

# MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

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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](http://mtsu.edu), under "Transportation" for the temporary changes to the routes.



Photo Courtesy Jennifer Ray  
Carrie Youell (far left) participates with students at the 2008 Panhellenic Easter egg hunt.

## Greek Life director search unsuccessful

By TIFFANY GIBSON  
News Editor

After completing two unsuccessful national searches over the past year, the position of Greek Life director remains unoccupied, prompting an upgrade in job responsibilities and salary.

The first search committee began reviewing prospective candidates in fall 2007 but was unable to find a person to properly fit the Greek Life position.

As an attempt to recruit people to apply for the position during the second nationwide search, Gene Fitch, associate vice president for Student Affairs and dean of Student Life, and Robert Glenn, vice president for Student Affairs and vice provost for Enrollment Management, attended

conferences to encourage possible candidates.

"During the search in the fall, we did not feel we had a strong enough candidate," Glenn said. "We had a number of good people who I think will have good careers, but they simply were not strong enough to handle the challenges of our Greek Life situation here."

Glenn said that MTSU "has gone to a lot of trouble to upgrade the position and make it more of a senior level position" that includes a higher salary.

"One of the things we have had trouble with over the last several years is the revolving door of young professionals that come in for a few years and then leave," Glenn said. "We think that's a problem because our Greek community needs strong and consistent leadership over

time."

During the spring search, Glenn said there were at least three qualified candidates. One withdrew from the offer, the second accepted another position before MTSU could make an offer and the third visited the campus and came to the conclusion that she did not want the position.

"We need to make sure we maintain the highest level of quality as we evaluate candidates, because we don't want to accept just anyone because the position is open," Glenn said.

Carrie Youell, Greek Life coordinator, currently serves as the Interim Greek Life director after Gentry McCreary, the former Greek Life director, left in July 2007.

GREEK LIFE, PAGE 4

## New associate vice president oversees MT's marketing plans

By BYRON WILKES  
Staff Writer

Tonjanita L. Johnson, formerly of Mississippi Valley State University, has been hired as the new associate vice president for marketing and communications.

"I love MTSU and I am very excited to be working here," Johnson said. "I am embracing the position very positively and energetically."

"I'm taking a bit of a chance to acclimate to the work environment here, and so far it has been wonderful."

Johnson began her job on June 1, and has seven years experience as executive assistant to the president/associate vice president for university relations at MVSU, which is located in Itta Bena, MS.

During her tenure there, she also served as the school's public relations director.

"My office will serve as an interface between the marketing and communication departments," Johnson said. "It will essentially be a strategic center for evaluating the manner in which MTSU operates its marketing campaigns, and the provision of the same resources to all departments on campus."

In addition to serving as a strategic center for unilateral movement of the entire campus, Johnson's office will also oversee a large array of marketing and communication aspects, including graphics, printing, photography and the news.

Johnson hopes that in her new position she will be able to promote a fuller image of MTSU to the public by utilizing the division's commu-

nication department.

One of Johnson's ideas is the inclusion of faculty and staff into the "I'm One!" current MTSU marketing campaign, an idea that will showcase the efforts and ideas of marketing and communication made by faculty.

According to Johnson, consistency should be one of

the primary goals of the university's marketing efforts in terms of the image of MTSU.

Johnson also emphasizes the importance of knowing the institutional guidelines and procedures of MTSU's marketing campaigns in order to make these campaigns as effective as possible.

"The thing that is most important here is presenting an integrated effort toward one goal," Johnson said. "We want all of the different channels here at MTSU to have a single voice."

Johnson added that the support from fellow MTSU faculty and staff has been overwhelming.

"[MTSU] is one of those places where people from many departments across campus have walked over to my office just to introduce themselves and say hello," Johnson said. "Everyone has been very easy to work with and opens up very straightforwardly about what they need or what they can do concerning my position. So far I'm excited for a long future."



Johnson

## Tennessee ranks No. 1 as 'textiest' state in the Southeast region by new Verizon Wireless study

By TIFFANY GIBSON  
News Editor

Tennessee has been named the 'textiest' state in the Southeast according to the Verizon Wireless "Big City Wireless Use Study."

The Big City Wireless Use Study measures the amount of text messages sent and received per month by Verizon Wireless customers.

"I was a little surprised at the numbers because when you look at the states that are more highly populated like Florida for example, in the Southeast Region," said Carly Culbertson, public relations manager for North and South Carolina and Tennessee regions. "My thought would have been Florida would have come out on top because you have so many cities with really high populations."

Other states also included in the study are Alabama,

Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The study shows that a 520 percent increase in text messaging of Verizon customers has been made within 2 years.

Nashville is the number one city in Tennessee with 223,150,538 text messages being sent and received since April 2008.

Culbertson said she's not entirely sure why Tennessee is ranked number one, but associates its text messaging popularity with the majority of the younger generation.

"I know that texting in general has become so popular," Culbertson said. "Initially, it was the youth segment, high school and college age kids growing up in the technology age that



Photo By Andi Nave, Photography Editor  
A customer texts outside of the Murfreesboro Verizon Wireless store located on Thompson Lane.

TEXT MESSAGE, PAGE 4

# OPINIONS

From the Editorial Board

## Greek Life needs to find a candidate for director post

It isn't easy to juggle the responsibility of school and an active participation in an extracurricular activity. We should know; we do it on a daily basis.

It really helps when you have someone to lean on, someone to guide you and to offer advice – hence the requirement of an adviser for student organizations.

This week marks a year since Greek Life had such a person. Gentry McCreary, the former Greek Life director, left on July 7, 2007 and Carrie Youell, the Greek Life coordinator, has been filling in ever since.

To be an organization without someone to help you through the battles of bureaucracy is a daunting task, especially if it's an organization as big as Greek Life.

Two failed search committees later; we are left wondering whether the position will ever be filled. Youell, who is serving as interim director, cannot continue to do both her job and her boss' job.

It isn't about whether she is doing a decent job or not. It's about not being able to carry the entire weight of the Greek system alone.

Carrie noted that during the second search, the job was of-

fered but the candidate refused. "I think it's kind of up in the air about what we are going to do," she added.

Hopefully the conundrum of "what to do" won't stay in midair too long because anybody in Youell's position is going to be having a crash flight if left afloat for an extended period of time.

In an attempt to attract more potential candidates, the university decided to up the ante and throw some more money into the pot. Unfortunately, more responsibility has been tacked on to the salary increase.

This isn't an extra incentive the director will still be getting paid for the work that they do. There is no extra money involved, only the feel of a "more senior level position," said Bob Glenn, vice president for Student Affairs and vice provost of Enrollment Management.

But two searches have failed to produce adequate candidates who will take the post. So they can't have possibly found "senior level management" material.

And in the meantime, Greek Life is left without a permanent adviser to oversee their day-to-day shenanigans and to help Youell.

## School board bans "Freedom Writers"

Indiana high school English teacher, Connie Heermann, was suspended for distributing "The Freedom Writers Diary" in her classroom.

Apparently, the Perry Township School Board felt that the content in the novel is graphic and will do more harm than good; therefore, they suspended Heermann for over a year.

The novel is a true story about real teenagers dealing with the struggle of growing up in gang-infested neighborhoods. Of course the content is going to be graphic due to the subject, but the novel holds so much more than language.

The message embedded in the novel is why Heermann wanted her class to read the diary of these teens in the first place. She picked the novel because it's a fascinating story that some of her students can relate to.

After reading "The Freedom Writers Diary," I think that the thoughts and circumstances of these students are tragic, but the overall message is empowering and moving.

In the beginning of the novel, students share their experiences with drugs, sex and violence, but as the novel progresses the students begin talking about their English teacher, Erin Gruwell, who has inspired them to take a more active role in their education.

Many students find their journal entry topics to be about the novels Gruwell assigns them to read in class.



**Open Mouth, Insert Foot**  
Tiffany Gibson

They express their joy in reading books such as "The Wave" and "Durango Street" because they can relate to the protagonists.

Others praise Gruwell for taking the time to understand and help them with their problems.

One student admits to being dyslexic and shares his/her difficulty with reading because of the condition. The student goes on to describe how Gruwell made him/her feel comfortable reading out loud in class.

The Perry Township School Board must not value teacher appreciation or determination to learn if they ban this book because it is clearly about teenagers taking control of their life and striving for a future.

In addition to this, many of the students in Heermann's class have stated that they miss their English teacher because she made reading interesting and picked books that would grab their attention.

These students obviously have dedication to learn and for a school board to deprive them of their instructor because of a novel is ridiculous

at best, morally reprehensible at worst.

Besides encouraging students to grasp a hold of educational opportunities, the book also shares the thoughts of Gruwell. Throughout her journal entries, she raves and praises her students for their efforts and goals they have accomplished.

In fact, Gruwell was surprised when she heard about the banning of the book and the punishment of Heermann.

"Teachers have never been suspended or gotten into any kind of trouble for using our book, so this is the first case," Gruwell said in a CNN video interview.

Furthermore to support her students' work and Heermann, Gruwell traveled to Indiana to appear before the school board. Unfortunately, the school board still ruled that Heermann was insubordinate in distributing the books after having been told not to in e-mail.

Instead of reading in between the lines and appreciating the message of this story, school board members are only worried about explicit slang.

However, Heermann took the content into consideration before handing out the book and sent permission slips home with the students. Heermann received 149 approvals and then proceeded to give her students copies of the book.

If the school board was worried about content then they should have asked the parents of the children what

they thought about the novel.

When Heermann received approval from parents, she went ahead with her curriculum of reading the novel. So why wouldn't it be acceptable after having parental consent?

But perhaps the most ludicrous detail about this whole ordeal is that even though students were not allowed to read the novel in class, a copy of "The Freedom Writers Diary" is available in the school library.

School board members don't feel threatened by the one they because they said students don't use the library enough anyway.

Not only did members of the school board happy to report this fact, but they continue to let the diary lie on a shelf for anyone to read or check out.

Students can take this "obscene" book without parental consent and no one would ever know it, but allow parents to become involved in their children's academics – that's dangerous.

It seems like a complete waste of time and effort to suspend Heermann over a book that is available in the school library.

If members of the school board and community are really worried about the crude and offensive language in this book then perhaps they should eliminate it from the premises all together.

Tiffany Gibson is a sophomore Journalism major and can be reached at tdg2w@mtsu.edu.

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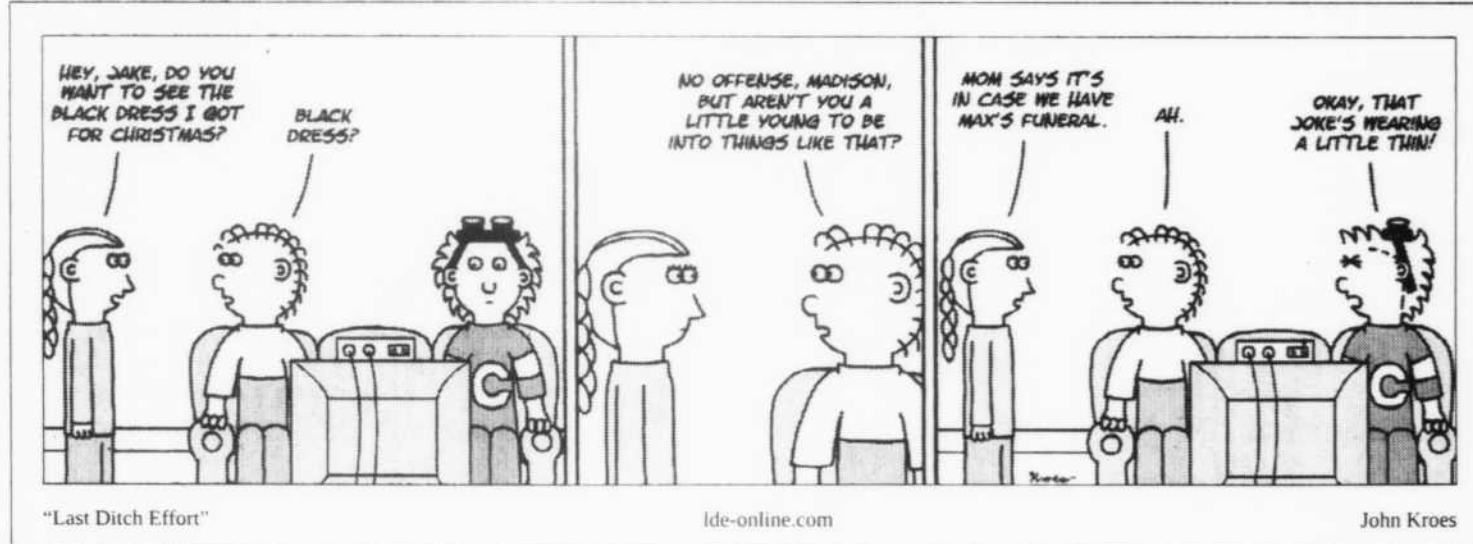
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## COMICS



## FACES IN THE CROWD

**Do you feel that you text message too much?**



**Najene**  
"Not really. I only do it when it is necessary."

Ben Najeme, senior biology



**Carland**  
"Yes. My phone dies in the middle of the day because I text so much."

Sarah Carland, senior social work



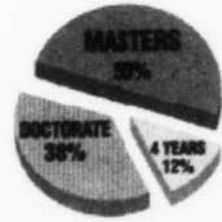
**Jones**  
"No, of course not. You can never text too much."

Cara Jones, freshman political science

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A CAREER IN YOUR MAJOR  
AFTER GRADUATION?**

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# FEATURES



**HOW FAR WILL YOU  
GO IN HIGHER EDU-  
CATION?**

BASED ON VOTES FROM  
MTSUSIDELINES.COM.

## Majoring in making a difference

### A young boy inspires one student to study social work

By MICHAEL STONE  
Features Editor

Business majors may say that they're majoring in business to hopefully become rich. Theatre majors may say they're majoring in theatre to hopefully become famous.

It's rare to find a major where people studying say, "I'm doing it because I care about people and I really want to help out those in need."

A social work major by the name Taylor Kaitlin Winters said that's why she's studying her major.

Growing up in Point Pleasant, New Jersey, Taylor would read the "horror stories" of children in the foster care system in the town's paper, The Asbury Park Press.

"At first, I wanted to major in psychology because I wanted to help adolescent girls," Taylor remembers. "I went through a lot of stuff they go through, so I figured I could really relate."

Taylor continued to lean towards psychology until the age of 13 when she met a charming young baby named Jacob McDonald.

Jacob's birth mother had a child before, but she and her husband were deemed unfit to care for her.

"She wanted to prove everyone wrong and show that she could have a child and raise him properly, so she had Jacob," Taylor says.

But three days after Jacob's birth, he was taken away from his birth mother. He was put into the foster home of Susan and Jim McDonald.

Susan and Jim lived next door to Taylor, and had been providing a foster home for children for two years before they took Jacob under their wing.

"Originally, the plan was just to provide a foster home for Jacob," Susan recalls. "We took him to visit his birth mother once a week. On one visit, out of the blue, when Jacob was three, she said, 'If I agree to sign the parental rights over to you, would you adopt him?'"

The McDonalds had discussed adopting Jacob since they brought him home.

"Everyone in the family loved him so much, so it was an easy decision," Susan says.

The process was lengthy and long for the McDonalds. The birth father didn't want to relinquish his rights and the paperwork never seemed to end.

But finally, the McDonalds had their last court date on June 25, 2003. The proceedings would officially adopt Jacob into their home by signing over all parental rights to them.

"I was the only non-family member in the court room that day," Taylor recalls. "Being in the court room made me want to major in social work because there aren't enough stories like Jacob's out there."

A couple months after Jacob's adoption, Taylor began college in N.J., taking classes towards her bachelor's degree in social work. Still living in



Photos Courtesy: Taylor Winters

(Above) Taylor plays with Jacob at Point Pleasant Beach. (Right) Taylor takes time from traveling to MTSU for the start of the fall semester to pose with a Tennessee road sign.

much, and she loves him. Every morning when he wakes up, he asks if it's a "Tay-Tay" day.

But after three years of college in N.J., and living her whole life in the Garden State, Taylor says she couldn't take it anymore.

"When you grow up in New Jersey, you go to high school in New Jersey," Taylor says. "And when you graduate, you go to college in New Jersey. Then you go on to work in retail in New Jersey and end up spending

your whole life in New Jersey. People there just don't have any real ambitions."

She wanted to break free from the Jersey cycle.

Taylor had visited the South on vacation and loved everything about it. She made up her mind that she was going to give herself a fresh start and get away from it all. The hardest part of making the decision, though, was leaving Jacob.

"Leaving him was one of the most difficult things I had ever done, but I knew I had to do it," Taylor says.

Taylor started to look into social work programs in the

**"I'm (majoring in social work) because I care about people and I really want to help out those in need."**

Taylor Winters  
Social Work major

New Jersey, Taylor says Jacob growing to be a young man.

"Taylor has been such a great inspiration to Jacob," Susan says. "He loves her so



region and began visiting schools.

"When I visited MTSU, I met some quality people," Taylor remembers. "Unlike in New Jersey, where people go to school just because it's what you do, people at Middle Tennessee went to school because they truly wanted to be there."

The ambitions of MTSU students attracted Taylor, as well as the beauty of the campus. But the prestige of the social work program sealed the deal.

"The social work program is accredited by the Council of Social Work Education," says John McDaniel, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. "It is very difficult to achieve this accreditation and the council is very strict on the schools they accredit."

So Taylor applied, and was accepted to a school that

was 867 miles away from her neighborhood on Woodwild Street and 867 miles away from her love, Jacob.

But after two semesters at MTSU, Taylor says it has been the best decision of her life.

"It has been a real growing experience living so far away from home," Taylor says. "It's the first time I've done everything by myself and not gone running home to mommy and daddy."

Upon graduation, Taylor wants to continue to live in Middle Tennessee and work for the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

A few times a semester, though, she makes the trip back to Point Pleasant to see her family; Susan and Jim; and, of course, Jacob.

"When I see him, he looks up at me with that cute face and says 'Tay-Tay, thank God you're home from school.'"



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# Former Olympic sports come right from playground

By JOHN MARSHALL  
AP Sports Writer

If you've been swimming, you probably tried it at least once: dive into the water and see how far you can get without taking a stroke. Coast past 62 feet and you could have earned a gold medal at the 1904 Olympics.

The tug-of-war you played with friends at school? That could have been worth a podium spot at six Games. A gym class favorite like the rope climb and a game that looked like hopscotch, the standing hop, step, jump, also were once medal events.

Long before the corporate sponsorships and billion-dollar television deals, the Olympic Games were more like games kids might play in the backyard. Some of the events may seem a bit strange, club swinging, anyone? But there was certainly a fun factor to the early days of the Olympics.

"It's was a different thing, kind of catch as catch can, particularly the very early days before it got formalized," said David Wallechinsky, vice president of the International Society of Olympic Historians. "Eventually, as it got bigger, they had to take it a lot more serious."

The first few modern Olympics, which started in Athens in 1896, were loosely organized. There were no national teams, athletes could just sign up, pay an entry fee and compete, and the host countries were allowed to pick what events were to be held.

That changed after World War I, when the International Olympic Committee took over selection of the Olympic program because Sweden wouldn't allow boxing at the 1912 Stockholm Games.

And while there has always been a political slant to the Olympics, St. Louis pulled a back-room deal to snatch the 1904 Games from Chicago, there wasn't much worldwide attention paid to the early Games.

A wild finish in the marathon at the 1908 Games, Italy's Dorando Pietri was disqualified for being helped across the finish line by two

officials after collapsing several times, and the Nazi presence at the 1936 Berlin Games helped increase media interest, eventually turning the Olympics into the financial and political monster of today.

Before all that happened, though, the Olympics were a simpler affair, filled with some, uh, interesting events.

One was the dueling pistols at the 1906 Athens Summer Olympics. Despite the Wild West connotations, the participants didn't actually shoot each other; they fired upon mannequins dressed in frock coats with bull-eyes on their chests.

Running deer shoot, where participants shot at moving cutouts of animals, was another worse-than-it-sounds competition.

For the authentic blood and guts, you'd have to go back to the 1900 Paris Games and live pigeon shooting. Nearly 300 birds were killed during the release-and-shoot competition, leaving a mess of feathers and blood after an event that clearly wouldn't fly today.

Less violent and perhaps more fun were some of the swimming events. There was the diving plunge, the aforementioned coasting event, and an underwater race, where swimmers earned points based on how long they could hold their breath and how far they could get before coming up for air.

The swimming obstacle race in 1900 was another unusual one, with swimmers climbing up and down a pole, then over and under and boats in the Seine River. Surely, some kid at the local swimming pool made that one up.

"It was probably tremendously entertaining," says Olympic historian John Lucas. "It was sort of like an X sport for the amusement of the mob."

Club swinging, held during the 1904 and 1932 games, would certainly fall into that category. Like rhythmic gymnastics with bowling pins or juggling without letting go, club swinging featured competitors whirling clubs around their bodies in vari-

sities across the state.

On the other hand, Culbertson said that other states have many universities as well, so it must be another factor that is playing a major role in Tennessee's success.

"Perhaps the music industry in Nashville affected that city in particular, but it's hard to say why Tennessee came out on top out of all the states," Culbertson said.

Horne agrees with Culbertson that the business aspect of a city can help increase text message rates.

"We serve a variety of customers from the business profession to the child that uses it for leisure," Horne said. "A lot of our customers do use quite a bit of text messaging as much as 30,000 text messages within a month's time."

Furthermore, Horne said that text messaging allows people to have options of communication.

"For those who can't make a call at the moment or they want to be private can send a text message, and those are just like making a call,"



Photo Courtesy Craig Nagy  
Logo for the 2008 Summer Olympics

ous patterns. The threat of getting donked on the head like the Three Stooges would have been enough to get people to watch.

Maybe a bit less entertaining was the 56-pound toss. This featured a weight, 56 pounds, of course, hooked to a handle that was tossed over a pole vault bar in an event that had to look similar to those strongman contests ESPN shows on slow week-ends.

"It was usually won by some gigantic, 350-pound Irish-American fellow," Lucas said. "A very bizarre sport."

Of course, peculiar events weren't limited to the early days.

For the 1984 Los Angeles Games, Olympic organizers introduced solo synchronized swimming. The idea was for the swimmer to synchronize with the music, but viewers couldn't get past the whole lack of a partner thing and the sport was dropped after the Barcelona Games in

1992.

"What can I say?" says Wallechinsky, author of The Complete Book of the Olympics series. "I asked them 'how can you synchronize one person?' Well, you're synchronized to the music. In rhythmic gymnastics there's music but you don't call it synchronized gymnastics. I just never liked it."

Certainly, there have been bigger, more mainstream sports dropped from the Olympic docket. Polo was part of five Games, rugby four, golf and lacrosse two each. Even cricket, croquet and Basque pelota had at

least one shining Olympic moment. When baseball and softball were dropped for the 2012 London Olympics, it marked the first time since 1936 an entire sport had been removed from the Olympic program.

Adding an event is a bit easier, cycling recently replaced the 1,000-meter time trial with BMX racing, but only as a replacement. The IOC is concerned about the Olympics becoming too unwieldy, so anytime a new sport or event is added, another has to be dropped, preferably for something more telegenic, like beach volleyball.

## Greek Life FROM PAGE 1

"We just recently finished our second search for a new life Greek Life director," Youell said. "The position was offered to someone but they did not accept it. I think it's kind of up in the air about what we are going to do."

Youell said the university is looking at candidates with very specific qualifications including experience in working with the Panhellenic Council, the Interfraternity Council and the Nation Pan-Hellenic Council.

"They are looking for someone who has a minimum of five years of professional experience," Youell said. "They don't have to have all Greek experience, but a Greek background is preferred as far as being a member of a fraternity/sorority or having some Greek affiliation."

To aid with the Greek Life director search, MTSU hired a new associate dean of Student Life to work with Gene Fitch. According to Glenn, the new associate dean, Danny Kelly, will work with Fitch in overseeing specific departments in the Office of Student Life and help "pick up some of the slack" until the position can be filled.

"We looked more closely at the associate dean candidates' qualifications because that position supervises the Greek Life area," Glenn said.

While an associate dean will be able to help manage the Greek Life vacancy, Glenn said that MTSU would continue searching until the right person for the job is hired.

"Hiring a person is the most important thing you do," Glenn said. "Because firing an incompetent person is the most difficult thing you'll ever have to do."

## TEXT MESSAGE FROM PAGE 1

quickly embraced text messaging as a fast and fun way to communicate."

In addition to the younger generation using this technology, Culbertson also said that parents get involved when they realize it's a great way to keep in contact with their kids.

Culbertson said that since text messaging is pretty cheap, people began getting packets and adding text messaging onto their phone plans.

"On a single line a customer can get unlimited text messaging for \$20 more than their original phone usage would be," said Hilton Horne, assistant store manager of Verizon Wireless store located in Murfreesboro. "We do also have bundles for small users with picture messages included as well as video."

Horne said he credits the large sum of text messaging statistics to MTSU's campus as well as many other univer-

sities across the state.

Agreeing with Horne, Culbertson said that text messages can be beneficial during business meetings where it would be rude to answer a phone call, but responding to a text message is fast and simple.

Horne said text messaging is also beneficial because of the Google text feature, which allows customers to save money by not calling 411.

"You can actually put the location or zip code in and it will bring up everyone in the area," Horne said. "By doing this you don't have to call 411 and this is included in the text messaging package."

When text messaging was first offered, Horne said that people weren't comfortable with it and had to get use to it, but as people began using it more frequently they became acclimated with it.

"At first they had mail being delivered by horse, then we had the phone, and now we have text messaging, so I think it has revolutionized communication."

## CRIME BRIEFS

July 3, 2008 at 4:03 p.m.

**Theft**  
Alumni Memorial Gym  
A faculty member called and advised that he heard some noise around the coke machines on the second floor of the Alumni Memorial Gym. When he went to check them they were turned off and the locks were popped out.

July 3, 2008 at 9:17 p.m.

Drug Abuse

Greek Row  
Brandon Smith was issued a state citation for simple possession of marijuana.

July 4, 2008 at 9:34 p.m.

**Traffic**  
Jim Cummings Annex Lot  
Sarah Arnold was arrested and charged with DUI.

July 7, 2008 at 4:32 a.m.

**Assistance**  
Greenland Drive Lot B  
An individual, who appeared to be intoxicated, was laying on the ground in the parking lot. He was unresponsive to complainant attempting to rouse him. He was released by emergency medical services, and picked up by a city cab to be dropped off at his residence.

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