

WEDNESDAY  
MARCH 19, 2003

52 70



Morning showers



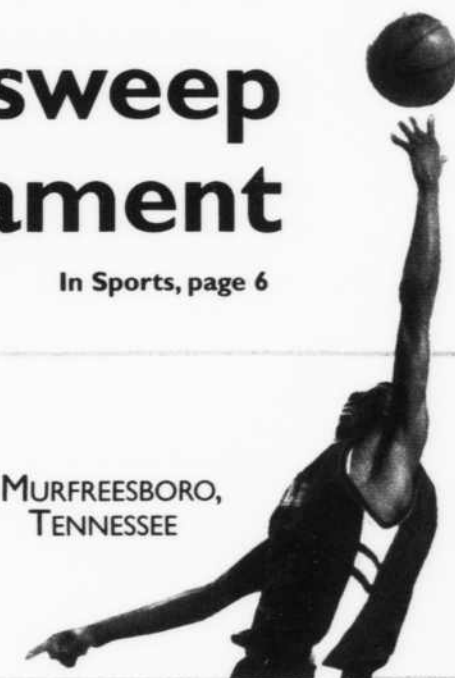
This week's poll question at  
www.mtsusidelines.com

Did the Tennessee Bureau of  
Investigation have a right to take  
names at the peace rally on campus?

# Hilltoppers sweep SBC tournament

In Sports, page 6

MURFREESBORO,  
TENNESSEE



## Middle Tennessee State University SIDELINES

An editorially  
independent  
newspaper

Volume 78 No. 77

### Campus Briefs

#### Circle K receives top honors at convention

MTSU's Circle K organization received top honors at the annual Kentucky-Tennessee District Convention March 7-9.

The group was awarded Most Outstanding Secretary, Most Outstanding Vice President and Most Outstanding Club.

Raising \$500 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation the club also won first place in the fund-raising competition.

The club's recruitment is ongoing, and they hold meetings every Tuesday night in the Keathley University Center.

For more information, contact the club president, Justin Ward, at 904-2498.

#### Up 'til Dawn board applications available

Student Organizations and Community Service is now accepting applications for the 2003-2004 Up 'til Dawn executive board.

Applications can be obtained from the office of Student Organizations and Community Service in the KUC, Room 326.

Applications are due in the office on March 26 at 4:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact Jacqueline Ingram at 898-5812.

#### 24-hour computer lab now open on campus

As of Monday, the hours of the university computer lab in the Business and Aerospace building, Room S137, were extended to 24-hour service seven days per week.

The pilot includes an Information Technology Department help desk from the hours of 4:30 p.m. to 8 a.m.

#### Electronic media senior day approaching

Students and teachers will hold a special senior day for Electronic Media Communications majors March 27.

The format will be a series of three panel discussions focusing on preparation for the workforce. There will be several media professionals serving on the panel, including MTSU alumni.

For more information, contact Mary Nichols at mnichols@mtsu.edu or Ben Henson at bsh2e@mtsu.edu.

#### Students subjects of film festival in April

MTSU will host its annual student film festival April 7-11. Films will be shown in the KUC Theatre at 7 p.m. each night. For more information about the film festival, contact Timmy Gibson, festival coordinator, at 867-9916 or by e-mail at aquamouth@yahoo.com

#### 'Collage' still accepting editor applications

Collage will be accepting applications for 2003-2004 editor until March 27. Applications can be picked up in the James Union Building, Room 306.

### Center federally funded



Photo by Jenny Cordle | Chief Photographer

School psychologist Karen Jones finishes a report of a student's assessment in her office in the Center for Dyslexia, which recently received new funding.

## Dyslexia study gets funding

### Money to support greater student assistance

By Linda G. Selby  
Staff Writer

U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon's office recently announced the acquisition of \$100,000 in federal funding for the Tennessee Center for the Study and Treatment of Dyslexia at MTSU.

The funds will be used to develop instructional modules to introduce the syndrome of dyslexia, and consider ways schools might organize themselves to support a student's learning.

"We're delighted to receive the grant, which will allow us to move forward in the development of modules that will help school personnel identify students with dyslexia and to organize school resources to assist these students in order for them to have more success in their school careers," said Diane Sawyer, chair of Excellence in Dyslexic Studies, and the director of the Center for Dyslexia.

"For the past 10 years, the center has served as a model for helping students overcome this disability," Gordon said in a press release.

"When caught early and provided with the right teaching methods, dyslexia doesn't present nearly the learning obstacle it would otherwise."

With the help of the Tennessee General Assembly, the center was created in 1993 with the goal of informing the public about dyslexia, establishing reliable approaches to identifying students with dyslexia and educating teachers on the best practices to promote literacy acquisition among students with dyslexia.

In research accomplished by the Orton Dyslexia Society Research Committee in 1994, the following statement is the working definition of dyslexia adopted by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

"Dyslexia is one of several distinct learning disabilities. It is a specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterized by difficulties in single-word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing. These difficulties in single word decoding are often unexpected in relationship to age and other cognitive and academic abilities; they are not the result of generalized developmental disability or sensory impairment.

See Dyslexia, 2

## Faculty Senate concludes talks on general education revamp

### Staff Reports

The Faculty Senate recently concluded its discussion about MTSU's proposed changes to the general education program.

The new plan is in conjunction with the Tennessee State Board of Regents general education revamp, which will set a universal standard for all 19 TBR schools.

TBR's plan, which will be instituted in the fall of 2004, mandates 41 hours of general

studies. This total is divided up by prescribed numbers of hours in communication, humanities, social sciences, history, natural sciences and mathematics courses.

The plan also details specific learning objectives for each study discipline.

TBR currently requires a minimum of 32 hours of general education but provides no cap on this number. MTSU currently requires 42 hours. TBR's goal is to solidify the hour and

curriculum requirements across the state in order to aid transfer students, who make up 40 percent of graduates, according to William Badley, director of General Studies at MTSU.

"We wanted to find a common core of general education at the lower level, and the next step was to establish a curriculum for all schools," TBR Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Kay Clark told

See Faculty Senate, 2

## Tournament may affect campus parking

### Buses will park along Tennessee

### Staff Reports

The state basketball championships held on campus will continue today and will likely have an impact on student parking.

The Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association boys' tournament will create a sudden influx of traffic on campus until Saturday.

Team buses will park along the east side of Tennessee

Boulevard from university President Sidney McPhee's driveway north to Division Street.

According to a memo circulated via e-mail by university officials, "This will create single-lane traffic for a brief stretch heading north on Tennessee [Boulevard], and motorists and pedestrians are asked to be particularly cautious in that area."

The entrance of Faulkinberry Drive from Tennessee Boulevard will remain closed during the competition.

MTSU students and employees, however, will be allowed to

drive on the east end of Faulkinberry in order to reach the Kirksey Old Main parking lots and Old Main Circle.

The Greenland lot adjacent to the Green Center will be reserved for TSSAA parking only. All parking proceeds go to TSSAA.

The memo encourages commuting students to park in the Tennessee Livestock Center lot and in lots east and south of campus, including the gravel lot on the northwest corner of Rutherford and MTSU

See TSSAA, 2

## MTSU plane damaged while landing

### Instructor, student both unharmed

By Leah Massey  
Staff Writer

An MTSU plane was damaged while landing earlier this month.

As the plane began to land at the Murfreesboro Municipal Airport on March 1, the nose wheel collapsed. The nose then dropped to the surface, and the propeller, located on the nose of the plane, struck the runway, according to aerospace chair Paul Craig. The plane continued to skid down the runway, he said.

Both an instructor and student were aboard the plane when the incident occurred, but there were no serious injuries.

"The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) has officially reported it as an incident," Craig said.

Craig explained that an "incident" means there was little damage and injury, whereas an accident would have been much more severe. The plane was not totaled and will be repaired for use in the future.

The airplane will require a new propeller, and the insurance company will inspect the plane before allowing it to be used in training again.

The inspections will include

the engines, propeller and all of the electrical systems.

According to Craig, although the plane's propeller did hit the ground, there was not enough damage to the runway to warrant closing it for use.

None of the instrumentation within the plane was damaged. The plane, a Cessna 172 RG, is one of three being leased for use by MTSU. Under the terms of the lease, the plane was leased exclusively to the university and belonged to the university at the time of the incident.

It has not yet been determined whether pilot or mechanical error caused the incident.

The Cessna 172 RG is a single engine craft that can carry up to four passengers. In flight, this plane can reach cruise speeds around 120 knots.

The Cessna 172 RG is used to train pilots seeking their commercial pilot's license. In order to graduate from MTSU as a pilot, a student must undergo this training.

The 172 RG consists of a more complex system than planes used in private pilot's license training. The "RG" in the plane's name stands for "retractable gear."

When in flight, the landing gear is retracted into the plane. The gear is then returned to its original position upon landing.

The investigation into what caused the incident is ongoing.

## Butler wins SGA presidency

### Student Government Association Spring 2003 Election Results



Butler

#### Executive Officers

President  
Michelle Butler 913 votes  
Jason Searles 703 votes  
Schylar Shoates 399 votes

#### Executive Vice President

Amanda Newman 1,705 votes

#### Vice President - Administration and Public Affairs

John Stewart 1,233 votes  
John Festervand 623 votes

#### Election Commissioner

Brittany Rogers 1,272  
Jimmy Baker 473

#### Senate Positions College of Basic and Applied Sciences

April Burke 228 votes  
Steven Embree 210 votes  
Walter "Mac" Harper 219 votes  
Jason Hooper 271 votes  
David Robinson 6 votes  
\*1 Remaining Seat to be filled during fall 2003 elections

#### College of Business

Curtis Settle, Jr. 160 votes  
Kyle Tolbert 167 votes  
Joseph Torrence 156 votes  
Brooke Roberson 186 votes  
\*1 Remaining seat to be filled during fall 2003 elections

#### College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

John Arnold 6 votes  
Khanthaly Phommala 3 votes  
\*3 Remaining seats to be filled during fall 2003 elections

For more Election results see page 2

## TSSAA: Horse fair will also slow traffic

Continued from 1

boulevards. Raider Xpress shuttles will run on both tomorrow and Friday from the Livestock and Rutherford lots directly to the Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building, then back to the lots again.

Those shuttles will be marked accordingly, according to the memo.

There will be parking attendants at both ends of Faulkinberry and on Greenland Drive to direct traffic and assist those looking for empty park-

ing spaces. The memo stated that on Friday, students may find it difficult to find parking at the Tennessee Livestock Center and in the north half of the Greenhouse Lot due to the Tennessee Volunteer Horse Fair, which will open that morning and conclude on Sunday.

"We appreciate understanding on the part of students and staff during this second week of TSSAA competition," the memo stated.

"Admittedly, it is an inconvenience - but a small one when measured in terms of the esti-

mated \$3.2 million the two-week event generates in the community, the more than 60,000 fans it brings to MTSU and the tremendous gesture of community service demonstrated by our public university."

For any questions about TSSAA parking, call Parking Services at 898-2850 or Public Safety at 898-2424.

For more information, go to the TSSAA Web site at [www.tssaa.org](http://www.tssaa.org), then click on "2003 State Basketball Tournament Information." ♦

## Election Results: Senators chosen

Continued from 1

### College of Liberal Arts

Whitney Fisher	133 votes
Jenny Rowan	155 votes
Ashley Elizabeth Graham	159 votes
Ashley Haun	131 votes

### College of Mass Communication

Adam Barnosky	190 votes
Melanie Blair	236 votes
Bridget Baggett	173 votes
Lea Wilson	199 votes
Gina Marie Garera	224 votes

Christopher Treidel	137 votes
Andrea LaVant	138 votes
Deryke Bellew	111 votes
Kasey Talbott	128 votes

**Undeclared**  
\*3 seats will be filled during fall 2003 elections

### At-Large Senators

Johnna Lynn Percy	982 votes
Mandie Thacker	1,195 votes
Ryan Blazer	44 votes
Chastity Wilson	38 votes

\*Still waiting for verification of eligibility

## Dyslexia: Workshops to inform participants

Continued from 1

different forms of language, often including, in addition to problems with reading, a conspicuous problem with proficiency in writing and spelling."

Dyslexia is found in families across the full range of socioeconomic backgrounds in society. A distinguishing characteristic of dyslexia is it will not necessarily disappear once someone reaches maturity.

Although appropriate remedial treatments and the development of compensatory strategies may moderate its effects, it will continue into adulthood.

The new modules funded by the grant will be used to fund a project beginning with two groups of educators who will learn to use the modules. One group will come to the MTSU campus and the other group will participate via distance learning vehicles such as the satellite uplinks and telecourses.

"We will evaluate the effectiveness of each of these modes of training delivery," Sawyer said. "It is our hope that the distance learning vehicles will be equally effective. This will open the door to training for school personnel throughout the country."

Workshops are designed to

give participants detailed information about the condition so they can specifically address the needs of those children who suffer from the disorder. Although this project will primarily assist teachers and students across Tennessee, they hope to gain the interest of centers around the country and allow them to have access to the information MTSU's center will gather.

"Ensuring our children have the best learning opportunities available to them is a top priority of mine," Gordon said. "And this center has done much to help children overcome a rather common disorder." ♦

## Faculty Senate: President has final say

Continued from 1

Sidelines in August 2002.

MTSU's proposal would work in conjunction with the newly mandated plan, but there are a few differences.

"The MTSU General Studies Commission recommended a more rigorous general studies

core curriculum than TBR," Faculty Senate President Jennifer Dooley said. "One of the main differences is MTSU recommended five hours of upper-division general studies."

According to Dooley, the Senate was not in favor of this stricter proposal. This opinion was given to former interim

provost, Bob Eaker, who then made his own recommendation to university President Sidney McPhee, who will have the final say.

To the best of Dooley's knowledge, the president has not acted on this yet, and McPhee could not be reached for comment before press time. ♦



Hear ye, hear ye!

Sidelines' Campus Events calendar is back in business.

Come by the JUB, Room 310, and fill out the campus events form.

Reach for the Pinnacle Student Success Workshops

Five Steps to a College Paper

Wed., March 19  
12:25-1:25 p.m. OR  
Thurs, March 20  
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

This seminar will help students to prepare a paper step by step. They will learn to focus on the topic, how to conduct research, how to organize their results, and how to organize their drafts and perfect a final paper.

Call 898-5989 to reserve a place at a session of your choice. The workshops will be held in KUC 320.

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**Creation/Evolution Seminar: "The Truth About Origins"**  
March 21-23, 2003

Hosted By  
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216 East Main @ Academy  
Murfreesboro

Guest Speaker, Brad Harrub, Ph.D.

Friday	March 21 - 7 P.M.	"Evolution And The Origins Of Man"
Saturday	March 22 - 10 A.M.	"Age of the Earth, Noah's Flood"
	11 A.M.	"The Dinosaur Dilemma"
Sunday	March 23 - 9 A.M.	"Scientific Accuracy of the Bible"
	10 A.M.	"Why We Are Losing Our Children"

The lectures are free and open to the public

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# OPINIONS

3 ♦ SIDELINES

Wednesday, March 19, 2003

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

From the Editorial Board

## Investigators right to admit mistake

For those of you who didn't get your fill of news the week before Spring Break, did you know that a Tennessee Bureau of Investigation agent was taking names of speakers at the "Books Not Bombs" rally here?

Neither did the protesters – until a government agent approached them and asked for their names.

The event exploded throughout the week and into Spring Break. The agent, TBI veteran Greg Elliott, had been coming up to people who had just spoken on the Knoll and asking for their names. The TBI had sent an agent to the rally – the first time an agent has been to a rally in 12 months – and, according to top TBI officials, he overstepped his bounds by what amounts to gathering intelligence on peacefully gathered citizens. The agent has since been reassigned.

Despite the fact that we live in a "post-Sept. 11 world," as the cryptic types like to call it, it is absurd for a government agent to be monitoring people just for speaking at a rally. Even if the information is never used (or discarded, as what should have been done), it amounts to creating a file on people defying the position of the U.S. government. Not frightened? You should be.

Kudos are due, however, to the TBI for taking it on the chin and admitting that the agent's actions were improper and would not happen again. If this had been the FBI, John Ashcroft or some other Bush cronie would have gone to the podium and insisted that the name-gathering was all part of our vague war on terror.

But it's hard to believe that the TBI had no idea what was going on before word started spreading and the story hit the Nashville media. Would the TBI have come forward with this info if organizers didn't (rightfully) make such a big stink about the whole incident? Doubtful.

In any case, our government has enough to worry about and should not be in the business of spying on vocal citizens who disagree with U.S. foreign policy. ♦

## Israeli bulldozer murder inexcusable

### Finding Trouble

Audie Sheridan  
Staff Columnist



Rachel Corrie was 23 years old when an Israeli bulldozer killed her.

According to *The New York Times*, the bulldozer knocked the Olympia, Wash., native down, ran her over, then backed up and did it again.

Why would the driver do this?

She dared to stand in front of that tracked piece of heavy equipment in an attempt to keep it from destroying a Palestinian home.

Did she deserve a barbaric slow murder for that? Not a chance.

Imagine, for a moment, being crushed under eight tons of mobile steel, moving on teeth-like tracks to chew you up like a Twinkie.

Then consider the posi-

tion of the Israeli Army. Capt. Jacob Dallal spoke for them, saying, "We are dealing with a group of protesters who were acting very irresponsibly, putting everyone in danger."

Who, exactly, is everyone? Surely he doesn't mean the men driving the team of bulldozers working that day, or the Israeli Army regulars manning the tank protecting the bulldozers?

Maybe he means the Palestinians taking fire from the Israeli Army immediately after the dozer ran over Corrie, one of whom died as a result.

Dallal also called the incident a "regrettable accident."

Indeed. There is no accident here. Corrie's death is the result of a deliberate devil-may-care attitude of the Israelis toward any and every thing opposing their domination of real estate.

They can afford this attitude solely because of their U.S. support.

Since 1967, the United

Nations passed 68 resolutions condemning, in various degrees, Israel's offensive against Palestinian civilians.

This number would be much higher if not for U.S. vetoes in the U.N. security council. Here is a brief and not at all comprehensive list of resolutions we vetoed.

We opposed: sending U.N. observers into the occupied territories of Israel, telling Israel to respect Muslim holy places, stopping Israel from building settlements in the occupied territories and telling Israel to abide by the Geneva conventions in their treatment of Palestinian civilians.

Not at all surprisingly, targeting homes is against the Fourth Geneva Convention which protects civilians from occupying powers.

Who are we kidding? Telling the Israelis to abide by the rules has proven pointless. The only country Israel listens to is the United States, and we dare

not even scold them for their obviously overzealous offensive against Palestinians.

The United States' reaction to Rachel Corrie's death was to have State Department spokesmen Lou Finton tell us the U.S. "deeply regrets this tragic death of an American citizen."

How heartfelt. How helpful.

Words like that do nothing on this front. At the very least, our government – could demand an apology from Israel, both to us as a nation and to the poor girl's family.

Why is the United States, the most powerful nation on earth, so terrified to condemn Israel?

Instead we simply call for an "immediate and full investigation."

No investigation needed, Finton.

An American citizen died under an Israeli Army bulldozer operating in the Gaza Strip in clear viola-

tion of the Fourth Geneva Convention and countless U.N. resolutions.

There are no questions here – only answers.

Answers this country has for too long lacked the stones to implement.

We rely on Israel for nothing, we pour money into its illegal settlements of the occupied territories, we ship it military equipment and bulldozers and our alliance with this miserable little country costs us dearly in the international arena.

It is time to cut them off.

This is the only way to get peace in the Middle East, and it's the only way we will prevent more deaths.

Rachel Corrie stood up for the value of life, and Israel knocked her down and drove a bulldozer over her.

Now it's our turn. ♦

*Audie Sheridan is a senior philosophy major and can be reached via e-mail at als3g@mtsu.edu.*

## Facts behind 'free press'

### Cosmo's Corner

Jeremy Coseo  
Staff Columnist



How much does the news affect your perception?

It's probably more than you would admit. We can't help it. We're trusting creatures. We want to believe the things written or reported are true, that they're unobstructed in their reality and content. But the fact of the matter is they're not.

The things we read in newspapers and magazines aren't directly from the source. As a matter of fact, we're lucky if they've been through only three or four people other than the source.

That's right – what ends up on the page with someone's name or picture attached to it isn't necessarily what that person wrote or intended.

You see, any type of printed work, like a news story or an opinions piece, has to run the gauntlet, so to speak. First, the piece is written by the writer or reporter, then it moves on to that writer's editor, then through the editor's editors and is edited one more time by copy editors before it hits the press. That's just the basic run for a general piece of work that appears in a newspaper or magazine.

That's quite a few people working on a piece written by one person. So, what makes it onto the page has been for-

matted to fit that page – it's been changed.

You can imagine where problems might arise.

If a story seems too edgy, tone it down. Exposes too much truth, cut parts out. In the most extreme cases, a piece won't even run.

What about a free press?

There is no such thing – it's an oxymoron.

A newspaper or magazine's first priority is to make money. If they don't make money, they can't run their paper. Second, they have to control their content. They can't just allow anything to be said because they might anger the wrong people.

What about free speech?

Sure, you can have free speech, but free speech in print is another story. Being a writer in the press, you're as free as your editor allows you to be.

The stuff you read has been adulterated. The writer's and reporter's words aren't sacred. They're used to fill space. Content and meaning take a back seat to standards and political correctness.

What does this mean to the unassuming people out there? It means that what they really isn't.

It means that a lot of the things you and I read in papers and magazines have been made palatable. The true grit and reality has been denied to us.

Instead, we get material that doesn't challenge us to think too much for ourselves. To make our

own conclusion from the facts presented to us. "Tell them what to think, and they will think it."

This control of ideas is dangerous. It's also un-American. That's why we have the First Amendment – to keep the government from infringing on the freedom of speech or of the press.

However, the First Amendment is designed to keep out government interference, not private interference.

That is a major flaw. Private interference and control of those freedoms can be just as dangerous as governmental, if not more so. The government is to be held accountable to the people. As for the private citizen who controls the press – who is he or she held accountable to?

To you, the reader.

Don't settle for medi-

ocrity. Demand the facts and truth from your publication of choice. Demand an unobstructed view. Demand fairness of coverage.

Or, demand another source for your information.

Don't feel restricted to your options of publications.

The power lies with you. If you stop buying a certain paper or magazine and other people stop buying those works, eventually one will be developed to fit your standards.

The truth hurts, but lies kill. ♦

*Jeremy Coseo is a freshman journalism major and can be reached via e-mail at jdc3g@mtsu.edu.*

## Don't 'choke' on need for affection

### Filler

Brandon Morrison  
Staff Columnist



Some people will do anything to get some lovin'.

A 36-year-old man from Arcadia, Fla., gave up on flowers and candy and jumped straight into faking choking episodes to gain the attention he craves.

Over the past few weeks, "Choking Man," as police have dubbed him, pretended to choke at various cities in Florida. Each time, he received help from women who happened to be around during his choking spells. After helping, the women were covered by hugs and kisses by "Choking Man." So far, there have been 16 reports of his unusual habit all over Florida.

So far, no one has pressed charges, and for good reason.

"Choking Man" isn't sick or demented. He's not a pervert. Many of the women who reported helping "Choking Man" said that, after spitting up whatever he was choking on, he would thank them profusely and even show them pictures of his family. No women reported that he stole anything from them, touched them inappropriately or even said anything out of line. Some of the women reflected that he seemed "totally harmless."

"He cried and hugged me, and he said he called his wife to let her know he was OK," Mary Lou DiMaggio told the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* about her experience with "Choking Man."

"I figured it was his way of avoiding that he had almost died."

This man isn't sick. Granted, what he did is irresponsible and grounds for getting some psychiatric help, but his only problem is letting his anxieties get the best of him. Everything else he did was in reaction to his phobia. He let his fear of nobody loving him take control of his life. He sought and found a way to experience affection without risking rejection.

Talk about hitting close to home. Granted, not many guys run around with a bag of peanuts halfway down their throat in order to catch that attractive blonde's eye. However, it's easy to relate to someone wanting attention without wanting to risk exposure and vulnerability.

"Choking Man's" antics haven't been completely harmless. One of the women involved was hospitalized with a panic attack. After she helped "Choking Man," she was freaked out by the experience. She couldn't sleep. Even though the woman returned to work, she can't stop thinking about the man who duped her.

Fortunately, "Choking Man's" story has a happy ending. He checked himself into a hospital last Tuesday to receive psychiatric treatment.

With some effort and a little luck, he won't bother any more women with his gawking complex.

Now, if it were only that simple for the rest of us. ♦

*Brandon Morrison is a sophomore media design major and can be reached via e-mail at bjm2k@mtsu.edu.*

## Correction

In the Wednesday, March 5, edition of *Sidelines*, Alpha Chi Omega was incorrectly identified as Alpha Omicron Pi. *Sidelines* regrets the error.

## SIDELINES

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\*denotes member of editorial board

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## Letters Policy

*Sidelines* welcomes letters to the editor from all readers. Please e-mail letters to [slopinio@mtsu.edu](mailto:slopinio@mtsu.edu), and include your name and a phone number for verification. *Sidelines* will not publish anonymous letters. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, length and content.



## Letter to the Editor

### Breast-feeding women's natural right

To the Editor:

I'm writing in response to Heidi Ward's column on breast-feeding ("Breast-feeding requires tact," March 5).

I agree that women shouldn't have their breast in full view; however, there are some people who are just ignorant when it comes to the subject of breast-feeding. I was breast-feeding my son in a restaurant with a blanket covering everything, and a woman at the table next to me asked me to go to the restroom to do it.

My response was, "Do you eat your dinner in the bathroom?"

As far as adjusting the time to feed your baby, obviously Ward doesn't have any children. When a baby is hungry, you feed it. Would you rather sit in a restaurant and listen to it screaming?

If you're uncomfortable seeing a woman breast-feed, then don't watch her.

Brooke Hamilton  
Sophomore, Mass Communication

We print our publication on paper straight from the lovin' tree.

[slopinio@mtsu.edu](mailto:slopinio@mtsu.edu)

## Basking in the Cayman Islands

MTSU students spend break on the beach

By Colleen Johnson  
Contributor

Within 45 minutes of launching off the dock, we float atop a clear blue ocean just above a reef filled with coral, sponge and hundreds of other sea creatures.

There is no detectable current, and the lure of the view below has everyone eager to take the plunge. Once our gear is adjusted, we take a giant stride entry into the glassy depths.

As we begin our leisurely descent, the world goes silent, and the only sound comes from our own slow breathing through regulators. With visibility of up to 100 feet underwater, it feels as if we are inside a giant aquarium. We glide toward a section of wall covered with barrel sponge and fan coral. To our right wall pulses with colorful life. To our left is nothing but blue abyss.

A shadow appears just off the wall from the deep. A 6-foot-long Caribbean black-tipped reef shark patrols the edge of the blue, coolly swimming past us as smaller fish head for cover.

When it disappears, those lucky enough to catch a glimpse exchange underwater grins.

This year marks the first Spring Break scuba diving trip offered by the MTSU Campus Recreation Aquatics Department.

Advertising for the trip began at the beginning of the fall semester.

The cost of the trip was \$1,500 for MTSU affiliates and just \$100 more for friends and family of MTSU. The package included round-trip airfare from Nashville to Cayman Brac, any ground transportation, six-night accommodations, two meals a day, five days of two-tank boat dives and unlimited shore diving.

We met at the Nashville Airport at 4:30 a.m., and after an excruciatingly long journey from Murfreesboro to the tiny island called Cayman Brac, the group of 10 decided it was well worth the wait.

However, the journey was not without its snags. Susan McClaran, a friend of an MTSU professor, failed to bring the correct birth certificate to allow her to leave the country.

"I thought my dream trip had been ruined because I brought the wrong one," she says.

"But luckily there were people willing to work with me in Miami Airport. I paid \$10 to sign an affidavit, and they said I was good to go."

There was also a six-hour layover in Miami.

"You can only walk around Miami airport so many times," says MTSU junior Wendy Gray. "I finally got bored with people watching and just slept on the floor at the gate."

Once we arrived at Divi



(Above) Members of the MTSU Campus Recreation Aquatics Department pose for a picture while on the ocean. (Below) The group painted their names on a board to have as a reminder of their trip to the Cayman Islands.

Tiara Beach Resort, there were no more worries. After 15 hours of travel, we all needed a good night's rest to be ready for scuba diving in the morning.

Cayman Brac, the second smallest island of the Cayman Islands, is as relaxing as it gets for vacationing divers. This island is a laid-back place with quiet beaches and quick runs to many breathtaking dive sites. It's hard not to notice the mesmerizing turquoise blue water that surrounds it.

Cayman Brac is located about 500 miles south of Miami and about 90 miles north of Cuba. The Brac is known world-wide as one of the best dive destinations in the Caribbean for its healthy reefs and abundant marine life.

"Divi Tiara's dive operation is the best I have ever been to," says Ray Wiley, associate director of Campus Recreation. "We were treated really well. I liked how they were so safety-conscious and checked our equipment. They really spoil you here."

The folks at Divi's scuba shop were more than helpful. They carried our heavy scuba gear from our room to the boat and had everything set up for us when we got on the boat at 9 a.m.

They helped us in and out of the water and changed our air tanks before we could blink an eye. After our last dive, they even went as far as to clean our equipment and carry it back to our rooms for us.

If you asked a dive master



about any ocean life, you got the *Encyclopedia Britannica* explanation. They were very knowledgeable of the life and geography of the Cayman Islands. They took pride in the reefs of the Caymans and stressed the importance of preserving the reefs.

"I thought all the dive masters were incredibly nice and helpful," says Keena Clark, a sophomore and aquatic staff member at MTSU. "Because I finished my certification while I was down here, I got to dive with just about everyone that works here."

Keena began her scuba certification at MTSU under Jerri Burch. She lacked only five open water dives to finish her scuba certification. With the help of the dive masters at Divi Tiara she was able to complete the process at the resort. The group got to take two

dives every morning for five days. Everyone was also given the opportunity to take a night dive on Tuesday.

Because Keena finished her certification the morning before the night dive, it was technically her first real dive.

"Everyone thought I was crazy for diving at night my first time," Keena says with a proud smile. "The dive masters kept telling me how brave I was."

In addition to wonderful scuba diving, MTSU's spring breakers were also treated to many delicious meals.

The cooks at Divi Tiara prepared everything from scratch and provided mouth-watering seafood. There were no complaints from anyone at the end of the week, except no one wanted to leave.

At the end of a blissful week, it was time to face an equally

long trip back to Murfreesboro. After waiting in long lines to get our luggage and go through customs, the group faced a nine-hour layover in Miami.

"It made the trip home a long one, but it gave us time to get out of the airport and see the city of Miami," Wendy says. "I finally got to see South Beach. It was very exciting."

Waterlogged, mildly jet-lagged and tanned, the group arrived safe and sound at Nashville's airport on Friday night. Everyone hugged goodbye and headed off to face the real world again.

"I've already started the planning for the trip next year. This trip was definitely a success. I think what made this trip so great was the continuity of our group. Everyone got along so well," Wiley says. ♦

## Slay Me

Professor sinks his teeth into 'Buffy'

By Matthew Guy  
Contributor

I've got a secret. I'm a fan of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

I use the term "fan" loosely; I am actually an obsessive, watch-it-every-day, world-revolves-around-all-things *Buffy* sort of person. I even had *Buffy* quoted in my wedding.

I'm not alone, though. What I didn't know is that MTSU is home to another *Buffy* fan who rivals me in his obsession. He's attended international conferences on *Buffy* and even edited a book on *Buffy* to prove it.



Lavery

David Lavery, co-editor of *Fighting the Forces: What's at Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Slayage: The On-Line Journal of Buffy Studies*, has taught in the English department at MTSU since 1993. He's developing a graduate/undergraduate course on *Buffy* for spring 2004.

"Students here first led me to *Buffy*," Lavery tells me from his Peck Hall office, which is covered with *Buffy* posters. "My first reaction when they told me about *Buffy*: I care why?"

A little background first: *Buffy*, which aired on the WB network from 1997 to 2001, and is currently in its seventh and final season on UPN, is about Buffy Summers, "One girl in all the world, a Chosen One. One born with the strength and skill to hunt the vampires, to stop the spread of evil."

It goes much deeper than that, which is why it gained the attention of scholars and entertainment critics the world over as well as some 16-year-old guys who think series star Sarah Michelle Gellar is hot.

But why is an English professor so interested in *Buffy*?

"I am an English teacher who did my doctoral dissertation on film, so I've always been a fan of the visual narrative as much as I have been with literature," he says, sounding more like a professor than an obsessed fan. Lavery received his Ph.D. in English from the University of Florida in 1978.

"There is no question that *Buffy* is the richest verbal show on television. From the puns to the alliterations to the witticisms, the writing, plain and simple, is fabulous," he says. "It is also the funniest show on television."

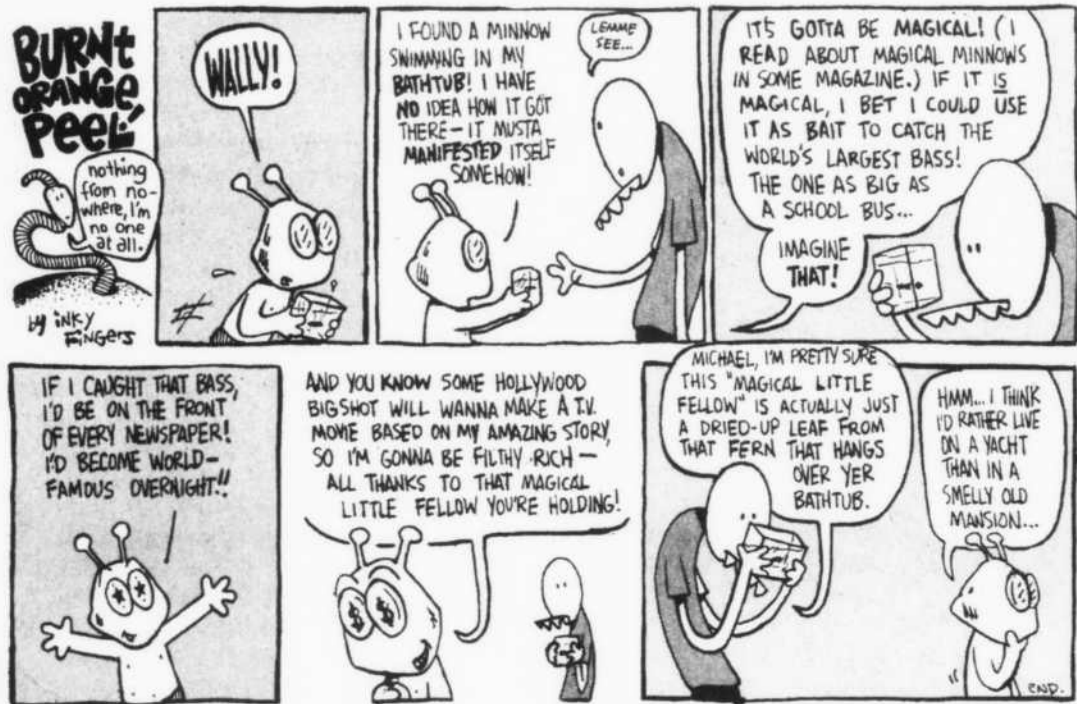
He compares it to another critically acclaimed show as well.

"*Buffy* works on a multiplicity of levels, just like *The Simpsons*. *Buffy* can appeal to all sorts of people. You don't have to have your Ph.D. to appreciate it."

*Buffy* isn't just funny; it can also be heart-wrenchingly sad. "So often, I have been left in tears from that show," Lavery confides in me.

Lavery's book, *Fighting the Forces*, which he co-edited with Rhonda Wilcox, professor of English at Gordon College in Georgia, is a collection of academic essays written about *Buffy*. A sampling of essay titles include: "I'm *Buffy* and you're history: Post-modern politics in *Buffy*," "My Emotions Give Me Power: The containment of girl's anger in *Buffy*," and "Sex and the Single Vampire: The Evolution of the Vampire Lothario and its representation

See *Buffy*, 5



## Campus Events

### March 19

A lecture on women's contributions to science will be given in the Cason-Kennedy Nursing Building, Room 121, at 1 p.m.

### March 20

DJs on The Knoll, presented by MTSU Concerts, will perform from noon to 3 p.m. on the Keathley University Center Knoll. The event will feature DJ Don Juan and DJ Proly Not.

The Eta Gamma Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity presents The Real World Reunion at 7 p.m. in the Tucker Theatre. The show will feature cast members Coral, from New York, and Steven, from Las Vegas. The event is free and open to everyone.

### March 21

Showcase on the Knoll, presented by MTSU Concerts, will feature various MTSU student songwriters. The showcase will take place from 2-6 p.m. and is free and open to everyone.

### March 21-23

The Tennessee Volunteer Horse Fair will take place in the Tennessee Livestock Center from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Mar. 21-22 and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Mar. 23. For more information, call (615) 395-9294.

### March 22

The MTSU Jazz Fest will take place in the Music Hall of the Wright Music Building. ♦

# Buffy: MTSU English professor, author designed Web site for Buffy fans

Continued from 4

in *Buffy*." His Web site, *Slayage: the Online Journal of Buffy Studies*, is an ongoing electronic journal publishing articles and essays that attempt to deconstruct the *Buffy* universe.

Lavery also travels the world lecturing on *Buffy*. Last year, he attended an academic conference on *Buffy* in London. In July, he and Wilcox will be the keynote speakers at the Sonic Synergies Creative Cultures Conference in Australia. He's also bringing an international *Buffy* conference to Nashville in May 2004.

"*Buffy* always assumes we are smart, and most television shows assume we are stupid," Lavery says.

It's his love for the show that has some critics of the scholarly approach to *Buffy* crying foul. One argument is that academic *Buffy* fans are so in love with the show that they can't see *Buffy*

for what it really is. Lavery's response: "So what?"

"I'm not objective, and I have never been objective toward any literature, film or television that I have loved," Lavery says, his passion swelling.

According to Wilcox, people who criticize *Buffy* scholarship are unaware of cultural history.

"When Shakespeare was alive, Elizabethan drama was seen as popular culture, not high art," Wilcox claims. "Do you see a pattern emerging?"

MTSU student Jeremy Brown appreciates the work Lavery and Wilcox do.

"I personally think that a lot of TV doesn't do anything for us," he says. "Should we study it? I think so. It's possibly, next to the Internet, the largest information medium our society uses."

Lavery is no stranger to television. In addition to *Buffy*, he has edited books on *Twin Peaks*, *The X-Files*, *The Sopranos* and is currently doing one on *Seinfeld*.

Perhaps it's egalitarianism that kept *Buffy* on the air for seven years despite declining ratings. Positive reviews of *Buffy* appeared in *Christianity Today* and *National Review*. Last year, *The Door Magazine*, a religious satire magazine, named *Buffy* "Theologian of the Year."

Lavery is intrigued by the fact that religious conservatives enjoy *Buffy*.

"*Buffy* is this immensely moral show in a lot of ways. If you want to look at it from a right wing perspective, actions have repercussions."

In an early story line, after *Buffy* has sex for the first time, her vampire-with-a-tortured-soul boyfriend immediately "changes" and becomes evil.

Lavery quickly points out, however, that religious fans may

not like the show as much as they say.

"I'm somewhat skeptical when the right wing claims to like *Buffy*. I'm certain they only like *Buffy* an inch deep because if *Buffy* has any sort of politics, it's definitely on the left."

Fans like Lavery and I need to start praying for something to fill the large void that will be left in our lives come May, when the final episode of *Buffy* is scheduled to air.

Last week, Gellar announced she won't return to the series for an eighth season, prompting UPN executives to cancel the series. However, series creator Joss Whedon is in the process of developing several possible spin-offs of *Buffy*.

"I am getting choked up just thinking about it, but I am rooting for the show to end well," Lavery admits.

"*Buffy* has the possibility of ending right, unlike a lot of shows that went on for too

long." Despite the demise of the series, *Buffy* continues to play a large part in Lavery's life. He will be a fan for life.

"I am a fan of *Buffy*," Lavery says. "At the end, I find myself rooting for *Buffy*. Sometimes I root for creativity. My binding interest is to cheer for creativity. But at the heart of it, what really inspires me is that the show works and that it remains this blessing to be able to tune in once a week and not be disappointed."

Still, Lavery may not be the biggest fan in the world, or the most obsessed.

"Sometimes, I want to ask fans of similar shows if they have ever had a girlfriend," Lavery tells me when discussing some of the conventions he has attended.

"I recognize that there are levels of obsession that go way beyond mine." ♦



## Dear Annie

### Boyfriend wants third wheel to roll away

Dear Annie,

This may not seem like a big deal, but my girlfriend's friend just broke up with her boyfriend. Now guess who she's spending all her time with? That's right, my girlfriend and me.

My girlfriend thing is driving me crazy! My third friend and I keep having fights about it because I don't really like her friend and don't like her hanging around all the time.

My girlfriend feels bad for her friend and tries to include her so she's not alone. This has been going on for about a month, and it's causing serious problems.

How can I get rid of this girl without coming off like an "insensitive guy?"

- Cool Guy

Dear Cool Guy,

There is a simple solution to this

problem. You need to find your girlfriend's friend a new boyfriend.

I know this may sound a little unusual considering some of my other advice - but I've had the same problem before. I hooked up "a third wheel" with a girlfriend one time, and they ended up getting married.

If you don't have any single friends, communicate to your girlfriend that you want to spend some quality time alone with her. You need to compromise on this issue. Sit down together and negotiate on how much time her friend can spend hanging out with both of you.

Also, I think it is very nice for your girlfriend to include her single friend. However, there needs to be a limit. It's not her responsibility to babysit this girl and make sure she doesn't feel lonely.



Illustration by Lucas Antoniak | Staff Illustrator

I think the problem here is that your girlfriend is being more understanding of her friend's feelings than of yours.

If you explain your situation to your girlfriend, just as you told me, then I don't think you'll come off as an "insensitive guy." Any guy who is willing to compromise is a "cool guy."

Please e-mail your questions to [DearMtsuAnnie@aol.com](mailto:DearMtsuAnnie@aol.com).

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## Blue Raider track team sends two to tourney

By David Hunter  
Senior Staff Reporter

After winning their third straight Sun Belt Conference title, the Middle Tennessee indoor track team had two representatives in this past weekend's NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Mardy Scales and Rosemary Okafor were the two qualifiers for Middle Tennessee. Scales, who won the Men's Sun Belt Outstanding Track Performer at the SBC Championships, participated in the 60-meter event.



Scales

Okafor, who took home the same award on the women's side, competed in the 200-meter event. Last year at the same event, Scales finished eighth despite a hamstring injury. The performance earned him All-American honors. At this year's competition, Scales ran a 6.66 seconds in his preliminary heat to earn him eighth place. It was the last spot taken for the 60m finals. The other runners in the 60m final included Mississippi State's Pierre Brown, Tre Gardner of Texas, Florida's Ahman Jasmine, Texas Christian University's Michael Frater, Julien Dunkley of East Carolina, Oregon's Samie Parker and Clemson's Larry Griffin.

In the men's 60m finals, Scales' seventh place finish in a time of 6.70 seconds earned the 66th All American honor in Middle Tennessee history under long time head coach Dean Hayes. The finish was a one-place improvement from last year's eighth place standing.

ECU's Julien Dunkley took home the victory in 60m in a time of 6.54 seconds. The time was better than the 6.55 seconds he put up in the prelims the night before.

In the 200m preliminaries, Okafor's time was not enough to earn a spot in the finals. She did, however, run a season-best time of 23.64 seconds in her heat to put her in 15th place out of 20 runners in the final prelim standings.

Louisiana State University's Muna Lee broke Merlene Ottey's collegiate record in the same heat race with a time of 22.49 seconds. The time was also the fastest in the world this year. Lee took home the victory with a time of 22.61 seconds in the 200m finals, which was the third fastest in the world this year.

The week before at the Last Chance Meet in Ames, Iowa, several other members of the MT track team were unable to earn a spot in their respective events for the NCAA Championships.

For the men, Jasper Demps and Linnie Yarbrough competed in the 60-meter hurdles event. Neither runner was able to make it into the finals of the meet.

Also running for the MT men was the 4x400-meter relay squad with Wesley Dupar-Scott, D.J. Spann, Tim Hicks and Sean Waller. The relay team finished the event with a time of 3:09.42 to place them sixth.

On the MT's women's side, Kishara George finished 10th in the 400m in a time of 56.11 seconds. Okafor was unable to compete in the event because of sickness. Her sickness also prevented the 4x400m-relay team from participating in the meet.

Both squads open the outdoor season this weekend at the Alabama Relays in Tuscaloosa, Ala. ♦

## Hilltoppers sweep SBC tournament

By Osby Martin  
Staff Reporter

Middle Tennessee played hard and left it all on the court but came up short in Bowling Green, Ky., last week.

The championship game had an electric atmosphere.

MT made it to the Sun Belt Conference championship game for the first time ever to face Western Kentucky on March 11 on ESPN. It marked the first time that both championship games, men's and women's, were played between the same schools.

For the third straight day, MT started strong, jumping out to a 20-9 lead with 4:15 left in the first half on an alley-oop slam by John Humphrey, but, unlike the previous two times, MT couldn't capitalize on it,

going the next 6:15 without scoring a point.

Western started poorly, especially shooting the basketball, but a smothering defense would keep them in the game and allow them to go on a 14-3 run to end the half and tie the score at 23 going into the locker room.

MT couldn't put Western away early because of turnovers. Western only shot 28 percent from the floor in the first half.

During a time span of eight minutes, Western went from being down 11 points to leading by nine. Western would not look back, although MT was able to come to within five points. Western would answer with a 14-2 run that blew the game open.

See **Hilltoppers, 8**

## Lady Raiders shot at Big Dance deflected by Western Kentucky

By Osby Martin  
Staff Reporter

The Lady Raiders came up one shot short of putting on their dancing shoes in their loss at the Sun Belt Conference Tournament championship game in Bowling Green, Ky.

MT faced off against rival Western Kentucky. The teams

split their regular season matchups with both teams winning on their home floor.

The game's first five minutes saw the usual championship game jitters as both teams committed some silly turnovers and missed some easy shots.

Western opened up a

See **Big Dance, 8**

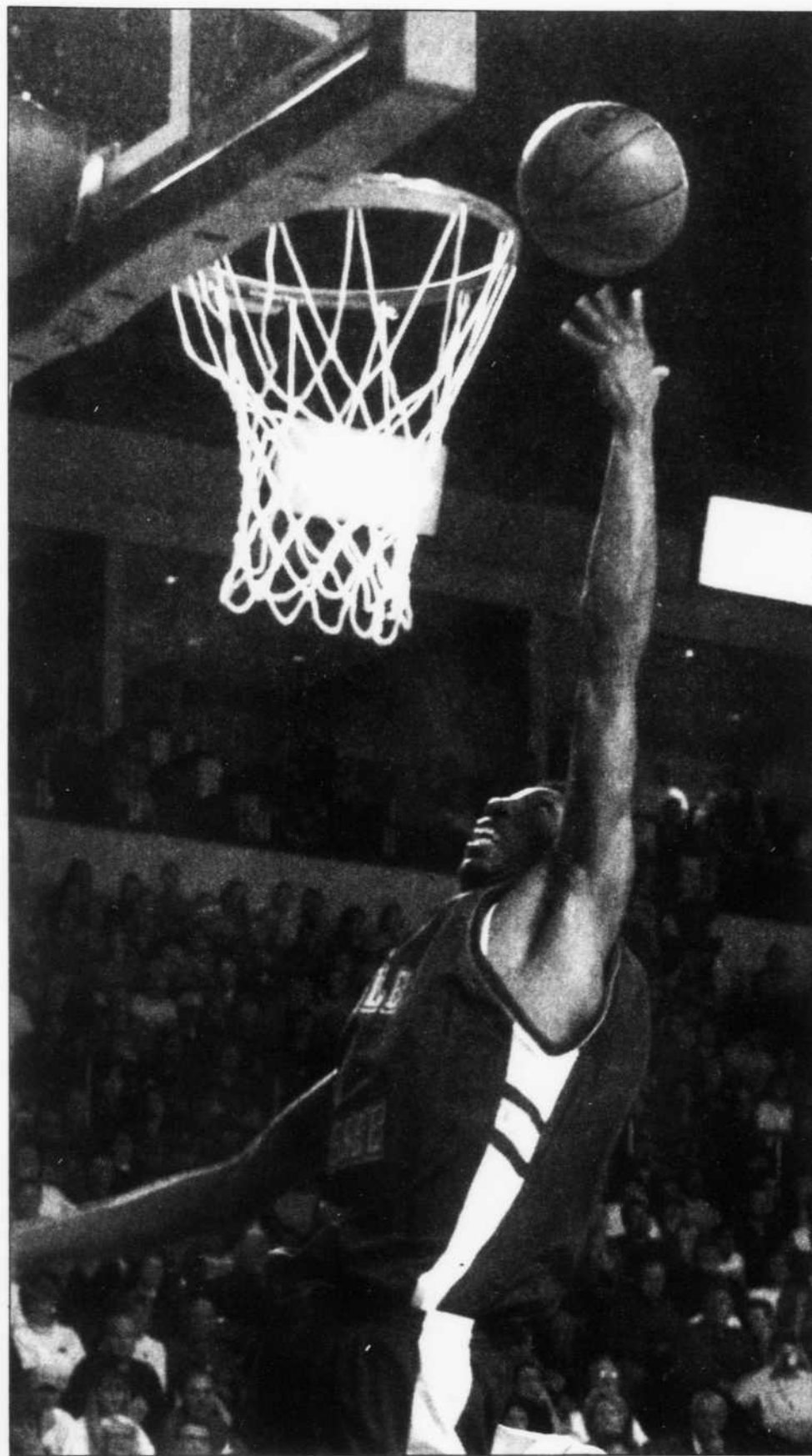


Photo by Jenny Cordle | Chief Photographer

MT forward William Pippen earns the team two points with a layup. Pippen was the team's highest scorer with 12 points during the night. Pippen, along with Tommy Gunn, were named part of the SBC All-Tournament team.

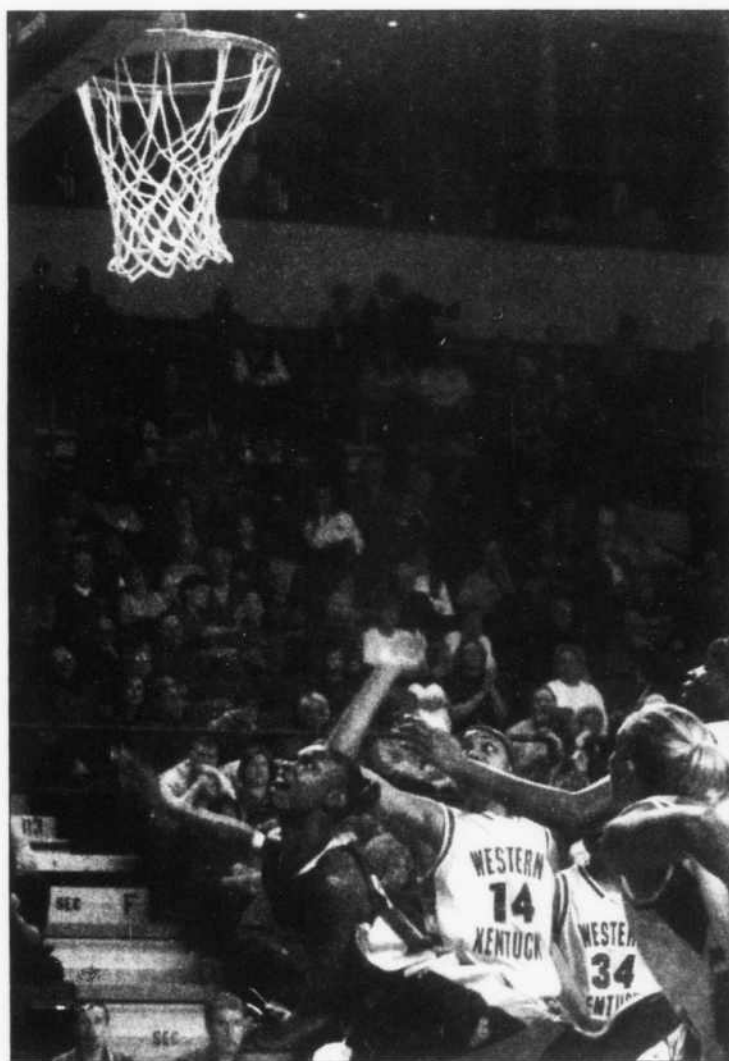


Photo by Jenny Cordle | Chief Photographer

Patrice Holmes watches as her shot spirals its way into the basket at the SBC championship game against WKU.

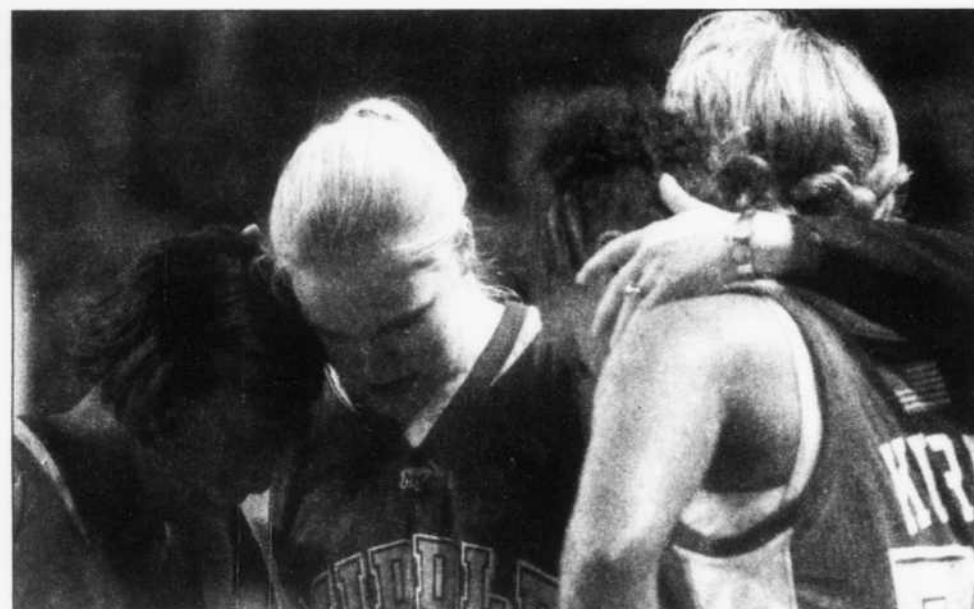


Photo by Jenny Cordle | Chief Photographer

Jennifer Justice, Mia Parvianen, Coach Stephany Smith and Eboni Kirby comfort each other after the close 86-83 loss against Western Kentucky.

## Softball team produces wins over break

By Trey Porter  
Staff Writer

During Spring Break, the Lady Raiders were busy winning softball games.

It all started Saturday in Cape Girardeau, Mo., where the Lady Raiders (11-6) came out slugging as Jennifer Dorias and Megan Cherinka launched their first home runs to help MT win three games in opening day action of the Southeast Missouri Classic.

Drake University was the first team to fall to the Lady Raiders' Spring Break winning streak, losing 3-2.

Senior ace Stacy Preator owned the mound for six innings by allowing no scores and only one hit. She racked up six strikeouts. Cherinka, the first baseman, put up a homer in the top of the fourth, and second baseman Dorias followed with a three-run bomber



File Photo

The Lady Raiders fell to UAB 15-3 on Sunday.

over the left field wall.

Lipscomb was the last team to fall on Saturday, giving up a 2-1 decision to the Lady Raiders.

Freshman Muriel Ledbetter owned Lipscomb for the entire

game as she gave up one hit and pocketed the win, which put her 3-1 on the season.

Kip Phillips, who has found a bag safely in 12 straight

See **Softball, 7**

## Lady Raider softball splits double header versus UAB

By Josh Beasley  
Staff Reporter

Cortney Mitchell and Danni DeCamino each hit home runs as Middle Tennessee softball (11-6) split a double header with UAB (14-10), winning 3-1 and losing 15-3, Wednesday at Lady Raider Field.

Mitchell knocked in her third home run of the year in the Lady Raiders' opening game as she took a pitch over the left field wall in the third inning to make the score 2-0. Middle Tennessee got on the board early in the bottom of the first inning when centerfielder Kip Phillips pulled a double steal as she swiped second and then stole home.

The Lady Raiders plated their final run of the first game in the bottom of the fifth inning when UAB pitcher Alexis Kreske walked Muriel Ledbetter with the bases loaded. The free pass to first sent Mitchell home.

Senior hurler Stacy Preator tossed a complete game, allow-

ing five hits and only giving up one run in the top of the seventh inning. She fanned six and moves to 6-2 on the season.

The second game was all UAB's. The Blazers posted 15 runs on 14 hits and belted four home runs.

In the first inning, Middle Tennessee looked in control. The Lady Raiders posted three runs to answer UAB's two runs to open the game. Senior Megan Cherinka hit an RBI single to send Mitchell home for the first run and sophomore DeCamino parked her second homer of the season in a two run shot that also sent Cherinka home.

For the season, the Lady Raiders' ace is 6-2 with a 2.29 ERA in 10 appearances and four complete games. She also struck-out 61 batters in 52.1 innings pitched.

The Lady Raiders are back in action today to play host to Evansville.

The first pitch is set for 3 p.m. in the double header. ♦



## Hilltoppers:

Continued from 6

MT would get as close as nine points but no closer as Western's shooting heated up in the second half to 52 percent. Western would go on to win the game and the championship 64-52, extending the nation's longest home winning streak to 39 games.

"The first four or five minutes of the second half we didn't play very well, but all the credit goes to Western," Davis said. "We did have an outstanding

year, but we turned it over too much tonight."

Pippen led MT with 12 points and eight boards, and Gunn added 11 points.

"It's a tough loss; we were one win from realizing a dream that started Oct. 15 with the beginning of practice, so of course it was a tough loss," Pippen said.

MT finished its season, barring a surprise invitation to the NIT, with an overall record of 16-14. ♦

## Big Dance:

Continued from 6

three-point barrage as they hit 10 of 13 from long distance in the first half. Leslie Logsdon led that barrage with a conference tournament record eight three-pointers in the first half and scoring 30 points.

Western would lead by as many as 12 in the first half before seeing the Lady Raiders go on an 11-0 run to cut the deficit to just one point with 5:49 left in the half.

The teams swapped big baskets down the stretch with Holmes hitting two big three-point baskets, both times pulling the Lady Raiders to within two points.

Western's Kristina Covington hit one of two free throws to give the Lady Toppers a three-point lead with 25 seconds left.

The Lady Raiders had a chance to tie the game with Ciara Gray getting a good look at a three, but the shot didn't fall. Gray instinctively ran in and got the rebound and passed it out to Holmes, who put up a three that was partially deflected and Western won the championship by a score of 86-83.

"I'm proud of how hard we fought and how we refused to give up," Smith said.

"My heart is broken; we are just a couple of possessions away from not being here right now, but out there [on the floor] playing in the confetti."

The Lady Raiders finished with an 18-12 record. ♦

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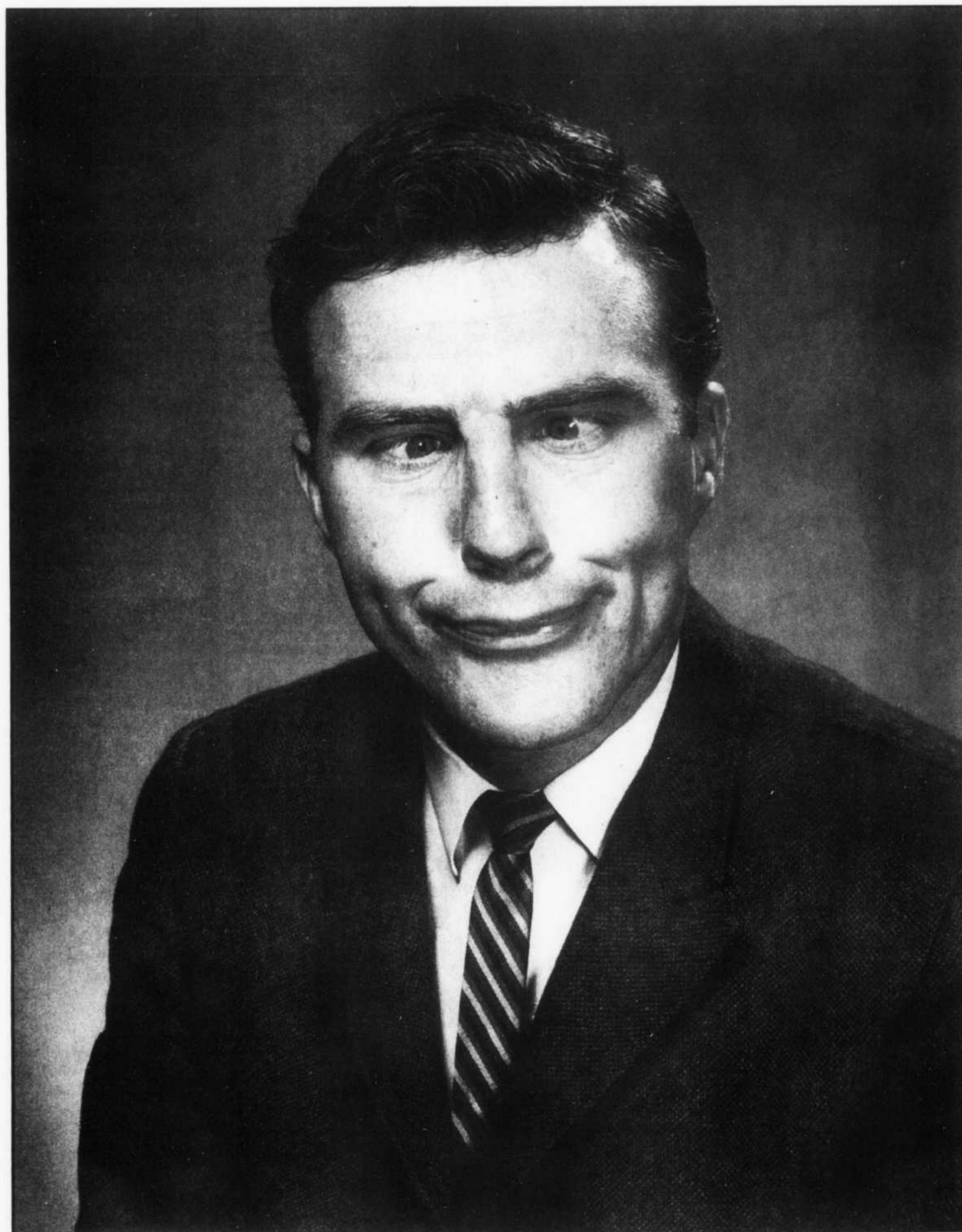
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