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Comic breaks the mold of funny

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ONLINE

How do you cope with stress around the holidays and finals?

INSIDE: Janitors need to make more money

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Middle Tennessee State University

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

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SIDELINES

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Criminal justice fraternity wins honors

Seniors bring home 10 awards in firearms, corrections and more

By LaQunda Partee
Contributor

Delta Omicron Alpha, the criminal justice fraternity at MTSU, went to regional competition Nov. 15-18 and brought back 10 awards.

Seniors Kyle Evans, Robyn

Burns and Cameran Reed competed against more than 100 students from 13 states.

"The competition gave an opportunity for professionals to come together for a little fun," said Burns, president of Delta Omicron Alpha.

The competition was held in

Greenville, S.C. Students competed in events involving crime scenes, firearms and physical agility.

To compete, students had to have their own weapon, have studied a safety course and completed 70 credit hours.

Reed also won an all-expense-paid trip to the national competition in Cheyenne, Wyo., to be held March 17-23.

The awards were as follows:

Evans, 3rd place, police management, 2nd place, firearms team; Burns, 1st place, corrections, 2nd place, juvenile, 2nd place, firearms team; Reed, 1st place, overall academic, 2nd place, corrections, 2nd place, firearms team, 3rd place, juvenile, 3rd place, physical agility.

Delta Omicron Alpha is a professional fraternity for students who major or minor in criminal justice.

The organization provides an outlet for criminal justice majors to consult and meet professionals in the field.

Applicants must have a 2.5 GPA and no felonies on their records.

Dues are \$40 each academic year. ♦

School vouchers still debated

By Kelly Smith
Contributor

The issue of school vouchers may seem unimportant to most college students, but to students with children, it holds more significance.

For the past couple years, the implementation of voucher programs within the K-12 school system has been a hotly debated national issue.

A voucher is a document that may be used by parents to pay for their child to attend an out-of-district school, either private or public.

The voucher proposal offers about \$2,500 for parents to use toward either tuition for a private school or other accommodations, such as transportation, if the transfer is to a public school.

"Although the voucher system appeared very promising, the actual implementation of a voucher program would only reach a small percentage of the school-age children across the nation," said Dorothy Craig, assistant professor of educational leadership.

In addition, because the program offers \$2,500, many parents cannot afford to match the money needed to send their children to private schools.

Another problem with the voucher program is the lack of knowledge some parents have of other schools, creating difficulties in deciding where to move their children, Craig said.

Carla Jackson, an MTSU student and parent, said she feels parents who are proponents of the voucher program want the option of moving their children to schools that offer a better education and have better resources.

With the voucher program money, parents are at least given the freedom to choose, she added.

"I would appreciate a program that allows me to have a voice in where I send my child to school," Jackson said.

On the other hand, opponents of the voucher program argue that, at best, vouchers would help only a lucky few children, while keeping the rest in a school with depleted resources.

"(We) need to fix what problems are already in these schools, like better resources and meeting the needs of diversity," Craig said.

Cindy London, a Murfreesboro resident and mother of an 11-year-old, said she feels the voucher program would create segregation.

"When I was my son's age, we started bringing in children from different districts in order to create diversity," she said.

Hence, the voucher program would "bring back the segregation problems that schools have tried to eliminate," she added.

Congressman Bart Gordon, D-Murfreesboro, said he feels children are our most precious resource and a quality

See Vouchers, 3

Officers run for fallen sisters, brothers in New York City



Photos by Amy Jones | Staff

(Above) Volunteers and employees of MTSU Public Safety wait at the water table for runners and walkers during Thursday's Enduring Freedom Run.

(Right) Public Safety secretary Margie Hardin runs a lap to raise money for the families of the officers killed in New York City Sept. 11.

Money raised will benefit families of rescue workers

By Victoria Cumbow
Staff Writer

MTSU's police officers broke out their running shoes Thursday to raise money for the families of New York City relief workers who died as a result of the events of Sept. 11.

For the past few weeks, participants have been collecting money from sponsors for the Enduring Freedom Run.

A total of 10 police officers and department personnel participated in the event and ran or walked a total of 257 laps.

"We ran in hour shifts," said Officer Tony Taylor, who came up with the idea for the run.

"I ran the whole hour for a total of 38 laps. It was a little hard, but I just figured, if those officers can go out and give the ultimate sacrifice, then I can endure a little bit of pain."

"I was in the Gulf War and Somalia, so [the attacks] hit me pretty hard," he said.

"I felt I needed to do something. I felt that if this money

can help one person out, then we've done something."

All the money collected will go directly to a fund for the fallen officers' and port authority officials' families.

"We decided as an office that the money collected needed to go directly to the families of the officers killed," said Margie Hardin, secretary for Public Safety. Donations were made either through a flat donation or a donation per

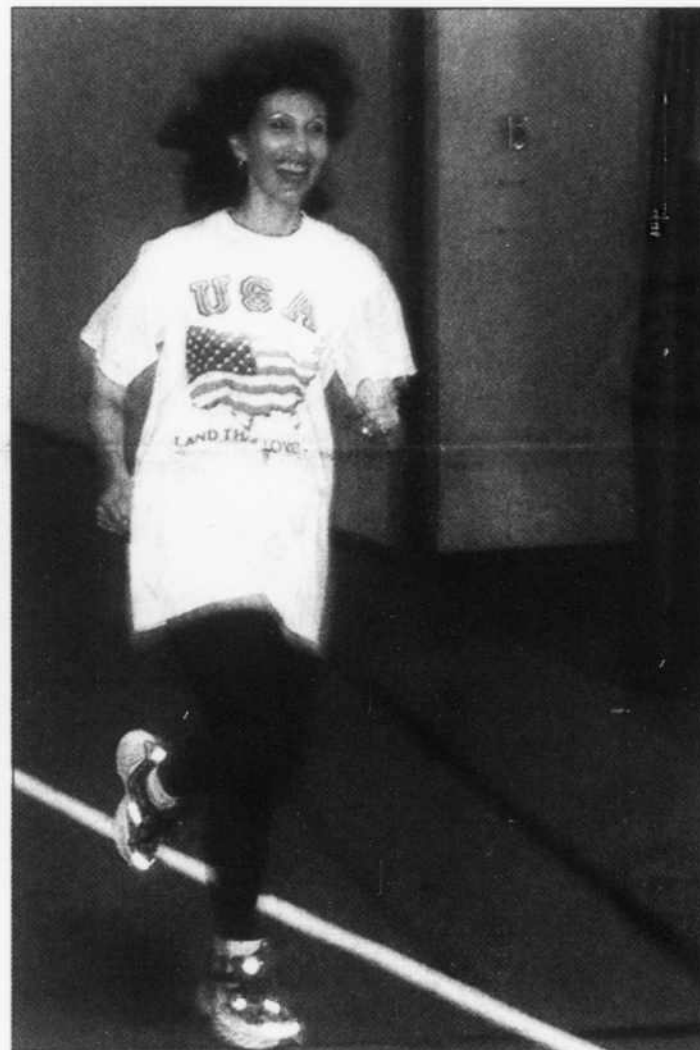
lap.

Chief Jack Drugmand admitted to being sore.

"I usually exercise roughly about three miles a day," he said, "but I almost doubled that on Thursday. I'm sore."

Although the total still is not known, the department hopes for at least \$1,000.

Cash or check donations can be made through Friday to MTSU Box 141. ♦



MTSU expands contract with Aramark to cover 800,000 square feet of campus

Custodians have been shifted to different buildings, not fired; recruitment, money cited as reasons

By Angelica Journagin
Staff Writer

Recruitment problems and the need to save money have prompted MTSU to expand Aramark's custodial contract.

Aramark, which has provided food services to MTSU for the past 30 years, now is responsible for providing custodial services to 800,000 of the 2.5 million square feet of MTSU's

campus.

This is an increase of 300,000 square feet that Aramark had been responsible for from a previous contract.

According to David Gray, MTSU director of facilities, it will cost MTSU 20 percent less to contract out to Aramark than it would if MTSU provided the services themselves.

Money was not the only reason for MTSU outsource part of

campus.

"We've had a very hard time trying to find level one custodians," Gray said. "Part of the problem is that we simply can't pay them enough."

Tennessee sets the pay scale for the custodians. Currently, entry level custodians make a little more than \$11,000 a year, which is about \$3,000 less than the national poverty line.

This year MTSU received \$280,000 from the state to make improvements and fix problems with the campus. Gray went on to say he is not expecting an increase of funds from the state in the near future.

"If the state isn't going to give us money to fix our problems then I don't think they are going to give us money for a raise" for custodial workers, Gray said.

Custodians who worked in the newly controlled Aramark buildings have been moved to another shift or different building.

Gray said he currently has no plans to fire workers.

This has not stopped custodians from worrying that they will lose their job.

"I feel, eventually, we will be without a job," said a custodial monitor at MTSU who pre-

ferred to stay anonymous. "[Aramark] is taking all of the buildings. Soon there will be no other place for us to go."

While many of the custodial workers are forced to have a second job, she said she had not heard of anyone planning to take a job with Aramark.

"We don't stay here for the money," she said. "We're state employees so we have good benefits. Aramark doesn't offer benefits."

Aramark could not be reached for comment. ♦

POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

From the left

Affirmative action needed for equality

By Angela White
Staff Columnist

Once upon a time in a land far far away, there existed a society where no one was ever judged, ridiculed, hated or discriminated against based on skin color. In this land of equal opportunity, everyone had the same chance to provide the best possible life for themselves and their loved ones. There was never talk of making up for past wrongs, for there was nothing in the society's history to repair. This fairy tale ain't America, folks.

The majority of powerful people in this country (white men) view anything that knocks them off their social pedestals as inherently unfair and therefore not equal. Equality to them is not a give-and-take process – the privileged are rarely willing to give up their favored status to help the disadvantaged. Thus arguments against equality-seeking programs like affirmative action arise, formulated with neither history nor fact in mind.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, white men hold 95 percent of senior management jobs. In 1993, minority men were half as likely as their white counterparts to be employed in managerial positions.

The Census Bureau reports that women earn approximately 73 percent of a man's salary for the same work. While that gap narrows as quality of education and employment increase, it never completely disappears. Furthermore, the discrepancy is most prevalent in lower-waged positions, which are more likely to be held by minority women. In 2000, black women earned a weekly median salary of \$458, while white men earned \$717. Hispanic women earned only \$373.

Equality has yet to be achieved, even with the use of affirmative action. Yet conservatives insist the need has passed for leveling the playing field. Some argue that affirmative action is not only harmful but insulting to minorities who neither need nor wish for such advantages. Reality, however, appears to contradict these claims.

The American Civil Liberties Union reports a study by The National Conference, an employment diversity organization, in which 63 percent of whites surveyed believed that African Americans already enjoy equal opportunity. Eighty percent of African Americans surveyed disagreed.

In addition, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People supports affirmative action – the organization protested the nominations of both John Ashcroft as attorney general and Linda Chavez as secretary of labor due to, among numerous other factors, their extensive anti-affirmative action records.

"We agree with the university that affirmative action is critical to enhancing educational opportunity," Kweisi Mfume, president of NAACP, said in March in response to the University of Michigan's appeal of a court decision striking down its affirmative action program.

Educational institutions use perhaps the most controversial affirmative action policies. Many universities require lower testing and grade standards for minorities in order to place a representative sample of the population into their incoming classes.

The question that should be asked is not why people who are considered "unworthy" and "incapable" of a reputable education because of their academic who are allowed into universities based solely on their race, but why these students make such low numbers in disproportionate percentages.

Standardized tests constantly face criticism due to their cultural biases that give middle- and upper-class white students an unfair advantage. In addition, well-funded public schools, which tend to be located in areas where property taxes are abundant (wealthy white neighborhoods), offer test preparation courses that are not offered to less-funded schools. Wealthy public schools also are more likely to offer advanced placement courses, which can both boost a student's GPA and make the student more desirable to universities during the admissions process.

See Upheaval, 3

From the right

Affirmative action hurts, not helps

By Jeremy Davis
Staff Columnist

Affirmative action may have put hundreds of minorities in American colleges and universities, but at what cost? Have the benefits of preferential treatment in admissions actually bettered the lives of minorities at large?

No – the idea of affirmative action may have been good 30 years ago, but it has no place in today's society.

A Gallup poll asked if preferential treatment of minorities was acceptable if it led to increased opportunities for historically neglected groups. More than 70 percent said no, and 66 percent of African Americans said no. If a majority of the people a certain policy is supposed to help do not want it, then why is it still on the books?

The problem is that programs that cater to one group are politically divisive and spawn emotion-driven, name-calling shouting matches. Democrats love their programs, but this dedication to outdated relics of public policy blinds them to the reality of current conditions. Their focus should be people – not their programs and careers.

A study at the University of California-Berkeley before affirmative action was banned in California shows just a hint of the problems affirmative action has created. The university admitted 317 African Americans with an average SAT score of 952 compared to the school's average of 1,200.

Can you imagine being accepted to a school you weren't prepared for just because of your race? Just more than 70 percent of those students flunked out of school. These students' self-esteem has been permanently damaged, and their academic record is forever tainted. This could have been avoided if the university had denied them entry and the students had gone on to a university more to their academic abilities.

The best way to avoid this is to simply take the race question off the application. A colorblind society is what we are all striving for. But until race questions are taken off all applications for public universities, federal grants and loans and jobs, we are still judging people by the color of their skin instead of the content of their character.

Many universities lower the standards for minorities in an effort to raise diversity in their classrooms. This is the most insulting thing anyone could do to minorities. The message these schools are sending to minorities is: "You're not ever going to meet our standards, so we're going to lower the bar for you." These administrators don't think minorities can make the grade.

Every minority's response should be a dignified middle finger and a smile. During the Berlin Olympics in Nazi Germany, Jesse Owens did not get a head start. He went out there and beat the Nazis at their own game by their rules on their turf. This example of outperforming should be the model for the civil rights struggles of today.

Liberal Democrats think they can solve racial problems through condescending speeches and government handouts. All this does is make minorities dependent on them for privileges, which in turn increases the power of liberal politicians.

Do you honestly believe 93 percent of African Americans are liberals? That is the percentage of African Americans who voted for Al Gore. Even though Bush's issues of school choice, faith-based initiatives and Social Security reform poll incredibly well with African Americans, hardly any of them voted for him.

The problem is programs like affirmative action create dependency. Dependency takes away dignity. Dignity and vision are the keys to progress.

It is time civil rights leaders renew the fight for individual empowerment instead of calling Republicans bigots and defending condescending liberals.

Diversity is not achieved by creating a colorful classroom. It is achieved by surrounding yourself with colorful minds. ♦

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Upheaval: Drops in minority college admission leads to 'two-tier' educational system

Continued from 2

In 1996, the U.S. Court of Appeals struck down the University of Texas' affirmative action policy in Hopwood vs. University of Texas School of Law, resulting in an 88 percent drop in African American students admitted and a 64 percent drop in Latino admissions in the first year alone. Affirmative action also took a hit with

California's Proposition 209, which resulted in a 72 percent drop in African-American admissions and a 35 percent drop in Latino admissions to Berkley and UCLA.

Such drastic drops are leading to the further creation of "two-tier" educational systems. Students who can make the numbers are admitted to more prestigious state institutions, while minorities who are unable

to compete due to the quality of their "equal" education are forced to attend universities that are "better suited" for their "academic abilities." Thus universities become racially segregated, with those housing minority students offering a poorer quality of education as well as fewer career prospects. Sound familiar?

Affirmative action is not about quotas. In fact, quotas are

illegal. Affirmative action allows race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and disability to be considered in the creation of diverse educational and employment environments.

Conservatives hardly complain when preferences are shown for children of alumni, family legacy, veteran status or blood relation to management. One's geographic region is even used as a factor in the admis-

sions procedures of some universities. Many factors besides numbers are used to determine who is admitted or hired.

Affirmative action not only helps to make up for historical atrocities but also provides for an interesting and diverse environment that better facilitates both the learning and labor processes.

Conservatives do not expect minorities to succeed by per-

forming at the same level as they. Instead, they want to "raise the bar," not to the height of their own, but higher. Minorities must prove themselves to conservatives in order to be considered worthy, despite the poor circumstances they may have faced. The privileged's abilities, however, are assumed to exist without such tests. Perhaps this is why minorities vote the way they do. ♦

Vouchers: Gordon says U.S. should improve education

Continued from 1

education is critical to meeting the challenges of today's increasingly competitive world. However, we should not take resources from our public schools in the process, he insisted.

"(The taking of resources from public schools) is why I oppose school vouchers," he said.

Gordon said he believes that when organizations accept money from the government, they open themselves to government regulation, which is the reason many parents leave the public school system.

"Regulation could be in the form of accreditation of schools and teachers, national standards and curriculum," he added.

Consequently, Gordon said, the nation needs to spend time and public tax dollars on improving the education system, and school vouchers would only divert America's already limited resources away from schools that are suffering, and in some cases, failing.

Only three states, Wisconsin, Florida and Ohio, currently use the voucher system, but those states remain tangled in court challenges.

Tennessee currently has not taken a side on the issue. ♦

PARKING LOT CLOSING FOR SPECIAL EVENT DECEMBER 4



On Tuesday, December 4, 2001, the parking lot located at the intersection of Blue Raider Drive and Baird Lane (across from Project HELP) will be closed from 12:00 noon to 9:30 p.m. for all vehicles due to a special event for the opening of the new Center for Dyslexia.

All vehicles that are parked in this lot after 12:00 noon will be towed at the owner's expense.

Suggested areas for student parking are the designated Green Permit Parking area close to Development House and St. Mark's UM Church (located off Main Street), the gravel lot located close to the Recreation Center, and the Tennessee Livestock Center off Greenland Drive.

The Raider Xpress operates from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Mon. - Thurs., and from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Friday to transport students, faculty, staff, and visitors throughout the campus.

For questions, please contact Parking and Transportation Services at 898-2850. Your cooperation regarding this lot closing is appreciated.

MTSU Crime Stoppers is offering cash rewards for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons involved in the following crimes:

Four Peck Hall snack food vending machines were vandalized sometime between 10:15 p.m. Nov. 22 and 6:55 p.m. Saturday Nov. 24. In each case, food was removed from the bottom two rows of the machine. The machine on the east side of the building had its glass broken out. The same four machines also were burglarized sometime between 7 p.m. Oct. 19 and 7 p.m. Oct. 20. Food was removed from the bottom two rows that time as well. If your information leads to an arrest, you will be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$1,000.

At approximately 1:30 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 17, part of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon homecoming float topper, which was next to the SAE dumpster, was set on fire. The wood fencing surrounding the dumpster also was damaged by the fire. Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the person or persons responsible for this crime.

Computer equipment, books, software and furniture were taken from the Midgett Business Building sometime between 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 21, and 8 a.m. Monday, Nov. 26. Some of the items stolen include a microwave, a Macintosh G-4 computer and a Power Macintosh 6500 computer. Crime Stoppers is offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons responsible for this crime.

On Tuesday, Nov. 27 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., a green cart was stolen from the bed of a 2000 Chevrolet pickup truck parked behind Smith Hall. The cart has "Simplex" printed on the side. Crime Stoppers is offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information that leads to the arrest of the person or persons responsible for this crime.

A 1993 two-door red Jeep Wrangler parked in the Baird Lane parking lot was broken into sometime between 11 p.m. Nov. 26 and 1:45 p.m. the next day. After breaking the driver's side window, the thieves removed the stereo from the dashboard. However, the stereo was left behind, leading officials to believe the thieves were scared off. Crime Stoppers is offering up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the responsible parties.

Contact MTSU Crime Stoppers at 893-7867 (STOP) between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

This is my brother Omar.

He had a hole in his tummy.

A bullet hit him.

I saw red grass.

A gun was in the garage.

I didn't mean to shoot daddy's gun.

I didn't mean to shoot daddy's gun.



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Editorial

Janitors need to make more money

Recently, MTSU announced that Aramark, which provides dining and limited janitorial services for the university, will expand its janitorial service to include 800,000 square feet of the 2.5 million on campus.

David Gray, MTSU's director of facilities, said the university will save 20 percent by contracting custodial work to Aramark.

Before one starts espousing on the wonders of capitalism, however, it should be noted that janitors at MTSU start at a state-mandated pay rate of \$11,000 a year, which is \$3,000 below the federally established and generally accepted poverty line.

This pay rate is simply not enough for the work these people do.

Custodians clean up after thousands of students, faculty, staff and visitors every day. They deal with slobos who leave trash and various bodily excretions on the floor and various "smells" that linger in certain campus buildings.

In an institution of higher learning, where the emphasis is on acquiring knowledge and money, why are the people who keep the university working in a clean, sanitary fashion paid as if their work is meaningless?

All of us realize the tight financial situation our state and, in turn, our university, is in, but is there money left to be saved? Where can 20 percent be cut from a budget that barely satisfies federal regulations?

By setting the pay at such a low level, custodian turnover is very high. Recruitment was cited as a reason for expanding privatization.

While the state does provide a high level of benefits, one cannot charge groceries to their dental insurance policy.

If the state wishes to display compassion and compete with the private job market (as well as other states), it should pay its hardest workers what they are worth. ♦

Correction

In the Nov. 29 issue of *Sidelines*, Stephanie Saujon was not given credit for writing "An exhibit of life." *Sidelines* regrets the error.

SIDELINES

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The originality crisis of the Pepsi generation

Banging on My Drum

Cody De Vos
Staff Columnist



Every so often, I sit down to write the Great American Novel. As a rule, I get about a paragraph into my masterpiece before I realize that everything I'm preparing to say has been said before, and more eloquently at that.

The good news: Our generation has been more exposed to, and had more access to, books, movies, television and music than many of our parents.

The bad news: We seem to be running on borrowed emotions, looking at our memories through cinematic lenses and littering every earnest conversation with pop culture similes.

Too often, the best guide we have for expressing our feelings or making decisions is what we've seen in the movies or read in a book.

For example: "Since I got to college, the spirit of Holden Caulfield has almost constantly been with me." However true, this statement poses a double quandary — are my feelings of dissatisfaction with all the "phony" people I've met one hundred percent genuine, or are they spiced with sentiments I picked up from *The Catcher in the Rye*? And what motivation should I have for committing these youthful longings to paper when J.D. Salinger mastered the art long before I was even born?

Mike Dirnt of Green Day once said he got all his religious beliefs from *Star Wars*. When asked about my own religious beliefs, the best way I know how to

respond is to prepare a statement peppered with quotes from various books, movies and interviews.

As legitimate and personal as my own beliefs are to me, I am painfully aware that every nagging question I have has already been asked, and every conclusion I arrive at has already been written by somebody somewhere, and that I am incapable of anything more than agreeing or disagreeing with them.

Post Gen-X media-ads such as quasi-intellectuals added a self to a song for every occasion, a book for every theme and a movie allusion for every experience. My ideal of human perfection is Dostoevsky's Prince Myshkin. My AOL screen name is the title of a Misfits song. My best friend and I are "like Samwise and Frodo," and my farewell to a friend who

recently moved overseas included lyrics from Bob Dylan's "Forever Young."

And this crippling sense that I can never feel a sensation that hasn't already been felt for me? The last time I mentioned it to someone, they asked me if I'd read Dave Eggers' *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*. The entire novel addresses what I chose to write this article about. Dammit.

I take a certain measure of comfort in knowing that mankind is universally facing the same questions and emotions that I am, and art is a creative reflection of life. I just wish I could face life with less art under my belt.

I've recently entertained the notion that if I were to stop reading books and watching movies, I'd acquire an untainted, or at least seemingly original, life experience. But even then, if I were to ever try to

write an autobiography, I'd stumble into the pratfalls of unoriginality. Love, hate, addiction, longing, spiritual searching ... they've all been covered more than adequately for me.

After a grieving soldier ritualistically slaughters a baby water buffalo in Tim O'Brien's *How to Tell a True War Story*, one soldier says to another, "Well, that's Nam. ... Over here, man, every sin's real fresh and original."

While I don't want to go to Vietnam or any other war zone, I'm jealous of anybody who's found a place where a sin, a virtue, a passion or a vice can be fresh and original. I myself am still looking.

Even my despair-ridden conclusion borrows a quote from George A. Romero's zombie movie classic, *Dawn of the Dead*: "It's all done, man. It's all been done." ♦

The phallacy of artistic expression

By Gabriel Carerra
The Informer (U.
Hartford)

U-WIRE — On Veterans Day weekend, Robert Rowan was ticketed for "misdemeanor criminal tampering" after going into the Boulder Public Library in Colorado and taking 21 ceramic penises, which were part of a public art display and placing them in the garbage. The faux severed penises were strung on a clothesline under the title "Hanging 'Em Out to Dry."

Later that day he phoned a local radio station and confessed his crime. Rowan was troubled that his 5-year-old daughter might see what he calls an "anti-male" and "pornographic" exhibit while using the public library. Rowan left a note stating, "El Dildo Bandito was here" and hung an American flag in their place.

The Boulder library is the same one that recently refused to display a 10-foot American flag in its

entrance in the wake of Sept. 11 because some patrons might be "offended."

A smaller flag was eventually draped in the wake of controversy.

The penises were hung at the Boulder library to support the Boulder County Safe House, a woman's domestic violence center. The library labels Rowan's actions as "intolerance" and "censorship," but Rowan states that this constitutes political expression being hosted at taxpayers' expense.

"If they had put this up at a private art gallery, that would have been fine. That way people could pay and see this stuff," Rowan said. "In a private gallery, the exhibit would be a freedom of speech issue rather than the abuse and improper use of tax dollars to promote a political view."

Many in the community believe the main problem is that a public institution is supporting one side of a hot political debate and disenfranchising the

other. Rowan believes the art exhibit and the Boulder County Safehouse do not merely educate the public about domestic violence; they are advancing an anti-male agenda.

Rowan cited that according to the U.S. Department of Justice's 1998 National Violence Against Women Survey, about 1.5 million women are abused by an intimate partner every year. However, a flood of new research indicates that the rates of domestic violence for men and women are roughly equal and suggests that the incidence of battered "husbands" is almost certainly under-reported due to the social stigma attached to male victims of domestic violence.

Yet the library's domestic violence exhibit portrays men as the perpetrators — never the victims. The display included a sign reading "Abuse by husbands and partners was ... the leading cause of injuries to women." Another sign at the exhibit

read, "In approximately 60 percent of the cases where the woman is being abused, so are the children."

Rowan added that nowhere is it stated that women commit most of the child abuse and child murders in America.

Susanne Walker is the artist who created the display and said she cannot understand why the dissenters are against her display. She is willing to meet with the dissenters to answer their objections.

Rowan said he felt he could not "debate [penises] hanging in the public library."

The editor of *feminist.com*, Wendy McElroy, defends Rowan's civil disobedience. She writes that the "Hanging 'Em Out to Dry" exhibit provides the same sort of "awareness" as does an a priori indictment of all boys as wife beaters.

It is hate speech directed at a category of human beings.

If you doubt this, imagine a display of black

penises strung up. It would be condemned as racist in an instant. Why is it less hate speech to expand the category from "black men" to "all men?"

It is not merely that victimized men are being ignored. Hatred is directed toward all men as a result of the brutality of a statistical few.

Rowan said he intends to make a test case of this incident, and he has the eager support of a burgeoning men's movement. The two newest chat rooms at the prominent Web site www.mensactivism.org have revolved around "El Dildo Bandito" and how best to assist him. The participants draw a hard line between public-supported hate speech and privately funded opinion.

Tax-funded hatred must be eliminated; private expression must be tolerated under the First Amendment.

The penises are currently in police custody, but if hung again, Rowan said he vows to take them down. ♦

Civil liberties must be preserved at all cost

By Alissa Miller
Campus Times (U.
Rochester)

U-WIRE — *Inter arma silent leges*. This ancient phrase presents the frighteningly accurate attitude of much of the U.S. government right now towards issues of civil liberty, "In times of war the law is silent."

Stop and think about this for a moment.

We are fighting a war to help bring freedom to the people of Afghanistan, and then possibly to other people oppressed by terrorism. Supporting governments. Officials are praising the

freedom of Muslim women to now go beyond the burkah if they chose.

We are America, the land of the free, and it is our solemn duty to proselytize to the world.

If our culture and our freedom are so precious to us that we protect them halfway around the world in foreign countries with the lives of our soldiers, why is our government not protecting those same rights here?

George Bush was sworn to protect the Constitution as the supreme law of the land. His executive order to try all non-citizens accused of terrorist activi-

ties in secret military tribunals, however, is a far cry from preserving the Constitution. It is directly opposing the established interpretation.

If the executive order was the only violation of civil liberties, the Constitutional safeguards would protect the public. Unfortunately, the executive is not the only branch that has failed to think before acting.

Congressmen have noted that the passing of the anti-terrorism and relief USAPATRIOT bill is a mockery of the rules of the institution. The sacred traditions of debate and

deliberation were blatantly ignored, in exchange for a quick-tempored and passionate decision.

Granted, Congress is supposed to reflect the wishes of the public, and there is no doubt that a majority of the public is screaming for a swift and decisive reaction to the epidemic of terrorism within U.S. borders.

However, the reason why the Constitution is not a proponent of direct democracy is to prevent this type of public passion from ruling when it is against the public's better interest.

With the executive and

legislative branches both acting in haste, the only brakes left on the way down the slippery slope are the Supreme Court and the people. With Chief Justice William Rehnquist at the helm, it is unlikely that the unconstitutionality of any government action will ever be even brought to judgment during a time of war.

I deeply hope, in the face of a government that is usurping its responsibilities to freedom, that the people realize how vital it is that we protect our liberties not only on distant continents, but right here at home. ♦

Letter to the Editor

Per-hour tuition result of tax loophole

To the Editor:

Well, it looks like we get to pay the price again for our legislature's refusal to solve the state's budget crisis. Now those of us who work hard and take a decent load of hours will have to pay more, since the Tennessee Board of Regents will start charging us by the hour. Of course, this is because of our state's inability to solve its budget problem. The problem is the same legislature's who oppose an income tax are giving their big money donors tax breaks they should not get.

The problem comes with the state's LLC exemptions. These exemptions are suppose to go to small businesses, so they do not have to pay the business taxes the state charges. But big corporations like Kroger, Wal-Mart and others are using them. The same legislatures that oppose an income tax are against closing this loophole.

The state should close these exemptions to make sure higher education does not suffer further.

Thomas Hoffman

Did your public high school use shady zoning practices and illegal recruiting to build a football dynasty? Tell us.
slopinio@mtsu.edu

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FEATURES

6 ♦ SIDELINES

Monday, December 3, 2001

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

MTSU COMIC BREAKS THE MOLD OF FUNNY

From comedian to recording artist, Carla Rhodes gains fame and success with her diverse talents



Rhodes poses with her foam-like puppet that resembles the famous rock 'n' roller Mick Jagger.

By Alicia Pickett
Staff Writer

Eccentric, red-headed and world famous, MTSU sophomore Carla Rhodes promotes a brasher style of humor and now has a CD



to prove it.

"(My songs) just pop into my head," Rhodes says.

"Juicy and white/ Chicken oh I love you/ chicken oh I eat you/... cluck, Cluck, CLUCK!!" is the chorus of one of Rhodes' insanity-induced songs, fashionably labeled "Chicken" for obvious reasons.

A stand-up comedian and ventriloquist, 19-year-old Rhodes could easily be labeled a pro in the comedy business.

She has been profiled in numerous London newspapers, profiled in the *New York Times* and documented in her own *TLC* presentation.

By using foam-like puppets that have uncanny resemblances to rockers David Bowie, Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, Rhodes has taken her comedy act on the road, from Nashville's hot spots to London's comedy pubs.

"I think the crowd likes (my act) because it's so different, (because) I'm so different," Rhodes comments.

Now, with fame and success in the United States and abroad, she has decided to put some of her comical stunts on record.

"I Love Animals" is about eating your pets," Rhodes says.

Beginning at age nine, Rhodes' obsession for a "different sort of wit" was ignited by comic geniuses such as Sherrie Lewis, Lamb Chop and the Marx Brothers.

"Their (joke) timing was so clever," she comments.

Rhodes' brilliant humor and curious drive to try new things in her act is displayed on her album.

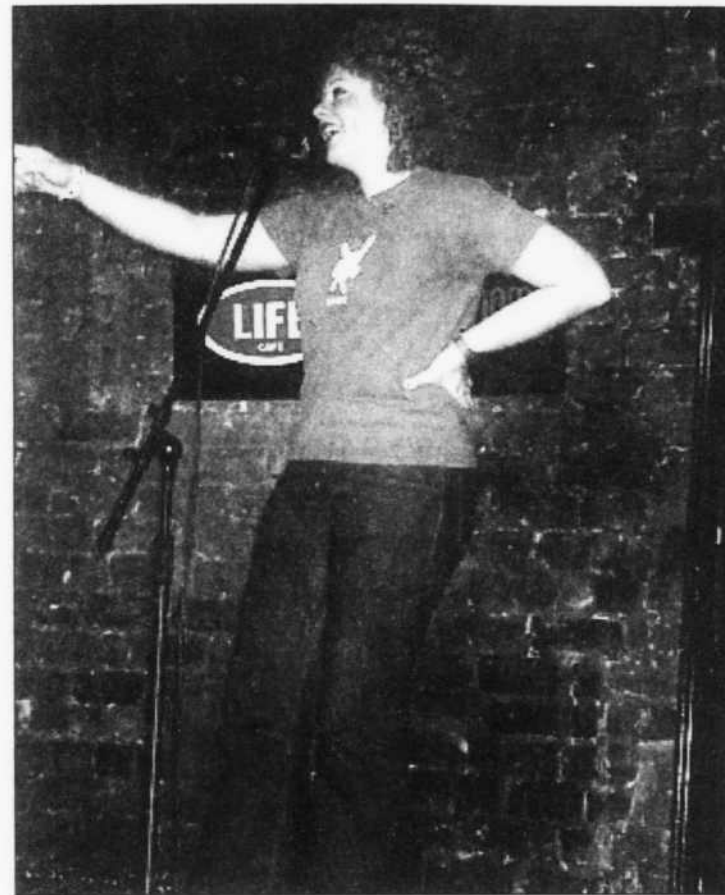
"There's something inside of me that just won't let me quit," Rhodes says.

The first track off Rhodes' self-titled *Volume Six* album is too



(Above) Carla Rhodes has recently released her latest album titled *Carla Golden Hits Volume 6*.

(Right) On stage, Rhodes performs with one of her rock star puppets, Keith Richards.



Rhodes performs in a pub in Liverpool, England.

nutty for words, which makes it so appealing to the younger, hipper generation of college kids.

"I wrote ('I Love Animals') while going down I-24," Rhodes says.

Her zany comedy of turning the normalities of life into gut-busting humor is edgy enough for the Bob and Tom syndicated radio show to give it tough ratings.

"(The Bob and Tom Show said) my CD was too odd and twisted," Rhodes says.

"Odd and twisted" adjectives are compliments to this wild and crazy comedian.

"I Love Animals" was number two on Dr. Demento's National Syndicated Radio (Show)," Rhodes says.

Songs ranging from "Scrubbing Bubbles," which makes a clever play on sniffing household products for fun, to "Lust For Lint," which speaks for itself, are daring techniques of a different sort as an approach to comedy. Too risqué in some opinions, *Volume Six* takes a common place discussion and pulls it through the ringer until it oozes funny.

Even though this home-grown Indiana red-headed comedian has seen the world and played most of its gigs, Rhodes' humility would astound most people.

"Anybody can do it," Rhodes says.

Having a tenacious attitude that just won't stop got her a record deal by just walking in the door.

"I went in to the studio, and he found out about my act of stand-up comedy and ventriloquism. I played him a few songs," Rhodes says.

She says that inspiring entertainers will get a lot of rejection in this business, but when someone recognizes their work just once, it's all worth it.

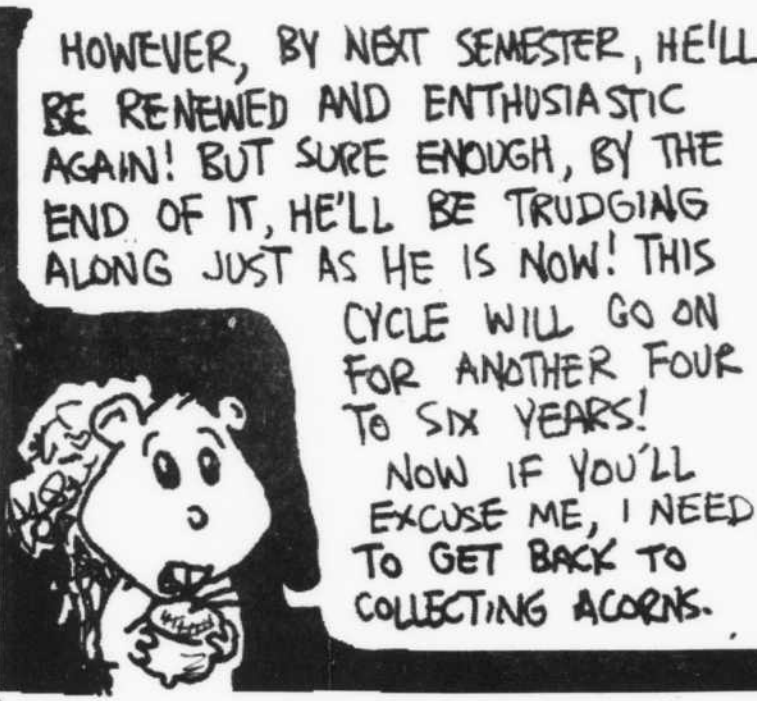
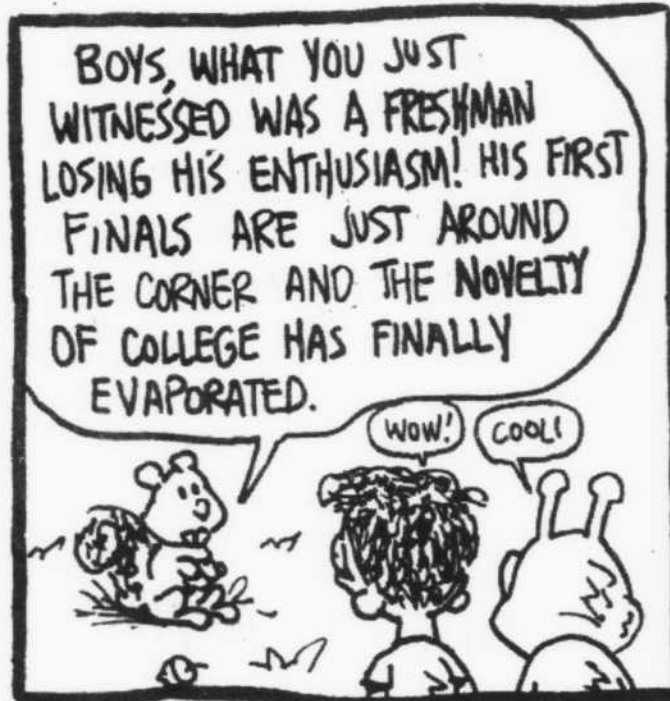
Rhodes' *Volume Six* CD can be purchased for \$10 at www.carlarhodes.net.



by Lucas Antoniak



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Dear Annie: No excuse for violence

Dear Annie,

My boyfriend just bought a new CD burner and some new clothes. His roommate's dog destroyed all of it. My boyfriend works really hard for his money, so he was really pissed all his stuff was ruined. And he beat the dog ... bad. Like the dog isn't walking right anymore. The dog isn't very big either - he probably weighs about 40 pounds. His roommate is out of town and nobody has taken the dog to the vet yet. Anyway, this really frightened me that he could lose his temper like this. He has never lost his temper around me or anything, so it was a complete shock. But now I am starting to wonder that, if he can viciously beat a dog, could I make him angry enough to beat me? See, I don't have to work, and he said I would understand if I had worked for that money and some dog had destroyed my stuff. I just don't know what to think about all of this. We've been going out for five months and we haven't had any big problems until now. Do you think this is a sign? What should I do? - Scared

Dear Scared,

I think this is a big red stop sign.

This is a sign of your boyfriend's true character. I am an animal lover. I have two dogs of my own, so your question really hit me in the heart. It's wrong for someone to beat a defenseless dog. It probably didn't even know the reason for being beaten. Sure, he has a right to be mad. But I would think he would get mad at his roommate and make him pay to replace his stuff. What purpose did it serve to beat the dog? It didn't bring his stuff back.

You have a right to be concerned. Sometimes we see a "red flag" in our relationships, and we know something just doesn't sit right deep inside. We can choose to address our feelings or talk ourselves out of how we really feel. Don't let the lame excuse: "You don't understand because you don't know the value of a dollar," cancel out your true feelings. While we are on the subject ... what an awful thing to say to someone. What is his problem? Could he be jealous that you don't have to work? There is no excuse for violence.

I believe you know what you should do. Just because you haven't had any problems until now doesn't mean this event should be dismissed. ♦

Please send your questions to DearMtsuAnnie@aol.com

Dance Club brings diversity to the stage

By Jessie Miraldi
Staff Writer

Enlarged shadows danced on the walls of Tucker Theatre this weekend, giving the audience the feeling that it was surrounded by dancers, making it a part of the show.

Friday and Saturday night, the MTSU Performing Arts Company performed its dance recital, which they host every semester. The show featured 22 dances, all of which differed in style.

The opening number was "P.J.'s to Pop Stars," which featured the song "A.M. to P.M.," by Christina Millian. The dancers consisted of two groups of people in P.J.'s and club clothes and was a hip-hop style.

The show also contained slower lyrical numbers, such as "Dancing in the Rain," which featured a group of dancers twirling with purple sashes to Prince's "Purple Rain."

Funny, lighthearted dances were also a big part of the recital.

One dance, "The Big Comfy Robot Couch," featured performers in aluminum foil frolicking about the stage like robots.

The colorful dance piece, "Rasta Flavor," included a mix of different reggae and rasta

beats. Another lighthearted dance was the impressive all-guy number "Mixed Flavors," which was a group of break-dancers all competing for the most impressive moves. This received a standing ovation at the end.

The show opened and closed with a company number, which consisted of all the members of MTSU's Dance Club.

A majority of the performers in the recital are members of the Dance Club, which meets every Tuesday night in the Murphy Center.

"Dance Club is a place to go, where no matter how you feel, you can dance it," said Dance Club member Amanda Virgillito. "If you're happy, sad or angry, just dance it."

The members of Dance Club come from all different backgrounds and have different levels of experience. Some have no traditional dance background while others have a lot.

"I danced all through middle and high school," Virgillito said, "but I've never been as passionate about dance as I am now."

Melissa Shahgoli, a member of Dance Club for three semesters now, has been dancing her whole life, but she has never taken formal dance classes.

"Dance Club is my second home," she said.

Shahgoli was one of the choreographers for the dance titled "How Ya Luv That," featuring hip-hop music from Daryl Jay and Missy Elliot.

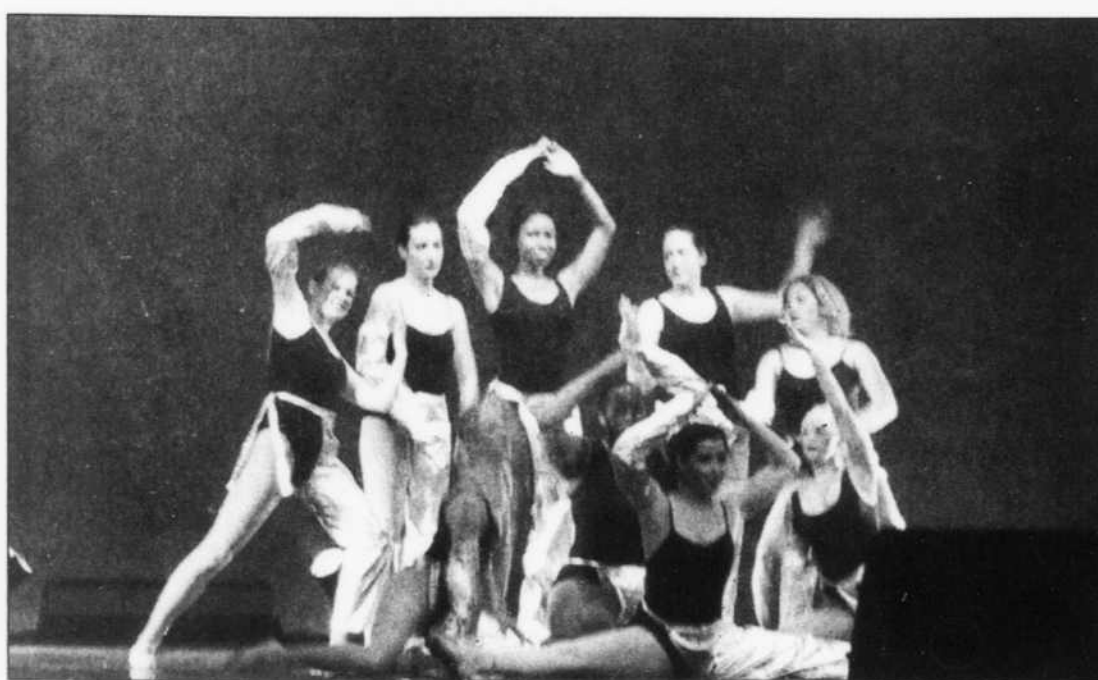
"It was hard at first because you have to come up with moves that nobody else has," she said, "but we got it together."

Freshman Melissa Oakey is a new member of Dance Club this semester. "A friend of mine was choreographing a dance and asked me to come to Dance Club, and I got hooked," she said. Oakey was in five different dances for the show, each containing a different style. "I've always liked to do a variety of dances," she said.

"All of the members of Dance Club are so diverse in their educational goals and their lives," said Angela Armstrong, faculty coordinator of Dance Club. "Dance Club is an important part of them, and you can see it when they perform."

The members of Dance Club worked very hard on the show, themed "United We Dance."

"We use dance as an outlet," said Virgillito. "Despite all that is happening in our country and all of the diversity amongst ourselves, we pull together and we dance." ♦



Photos by Charlene Callier | Staff

(Above) Students perform "Ballet in Three Parts," which was choreographed by Anne Colle and dancers, during this weekend's recital. (Below) Angela Armstrong, director of the MTSU Performing Arts Company, talks with students on final questions and instructions behind the stage at Tucker Theatre before their performance



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4:00pm KUC 126

Photo by
Amy Jones
Staff

John
Humphrey
ponders
whether
to take
on the
IUPUI
defender
with the
dribble
or to
take
the
jump
shot.



Blue Raiders lose game at Radford

Staff Reports

The Middle Tennessee men's basketball team lost to Radford 72-53 Saturday afternoon in Radford, Va., to drop its record to 3-2.

The Blue Raiders fell behind early in the game, trailing by 9 with 8:09 left in the first half. MT cut the lead to 3. RU pushed its lead to 33-23 at the half.

MT came out of the locker room and cut the lead to 8 on

two William Pippen free throws at 18:32. RU used the next three minutes to increase its lead to 15 and take the win.

The Blue Raiders shot 32.8 percent from the field for the game. MT was 4-of-16 from three-point range.

"We turned the ball over some, but that's not the issue here," head coach Randy Wiel said. "We're sputtering on offense, and we need to get out of it. We need to have a combi-

nation of the inside and outside game and right now both parts are sputtering."

Tommy Gunn led the Blue Raider offense with 12 points. Gunn has scored in double figures in six straight games.

Iiro Tenngren set a career high with 12 rebounds. Tenngren is the first Blue Raider to reach double figures in rebounds this season.

Andrey Savtchenko led four Highlanders in double figures

with a game-high 19 points and 11 rebounds. Raymond Arrington finished with 14 points. Correy Watkins added 11 points, 9 rebounds and 3 steals. Mike Hornbuckle had 10 points.

MT's road losing streak is now at 12 games.

The Blue Raiders will return to Murphy Center tomorrow night for a 7 p.m. tipoff against Rice. ♦

Lady Raiders score upset over Ole Miss

Almost perfect free-throw shooting leads to victory

Staff Reports

Jamie Thomatis and Joanne Aluka combined for 47 points and 15 rebounds as the Middle Tennessee women's basketball team beat Ole Miss 74-64 Saturday afternoon at Murphy Center.

The Lady Rebels (4-2) built up a 13-point lead with 50 percent shooting at the 12:00 mark in the first half.

The Lady Raiders (3-2) went on a 17-2 run over the next seven minutes to take a 2-point lead with just under five minutes left in the half.

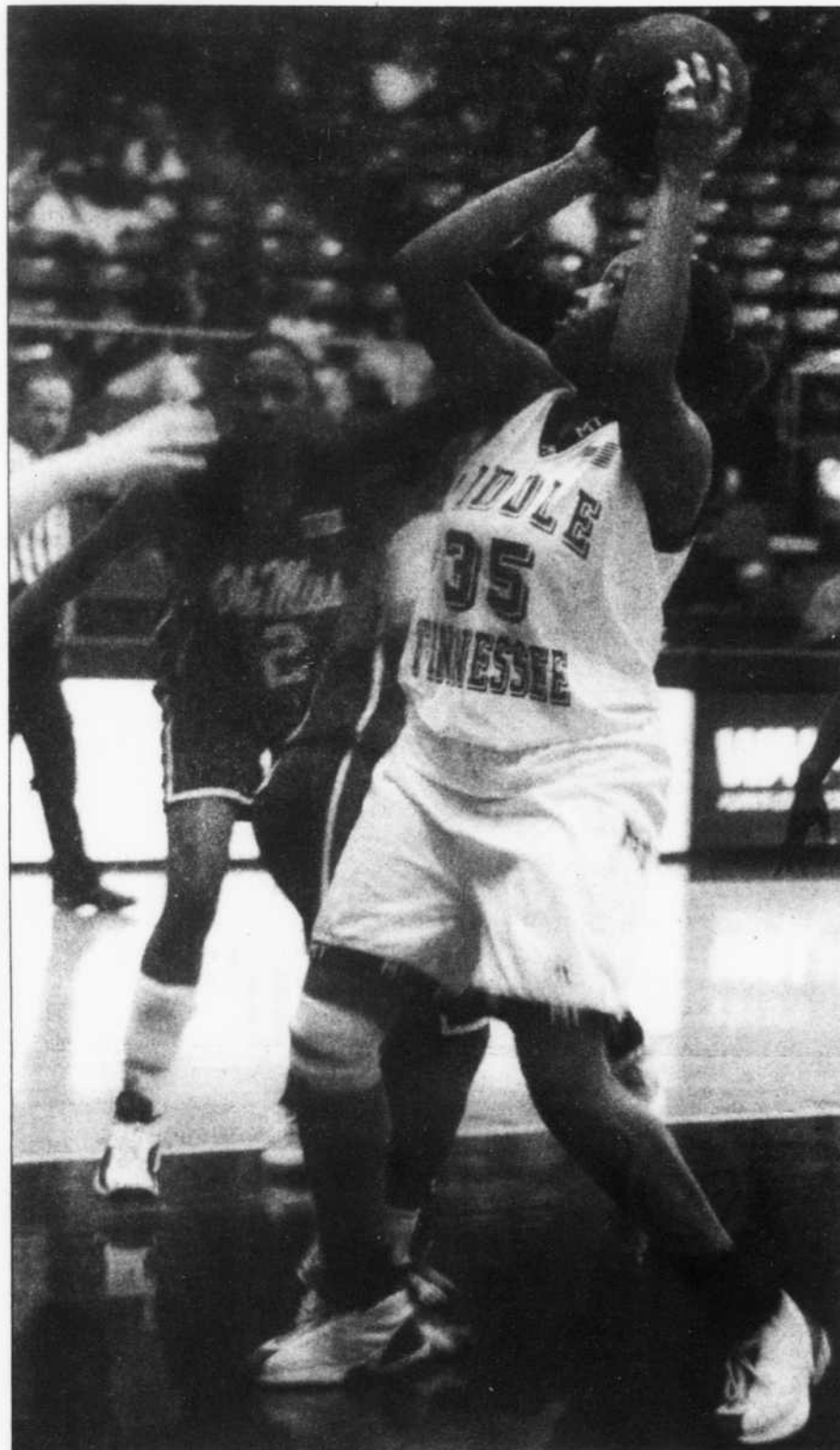
"I thought we started out pretty well, and then Ole Miss opened things up," head coach Stephany Smith said. "At half-time, I told our team we were in

a good position and to just come out and play our game in the second half. We started playing scared about the middle of the second half, but I am proud of how our team responded."

Ole Miss held a 37-34 lead at halftime despite 13 first-half turnovers. MT responded with a 14-3 run to go ahead 48-40 at 15:00. The Lady Rebels answered with its own 9-0 run. Paula Penttila ended the Lady Raider scoring drought with a three at the 12:12 mark.

The lead changed nine times over the next 5:39 of the game, with neither team gaining more than a 2-point advantage. Jessica Schlueter scored her only points of the game at 6:51 to

See Basketball, 9



(Above) Jamie Thomatis shoots for two of her game-high 31 points.
(Right) Joanne Aluka soars past an Ole Miss defender.

Aluka reaches 1,000

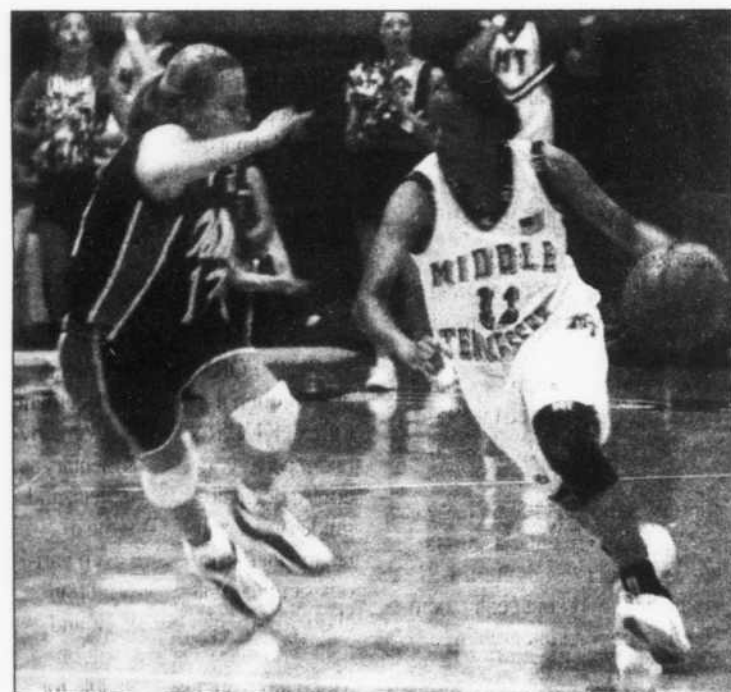
By David Hunter
Staff Writer

Jamie Thomatis and Joanne Aluka were double trouble for Ole Miss Saturday.

During Saturday's big 74-64 victory over Ole Miss, Lady Raider Aluka became a new member of Middle Tennessee's 1,000 point club. The points came with 5:43 left in the first half and made the score 26-23 in favor of Ole Miss.

She scored a season high 16 points in the victory. She passed Kelly Chastain for 15th place on the all-time scoring list. Aluka now has 1,006 points for her career. At the same time, Thomatis scored 31 points and had 10 rebounds. She was perfect from the foul line going 10-10. That included hitting eight of them in the last 3:34 of the game to finish off the Rebels.

See Aluka, 9



Jessica McClure drives as the Ole Miss defender tries to regain position in Saturday's 10 point victory.

Softball prepares for future with first recruiting class under new head coach

Staff Reports

The Middle Tennessee softball team signed three players to national letters of intent Thursday.

The class is the first recruiting class for head coach Cindy Connelley.

She signed two pitchers and a designated hitter. Tiffany Childress and Jen Dorais will fill the pitching roles. MT loses senior pitchers Jennifer Martinez, Stacy Preator and Amanda Kendall after this season.

Childress is the first athlete from the state of Tennessee to be signed to a softball scholarship at MT since 1997. She pitched for Columbia Central

and led her team to a second place finish in the 3-A State Championship in 2001.

Dorais will play mostly as a utility player for the Lady Raiders. She can pitch and play middle infield and outfield.

"Tiffany is a quality person and player who studies and loves the game," Connelley said. "Jen is the consummate utility player."

Megan Cherinka is transferring from Sierra Junior College and will play in January. Cherinka is a designated hitter who can also play first and second base.

"Megan is the instant impact player we were looking for," Connelley said.



Amanda Kendall is one of three pitchers for MT.

The Lady Raiders kick off their season Feb. 15 playing Troy State in the Mardi Gras Classic in Monroe, La. ♦

Blue Raiders sign state's top prospect

Staff Reports

The Middle Tennessee men's golf team signed Tennessee's top prospect to a national letter of intent Thursday.

Josh Nelms signed with the Blue Raiders during the early signing period and will begin competition next fall.

"Josh was our number one target," Moore said. "He is big and strong and should contribute to our program right away."

Nelms helped lead Baylor High School in Chattanooga, Tenn., to four straight state championships. He won the "Wally" in Nashville and later the Craig Rudolph Memorial in Clarksville, Tenn., last summer. Nelms finished second in the

region and third in the Division II state this fall. He was also third in the region as a sophomore and junior. Nelms finished runner-up in the Tennessee Junior and the City Junior Tournament. He won the Chattanooga Junior Classic.

"I think Josh's best event was a sixth place finish last summer in the Tennessee Amateur Championship at the Golf Club of Tennessee," Moore said.

"Two of the players who beat him were nationally ranked men's amateur players, while 20 of the players he did beat were collegiate golfers."

Nelms' father is the Central High School basketball and golf coach. His uncle is a former Tennessee Open Champion and a Creeks Bend pro. ♦



7 Day
Sportscast

TUESDAY

Men's Basketball

Blue Raiders vs. Rice
Murphy Center
7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Women's Basketball

Lady Raiders vs.
University of
Tennessee-Martin
Murphy Center
7 p.m.

THURSDAY

Men's Basketball

Blue Raiders at University
of Tennessee-Martin
Martin, Tenn.
7 p.m.

SATURDAY

Men's Basketball

Blue Raiders vs.
Tennessee State
Murphy Center
7 p.m.

Track

Indoor Meet
11:30 a.m.



Photo by Amy Jones | Staff

Basketball: Lady Raiders beat Ole Miss, win first game over SEC opponent in six years

Continued from 8

give MT the lead for good at 61-60.

The Lady Rebels went just 2-of-13 from the field the rest of the way. The Lady Raiders made 11-of-12 free-throw attempts

down the stretch to secure the win.

"Our senior class has accomplished a lot, but they have never beaten an SEC opponent," Smith said. "So this win was really special for them."

Thomatis finished with sea-

son-highs 31 points and 10 rebounds. This was her first double-double since Feb. 15 of last season and the 10th of her career. Thomatis went 9-of-18 from the field and a perfect 10-for-10 from the free-throw line. She made three of MT's five

three-pointers in the contest.

Aluka had 16 points and five rebounds. She scored her 1,000th point at 5:43 in the first half on a short jump shot. Aluka is the 15th member of the Millennium Club in MT history.

Sherika Wright and Ally Kelly led Ole Miss with 13 points apiece. Wright added 8 assists.

The win was the first for the Lady Raiders over an SEC opponent since defeating Ole Miss, 88-86 in Murfreesboro Nov. 24,

1995.

MT's next game is Wednesday against the University of Tennessee-Martin. Tip-off is at 7 p.m. in Murphy Center. ♦

Aluka: Players score big points in Lady Raider victory

Continued from 8

This was the Lady Raiders first win over Ole Miss since an 88-86 victory Nov. 24, 1995. It was also their first win over a Southeastern Conference team during that time. It comes after two early losses, one in overtime at Georgia and one at home against Conference USA opponent Cincinnati.

"It is a wonderful feeling," Aluka said. "Coach told us it's our last time, no second chances."

Aluka is the second player on this year's team to join the 1,000 point club. Thomatis is the other, with 1,536 points during her career. She is fifth on the all time scoring list.

"It feels pretty good to join Jamie on the club" said Aluka.

This is Aluka's 59th start in 61 games at MT. She has led the Lady Raiders the past two seasons in field goal percentage and has a career .513 field goal percentage. She is 12th on the career rebounding list with 588 rebounds.

Jaime Thomatis is a fixture on the Lady Raider Top 10 list of career records. She is currently fifth in scoring, 10th in steals, seventh in field goals made, eighth in field goals attempted, first in field goal percentage, fourth in free throws made, sixth in free throws attempted, fourth in free throw percentage and three-point percentage and sixth in double figure scoring.

In this contest, she started her 43rd consecutive game. That included her 18th straight

double figure game.

Her 31 points and 10 rebounds were a season high, and her first double-double this season. That makes 10 in her career.

This is the 12th time in the last 16 games she has scored 20 or more points. ♦

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Florida International wins first NCAA match

Win is the first by Sun Belt team in NCAA Tournament since 1995

Staff Reports

The Florida International volleyball team beat the University of Central Florida 3-0 in its first ever NCAA Division I Tournament match in the first round of the NCAA Tournament in Gainesville, Fla., Thursday.

FIU won the first game 30-28. This was the first time a Sun Belt Conference team has won a game in the NCAA Tournament since 1995.

The Golden Panthers took a two-games-to-none lead with a 30-21 game two victory.

FIU took game three 36-30

for the first-ever Sun Belt Conference win in the NCAA Tournament.

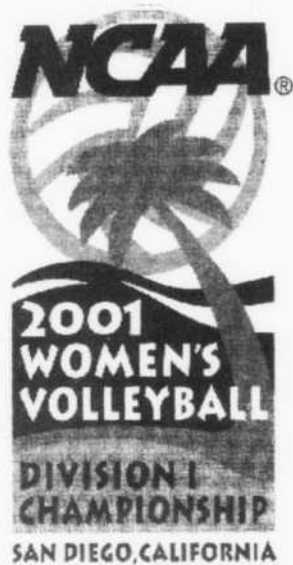
Nirvana Kos led the Golden Panthers with 19 kills. Adriana Fundora added a double-double with 13 kills and 10 digs.

FIU was eliminated by No. 7 Florida in the second round Friday.

Florida won the first game 30-22. Kos led the Golden Panthers with a game-high 21 kills.

The second game saw the lead change numerous times. Florida used two blocks to take a 31-29 game-two win.

Game three saw much the



same kind of action with the lead changing several times. Florida won the final game 30-26. ♦

North Texas goes to bowl with losing record

TROY, Ala. (AP) — Drew Boteler kicked a field goal with 23 seconds remaining to lift Troy State to a 18-16 win over North Texas Saturday.

Even with the loss, North Texas (5-6) is bound for the inaugural New Orleans Bowl as the Sun Belt Conference champion. The Mean Green will be the first team to take advantage of an NCAA waiver that allows a conference champion to play in a bowl without the mandated six victories.

North Texas scored a safety with 4:02 left to give the Mean Green a 16-15 lead. But Troy State (7-4) drove 31 yards on eight plays to put Boteler in position for a game-winning 22-yard field goal.

The Mean Green led until

the fourth quarter. Less than three minutes into the fourth, Boteler gave Troy State its first

two touchdowns. He connected with George Marshall twice in the first quarter on 17- and 22-yard touchdown passes.

The Mean Green outpassed the Trojans 145 yards to 86. But Troy State outran them 162-7 for 248 total yards to 217 for North Texas.

After losing their first five games, the Mean Green won their next five to win the Sun Belt Conference and clinch a spot in the New Orleans Bowl.

Only a couple of Division I-A teams have gone to bowls with losing records, even before the NCAA started requiring six wins for eligibility. Southern Methodist University and William & Mary received invitations after posting losing records in the regular season. ♦



lead on a 23-yard field goal that made it 15-14.

The Trojans were down 14-6 at halftime.

With 7:21 left in the third quarter, Demontray Carter ran 34 yards for a touchdown, making it 14-12 before a two-point conversion attempt failed. Carter ran for 149 yards.

Scott Hall led North Texas, passing for 145 yards, including

Vols chomp Gators; smelling roses

Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Travis Stephens ran for a career-high 226 yards Saturday as No. 5 Tennessee stopped No. 2 Florida on a two-point conversion with 1:10 left for a 34-32 win that further scrambled the Rose Bowl picture.

The Vols (10-1, 7-1 Southeastern Conference), 18-point underdogs in this game, won at Florida for the first time since 1971. They advanced to next week's SEC title game against No. 22 LSU and still have a chance to play Miami for the national championship in Pasadena, Calif., Jan. 3.

"We're a Top 5 team, and we get no respect," offensive lineman Fred Weary said. "They're going to respect us now."

The Vols came into the game ranked sixth in the Bowl Championship Series standings. Regardless of where they are once the new standings are released, they won't have that 30-year winless streak at The Swamp hanging over them.

"Some people say 30 years, but it was only seven times," Fulmer said. "It was seven times too many."

When Nebraska and Oklahoma lost last week, Florida needed to win twice to make the trip to Pasadena and play for the championship.

Now, the Gators will play in a bowl game well outside the limelight hardly the destination they expected.

"We didn't win anything this year," coach Steve Spurrier said. "We had a good record, had a lot of good games, but we didn't win anything."

Rex Grossman led the Gators on a late 77-yard touchdown drive that made the score 34-32 and briefly kept Florida's title hopes alive. But Grossman couldn't find anyone open on the two-point conversion and threw an incompleteness.

The Vols recovered the onside kick and "Rocky Top" took over the otherwise silent Swamp. Florida lost to an SEC East opponent at home for the first time since the conference was split into divisions in 1992, a span of 23 games.

The 5-foot-9-inch, 190-pound Stephens had runs of 49, 35, 34 and 68 yards, the last of which set up a 2-yard touchdown by Jabari Davis for a 34-26 lead. Only Herschel Walker has run for more against the Gators, gaining 238 in 1980, a 26-21 Georgia victory.

Tennessee rushed for 242 yards. Trailing 20-14 at halftime, the Vols set the tone for the second half, getting three quick gains on passing plays, then regaining the lead when Stephens burst through the middle for a 35-yard score.

"They weren't as good as I thought they were on defense," Vols receiver Donte Stallworth said.

Florida came back with a long drive of its own, but for the third time settled for a field goal and a 23-21 lead.

Early in the fourth, Stephens broke through for a 34-yard gain that set up a touchdown for a 27-23 lead.

The Gators pulled within one on Jeff Chandler's 52-yard field goal, but on the next drive, Stephens ran off right tackle for a 68-yard gain, shedding tackles

by Guss Scott and Marquand Manuel.

It was the signature play of this game and for these Vols who have always prided themselves on ball control and working the clock, a formula that never seemed to work against the Gators, until Saturday.

"It looked like Colorado running through Nebraska," Spurrier said, remembering the Buffs' 62-36 victory last week. "I don't know what happened."

It signaled the end of Florida's years of dominance in this series. The teams have split their last four games, and in this case, it was Fulmer, not Spurrier, who made all the right decisions.

Trailing 23-21, Fulmer chose to go for it on fourth-and-one from midfield. Clausen made it on a bootleg. Two plays later, Stephens broke the 34-yarder that set up the score to give the Vols the lead for good.

That drive came just after Spurrier passed on a 48-yard field-goal attempt and chose to go on fourth-and-one from the Tennessee 31. Thomas Moody got called for false start and Spurrier kept the offense out there.

Will Overstreet, part of defensive line that overwhelmed the Gators as well, sacked Grossman, and Tennessee took over on the 44. Grossman took a beating, paying for each of his 362 passing yards.

"I could see it in his eyes," Vols defensive lineman John Henderson said. "He looked frustrated from the beginning."

To say this was a shock for the Gators is no understatement.

They had been dominant all season, save a 23-20 loss to Auburn in October, in which it was clear they were not ready to play.

Florida played this game without leading rusher Earnest Graham and gained just 36 yards on the ground.

But after the game Spurrier said "There were no excuses. They just ran it down our throats."

And now, the Gators will have a mindnumbing month to prepare for their bowl game — a BCS bid is still possible, but it could also be the Outback or the dreaded Citrus — and try to make sense of this season.

Grossman surpassed 300 yards for the 10th time in 11 games, but his Heisman candidacy will suffer. He lost, while his main competition, Ken Dorsey, led Miami to a victory and the trip to the Rose Bowl on this, the final Saturday before Heisman ballots are due. ♦

Rose Bowl real possibility

Associated Press

No. 1 Miami punched its ticket to the national championship game, while No. 2 Florida and No. 3 Texas were knocked out the title chase Saturday night.

With its 26-24 win at No. 14 Virginia Tech, the Hurricanes (11-0) clinched a berth in the Rose Bowl Jan. 3, this season's Bowl Championship Series' designated title game. After the win, two Rose Bowl officials extended an invitation to the 'Canes to play in Pasadena Jan. 3.

No. 5 Tennessee (10-1) became the favorite to play Miami after its 34-32 win at Florida (9-2). The Volunteers need to beat No. 22 LSU in the Southeastern Conference title game next Saturday to secure a trip to the Rose Bowl. LSU (8-3) moved into the SEC title game with a 27-14 over Auburn.

Also Saturday night, No. 3 Texas (10-2) dropped from title contention by losing to No. 9 Colorado 39-27 in the Big 12 championship game in Irving, Texas.

No. 4 Oregon (10-1) remained in the title hunt with a 17-14 win over Oregon State, while No. 10 BYU (12-0) kept its hopes alive of gaining an at-large berth to a BCS bowl with a 41-38 win at Mississippi State.

No. 6 Nebraska (11-1), which completed its season last week with a 52-36 loss to Colorado, also has an outside chance to play in the Rose Bowl. But the Huskers would need the Vols to lose and the BCS standings to keep them ahead of Oregon.

The final BCS standings will be released Dec. 9. ♦

NOTICE TO ALL STUDENTS

PLACED ON ACADEMIC SUSPENSION AFTER GRADING

All students academically suspended at the end of the 2001 Fall term who have pre-registered for classes will have their schedules deleted for the 2002 Spring term. Undergraduate suspended students who wish to appeal to attend the Spring term must contact the Records Office, Cope Administration Bldg 106, or access the MTSU website at <http://www.mtsu.edu/~records> for an appeals application. The completed application must be returned to the Records Office by 4:00 p.m., January 2, 2002; otherwise the appeal will not be accepted.

University offices will close for the holidays. If you wish to submit your application before the holidays, please do so by 4:00 p.m. on December 20, 2001.


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