

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

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INSIDE

Blindman's Peace



One local band has settled in as the premiere blues-rock band of Middle Tennessee
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COMMUTE

The intersection at Blue Raider Drive and MTSU Boulevard will be closed May 5 through August 20 for construction of a roundabout. The temporary detour by the Honors Building will be active for those who are traveling north on Blue Raider Drive.

There will also be a detour just past the Greenhouse for those who are traveling east on Blue Raider Drive. Detour signs will be posted.

For those who ride the Raider Xpress, please check mtsu.edu, under "Transportation" for the temporary changes to the routes.



Photo By Andi Nave, Photography Editor
Members of The Nashville Movement held picket signs and American flags while marching against economic and racial injustice last Thursday.

Workers rally for improved wages

By ALEX MOORMAN
Assistant News Editor

Members of "The Nashville Movement" joined together last Thursday to march in Nashville against economic and racial injustice, determined to have their voices heard.

Marchers held picket signs

displaying phrases such as "An injury to one is an injury to all" and "Workers rights are human rights."

"We are following in the footsteps of the great people from the Civil Rights Movement," said Katalina Nieto, Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition representative. "We are lay-

ing the groundwork for an even bigger change, a change that can help the poorest of workers."

The Nashville Movement is a coalition of people from different economic backgrounds, joining together to help end poverty for the poorest workers in Nashville.

"The Nashville Movement is picking up in the successful legacy of the 1960s Civil Rights struggle in Nashville," stated Movement literature. "But now we're not just organizing for a seat at the lunch table, we want to be able to afford what's on the menu."

Middle Tennessee Jobs

formed the Movement in 2007 with assistance from Justice, Nashville Homeless Power Project, the Urban Epicenter and Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition.

"We are ready for an answer because we deserve an

RALLY, PAGE 2



File Photo

Manchester police ready for Bonnaroo crowd

By KRISTIN M. HALL
Associated Press Writer

Ross Simmons, Manchester chief of police, follows the lineup of bands for Bonnaroo like any good fan, but worries about the crowd it may attract.

Instead of picking the shows he'd like to see, he tries to anticipate how the widely diverse musical acts and their fans can affect his job of controlling traffic and crowds.

The festival, which opens Thursday, started in 2002 with a lineup of jam bands and their mostly laid-back fans.

This year's lineup of heavier rock bands like Pearl Jam and Metallica has Simmons

"If you work it year in after year you can tell a difference in attitude. Metallica's going to be here so that's going to make a difference."

Ross Simmons
Chief of Manchester Police

expecting a slightly different crowd.

"If you work it year in and year out, you can tell a difference in attitude," Simmons said. "Metallica's going to be here so that's going to make a difference."

The four-day outdoor festival swells the population of Manchester from less than 10,000 to potentially more than 100,000.

Monumental traffic jams

have become part of the Bonnaroo culture, along with brutal summer heat, fragrant portable toilets and water smelling of sulfur.

However, Tennessee transportation officials say traffic control has improved over the last couple of years.

Interstate 24 between Nashville and Chattanooga

Director of journalism transfers to University of South Carolina

By ANDY HARPER
Editor in Chief

Carol Pardun, director of the School of Journalism, is transferring at the end of this month to the University of South Carolina to assume a similar role as director of the USC School of Journalism.

"I want people to know that I've enjoyed my time at MTSU and I love the students and faculty," Pardun said.

The director of journalism at USC encompasses all mass-communication disciplines, including print, broadcast, advertising, public relations and visual, Pardun said.

"I'm going to miss my colleagues here," Pardun said. "It's hard to say what part I'm going to miss, because I know there's going to be wonderful colleagues at South Carolina, but not the same as here."

Pardun came to MTSU in the fall of 2005 as the director of journalism after serving as a professor at the University of North Carolina. She earned her doctorate in mass communication from the University of Georgia in 1992.

Pardun is the former editor of Mass Communication & Society, sits on the editorial boards of Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, Journal of Media & Religion, Simile, Mass Communication & Society and Journal of Advertising, according to her biography on the MTSU Web site.

Pardun is also the current vice president and president-

elect of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

"There are a number of things I'm looking forward to, like living in the commu-

nity, walking to work and to local restaurants," Pardun said. "I'm also looking forward to being a part of a research one university."

In addition to her academic accomplishments while at MTSU, Pardun continued her longtime love of rowing by forming a Nashville-based rowing club in April of 2006.

"I've definitely enjoyed living in Nashville and I really like Murfreesboro, but I'm looking forward to finally being back on the East coast," Pardun said. "I just really like hot and humid weather, to Eastern time and the coast. It's just more of who I am."

An interim director for the school of journalism has not been named but is expected to be announced by the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost in the upcoming weeks.

"Carol will be missed," said John Omachonu, interim dean for the College of Mass Communication. "She brought to the School of Journalism the kind of energy and enthusiasm that did not exist before her arrival."



Pardun

BONNAROO, PAGE 2

**BONNAROO
FROM PAGE 1**

once became a parking lot on the opening day of Bonnaroo as officials tried to funnel about cars from all directions.

Tennessee transportation officials say traffic control has improved over the last couple of years.

"We're really proud of the fact that the through-traffic on the interstate hasn't completely stopped," said Jennifer Flynn, a spokeswoman with the Department of Transportation.

Heat is also always an issue, and the first week of June has been the hottest in 60 years for parts of Middle Tennessee.

If it keeps up, that could be an additional health concern

for festival-goers, but the National Weather Service is expecting a line of showers and thunderstorms to cool down the high temperatures to the mid-80s over the weekend.

"It does always seem to be hot the week of Bonnaroo," Flynn said.

Browning said this year there is an added focus on assisting fans with disabilities.

Deputies will be able to help guide them to special routes marked with wheelchair symbols where they can find accessible camping areas.

Simmons said his experience with Bonnaroo means he'll have no trouble if organizers ever plan additional concerts on the site about 60 miles southeast of Nashville.

"We just may move Music City down here," Simmons said. "That's what we're thinking."

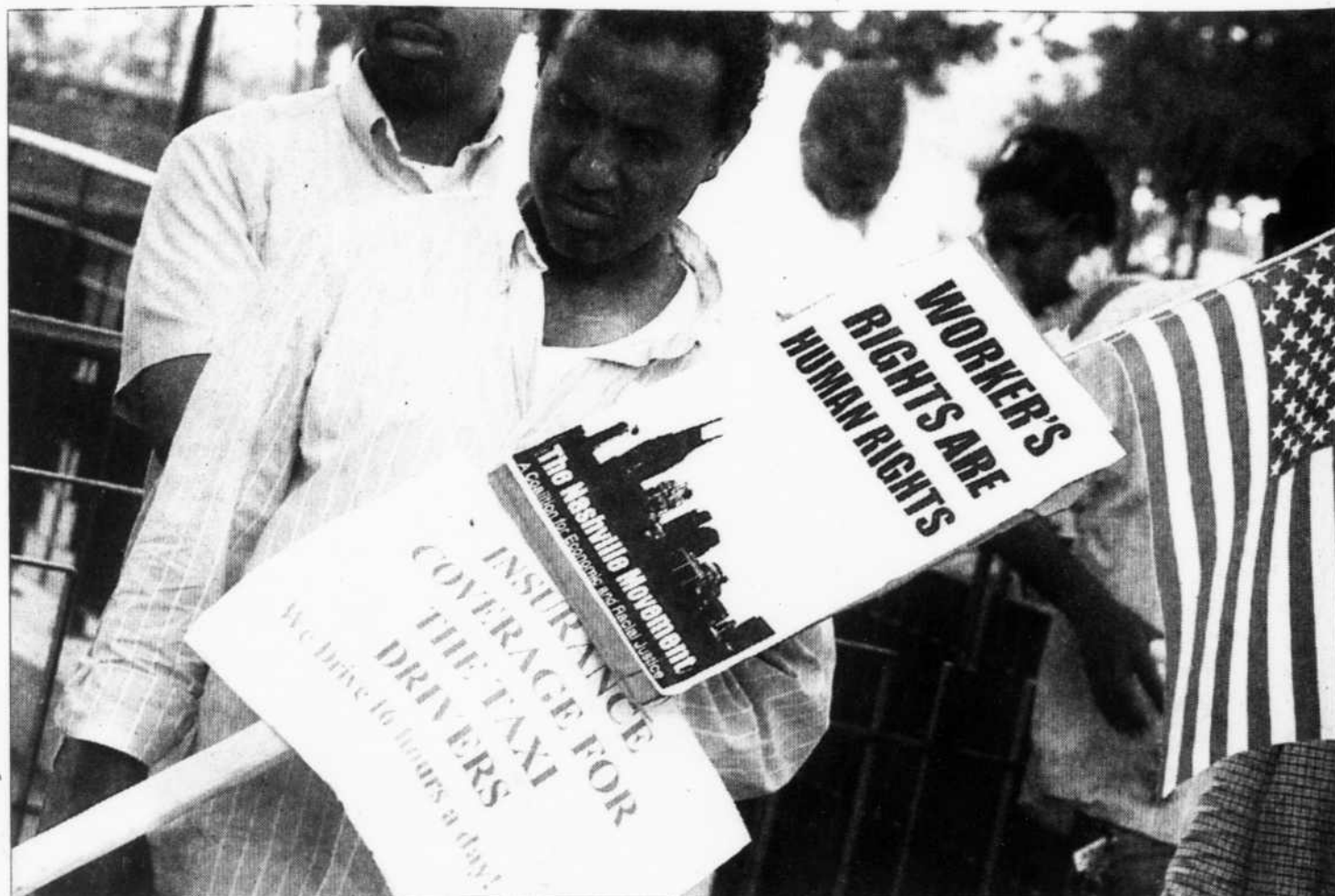


Photo By Andi Nave, Photography Editor

Taxi cab drivers and car wash workers protest worker's rights last Thursday to bring about change through the Nashville Movement.

**RALLY
FROM PAGE 1**

answer," said Hailemariam Gebremariam, a Nashville taxi driver and Movement supporter. "Today we are going to make the start to get that answer."

Gebremariam said that he was tired of being treated as

a "second-class citizen" and that he felt that this movement was just what workers needed to help eliminate their problems.

"They can't exploit us anymore because we aren't going to let them," Gebremariam said.

A rally took place at the 15th Avenue Baptist Church at 5 p.m. The movement

then marched to the Metro Court House.

In addition to campaigning for better working conditions, Nashville Movement representatives bought hamburgers and drinks for the poverty-stricken marchers.

In recognition of the event, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People will announce the

Human Rights Award to the Nashville Metro Taxi Drivers Alliance.

Although the taxi drivers in Nashville are not the only ones being affected, they are among the groups that are seeing these problems in excess and are ready for a change.

"This is going to finally be a new day for workers," Nieto said.

CRIME BRIEFS

June 04, 2008 9:15 a.m.

Warrant
Recreation Center
Officer checking suspicious vehicle parked at the entrance of construction site.

June 04, 2008 1:13 p.m.

Theft
Recreation Center
Subject called and said that someone had stolen money from a locker.

June 05, 2008 2:12 a.m.

DUI
East Main Street
David E. Rice was arrested for DUI, driving without a license and violation of implied consent.

June 05, 2008 6:17 p.m.

Vagrancy
Crestland Avenue
Trespassing warning was issued.

June 06, 2008 5:46 a.m.

Sex Offenses
MTSU Boulevard
Complainant said that a male individual pulled up to the front of the building in a small green car and was completely naked. Subject quickly pulled back out and left towards Cummings Hall.

wards Cummings Hall.

June 06, 2008 11:24 a.m.

Traffic
Nicks Hall Lot
Subject called and said that someone hit her vehicle and did not leave a note. She had just noticed the damage after leaving her car in the lot overnight.

June 08, 2008 1:12 a.m.

Traffic
Blue Raider Drive
Jarrell Gray was given a citation for no proof of insurance, stop sign violation and loud music.

June 08, 2008 1:24 p.m.

Theft
Nicks Hall
Subject advised of a stolen bicycle from bike rack.

June 09, 2008 6:30 a.m.

Burglary
Greek Row
Complainant stated that he was walking from Campus Crossing North to the Recreation Center when he noticed a white male around 40 who appeared to be entering a silver vehicle. He was behind the Sigma Chi house with a screwdriver.

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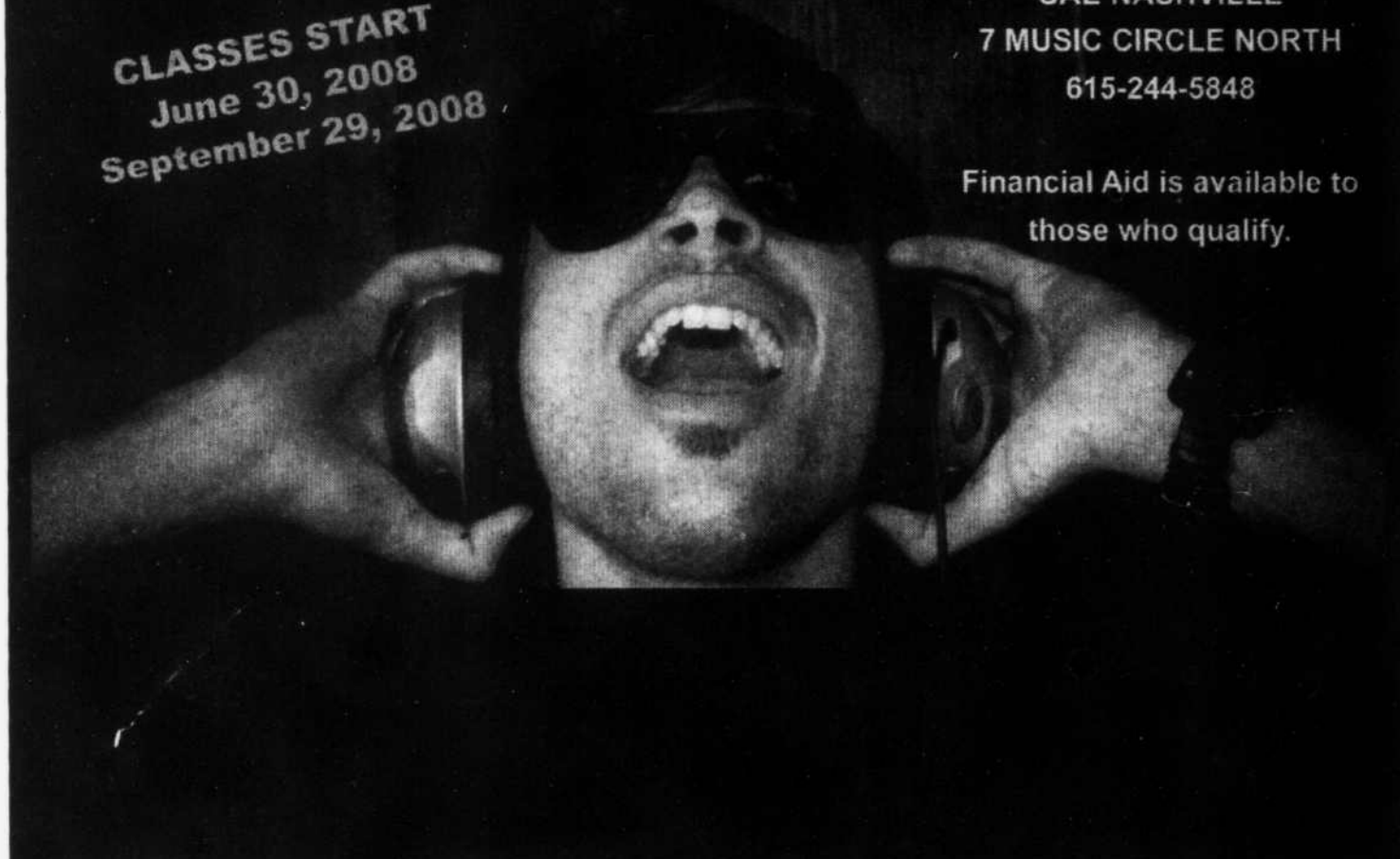
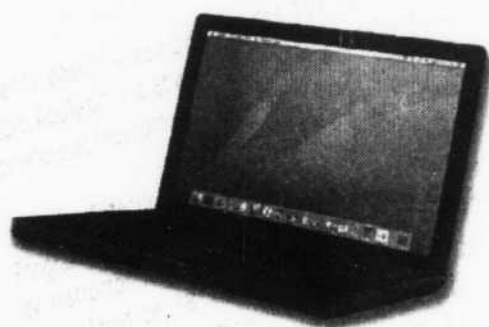
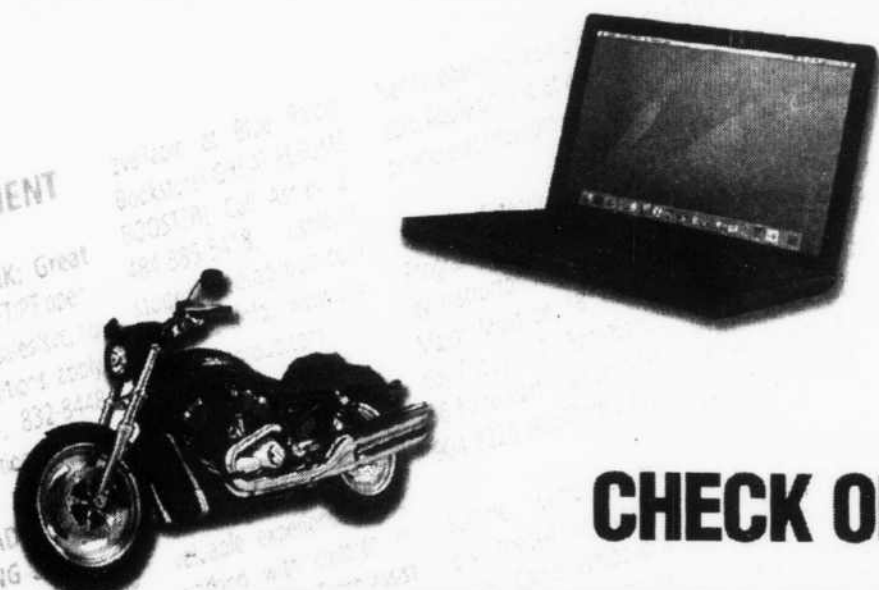
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FEATURES

HOW OFTEN, IF
EVER, DO YOU
EXERCISE?BASED ON VOTES FROM
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The Journey of Blindman's Peace

One local band came to Tennessee to showcase their blues-rock style

By MICHAEL STONE
Features Editor

As the smoke billowed and the bottles tipped, Blindman's Peace made sure the crowd at Liquid Smoke on June 6 heard the countless hours of practice and dedication the band put into every note and every beat.

"It was one of the longest shows we've ever played," describes lead vocalist and guitarist David Talley. "The atmosphere was great, and the crowd was energetic. I didn't want to stop playing after we finished the set."

The band performed 12 original songs, two John Mayer covers, "I Don't Need No Doctor" by Ray Charles, "Tin Pan Alley" by Stevie Ray Vaughn and "Ain't No Sunshine" by Bill Withers.

Throughout the show, the band was precise with their playing. But it wasn't the type of precision that takes away from soul. It was the type that comes from devotion to the craft of being godly musicians, and, at the same time, allows them to put themselves into the music.

And when the guys turned off the music and began to pack up, the crowd pleaded in sporadic, inebriated screams for more.

That gave David encouragement to do what he really wanted to do—not stop playing.

He switched his amp back on and slipped his guitar strap over his shoulder. Matt Clyde, the drummer for Blindman's Peace, had already disassembled the intricate foundation of his drum kit, so he grabbed some bongos, and gave David a beat to follow.

Blindman's Peace gave the crowd an hour-long encore that night.

"I thought they played a great show," asserts Liquid Smoke owner Mike Lamure, who was working the bar during the show. "Their music made work enjoyable that night and I would definitely love for them to play again."

Blindman's Roots

A name like Blindman's Peace must have a meaningful story behind it, right?

Well, the band isn't the type to disappoint.

"Dave's uncle, Billy, went blind at age 23," explains bassist Victor Avellino. "He's been such an inspiration to us because of his wife of 18 years. Even after his stroke he is. Even after his wife of 18 years left him a few years ago, he's still been as strong as ever."

Billy finding strength isn't the only meaning behind the band's name.

"In a more broad sense, Blindman's Peace is a metaphor for spiritual blindness," Avellino discusses. "Even though we are Christians, we don't play stereotypical Christian music. We make our music so everyone can apply it to their everyday lives."

The band's story started a couple years back when Matt, David and Victor were attending Evangel University in Springfield, Mo.

"Me and Dave lived on the



Photo By Michael Stone, Features Editor

(From Left to Right) David Talley, Matt Clyde and Victor Avellino practice their song "Route 66" at the garage behind their house.

"Blindman's Peace is a metaphor for spiritual blindness. Even though we are Christians, we don't play stereotypical Christian music. We make our music so everyone can apply it to their everyday lives."

Victor Avellino
Blindman's Peace

same floor and jammed on a riff once," Clyde recalls. "That turned into be our first show. We needed a bassist, and we had heard Vic was a really good slap-bass player. So we contacted him, and we all started playing together. It just clicked from the very beginning."

The three began playing local gigs and creating a name for themselves. The sound that began to flow from their instruments collaborating is described by fans and the band themselves as "good-ole blues-rock."

But who's ever heard of a famous band coming out of Missouri?

One night, after a "crappy show," Matt simply said, "We gotta move."

"We all knew it. If we were ever going to make it, we needed to get out of Springfield," Clyde remembers. "We were so settled into the city, though. It was a hard move to say the least. But we had to because Missouri."

"It was really hard to see them leave," expresses Geoff McLarty, Evangel classmate. "Springfield just doesn't appreciate blues rock. The way they play it is unique; they're quality musicians and all their fans, not just me, were really saddened when they left. But they did what they had to do."

Ain't No Place
I'd Rather Be

The band decided on moving to where their blues-rock would be appreciated. That place just so happens to be the most musically-cultured place in the world—Tennessee.

Moving to Middle Tennessee and transferring to MTSU "has to be the gutsiest thing we've ever done," Talley believes. "None of us regret it at all."

And so far, the band seems to have picked the right place.

They were picked to play in MTSU's Last Band Rocking, are currently in Yuenling's Battle of the Bands at Bluesboro and will open for Six Pence None the Richer (think back to that "Kiss Me" song from middle school) at Cornerstone Music Festival in Bushnell, Ill. on July 2.

"We really like their music," expresses John Herrin, Director of Cornerstone Music Festival. "They stood out to us, and that's why they're playing at Cornerstone."

The expected attendance for the festival is between about 15,000. Blindman's Peace will be playing on the Gallery Stage.

"The gallery stage is very melo- lowed-out, and is more so music for everyone," Herrin explains. "We put bands there that we think appeal to the majority of the people coming."

Currently, the guys are practicing for the festival at their house located in the land known by MTSU students as "across the interstate." It has a garage behind the house that is "perfect for band practice," Talley expresses, making Blindman's Peace the epitome of the phrase "garage

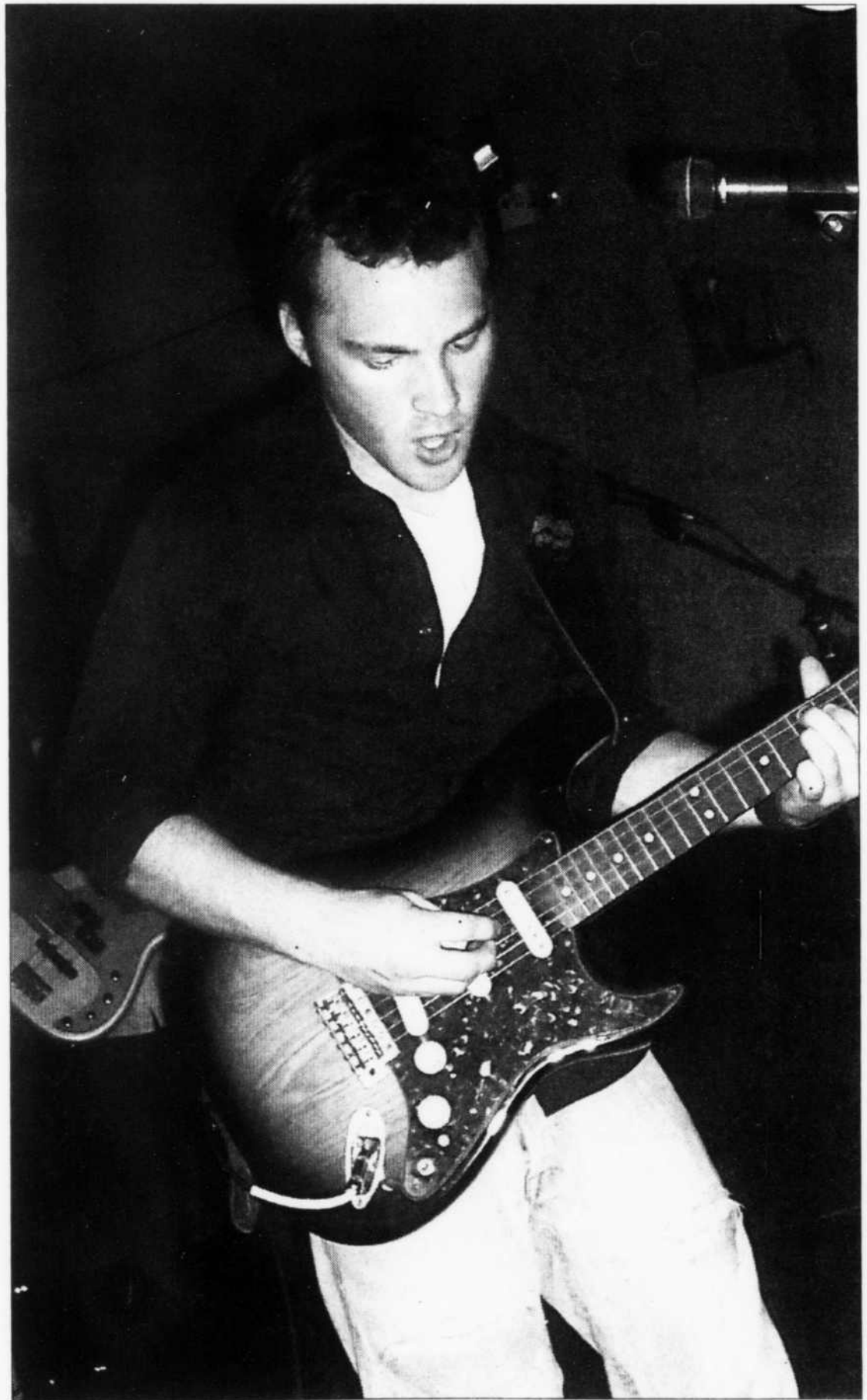


Photo By Michael Stone, Features Editor

David Talley wows the crowd at Liquid Smoke with his blues-guitar playing.

band."

And when the band emerges from their garage layer to play a show or two, their fan following can't wait for the gigs to start.

"I saw them for the first time in Nashville at On The Rocks in November," recalls Michele Royer, MTSU freshman psychology major. "I've

been a fan ever since because of their original sound."

"They are a great mix of blues and rock," describes Brittany Davidson, MTSU sophomore electronic media major. "And it's always a plus when the band is hot."

With an entourage of fans, dozens of original songs, covers that we all love, David's

bluesy voice and guitar, Victor's slap-bass and Matt's precision drumming, no one should be surprised when Six Pence None the Richer soon opens for Blindman's Peace.

Intrigued? Haven't heard them yet? Check them out July 14 at 10 p.m. at Café Coco in Nashville or at www.myspace.com/blindmanspeace.



Davidson



Royer

OPINIONS

From the Editorial Board

Bonnaroo now exists to make corporations richer

Bonnaroo. • Bonnaroo, Bonnaroo. Sick of hearing that word yet? Trust me, we are. And who's talking about it?

Well first, there are the people who enjoy Bonnaroo for the music. These people are few and far between. They don't try to obey any hippified-stereotypes; they're themselves.

Then, we have the majority of people hyping up 'Roo. No, it's not the true "tree-hugging, marijuana-smoking, groovy-dancing hippie" that we're told attends Bonnaroo. It's the poser hippie. And by poser hippie, we mean the ones that change from Abercrombie to tie-dye as soon as they set their twelve-man tents with portable showers in them on the grounds of the 700-acre Manchester farm.

True hippies stopped going to Bonnaroo many years back when they smelled its corporate stench from their... well, wherever true hippies live.

The smell began emanating when MTV bought it out. That's when the spirit, the loving, tree-hugging spirit, went out the door.

But of course, the people of Bonnaroo (MTV corporate people) try to hide

their corporate ways by touting, "Look at us, we're groovy people too. Look at us! No concern about profits here; just the love." Oh, but what corporation doesn't love profits? And that's why Kanye West and Metallica are coming—because they mean dollar signs, not love signs.

Thanks to the editorial board, we have some suggestions for everyone, whether you're going or not, to eliminate the dreaded "B word" from our beloved streets.

If you're going to enjoy the music: go, have fun, but stop reminding us you're going. Trust us, we're very proud of you. If you're going for a weekend of being someone you're not, and extreme debauchery while on illegal, mind-altering substances, again, stop reminding everyone. Have fun rolling in the mud this weekend. And for the true hippies, stop complaining. Just don't go; it's that easy.

And with everyone's help, both poser and hippie, the dreaded "B word" will be nothing more than something, somewhere at sometime, and everyone will stop staring at their computer screens for "Bonnaroo updates."

Letters to the Editor

CUSTOMS is not "unnecessary"

In response to a very small portion of the editorial "Goodbye education, hello new baseball field," I would like to explain to the editors and readers why CUSTOMS is not a "waste of cash" or "unnecessary."

I understand that in times like these everyone has different views of what is valuable and essential; however, since the school's budget hinges on student enrollment - and the tuition money from that - as well as state money, freshmen orientation is incredibly important to ensuring we have the necessary numbers to avoid having to cut more programs and jobs if enrollment is down.

If you take a quick look into the research related to student retention, you will find that freshmen orientation is an often used and effective program for retention.

In higher education, retention is a huge issue since it

is cheaper to keep a student than recruit them and because keeping students means more tuition money for the school.

The reason orientation is so helpful is because it helps the student learn about the school, departments, and services available to them; it also helps students find ways to become involved on campus which is incredibly important to keeping students from year to year.

Students who are involved on campus are more likely to be retained and graduate on time. Students who come to CUSTOMS learn so much about the university that will help them be ready for their first semester at MTSU and beyond.

And besides all of this, the main focus of CUSTOMS is academic advising for each student's major and registration for fall classes, which is vital no matter what one might think of the CUSTOMS program.

Many people, and often

LETTERS, PAGE 5

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

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Canada says, "Stop Smoking!"

Canada's effort to put smokers out by hiding cigarettes is futile

The first thing that crosses my mind when walking into a convenience store is the numerous cigarette brands mounted on the wall with advertisements of their low prices.

By looking at these I can't help but feel an impulse to buy a pack of this product - Not.

Recently, Canadian convenience stores have started hiding cigarettes in cabinets and behind the counter so consumers won't be tempted by them when they enter the store.

These new regulations are part of the Tobacco Control Act, which began in 2002 with provinces such as Saskatchewan and Ontario.

The law specifies that vendors are required to hide cigarettes, cigars and chewing tobacco from the public's eye.

If vendors refuse to do so, they will have to ban minors from their stores.

In Ontario, the Smoke-Free Ontario Act required that all counter top displays and decorative panels be removed from stores by May 31, 2008 for health inspections.

By hiding tobacco products behind a counter or curtain, people believe that it will actually decrease the smoking population.

However, most of the consumers that walk into these stores, already craving, intend to purchase a pack of cigarettes regardless of being influenced by displays.

Therefore, hiding them or making customers flip through a booklet of brands will be a complete waste of time for the customer and vendor.

Convenience store



OPEN MOUTH, INSERT FOOT
Tiffany Gibson

owners will also be wasting time and money by installing special cabinets in their stores because cigarette purchases will not decline due to this law.

The time that will be spent to enforce this new law will do nothing and the cost of cabinets to outfit every single store in these provinces could be used for other, more important matters.

According to the American Lung Association, 6,000 children under 18 start smoking each day, and almost 2,000 of them will become regular smokers.

If statistics such as these continue to rise then vendors will be making more profit and implementing a law that is merely ineffective and pointless.

People don't walk into these stores to buy food or gas and suddenly have an epiphany to purchase tobacco products because of the advertisements draped on the walls.

Those who choose to smoke have a need to satisfy their craving and purchase tobacco products in order to do so.

A cabinet is not going to stop someone who is perusing the shelves to feed the beast of their need for nicotine.

Then again, if the Canadian government is trying to prevent young teenagers from smoking perhaps they should focus on reducing the amount of advertisements in magazines and billboards.

There have also been rumors of American convenience stores banning cigarette displays in or-

der to save lives. If there is any impact whatsoever in Canada by this law, the American government will consider enforcing it as well.

In Tennessee, there are already heavy smoking laws and taxes to ensure that less people consume cigarettes. Having a cabinet hide, and I stress this again, will not hide an addicts need.

American government officials have already made an attempt to reduce the number of smoking billboards located around schools by banning them, but considering smoking ads prevail on almost every television show or movie it hardly seems to be having an impact.

Smoking is bad and unhealthy, but if a product is legal then why should it be hidden?

Consuming alcohol over time can cause damage to the liver and many other organs in the body, but no one campaigns to ban it from convenience stores.

Alcohol, while not as dangerous in the long run as cigarettes is, has more immediate threats to any city, state or nation.

The rates of drunk driving accidents are astronomical but since prohibition, not one seems to care or notice that alcohol is stocked on shelves in convenience stores.

While cigarettes are being locked up in cabinets, cases of beer will remain on the shelves for the public to see.

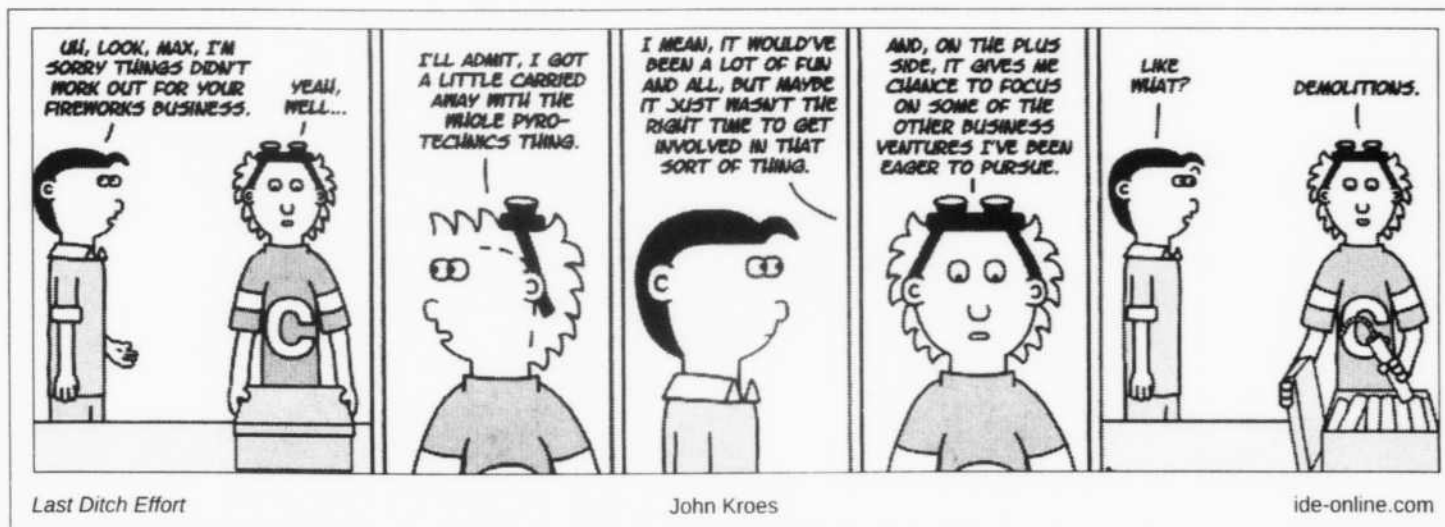
If people are easily influenced to smoke by looking at a pack of cigarettes then wouldn't they be just as easily persuaded to drink by seeing a case of beer?

Basically, their logic revolves around the premise that consumers must know the name of the brand they want before a clerk can sell them the actual product.

If people can't look at displays to remember the name then they will not be able to purchase any tobacco product whatsoever.

Tiffany Gibson is a sophomore journalism major and can be reached at slnews@mtsu.edu

Photo illustration by Andi Nave, Photography Editor, and Eric Shuff, Production Manager



Last Ditch Effort

John Kroes

ide-online.com

FACES IN THE CROWD

Do you think that if convenient stores were to hide tobacco products from customers that it would help eliminate smoking and why?



Maitkke
"No, I think that smoking is a personal choice and it can be addictive."

Jenae Matikke, nursing junior



Kimbrough
"Yeah I guess it would help. Maybe it would remind you if you didn't see it."

Candy Kimbrough, nursing junior



Burriss
"No, not at all. I don't think you smoke because you see cigarettes in a store."

Justin Burriss, mass communications graduate student

Letters to the Editor continued

this paper's staff, are quick to complain about CUS-TOMS. However, majority of students who come to the orientation program are satisfied with their first college experience, and that claim can be supported with the surveys all students fill out.

For those who come and complain, they probably do not realize how difficult college would be without it. At orientation, students learn about Pipeline, their majors, parking, financial aid, health services, involvement opportunities, and even Sidelines, just to name a few things.

There will always be students who attend CUS-TOMS that refuse to take advantage of the program and there will always be those who think it is "unnecessary," but CUS-TOMS is an extremely important part of MTSU and has been for many years.

And just to throw it out there, CUS-TOMS does charge people to come so it can cover most of its costs without putting a strain on the school's budget. So I doubt that it is breaking the bank by any means.

Tyler Henson

Alumni do not help the budget

The funding for education, especially higher education, is usually ruled by "Let George do it."

Let someone else do the work.

In my opinion the biggest dead beats are alumni. I am a graduate of Illinois Moo U. They were there when I needed them.

The Moo U. let me clean

toilets so that I could get an education. I admit that dollar-wise I am not a big contributor, but every time they ask, I send.

The top two items of my education funding wish list are:

Men should send their girlfriends or wives to college and there should be an education tax on every pop up advertisement that appears on someone's PC.

Terrence S. Kiobassa
Chicago, IL

Happy to hear campus is green

The article in the Customs issue of Sidelines titled "Campus bus modified to use Alternative fuel" was very intriguing.

With all of the discussion these days about becoming more environmentally conscious and producing less waste, I was very interested to hear about the steps the university is taking to cut down on their waste production.

I think that modifying a campus bus to run on biodiesel and cooking oil is a great idea.

In fact I think that the university should look into modifying more of their busses. While there may be an initial cost incurred by the university I think that the money saved on gas would be worth it.

Being such a large institution, I think that the university should really start looking into ways that they can become more environmentally responsible.

Because when you think about it even the smallest

things, when you take into account how large our university is, could really make a difference. And I think that this bus modification project is a perfect place to start.

Courtney Breitenbucher
Public Relations Junior

Racism is still an issue in the U.S.

I am writing in response to the article written by Faith Franklin in the April 24, 2008 edition of Sidelines titled "Education is the only way to combat today's racism."

I loved the perspective that Ms. Franklin brought to the article. I respect her opinions and the professional manner for which she portrayed her personal opinion.

Her solution to the racism problem in America is a solution that I have been screaming for many years. Being the majority and growing up in a small town in Tennessee, I was still able to see the racism and prejudice that burdens not just our region, but also the whole country today. Education is the only true answer for anything. Ignorance is the one true crime and villain in our society today.

Thanks for allowing the voices and opinions of the student body to be heard without restrictions and limitations that I have witnessed on some campus newspapers in the past. Congratulations and keep up the wonderful journalism.

Tonya Crook
Smithville, TN

Children's safety should be focus, not polygamy

For the past couple of months, I have been following the case at the Yearning for Zion Ranch in Eldorado, Texas religiously – slight pun intended.

My fascination with the Fundamental Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or the FLDS began years ago when I learned about Warren Jeffs, the leader and self-proclaimed prophet of the court.

When Jeffs was finally apprehended in August of 2006, I nearly threw a party to celebrate. And it felt like Christmas when Utah courts sentenced Jeffs for 10 years to life for his numerous crimes, including accomplice to rape, incest and molestation.

There are few people on the face of this planet that I would describe as purely evil – Warren Jeffs is one of them.

But the recent events with the YFZ Ranch have left me somewhat disturbed. I hate the unspeakable horrors the children, girls and boys, face as a part of the FLDS – rape, underage marriage, excommunication and abandonment. But it is equally despicable to see a mother's anguish at having her child forcefully taken away from her.

In a nutshell, the series of events began in March, after Texas Child Protective Services received a phone call from a 16-year-old girl claiming to have been sexually abused at the ranch. The phone call resulted in a raid of the compound on April 3.

The raid itself resulted in Child Protective Services removing over 500 women and children from the ranch over the next five days. On April 17, a Texas court ruled that the children would remain in state custody and were to be split between 16 various foster home and CPS facilities.

On May 22, an appellate court overturned the original decision, claiming that CPS had no right to remove the children from their homes. Seven days later, the Texas Supreme Court concurred with the appellate decision and ordered that all the children be returned.

"The child custody issues and other court proceedings



YEAH, WHATEVER
Andy Harper

do not impact the ongoing criminal investigation," said Jerry Strickland, a spokesman for the Texas attorney general's office in the Los Angeles Times. "The evidence collected from the polygamist compound and reviewed by investigators will dictate the direction of this investigation."

Thank goodness the Texas CPS doesn't give up so easily. The most frequently used argument about the entire situation is that this is somehow an attack on religious freedom or polygamy.

Seriously, who cares if someone chooses to be a polygamist for religious reasons? If having multiple spouses and a pack of children is your passion, then more power to you.

If a person can keep all of his or her wives or husbands happy and safe; if all the children are developing in a healthy, stable environment, then there is no reason that family should be judged because their views on familiar structure are different from the mainstream.

The problem isn't polygamy.

The problem is girls being forced into marriage and sexual relations at 14-years-old.

The problem is young men being disowned or run out of their communities because they are "competition" for the older men, who require more wives.

The problem is women being raped for the cause of procreation because some dirty, old man named Warren Jeffs declared that his libido-driven, middle-aged male followers need to sleep with a different woman every night.

The problem has escalated out of control.

"Let's say you're a 6-month-old girl, no evidence whatsoever of any abuse," said Mark Shurtleff, a Utah Attorney General, to the Salt Lake City Deseret News. "They're simply saying, 'You, in this culture, may grow up to be a child bride when you're 14. Therefore we're going to remove you now when you're 6 months old.' Or, 'You're a 6-month-old boy; 25, 30 years, 40 years from now you're going to be a predator, so we're going to take you away now.'"

Shurtleff disagreed with the removal of the women and children on a very good principle – thought crime. Despite the constant unease of a 1984-esc society, thankfully thoughts, at least in the United States, are not a crime.

However, premeditation and thought are two very different things. If the investigation turns up any evidence to suggest premeditated rape, as in the arranged marriage of a 12-year-old to a 22-year-old, the perpetrators better immediately end up behind bars.

This might result in another chaotic attempt to rescue women and children from the FLDS, a venture that, once again, might be fruitless.

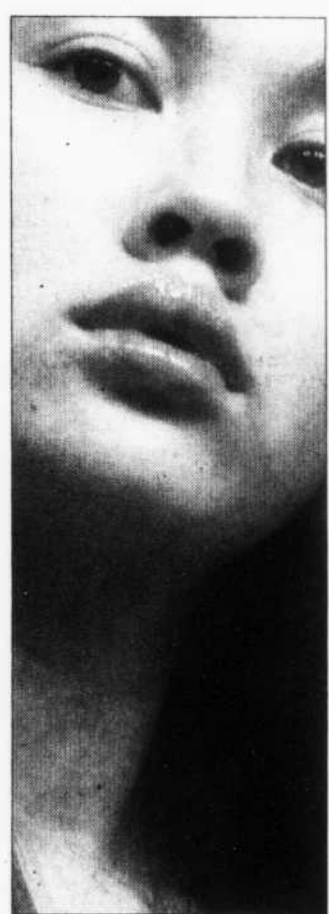
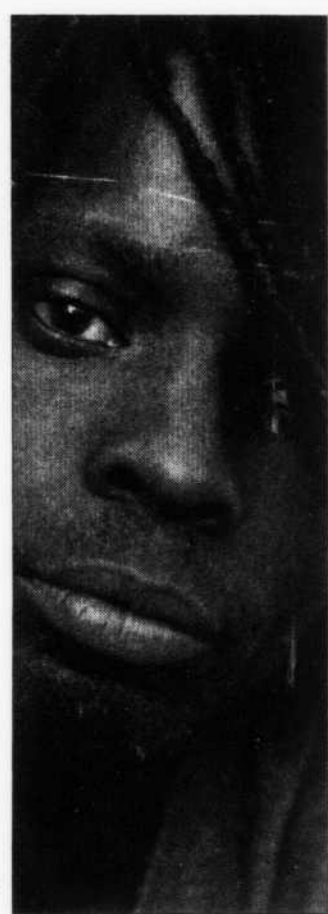
So the real question, the fact that has left me disturbed, is this: is it better to save a child's future based on circumstantial evidence of what might happen or honor the rights of the parents charged with the safety of that child?

Mark Shurtleff says no. Texas Child Protective Services says yes. Once again, the country is divided over the welfare of its youngest citizens – excuse the jab at the abortion issue.

The only conceivable possibility for solving the problem is to follow the red-taped, bureaucratic trail of case-by-case examination, investigation, prosecution and resolve. But by the time that happens, Warren Jeffs will have probably been released from his lifetime sentence and marrying his next child-bride.

Andy Harper is a senior journalism major and can be reached at sleditor@mtsu.edu

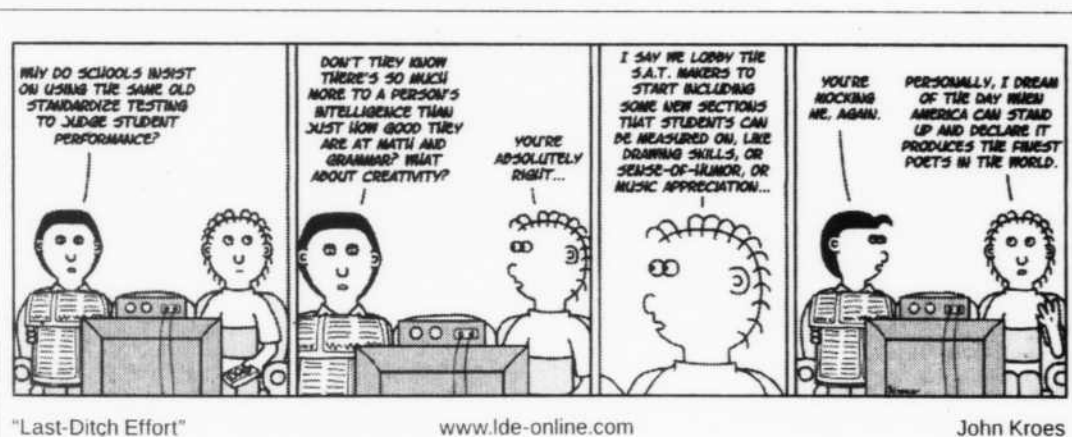
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MORE SESSIONS TO COME

SPORTS

Sun Belt Football Preview

Hilltoppers prepare for FBS, stadium refurbishment

By RICHARD LOWE
Sports Editor

This summer, Sidelines will be focusing on the Sun Belt Conference as the march towards college football season begins. We will preview every team's season as well as take a look at issues impacting the conference as a whole. This week, we take a look at Western Kentucky as they enter their last season before becoming a full member of the SBC and the Football Bowl Subdivision.

Seven years ago, Western Kentucky's football team made it to the apex of the former Division I-AA by winning the national championship. If Western Kentucky wants to become the national champion on the FBS level, then it starts this season. If last year was any indication, the Hilltoppers will be a team to look out for.

Although they are not eligible for postseason play this year, they can put themselves in a great position for next year's preseason polls by having a good showing in their

games.

The Hilltoppers only gained one victory over a Football Bowl Subdivision team, a 20-17 victory over MT, but lost to North Texas and Troy by a combined three points. This year, WKU will be facing five teams from the Sun Belt Conference while trying their hand against opponents from the Big Ten, SEC, MAC and ACC.

The Hilltoppers return 14 starters from last year's team. After using a two-quarterback system last fall, the one name that came out of spring practice was not David Wolke or K.J. Black. Sophomore Brandon Smith placed his name in the starting quarterback sweepstakes. The Hilltoppers lose wide receiver Curtis Hamilton but have the chance to develop young wide outs in Quinterrance Cooper, Jake Gaebler and Jessie Quinn.

David Elson is entering his fourth year as head coach for the Hilltoppers. He has the most victories of any coach in his first three years in WKU history. This season, he will be calling defensive plays



Photos Courtesy Faye Lash and WKU Media Relations, Photo Illustration by Eric Shuff, Production Manager

Western Kentucky University coach David Elson will be leading his team into the FBS era inside of their newly renovated stadium.

from the sidelines. He was the defensive coordinator for WKU in 2001 and 2002 and has been a member of the WKU football staff since the 1996 season.

Fans of Hilltopper football will be watching their home games in the newly renovated Houchens Industries-L.T.

Smith Stadium. The renovation has added a grandstand on the west side of the stadium. The grandstand has added approximately 5,000 seats along with concessions and restrooms. The football offices, locker rooms, a weight room and a training room will all be apart of the West grandstand. The first game inside of the stadium will be against Murray State on Sept. 20.

The final five games on their schedule will be against

June 18: Arkansas State and Troy Preview
June 25: Florida International and Louisiana-Lafayette Preview
July 2: Louisiana-Monroe and North Texas Preview
July 9: Florida Atlantic Preview
July 16: Middle Tennessee State Preview
July 23: The APR and the Bowls
July 30: The Future of the SBC

Sun Belt Conference opponents, starting with Florida Atlantic University, the reigning conference champions.

Overall, the Hilltoppers will be facing six teams that participated in bowl games

with two of those teams being champions of their conference (Virginia Tech and Florida Atlantic).

WKU open their season on Aug. 30 against the University of Indiana.

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Griffey hits home run No. 600 against Marlins Cincinnati Reds' outfielder becomes only active player in the 600 home run club

By CHARLIE MCCARTHY
Associated Press

Ken Griffey Jr. insisted he never dreamed of joining baseball's ultimate group of power hitters when he reached the majors 19 years ago.

"My father hit 152 home runs, and that's who I wanted to be like," said Griffey, who hit his 600th career homer Monday night to join Barry Bonds, Hank Aaron, Babe Ruth, Willie Mays and Sammy Sosa as the only players to do so.

Griffey connected off Mark Hendrickson in the first inning of the Cincinnati Reds' 9-4 victory over the Florida Marlins. The 38-year-old slugger hit a 3-1 pitch 413 feet into the right-field seats with Jerry Hairston on third and one out.

"I was just trying to get a pitch I could hit and be as patient as possible," Griffey said. "And I was fortunate enough to get a curveball I could drive."

Griffey started the season with 593 home runs despite numerous injuries in recent years — enough to make a lot of people wonder how many homers he could have had if he had stayed relatively healthy.

"No, I don't think about that," Reds manager Dusty

Baker said. "I appreciate where he is right now."

In the other NL games Monday, it was: Pittsburgh 5, Arizona 3 and San Francisco 3, Washington 2.

Paul Bako had his first career multihomer game — three-run and two-run shots — and Brandon Phillips added a solo homer in support of Edinson Volquez (9-2).

Griffey ended the game 1-for-4 with a strikeout and an intentional walk. He exited in the middle of the eighth.

Volquez gave up three runs, three hits, five walks and struck out five in six innings.

Hairston left the game in the middle of the first after suffering a fractured left thumb when stealing second.

Hendrickson (7-4) allowed six runs — five earned — and five hits in 2 1-3 innings. Mike Jacobs homered for the Marlins.

But the night belonged to Griffey.

"We saw 400 the other day with (Atlanta's) Chipper (Jones) and 600 today," Marlins left fielder Luis Gonzalez said. "It's not the side you want to be on."

Baker said Griffey told him on Sunday he would hit No. 600. Hairston said the slugger told him the same thing before Monday night's game.

"I say a lot things," Griffey,

said with a smile.

In the last year of his contract with Cincinnati, Griffey sounded like someone who isn't thinking of retirement yet.

"I enjoy baseball and as long as I can go out there and help a team win I'll do it," he said.

Griffey, whose previous homer came May 31, wasn't homered No. 600 happened away from home.

"Pretty much everybody knows my track record," said Griffey, who hit his 400th and 500th home runs on the road, too.

Among those in the dugout who greeted the slugger after his historic home run was Griffey's 14-year-old son, Trey.

"As a father, I'm more excited about what he does than what I do," Griffey said.

For people skeptical of that nonchalant attitude, Griffey explained he got it from his father, who played 19 seasons in the majors. Father and son were teammates in Seattle for two seasons.

"He just told me as a kid, 'Don't get too high, don't get too low — just be yourself,'" Griffey said. "I think that's the one thing I take pride of."

Now, he also can take pride in having 448 more home runs than Ken Sr.