Stuart said. "We already had two Subways on campus, so Quizno's was chosen."

Stuart concedes that Quizno's is on the pricier end of campus dining, but suggests that students who are concerned about their budget do have many other choices for on-campus dining.

"I think it's a personal thing," Stuart says. "Many students on campus budget themselves financially, and Quizno's is on the upper end of the scale. That's why we went with a full

Quizno's, so we could get the Real Deal."

The Real Deal is a sandwich combo that provides students with a cheaper option.

The Real Deal combo is not usually offered at college-sized Quizno's. However, Stuart said Aramark made a last-minute decision to put in a full Quizno's so that the Real Deal would be offered for the benefit of the students at MTSU.

Though the KUC Grille has already come a long way from where it was a year ago, Stuart said to expect more changes in the future.

"This is just the first step. We are going through several phases," Stuart said. "Student satisfaction is our goal." ♦

D'Souza: Liberty prerequisite for virtue, author says

Continued from 1

Young Conservative and was interested in bringing him to campus.

"I got in contact with student programming and Dinesh, and things just worked out. He's an intelligent and provocative speaker, and there was a great turnout tonight," Owens said.

Not everyone agreed with D'Souza's ideas.

"He kept talking about the power of democracy, but when I pointed out that we live in a

republic, he skirted the issue and said we had the power to elect the president, and I disagreed with his explanation," said Trevor Johnson, a recording industry major.

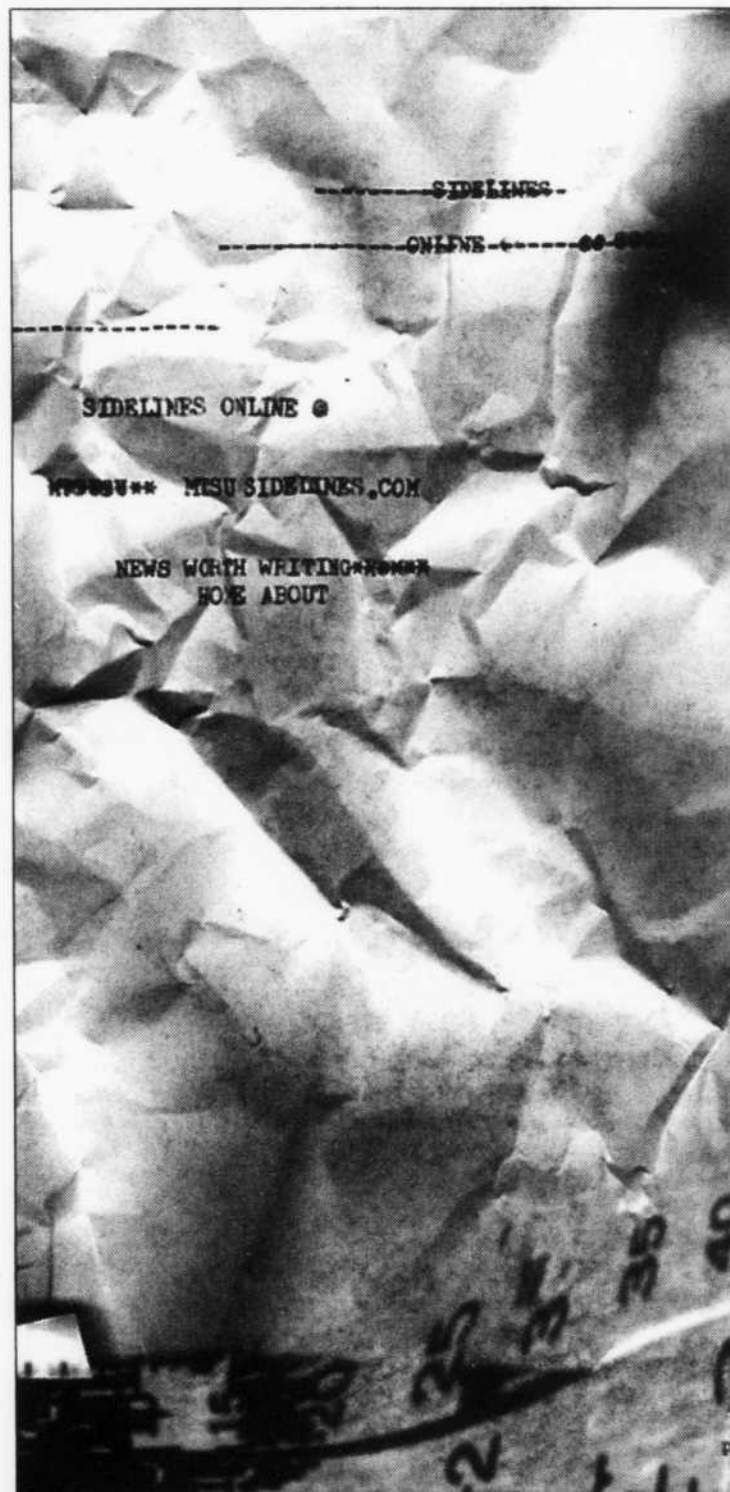
D'Souza was born in India and moved to the United States in 1978. He attended high school for a year, before studying English and political science at Dartmouth.

He was the senior domestic policy analyst at the White House during the Reagan administration from 1987 to 1988, has written six books and has written for *Vanity Fair* and *The New York Times*. ♦



Photo by Rachelle Morvant | Chief Photographer

The Raider Republicans hosted Dinesh D'Souza, author of *What's So Great About America?*, last Wednesday.



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Gas prices increase 7 percent in January

By Brad Foss
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gasoline prices rose more than 7 percent in January, which typically is one of the slowest driving months of the year. That's leading experts to predict pump prices may surge past last year's record highs when highway travel picks up late in the spring.

Government figures show that the average price of regular unleaded has risen in each of the last four weeks, jumping from \$1.78 at the start of the year to \$1.91 a gallon in the week ended Jan. 31. That's more than 30 cents a gallon higher than a year earlier.

Prices are highest on the West Coast, averaging \$1.99 a gallon and lowest in the Rocky Mountain region, averaging \$1.83 a gallon.

Last year, the average price peaked above \$2 a gallon in May, just before Memorial Day, which is the unofficial start of the summer driving season. To be just a dime short of that level in early February is not good news for motorists, analysts said.

Carl Larry, head of energy futures at Barclays Capital in New York, said he expects retail gasoline prices to rise above last year's peak due to rising demand for fuel and the higher price of crude oil, from which gasoline is refined.

"We're starting to see the economy come back, so demand can only go higher from where it's at," Larry said.

Over the past four weeks, nationwide demand for gasoline is up more than 1 percent at 8.8 million barrels, according to the latest U.S. government data.

Larry said gasoline prices would be propelled higher this spring by fears about the nation's growing dependence

on imports and the possibility of supply-chain snags as refiners temporarily shut down, or turn around operations in order to shift production from winter-grade fuel to cleaner-burning summer blends.

"All these things fall into place," he said.

Another indicator of the strength of the U.S. gasoline market: the nation's largest independent refiner, Valero Energy Corp. of San Antonio, has seen its stock price more than double in the past year.

Last week Valero reported that its fourth quarter income nearly quadrupled to \$488.5 million.

Crude oil futures are about 40 percent higher than a year ago, hovering just below \$47 a barrel, as fears of supply disruptions in Iraq and possible terrorist attacks throughout the Middle East make traders reluctant to bet on lower prices, given strong global demand and an unusually thin supply cushion.

Tom Kloza, director of Oil Price Information Service in Lakewood, N.J., said he anticipates the price of gasoline to "rocket higher in the next 90 days." Nationally, Kloza predicts average gasoline prices could surpass \$2.15 and even run as high as \$2.50. That said, he expects those highs to be short-lived.

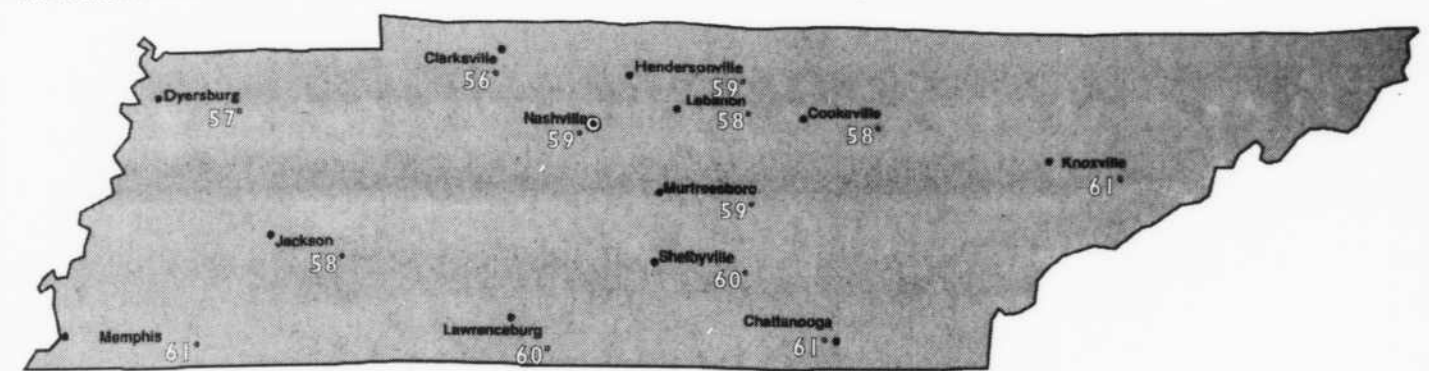
At the start of January, gasoline futures traded at \$1.13 per gallon on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

By the beginning of February, futures prices had jumped 16 percent.

A survey released on Sunday by the semimonthly Lundberg Survey of 7,000 gas stations across the country showed an average price of \$1.91 nationwide for a gallon of regular unleaded fuel. ♦

Tennessee Weather – Monday's Highs

From the Associated Press



Tuesday



61° ▲
45° ▼

Wednesday



50° ▲
34° ▼

Thursday



43° ▲
27° ▼

Friday



44° ▲
28° ▼

Saturday



46° ▲
34° ▼

Cross: Stable Greek director needed, Fulcher says

Continued from 1

agement, has spoken with the fraternities about the arson.

He said that he encouraged them to help the investigation by providing any information they know, but also not contribute to the rumor mill.

"What we're trying to do is keep people from losing their cool and going off half-cocked," Glenn said. "They've got to control their membership and not get into 'one-up-manship.'"

Competition between fraternities is high, Glenn said, and that can sometimes generate petty fighting that leads to pranks and vandalism.

"Any time you have groups with a real strong sense of identity all living right up on top of each other, you can expect these things to take place," Glenn said. "It is how we respond to it as a community that will determine

if it will continue and escalate or diminish."

Smith also attributes some of the recent problems to the location of Greek Row.

"We have an apartment complex next door. We're open targets over here," Smith said. "We're away from campus and MTSU police officers do what they can, but they can't be here 24 hours a day, and that's understandable."

MTSU's Greek community represents less than 10 percent of the entire student body, a figure that is smaller than other Tennessee universities. Fraternity recruitment just finished last week and leaders are hoping for more involvement on campus.

One of the main problems with the lack of growth in MTSU's Greek community is the position of Greek Life director. Last summer, the director

was dismissed after several complaints were filed against her. Currently, the interim director is a former student, Carrie Smith.

"If we had a stable Greek director who had a strong IFC judicial board, was strong in recruitment and knew how to better finance the houses, I think that would be something that could prevent petty things like this," Fulcher said. "We need to get numbers up."

Glenn said that even with strong leaders in the director position, individual members might still act up.

"My experience on three other campuses has been that the kind of people who do this sort of thing don't respond to real leadership," Glenn said. "The only thing that typically helps is to just get rid of them."

Smith said he wasn't worried that the arson will affect Sigma

Chi recruitment because they weren't involved.

However, Fulcher said that the arson could affect overall fraternity recruitment.

"People are going to think, 'How are we going to take the Greek community seriously?' I believe we have a lot of great leadership and we're taking the right steps, but things like that do nothing but set us back," he said.

Glenn disagrees and said that students who are interested will realize that these pranks do not represent the whole system.

"I think anybody that is interested enough in Greeks is going to come down and look over the situation and see that this is an isolated incident, and they are going to see that this is not a true reflection of the men that are residents down there," he said. ♦

Memphis officers suspended in botched drug raid

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Eight police officers here are suspended more than two years after a botched drug raid left a gravedigger dead.

Narcotics officers Mark Lucas, Albert Bonner, Jeffrey Simcox, Felipe Boyce, Veronica Crutchfield, Juan Gonzalez, Darlet Wallace and Lieutenant Anthony Berryhill were put on

paid leave Friday, police said.

The 2002 raid that killed Jeffery Robinson, 41, prompted an award of nearly \$3 million in a federal civil case filed by the man's family against three narcotics officers. A second case against the city has been canceled as both sides close on a settlement worth about \$1.1 million, city attorney Sara Hall said.

Jurors in the first case were

convinced that Lucas, Bonner and Simcox not only wrongly killed Robinson, a caretaker at Baron Hirsch Cemetery, but tried to cover it up. Jurors found Berryhill wasn't at fault.

Police procedures prevented the department from taken action against the officers before now, Hall said.

"Everything has to be done according to policy and procedure," she told The Commercial Appeal.

State prosecutors have been investigating since last year whether evidence in the case was manufactured or hidden. During the civil trial against the officers, attorneys for the family cast doubt over police methods and pointed out mishandling of evidence — saying the box cutter that officers said Robinson brandished as a weapon was taken from a toolbox and planted next to Robinson. The victim's polo shirt, taken by police, showed no blood stains, no powder burns and no bullet holes.

Shot through the jaw and

neck, Robinson was paralyzed when the bullet hit his spine. He died six weeks later from pneumonia, brought on by the gunshot wound.

"We saw some things in this trial that led me to believe that we need to go ahead and clear up any misconceptions," Memphis Police Director Larry Godwin said.

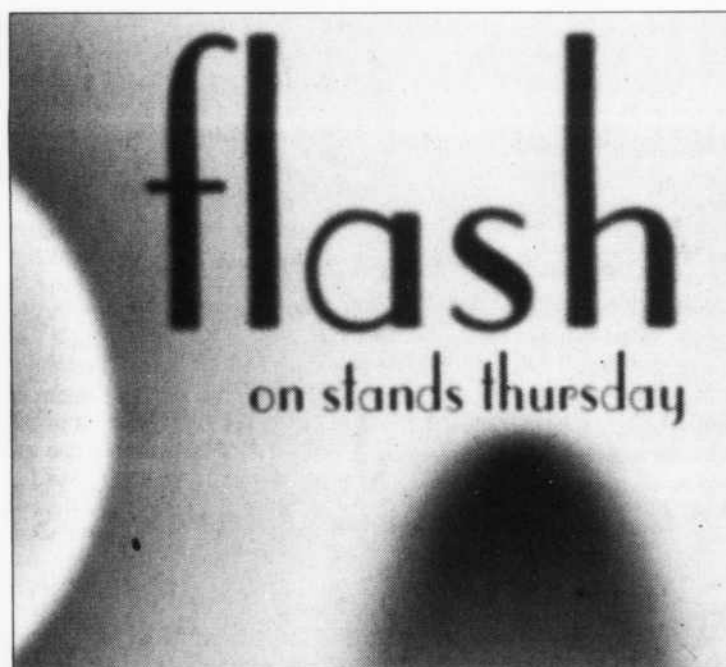
The department's investigation found the shooting was justified and no one was charged after an Attorney General's Office review.

But the officer's attorney, Ted Hansom, said the department's internal investigation was so flawed that jurors concluded there was a cover-up.

"I'm convinced this investigation was screwed up from the onset," Hansom said.

But Hansom said he believes Officer Mark Lucas thought his life was in danger when he shot Robinson.

"These things happen in seconds," Hansom said. "To this day, he believes it happened the way he said it did." ♦



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website at www.mtsu.edu/~career

From the Editorial Board Dangerous pranks give Greeks poor reputation

We understand the appeal of harmless rivalry between the fraternities on Greek Row. We know that for some, the various pranks and mischievous interchanges between two or more fraternities might seem like a fun way to break the monotony of everyday college life.

But when harmless pranks turn into vandalism, violence and even arson, it has gone way too far and there is no benefit to anyone. Incidents, such as the flaming stone cross outside of the Sigma Chi house, reflect badly on individual fraternities, the Greek community and MTSU as a whole.

Whether the fraternities realize it or not, people that aren't involved in Greek organizations tend to lump them all together as one group.

When one or two people in one or two of the fraternities behave badly, the community probably doesn't fully understand that only one or two people are responsible.

They only know that those crazy Greeks did something stupid that put a lot of people in danger – again.

And those people outside of MTSU, probably generalize even more than that.

Perhaps the fraternities should consider doing more within their organizations to stop this inappropriate behavior.

If Greek governing groups, like the Interfraternity Council, were to spend more of its time finding and disciplining the culprits of such ridiculous acts, maybe, just maybe, they could put an end to those pranks that go too far.

If necessary, the administration should step in to set up a strong leadership within the fraternities to oversee discipline.

Do whatever it takes. Just single the few guys that don't know that boundaries between harmless pranks and dangerous stunts exist and make an example of them.

After all, the better the reputation the fraternities have, the easier it will be to recruit new members to help pay for those expensive houses.

For that matter, it will be hard to convince the public that shoddy construction is responsible for the deterioration of those houses when it is fairly well-known that the fraternities take it upon themselves to do their share of damage. ♦

From the Opinions Editor New music rental program just doesn't make any sense

Let's try a thought experiment. You go to your local record shop, where they offer you a deal: for a monthly fee, you get to take all the music you want, whenever you want.

Sounds like a good deal, doesn't it? Except, there's a catch: if you stop paying the subscription fee, you lose all your music. Suddenly, that service doesn't sound quite so much fun anymore, I imagine.

Well, it's a real business plan. Napster, once notorious as being a trading ground for illegally copied music, partnered up with computing giant Microsoft to create just such a music rental service, with a number of companies that manufacture portable MP3 players signing on to develop and sell products compatible with the new Napster service. You pay \$15; you get to download all the music you want. If you stop paying, all the music you bought off Napster will stop working once your subscription runs out.

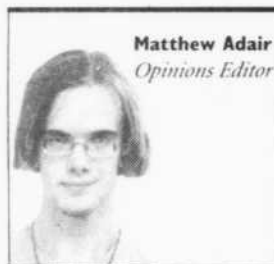
But who wants to rent their music? The entire reason that services like iTunes have been as successful as they have is because they allow listeners to pick and choose the songs they want at their own pace. If I want to only buy a few songs every couple of months, my decision is as economical as if I had the money to buy 100 songs a month.

With Napster's service, I have to keep buying more than a dozen songs a month to make my decision worthwhile. Given the state of the music industry, I'm not sure I'd be able to find 15 songs every month that I couldn't live without.

More importantly, the timed-subscription model is just absurd. If I take the time to purchase a product, whether I do so in person or online, I should be allowed to keep that product. I don't want to have to keep pouring money into the music industry's pocket just to keep listening to a handful of my favorite songs.

Sorry, Napster. I'll keep buying my songs track-by-track. It might cost some of my money in the long run, but I like being able to control just how I listen to my music. ♦

Matthew Adair is a sophomore art education major and can be reached at matt.adair@gmail.com.



Matthew Adair
Opinions Editor

Save a life by saving your organs

It may be said that America has claimed the definition of what makes a hero. It seems that all the time, some newscaster is proclaiming a sports figure, disaster survivor or charitable entertainer as a "real American hero."

Yet, there is still one worthwhile action that is generally viewed as truly heroic, by all. The saving of another human life is still the most appreciated action of the hero.

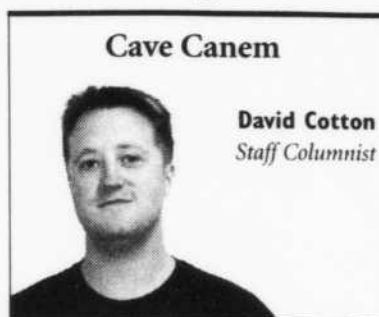
Nonetheless, the majority of Americans turn down the chance every day, to save a life and be a hero, by not checking the organ donation card on the back of their driver's license.

Organs and tissues donated by those that no longer need them can save lives and greatly improve the quality of life for others.

Organs eligible for donation include the heart, kidneys, pancreas, lungs, liver and intestines. Tissues such as eyes, skin, bone, heart valves, tendons, all transplantable. Only HIV and active cancer exclude people from donating organs, and there is no set age limit for donation.

Organ transplants save about six people a day.

However, over a dozen people die every day in the United States,



Cave Canem

David Cotton
Staff Columnist

waiting for an organ.

For the year 2000, nationwide, over 79,000 men, women and children waited for life-saving organs. There were, however, less than 12,000 organ donors. Just a little over half of this number came from cadaveric organ donors, or those who had arranged for, or whose family agreed to, organ donation after death.

Currently there are 87,312 people on the nation's transplant waiting list. With one death every 13 seconds in this country, there is no reason it has to be this way.

The reason so many people on the issue of organ donation are varied and, often, unspecified. Occasionally, the issue involves brain death. When someone is still alive and donation may require the removal from respiratory equipment, families are sometimes naturally worried that they may be

denying their loved one a chance to recover. Death is assumed, however, when a person cannot breathe without assistance, has no pupil response to light and does not react to pain. Hospital treatment and lifesaving efforts are not affected by organ and tissue donation.

Funeral rites concern some potential donors, as no one truly relishes the idea of having their body dissected, even after death. However, as far as dead bodies go, there is little cosmetic change caused by donation and nothing that prevents an open-casket funeral.

Personally, I feel someone overly concerned with death, is taking shallow vanity to an extreme.

Most major religions of the world don't overtly oppose organ donation, and most view it as a humanitarian act.

The true reason for poor organ and tissue donation numbers may simply be due to little or no preparation.

Few people even think about it. The confusion and sadness that coincides with the passing of a loved one make on-the-spot decisions for the family difficult to make. Obviously, time is crucial in

organ donation, and the possibility of a successful transplant declines rapidly. A family in grief may find it difficult to let go of its loved one, and may be hesitant to allow the removal of their organs, as it is such an act of finality.

In Tennessee, nearly 2000 people are waiting for lifesaving organs; yet, the state has provided less than 300 donors. This is a poor ratio for "The Volunteer State," especially when a signature for organ donation on the state driver's license serves as legally binding first-person consent.

It is simple to declare yourself an organ donor. Simply sign the donor card on the back of your driver's license. Discuss the issue with your family, so that your wishes are known.

Some Hendersonville High School seniors recently made a video to promote donor awareness that will be played at the Sumner County motor vehicles office. This was a great effort, as little education goes a long way in explaining the issue. Maybe it will help more Tennesseans volunteer to help their fellow Americans. ♦

David Cotton is a graduate history major and can be reached at dpc2b@mtsu.edu.

Social Security needs large-scale reforms

By David Thigpen
Daily Mississippian

(U-WIRE) OXFORD, Miss. – As the camera panned from left to right Wednesday night at the State of the Union, you could tell that George Bush's fight to reform Social Security was going to be a long one, because not a single Democrat was standing when Bush made his call for reform.

Bush's call to reform is one that should be supported by every American, because, without reform, Social Security will be bankrupt by 2042, and retirees benefits will have to be cut by 27 percent to meet the shortfall, according to Social Security's Chief Actuary.

So, if nothing is done to reform Social Security, then most college-aged people will not receive their full benefits, rather, only 70 percent of what they are owed by Social Security.

This is absurd. No one in their right mind would knowingly invest their money into something where they would only get 70 percent of the money that was owed them, unless they were forced to.

Why should college-aged people have to pay into Social Security when there is no guarantee that the full amount of their benefit will be there for them when they retire?

Bush's plan involves allowing people to put a portion of their payroll taxes into a private investment account modeled after the federal retirement program, called the Thrift Savings Plan, which allows workers to deposit a portion of their paychecks into any of five broadly-based investment funds.

The Thrift Savings Plan has the benefit of mirroring the 401k plans that workers have already become familiar with. So, the concept of a private account is not really all that foreign to the public.

Initially, individual contributions to the private accounts would be capped at \$1,000 per year, to hold down the lost income to the Social Security trust fund. However, as time goes on, that figure would rise by \$100 a year, until all workers could invest the full 4 percent.

The only downside to Bush's plan is that if you sign up for a private account, you would receive less in added benefits compared to peo-

ple who don't invest in the private account. However, the gains you would make would be more than enough to offset the lost benefits.

Bush's plan may never be enacted if people like Princeton economist Paul Krugman have their way.

"You've been sold a scare story," said Krugman in an interview with *Rolling Stone*. "Right now Social Security has a large and growing trust fund, a surplus that has been collected to pay for the surge in benefits we'll experience when baby boomers start to retire."

In this interview, Krugman gives the impression that Social Security is doing fine in its present state and is not in need of reform.

Then again, it is a lot easier to believe that Social Security doesn't need to be reformed when you are among the group of retirees who is guaranteed that their benefits will still be there.

In the article, Krugman even went so far as to say that Social Security would still be functional even if the trust fund were completely depleted.

"Even if the Social Security trust fund does run out, Social Security will still be able to pay 80 percent of the promised benefits," Krugman said.

"The actual shortfall would be a pretty small part of the federal budget, quite easily made up from other sources."

I don't know where Krugman got his information, but it is in direct conflict with the projections of Social Security's Chief Actuary.

According to the Chief Actuary, if additional revenue were provided, beginning in 2042, there would have to be a payroll tax rate increase of about 3.1 percent for the year.

The amount of additional revenue needed would gradually rise, reaching an amount equivalent to an increase in the payroll tax of about 5.9 percentage points for 2078, a rate 50 percent higher than today's.

So, Bush was right when he said that if steps are not taken to reform Social Security, the only solutions would be drastically higher taxes, massive new borrowing, or sudden and severe cuts in Social Security benefits or other government programs. ♦

Be cool, stay in school: don't graduate too soon

The semester is officially off to a riveting start. Those who are graduating in May are already counting down the final number of days until school's out for summer – forever.

For most of us, though, we still can't see the light at the end of the tunnel, because MTSU is definitely the black hole of college: It sucks you in, and there's no escape.

But, fear not. If you're still semesters away from your degree, or if you just started and you're already behind schedule, because you just can't seem to get into that one class you need as a prerequisite in order to take all those other classes you need that are only offered every other fall, here are some reasons why it's totally OK if you never graduate.

First off, those student loans aren't a worry. As long as you stay in college, most, if not all, of these lenders will let you forgo paying your loans. So, theoretically, if you stay in school forever, you just may never have to start making those monthly payments that will no doubt remind you why it wasn't such a good idea to stay in school forever.

Next, think of all the friends you'll meet. If you stick around long enough, you may end up knowing nearly everyone on campus. This comes in very handy if you ever need a favor. If you have more people to ask, you're more likely to get someone to say yes. Besides, wouldn't it be kind of cool being that creepy old guy or girl who's been in every class you've had since you got to school? You'll develop a reputation at light speed.

I'm a fan of staying in school as long as possible – including going to graduate school – until the job market in your profession is at its peak. There's no use in graduating now if you won't have a job in your field for another year and half. Take some more classes, learn some more stuff and keep sending out those resumes.

Besides, who needs a real job now anyway? The real world is just as scary as everyone warned you it would be.

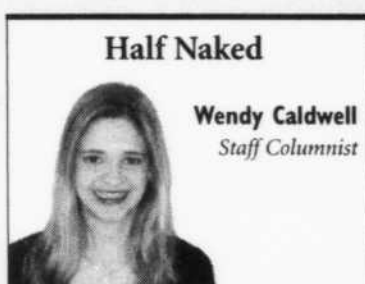
Actually, I really don't know about that. It's just an educated guess. I'm obviously still in college, and have no concept of the real world other than I'm in no hurry to join in. I'll take a few more classes while I wait for the job market to get better.

Because they've just restructured graduation, it may be a good idea to let them go through a few semesters before you become a part of it. It usually takes a few runs of any ceremony just to get the flow right. It'll go much more smoothly in a year or two, and who wants to fly in an entire extended family for a weekend? If you wait a few more years, those pesky relatives may just give up on you graduating. Then, when they finally do get the invitation (which you should send the week before), they'll be so excited they'll send you lots of money. Which will come in handy, just in case that job market didn't improve.

So, before you go filling your upper-division forms and your intent to graduate forms, think long and hard about whether or not that's the right step for you. What if you can't get a job? What if you can't afford to start paying back your student loans? What if Aunt Edna brings her eight dogs with her to stay at your house for a whole week, for your graduation? These are definitely some things to consider before you get senior-itis.

Besides, didn't they always tell us to stay in school? ♦

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Half Naked

Wendy Caldwell
Staff Columnist

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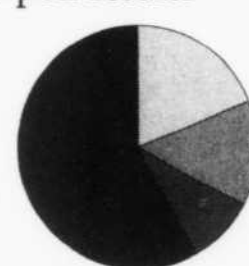
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Sidelines online poll results

How do you feel about TennCare reform?

- I was against it from the get-go. (19 percent)
- It's not great, but it could be worse. At least children won't be affected. (14 percent)
- Without TennCare, I would have no coverage. (9 percent)
- I support the governor's decisions. (51 percent)



I'll let you know when I see how it will affect me or I am undecided. (7 percent)

Visit www.mtsusidelines.com to answer this week's poll question, "Should single people feel left out on Valentine's Day?" 112 people voted. Results are not scientific.

Comics Night is Smokin' up the Square

By Abby Sliger
Staff Writer

Where in Murfreesboro can you go to watch energetic performers, hear excerpts from a diary and see some tight pants? All this and more will be at Liquid Smoke on the Square during Smokin' Comics Night.

Every second Monday of each month, Liquid Smoke offers a place for Middle Tennessee's comedians to perform. Feb. 21 is the next date to catch Smokin' Comics Night.

According to Mark Anundson, a performer as well as the organizer and host of Smokin' Comics Night, if you go to a show, you should expect "rowdy, raucous and hilarious times."

Six to eight comics perform a night, and even though there are regulars to the show, the line-up changes from month to month. On Feb. 21, the line-up includes B.W. Davis, Jesse Perry, Joe Southards, Renard Hirsch, Tony San Antonio, MTSU's own Rob Haynes and maybe one or two others, Anundson says.

Liquid Smoke requires you to be 18 to enter the venue, but the content is "anything goes," Anundson says.

"Subjects range from going to college to bitter, old married comics. Joe Southards [a fellow comedian] reads from his diary," Anundson says. "Expect strong joke writers and energetic performers."

Several comedians have performed at Liquid Smoke including Tim Northern, who has been on *Star Search*, and Keith Alberstadt. Well-established performers will not be showcast unless they "are in town, hear about the show and want to be in it," Anundson says.

If this happens, it would be unannounced. Anundson says he recruits for Smokin' Comics Night from an open mic night in Nashville called Bar Car, which has open mic nights on Tuesday nights.

"I'm a regular at Bar Car," Anundson says. "I book people when they are funny, and I have seen them two or three times."

Anundson will ask a comic to perform at Smokin' Comics Night after he knows the comedian has a good 10 minutes of material.

Smokin' Comics Night began after Bluesboro's attempt at an open mic night was unsuccessful, Anundson says.

Anundson was supposed to host the show, but when no comics showed up, he did his act and left.

Not wanting to go straight home, he stopped into Liquid Smoke to buy a cigar, drive home and smoke it on his porch, Anundson says.

A man in Liquid Smoke offered to buy him a beer because he saw Anundson's comedy and thought it was funny.

The owner, who was working the counter at the time, said he and his wife had talked about

wanting to do a comedy show in the store, Anundson says.

"I had no intentions of going to Liquid Smoke," Anundson says. "It was like one comedy show failed and one was born."

The audience at the shows is varied, including a section of MTSU students, who are attentive, and "older folks" who have a good time, Anundson says.

"Usually if the comedy is not in a comedy club then they don't usually last long," Anundson says.

Smokin' Comics Night is now entering its second year.

There is no cover charge for the show, but a tip jar is passed around to help the performers cover gas money, Anundson says.

Anundson hopes Smokin' Comics Night lasts for a long time. He and other comics see the show as a "workshop for those starting out and with little experience."

"The ultimate goal is for each performer to use this to become professional, what we call road comics," Anundson says. "It gives them a place to hone their act. Come to Smokin' Comics Night if you want to see a good comedy show."

Smokin' Comics Night is used to help a comic prepare him or herself for places like Zanies Comedy Night Club in Nashville, Anundson says.

There are plenty of open mic nights for people who are interested in pursuing a stand-up comedy dream.

Anundson also suggests to write new material every day.

"Write a joke, even if it's not funny," Anundson says. "Get as much stage time as possible. You can't get good at being a comedian overnight; it takes years and years of practice." ♦



Photos by Rachelle Morvant | Chief Photographer

Smokin' Comics Night is held at Liquid Smoke every second Monday of each month. The next Comics Night will be held Feb. 21 and will feature MTSU student Rob Haynes.

Cinema at the Center

Center for the Arts brings films of the past to the present

By Audrey Scruton
Staff Writer

Tired of the same old dinner-and-a-movie option on Friday nights?

Students looking for something different to do on the weekends now have that chance with The Murfreesboro Center for the Arts' Cinema at the Center program.

The Center for the Arts recently founded this classic film series, where timeless movies from the 1940s and '50s will be shown on the first Friday of each month until May.

The program kicked off Friday with a showing of the Academy Award-winning film, *Casablanca*.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to see classic films returned to the big screen," said George W. Manus Jr., CFTA public relations director.

The program, sponsored by National Health Care, is the brainchild of film historian Candilyn Ford.

"I've always been into classic — my mother calls them old — movies," Ford said. "I wanted to share my love for these films with other people, and help introduce the beauty of these movies to people who may not have had the chance to see them before."

It took several months for

Ford to launch the program.

"You have to get special permission from each studio to show their film, which takes a while, and it's very expensive," Ford explained. "It cost \$350 for *Casablanca* alone."

Plans to continue the Cinema at the Center program, beyond its initial run through, are in the works. "If this first one is successful, I hope we can make this an annual program, with showings in the fall and spring," Ford said.

Ford was more than pleased with the program's first night.

"There were a lot more people here than I expected, and I'm just so happy to see how well this is turning out," Ford said. "I hope everyone comes back for the rest of the films too."

MTSU students Sarah Kumpf and Elliott Tenpenny echoed Ford's sentiments.

"We had a wonderful time, and it was a fun idea," Kumpf said. "I would definitely come back to another one."

Ford hopes the program accomplishes a new understanding and appreciation of older films.

"Films are so much more than just entertainment," Ford said. "You can learn more about history and see how filmmaking has evolved over the years. Something that was done in

Gone with the Wind in 1939 was reused by [Martin] Scorsese in *The Aviator*, and it's so much fun to see that."

"An introduction to each film will occur before each show to reintroduce these important films to today's generation, and there will be a reception in the gallery before each showing," Manus added.

Historical background, film-making trivia and other interesting information about the film are included in Ford's introduction. For example, Ford explained that actress Hedy Lamarr, not Ingrid Bergman, was the first choice for the role of Ilsa in *Casablanca*.

"Lamarr had a contract with MGM at the time, though, and couldn't be loaned to Warner Brothers for the movie, so they went with Bergman instead," Ford said.

The reception in the gallery features refreshments, live music and even an opportunity to flip through some of Ford's film books, such as *Great Hollywood Movies* by Ted Sennett.

"I wanted this whole thing to feel like an event, not just going to see a movie," Ford said. "I wanted it to feel like a whole evening out, not something that was thrown together."

Ford encourages people to suggest other films they would



Photo by Blake Noel | Staff Photographer

Dot Harrison sells a ticket to Michael Knight at Friday's showing of *Casablanca*.

enjoy seeing.

"For the first time out, we tried to incorporate a movie from each genre. We have a romance, a western, a musical and a comedy. But I think it would be fun to do themes, like all Hitchcock movies, or all war films," Ford said.

"Hopefully, people can have a good time, learn something and be a little more educated about these films," Ford said.

Future Cinema at the Center showings include: *The Quiet*

Man, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara on Friday, March 4; *Some Like It Hot*, starring Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon and Marilyn Monroe on Friday, April 1; and *Singin' in the Rain*, starring Gene Kelly, Donald O'Connor and Debbie Reynolds on Friday, May 6.

The Center for the Arts is a not-for-profit venue receiving funding from The Tennessee Arts Commission and The National Endowment for the Arts.

It is located at 110 W. College Street. Reservations for all Cinema at the Center showings can be made by calling 904-ARTS (2787).

All showings begin at 7 p.m. and include a reception before the film.

Ticket prices are \$10 for general admission and \$8 for students and senior citizens, and season tickets for all films are available. ♦

Yarbrough sets mark, Lady Raiders dominate

By Katy Hamlett
Staff Writer

The MT track teams hosted the Middle Tennessee Open over the weekend, showcasing performances that earned MT another NCAA provisional mark on the men's side and six first-place finishes by the Lady Raiders.

In addition to Linnie Yarbrough's NCAA qualifying mark, one of MT's notable achievements at the Open was the powerful performance exhibited by the women's team across all events.

"[The women] really came together and were solid," MT head coach Dean Hayes said. "We had a lot of yearly best and lifetime best [marks]. It's a big help for us."

KeKe Deckard, an SBC Volleyball Player of the Week in 2004, took first place in both the high jump and long jump.

"[Deckard has] a lot of athletic ability," Hayes explained. "She doesn't have any more volleyball, and she gets to spend more time with track now. That's one of the reasons she

came [to MT], so she could do both."

Deckard was followed in the long jump by three Lady Raider teammates, Stephanie Tamgho, who took second place with an 18-1, Sierra Douglas, who marked an 18-2, and Latoya Brown, who landed fourth place with a 17-1 3/4 jump.

Tamgho continued her work in the triple jump event, landing a 39-9 during her second attempt this weekend, marking a substantial improvement over her 36-11 at the Indiana Invitational Jan. 29.

Jessica Anderson and Tiffany Owens attracted attention at the meet, both earning their yearly best marks in the 200-meter dash and 55-meter dash, respectively.

In the women's shot-put event, Laetitia Florimond earned a first place for MT with her lifetime best of 45.7.

"[The women] are a little more solid; they're on a roll," Hayes said.

On the men's side, junior Yarbrough earned NCAA provisional marks and an MT first place for his 7.30 second performance in the 55-meter hurdles.

"That was his best performance," Hayes said. "He really looked good."

VanTonio Fraley, who took MT's only first place mark at the Jan. 29 meet in Indiana, continued his winning streak, taking first place in the 55-meter dash and third place in the 200 meter dash.

"[Fraley] is a junior college transfer who's really been running well," Hayes said. "He's been getting very consistent [in his events], which is really what we're looking for."

Fraley's competitors included runners from Western Kentucky, Tennessee State, Arkansas State and Belmont.

Belmont appeared fairly harmless throughout the events until the distance races gave the Bruins a chance to showcase their talent.

"They basically are a distance-oriented team," Hayes said. "They do very well in cross country, and many track runners carry over from that."

The Bruins swept the 1,600- and 3,000-

See **Open, 7**



Photo by Blake Noel | Staff Photographer

MT's Linnie Yarbrough (right) won the 55-meter hurdles.

MT earns homemade split



Photo by Brady Purnell | Staff Photographer

Blue Raider senior Michael Cuffee shoots over WKU's Anthony Winchester in MT's 61-56 loss Thursday night.

Blue Raiders drop third consecutive home game

By David Hunter
Senior Staff Writer


The word three-peat is used in sports all the time.

This three-peat, however, is one that the Middle Tennessee men's basketball team did not want to be a part of.

Last Thursday night, the Blue Raiders were defeated by Sun Belt Conference foe Western Kentucky 61-56 in front of a season-best crowd of 6,103.

It was MT's third consecutive loss at home and fifth out of the last six games.

"Every loss we have had this year has stung," MT forward Michael Cuffee said. "This was a real bad loss because we have

	
WKU	61
MT	56

now lost three straight at home. We were trying to get back in the hunt."

Like in the previous five losses, the Blue Raiders fell behind in the first half and tried to come from behind. However, time ran out for MT.

In the first half, after MT's Keith Christmas hit a jumper with 13:01 to go, MT was

See **WKU, 8**

Morrison makes most of start, scores 26 in win

By David Hunter
Senior Staff Writer

On Saturday night, the Murphy Center felt like home sweet home again.

The Blue Raider men's basketball team ended their three-game home losing streak with an 82-69 victory over Florida International.

"Our team desperately needed a win, which is an understatement," MT head coach Kermit Davis said.

One of the keys to the victory was the way the Blue Raiders started on offense. In the past six games coming into Saturday night, MT was outscored 100-56.

"I thought offensively we

	
MT	82
FIU	69
Next Game: Feb. 10 vs North Texas	

had a better rhythm. I wasn't real pleased with giving them a couple of baskets in transition," Davis said. "I thought we moved the ball around a little bit better."

In the win, the game was tied at 16 with 9:58 to go. However, MT's Fats Cuyler nailed a three-pointer to break the tie. The Golden

See **FIU, 8**

Don't try to predict how Blue Raiders will finish this year

So much for predictions. Prior to the 2004-05 basketball season, the powers that be predicted that Middle Tennessee would win the Sun Belt Conference's East Division.

Now, barring an implosion from three other teams and an amazing turnaround from MT (at the same time), this prediction isn't worth the paper it was printed on.

This weekend's home split is merely a microcosm of the season, which has been full of both ups and downs.

On Thursday, the team looked like the Blue Raiders of late, trailing Western Kentucky by 16 at the half and making a valiant but unfruitful run in the second half.

Saturday, the team scored 52 points in the second half, four players scored in double figures and MT defeated Florida International by 13.

Thursday, the Blue Raiders looked like the team that has lost five of their last seven contests and hadn't scored more than 65 points in almost a month.

Saturday, however, Kermit Davis' team looked like the same

Sports commentary



Jon Leffew
Assistant Sports Editor

squad that went 13-4 to begin the season, won a share of the San Juan Shootout title and began Sun Belt Conference play with two straight wins.

Now, fans have forgotten this team's hopes of making the NCAA tournament and turned their attention to which team will show up on a given night.

In spite of all of the negatives that have come from the team's recent struggles, I've dug really deep to find a few players that will help lead this team back into contention.

The first positive is Marcus Morrison.

Morrison, who had struggled as of late, averaged 18 points per game in the team's two games this weekend, including a career-high 26 against FIU.

The energy that Morrison brings as either a starter or

See **Predictions, 7**

Logsdon leads WKU past MT in overtime

By Jori Rice
Staff Writer

The women's Middle Tennessee-Western Kentucky matchup was closer than the men's contest on Thursday, but the result was the same.

After Patrice Holmes tied the game with just more than a minute to go in regulation, the Lady Toppers prevailed 71-67 in overtime at E. A. Diddle Arena in Bowling Green, Ky.

"I'm really proud of our young ladies," WKU head coach Mary Taylor Cowles told www.wkusports.com. "I didn't think we played exceptionally well, especially in the first half, but we played extremely hard. We found a way to get it done and be successful for the night."

MT (14-6, 6-1 Sun Belt Conference) and WKU (15-6, 8-0 SBC) were both undefeated in the conference coming into the game.

As usual, the score was close throughout this rivalry game. The Lady Raiders held the largest lead of the night at 43-36 early in the second half, but neither team pulled away.

The Lady Raiders led 29-28 at halftime and led most of the second half, but the Lady

Toppers took the lead with 4:10 remaining after a layup by Crystal Kelly.

After Holmes scored with 1:03 remaining to know the score at 59, both teams had an opportunity to win the game. Holmes missed a jumper with 13 seconds left, and Leslie Logsdon's three-pointer to win for WKU was off as well.

The Lady Raiders took the early lead in overtime, but a three-pointer by Logsdon tied the score at 65, and WKU never looked back.

Logsdon led WKU with a game-high 21 points, including all 12 of the Lady Toppers' points in overtime. Kelly added 18, Krystal Gardner had 16 and Tiffany Porter-Talbert scored 12.

Holmes led the Lady Raiders with 19 points and five steals, making her the all-time MT leader in steals with 297.

Chrissy Givens scored 17 points and added seven rebounds. Tia Stovall had 12 points and four assists.

After a win over Florida International on Saturday, WKU now leads the SBC East by a game and a half over the Lady Raiders. The teams still have to play at Murphy Center on Feb. 24. ♦

Blue Raiders take two out of three on road

By Chase Williams
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee men's tennis team had a busy weekend as they hit the road for three straight days of non-conference action.

After dropping their match on Thursday, the No. 57 Blue Raiders rebounded with victories over a pair of Indiana schools on Friday and Saturday to improve their season record to 4-1.

MT traveled to Louisville, Ky. on Thursday to battle the No. 39 Louisville Cardinals in their first road match of the season. After dueling it out for four hours at the Bass-Rudd Tennis Center, the Cardinals came out on top 4-2.

Louisville struck first in the No. 1 doubles match when Jeremy Clark and Jakob Gustaffson upset MT's No. 29 duo of junior Brandon Allan and sophomore Kai Schledorn 9-8. The Blue Raiders' No. 58 tandem of sophomores Marco Born and Andreas Siljestrom downed the Cardinal's Jhonny Berrido and Mark Kennedy 8-5 in the No. 2 match, however, but Louisville won

the doubles point when Damar Johnson and Tony Teufel took an 8-6 victory over seniors Greg Pollack and Anant Sitaram at No. 3.

In singles play, No. 68 Siljestrom fell 2-6, 2-6 against No. 124 Johnson at No. 1, and Louisville's Gustaffson defeated Born 7-6, 6-7, 2-6 at No. 2. The Blue Raiders took wins in No. 3 and 6 singles, as Schledorn won 6-3, 6-2 over Nicolas Houard and Allan took out Clark 6-3, 7-6.

The Cardinals' Berrido defeated Pollack 7-6, 6-3 at No. 5. Sitaram and Octavian Nicodim did not finish their match at No. 4 after the match was decided.

The Blue Raiders didn't have time to reflect on the loss, however, as they traveled to Terre Haute, Ind. to take on the Sycamores of Indiana State on Friday. MT swept all three doubles matches and lost only two singles matches in their 5-2 triumph at the Wabash Valley Tennis Club.

The pairing of Born and Siljestrom downed ISU's Aaron Phillips and Simon Thornewill 8-6 at No. 1 doubles. Allan and Schledorn won at No. 2 against the Sycamore's Rishi Behl and Anton Tsymbalov 8-6, while Pollack and Sitaram dis-

posed of ISU's Christopher Eldon and Will Moseley 8-4 at No. 3.

The Sycamores' Tsymbalov fought off MT's Born 0-6, 6-3, 6-2 in the No. 1 singles match, and ISU's Eldon defeated Allan 7-6 (4), 6-4 at No. 5. Those would be the only bright spots for the Sycamores as the Blue Raiders took the remaining matches.

Siljestrom dropped Behl 6-4, 6-3 at No. 2, while Sitaram won over Thornewill 7-5, 6-4 at No. 3. At No. 4, Schledorn took out Phillips 6-0, 6-2, and Pollack won a 6-2, 6-4 decision over ISU's Kevin Doh.

The final stop of the Blue Raiders' road trip landed them in Bloomington, Ind. on Saturday to face the No. 68 Indiana Hoosiers. The outcome looked bleak early for MT as the Hoosiers jumped out to a 2-0 lead after doubles play and the first singles match.

The Blue Raiders fought back, however, and gained a 4-3 win, the third time in the last three years MT won a match after dropping the doubles point.

"We really fought hard tonight and played smart against a very good Indiana team," MT head coach Dale Short told MT Media Relations.

"We lost the doubles point, but the guys really responded in singles to get us the win."

Born and Siljestrom defeated IU's Ryan Recht and John Stone at No. 1 doubles 8-5. The Hoosiers responded with Dmytro Ishtiganov and Jakub Praibis over Allan and Schledorn 8-6 at No. 2, and Michael McCarthy and Dara McLoughlin 8-4 over Pollack and Sitaram at No. 3 to take the doubles point.

At No. 1 singles, IU's No. 60 Praibis defeated Siljestrom 7-6 (5), 4-6, 7-5. The Blue Raiders took the No. 2 and 3 matches, as Born dropped Recht 6-3, 6-4, and Schledorn downed Neil Kenner 4-6, 6-1, 6-4. The Hoosier's McCarthy won a 6-0, 6-4 decision over Sitaram at No. 4, the last win for IU on the day.

MT took 6-3, 6-4 victories in the No. 5 and No. 6 matches, as Pollack defeated Tom Bagnato and Allan knocked off Stone.

MT returns to action next weekend when they face Georgia Tech on Saturday and Furman on Sunday. Both matches are at noon at the Racquet Club of Murfreesboro. ♦

Lady Raiders open season with victory

Stapp enjoys successful coaching debut with 5-2 win

By Casey Brown
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee women's tennis team opened the 2005 season with a 5-2 win over Belmont University on Saturday at the Racquet Club of Murfreesboro.

The Lady Raiders received an early scare when the Bruins won the doubles point. At No. 2 doubles, MT's Ana Marie Cibils and Emily Vest fell 8-3 to April Bradley and Katie Rhodes of BU.

Senior Jennifer Klaschka and freshman Ann-Kristin Siljestrom picked up a win at No. 1 doubles for MT, defeating Elizabeth Conyer and Linda Johansson 8-1. Belmont picked up the point, however, when Burgandy Moss and Shivani Oberoi defeated Lady Raiders Claudia Szabo and Jacqui Williams 8-5 at the No. 3 slot.

"They [BU] took it to us in the doubles point and put us on our heels a little bit.

They really brought their 'A' game today," MT head coach Neil Stapp said.

Needing to rebound in singles play, the Lady Raiders did not disappoint, winning five of six matches. At No. 1 singles, Klaschka fought through a tough first set and emerged victorious over Johansson 7-6, 6-2.

MT picked up another crucial singles win when senior Vest won over Bradley 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 in a marathon match at the No. 4 position.

"I think our senior leadership was huge out there," Stapp said. "Jenny and Emily really played well, won two tough matches, and that sort of turned the tide for us."

The Lady Raiders claimed easy victories farther down in the lineup. The sophomore Williams handled Moss 6-0, 6-2 at No. 5 to clinch the match for MT.

Siljestrom showed no signs of nerves in her first collegiate singles match, as the

freshman thoroughly dominated BU's Christina Griffith 6-1, 6-1 at No. 6.

"We played really strong down low as well. I think our lineup was about right," Stapp said.

The Bruins picked up their lone singles victory when Conyer defeated Cibils 7-5, 6-4 in a hard-fought match at No. 2.

"I think it was tougher than we expected. This was their sixth match of the season, and they were match-tough. We've got to work a little harder at our doubles. But overall I was pleased," Stapp said.

There was no rest for the weary as the Lady Raiders faced off against the Trojans of Troy Sunday morning at the Racquet Club. *Sidelines* will have full coverage of that match in Wednesday's edition. ♦

Photo by Jay Richardson | Photo Editor

MT's Jennifer Klaschka won her doubles and singles matches Saturday.



Predictions: Talented trio could spark team's turnaround

Continued from 6

reserve has proven beneficial for the Blue Raiders and exciting for the fans.

The team's second player who appears to be ready for a late-season run is Bryan Smithson.

Smithson, who slipped in under the radar last season and became a pleasant surprise for all, has struggled for most of

this season.

However, the sophomore point guard is averaging three rebounds, three assists and nine ppg through the last five games and appears to be returning to the form that made him a fan favorite last year.

MT's third late-season impact player and new first option is Michael Cuffee.

Cuffee, who has been a picture of consistency during his

two seasons at MT, almost led the team to a win against WKU, and his inspired play both inside and out has been a positive all year.

Through it all, this trio has at least helped the Blue Raiders become entertaining to watch, even if they aren't winning games.

So, which team will show up when the team home stand on

against North Texas?

If this season thus far is any indication, no one will know the answer until Thursday night.

Either way, unlike my colleagues, this team has taught me to keep my hair-brained predictions to myself. ♦

Jon Leffew is a sophomore at jals3p@mtsu.edu.

Open: MT hosts final meet

Continued from 6

meter runs, taking first place for the events on both the men and women's side.

The MT women's primary SBC rival, WKU, took first place in the women's 800- and 200-meter dashes, along with the top two

spots in women's weight throw.

Next weekend MT track will host the MT Valentine Invitational, the squads' fourth and final event of the indoor track season, followed in two weeks by the Sun Belt Conference Finals at ASU. ♦

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Sporadic shooting hurts Blue Raiders

By Jonathan Hutton
Staff Writer

In Saturday night's game against Western Kentucky, the Blue Raiders could not seal the deal down the stretch. Time after time, Middle Tennessee missed mid-lane jumpers, missed layups or committed costly turnovers that eventually spelled doom for a team at home playing behind a large crowd and against a conference rival.

In recent home games leading up to Saturday night's win over Florida International, fans could count on the Blue Raiders to dig themselves a hole in the first half that would prove impossible to climb out of.

At halftime against WKU, the Blue Raiders had already committed seven turnovers and were only nine of 25 (36 percent) from the field. Even worse, most of those missed shots weren't three pointers (the Blue Raiders were 2-for-3) but instead

were mid-lane jumpers.

Those bad numbers, combined with WKU shooting 50 percent from behind the arc and 58 percent overall, sent the Blue Raiders into the locker room at halftime down 16 points en route to a third consecutive home loss.

MT head coach Kermit Davis spoke after Thursday's loss about executing shots when they need to be made.

"You have to make plays and be tough enough to do it. Right now, our guys aren't playing with a lot of confidence offensively," Davis said. "It is just inexcusable for us time in and time out to play 25 minutes of quality basketball."

Before Saturday's game, MT shot an average of 38 percent from the floor as the team lost five of its last six games.

Saturday night's win over FIU seemed to be a different story. The Blue Raiders finally took a lead into halftime and finished the game strong, scoring 52 second-half points.

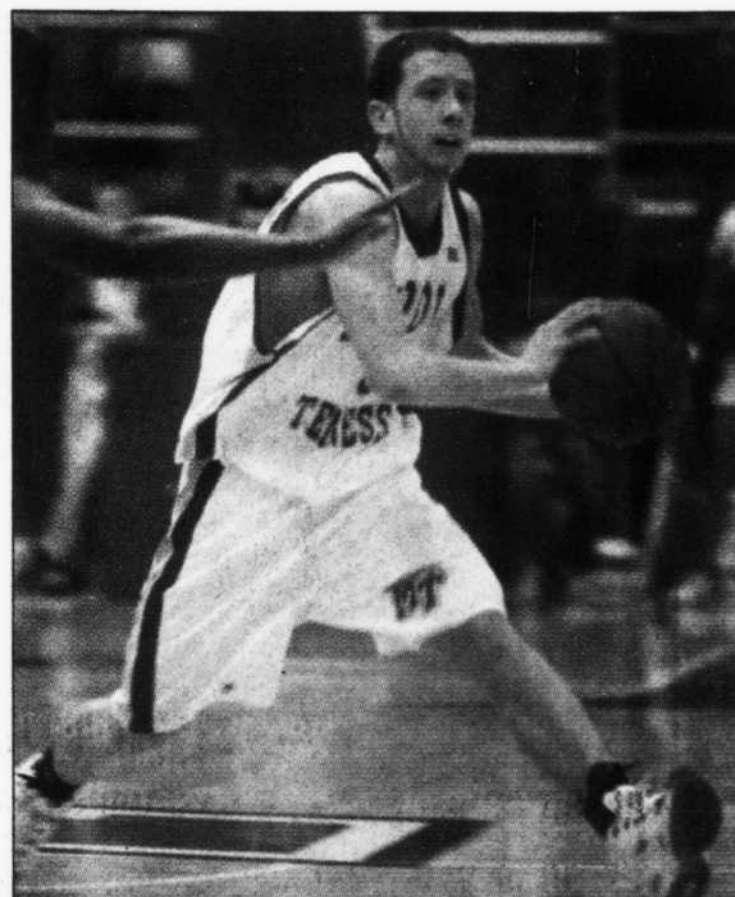
"Our team desperately needed to win, which is an understatement," Davis said Saturday. "Were we at our best? No, but I thought offensively we played with a lot more confidence tonight."

Sophomore point guard Brian Smithson, who had 13 points Saturday after a scoreless effort against WKU, said that Davis did not lose confidence in his team's shooting.

"Even though we have been shooting low percentages, [Davis] hasn't put any restrictions on anyone," Smithson said following the FIU win. "We are just taking it to the goal, and people are building their confidence back up."

The Blue Raiders will have one more home contest against North Texas on Thursday before traveling to SBC West leader Denver on Saturday. ♦

Photo by Rachelle Morvant | Chief Photographer
MT point guard Bryan Smithson had 13 points in a win over FIU Saturday.



WKU: Hilltoppers now in first in SBC East

Continued from 6

ahead 10-9. However, WKU went on a 10-0 run in the next three minutes. That run included three pointers by WKU's Courtney Lee and Ty Rogers. Lee finished the run with a one-handed slam with 9:53 left to make the score 19-10.

The Hilltoppers pushed the lead to 16 at halftime 36-20.

Early in the second half, WKU extended that lead to 18 on two separate occasions.

The Blue Raiders were down 53-42 with 4:24 left, but it was their turn to put a run together. For the next three minutes, MT went on an 11-3 run to cut the lead to two on a shot by Bryan Smithson to make the score 55-53 with 1:00 to go. That run included threes by Mike Dean

and Michael Cuffee.

"We are not coming out of the gates ready to play right away," MT guard Fats Cuyler said. "In the second half down 16, we came out ready to play because we didn't want to get embarrassed."

WKU put the game away with six consecutive free throws to expand the lead back to 61-53. MT's Smithson nailed a three-pointer with seven seconds left to cut the lead in half at 61-56. That was the final basket made in the game.

"We didn't handle [the lead] well down the stretch," WKU head coach Darrin Horn said. "Again, that is part of having a young team and guys that haven't been in that situation enough. It is a positive to build on."

One of the reasons that MT has not won games has been the lack of shooting. During the game, MT shot only 39.6 percent; in the last six games, the team is averaging 37.9 percent shooting from the field.

"It is an understatement, but we are struggling offensively," MT head coach Kermit Davis said. "We are trying to play fast. We are trying to play in transition. It boils down to their guys making plays."

Right now, our guys aren't playing with a lot of confidence offensively," Davis added.

WKU's Lee led all scorers with 17 points, while Anthony Winchester added 15 and Danny Rumph had 10.

Cuffee lead MT with 16, while Steve Thomas chipped in with 12, and Marcus Morrison had 10. ♦

FIU: MT stays ahead of Golden Panthers

Continued from 6

Panthers never got closer.

"That was one of our goals," junior Marcus Morrison said. "We wanted to focus, primarily on the first half. In the first 20 minutes, we wanted to come out and play strong, because we knew we would progress as the game went on."

With three seconds left in the opening half, FIU's Junior Mathis hit a three to cut the lead to 30-27 at the break.

FIU's Ivan Almonte converted a three-point play to begin the half and tie the score at 30 with 18:58 left.

However, the Blue Raiders pulled away for good when Morrison stole the ball and converted a layup.

Then, Mike Dean caused a turnover in the backcourt, and also laid it in to make the score 34-30.

FIU's Jayce Lewis knocked down a three-pointer to cut the

lead to 34-33. Dean then hit another layup to make the score 36-33 with 16:31 left.

Morrison then took over the game, scoring MT's next 18 of their 23 points. Morrison, who was a starter, scored a career-high 26 points, including 22 in the second half.

"I felt good to start off the game," Morrison said. "I got some open looks, and I knocked them down."

FIU's Junior Mathis led all scorers with 30 points, including a red-hot 7-for-11 from three-point range. Almonte added 15, but nine of those came from the foul line. Almonte came into the game averaging 16.8 points per game. Ismael N'Diaye scored 10 for the Golden Panthers.

"This is not the best effort we've had, not even close. It was probably one of our worst efforts the whole year," FIU head coach Sergio Rouco said.

For the Blue Raiders, Dean had

18, Bryan Smithson added 13 and Michael Cuffee scored 10.

During the game, all the MT coaches wore tennis shoes as part of the Coaches vs. Cancer nationwide program that was going on at many of Saturday's college basketball games. Several coaches wore tennis shoes on the sidelines as part of the event.

"It is just a good awareness, and I think we have all been touched by cancer: uncles, aunts, fathers, brothers, sisters, yourself," Davis said.

The Blue Raiders improved to 14-9 (4-5 SBC), while the Golden Panthers dropped to 8-13 (1-7).

The next game for the Blue Raiders is Thursday at the Murphy Center against North Texas.

Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m. as the second part of the double-header with the Lady Raiders playing Denver. ♦

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