



Professor
creates new
art theme

In Features, page 6



Softball team
plays in Mardi
Gras Classic

In Sports, page 8

Should sex offenders be
required to register
with Public Safety?

In Opinions, page 5

INSIDE: THEC, good luck getting state to take you seriously

Middle Tennessee State University

SIDELINES

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Higher education faces tough decisions

THEC keeps 60/40 policy on funding

By Wesley Bush
MTSU State Capitol Bureau

Thanks to underfunding from the Tennessee legislature, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has considered abandoning its policy on tuition and fees.

At their recent quarterly meeting, the commission decided not to abandon their "60/40" policy, choosing instead to impress upon legislators that inadequate appropriations are putting additional pressure on THEC to raise tuition and fees—despite annual increases in recent years.

"We strongly considered abandoning the policy," THEC Executive Director Rich Rhoda said. "That's when we came back and said, 'No, we don't want to do that because then we really are floating out there.' We ought to have some philosophical basis to what we acknowledge."

"I think what everyone was saying is, 'Acknowledge that we've gotten away from it, but don't abandon it.'"

The nearly abandoned policy suggests that for every dollar the legislature appropriates for higher education, student tuition and fees should provide another 40 percent. But with tuition going up every year recently, including a 15 percent increase last year at MTSU, that proportion has been skewed.

In the 2001-02 academic year, for instance, tuition and fees represent not 40 percent of the appropriated amount but 57 percent, said Russ Deaton, THEC director of fiscal analysis. Tuition and fees now represent 36.3 percent of total higher education funding instead of the 28.5 percent the 60/40 policy would suggest.

MTSU carries a higher percentage of its total revenue from fees than any other university in Tennessee.

In the past eight years,



tuition and fees at all state colleges and universities increased by 72 percent, while state appropriations increased only 27 percent.

Despite rising tuition, however, enrollment continues to climb statewide, up nearly 9 percent in the last decade.

"That's the other irony," Rhoda said. "We've increased fees significantly, but enrollment continues to increase. Not a lot, but some would say we've shown that we haven't hit the market tipping point yet."

"I think there's no question—every time you raise fees, someone is hurt."

While higher-education enrollment has gone up, appropriated funding per student has not. Among the 16 southeastern states, Tennessee 10th during the 2000-01 school year in appropriations per full-time equivalent student—a drop of three places over the previous three years.

And while appropriations did go up \$647 per student between 1997-98 and 2000-01, only two of the 16 southeastern states had smaller percentage increases. The average state appropriation per student in those years was \$5,801—10 percent more than Tennessee's \$5,217 FTE appropriation.

Rep. John Hood, D-Murfreesboro, isn't optimistic about finding a way to fully fund the state's colleges and universities.

"I think more people agree down here (in the legislature) that we have an immediate problem with this year's budget," he said, "but I don't see a great deal of shifting of position

of those who will vote for the income tax to those who won't, and the third group who won't vote for anything."

An option discussed at THEC's quarterly meeting in Nashville involved taking funds from terminated programs and services and redirecting them to existing or future programs. At stake could be athletic programs that fail to yield adequate support and participation for its school.

"Hypothetically," Rhoda said, "we know that across the state, institutions put well over \$20 million a year into supporting athletics. So if push came to shove, there is money that could be redirected to faculty salaries."

"Then we go to the legislature and say, 'Is this what you had in mind?'"

Rand Jones, THEC chairman and a Murfreesboro resident, said it's difficult to persuade the legislature to provide more funds when the public's opinion of higher education is low.

"Unfortunately," he said, "there are a whole lot of Tennesseans that don't see the need (for post-secondary education). They're doing all right. They'll work down at the plant or wherever it is. They don't see the need in spending money on education."

Jones pointed to the fact that only 17.7 percent of Tennesseans have college degrees as evidence that the state's educational efforts "are way behind."

"The bottom line, I think," Jones said, "is that people have lost confidence in government." ♦

News series probes cause of shortfalls

By Jessica Kent
Staff Writer

In its series "Budget under a Microscope," *The Tennessean* examined the problems with the state budget for higher education. The report questioned whether the real problem was funding or efficiency.

Mary Morgan, communication director for the Tennessee Board of Regents, said the big problem is funding, not inefficiency. "In any organization there are going to be inefficiencies," she said. "No one is exempt."

MTSU Vice President Duane Stucky agrees that the problem is funding. He said that for the last 10 years, funding has been less than what the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has recommended.

TBR recently examined their operating procedures in "Defining our Future" a report to the General Assembly. The board looked for ways to improve the system by cutting funds for certain programs and running more efficiently.

"We feel like we've done a good job of self-examination,"

Morgan said. "We do everything we can to use our resources to the best advantage"

MTSU's President Sidney McPhee recently appointed a committee to look at efficiency at MTSU. Stucky said MTSU is very efficient and very effective at stretching dollars and making them count.

Tennessee is behind most other states in funding for higher education. This, Morgan said, is not good for the state's economic future.

According to Morgan, the state is diminishing resources for higher education.

Education, passing the cost on to students who want to go to college. The state provides funding for about 15,000 of the 18,000 students currently attending MTSU, Stucky said. Although more and more students are wanting to go to college, the state is spending less on higher education.

The state has looked at capping enrollment at universities. Morgan says she is opposed to this idea. The balance, she said, has to be made between the quality of students and quantity. Typically, everyone wants

there to be a high quantity of people in the work force with college degrees. But, Morgan said, quality is very important.

The TBR's mission is access, Morgan said. The board wants everyone to have access to a college education through either a university or community college. The balance, though, is left up to the state, she said.

"When compared to other states, Tennessee would be lucky to get a D," Morgan said. She said the state is far behind in a lot of things and keeps getting further behind. She cited examples such as the nursing program at Tennessee Technological University, which is at the point of losing accreditation because it doesn't have its own building.

One suggestion that has been made to lower costs is to combine the three existing governing bodies of higher education into one. The TBR currently governs all public colleges and universities in the state, excluding the University of Tennessee system, which has its own governing system. THEC oversees both the UT system and TBR. By cutting the THEC, the state could save around \$2 million a year, according to Morgan.

"Reorganization virtually never saves money," Morgan said. ♦



'An income of her own'



Photo by Allison Grammer | Staff

High school seniors from local schools learn about personal finance at an event sponsored by the Girl Scouts and the June Anderson Women's Center.

Black History Month

Moore heads diversity panel

By Jason Cox
News Editor

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Acel Moore will head a panel discussion on race issues in American newsrooms Feb. 18.

The forum, "Race in the New Century: A View From the Newsroom" will be held from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the State Farm Auditorium in the Business and Aerospace Building. The event is sponsored by the John Seigenthaler Chair of Excellence in First Amendment Studies and is part of MTSU's African American History Month activities.

Moore, a columnist and Editorial Board member at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, has been at the *Inquirer* for 40 years. In

the 1970s, Moore and MTSU journalism professor Wendell Rawls won the Pulitzer Prize for an investigative series on inmate abuse at Fairview State Hospital in Pennsylvania. Moore is also a founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists.

The panel will include longtime *Tennessean* writer Dwight Lewis, Associated Press writer and MTSU graduate Lucas Johnson and Sybril Bennett, reporter for the NewsChannel 5 Network in Nashville and former MTSU assistant professor in broadcast journalism.

In addition to having graduated from MTSU, Johnson started *The Assessor*, a multicultural newspaper that is still printed.

"I think all of the panelists



Moore

are going to bring a unique perspective to race in the newsroom," said Sharon Fitzgerald, an adjunct journalism professor who also does publicity work for the Seigenthaler Chair.

"Panels such as this one bring race issues to the forefront," Fitzgerald said diversity is a definite issue in newsrooms and that, while diversity has improved in recent years, there is still plenty of work to be done.

For more information, call Fitzgerald at 890-8578. ♦



Photo by Amy Jones | Chief Photographer

A defenseless Nissan finds itself slanted by a sinkhole in the Health Services parking lot.

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POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

From the left 'Free market' allows corporate abuse

By Shasta Fite and Pete Roode
Staff Writer and Contributor

The theoretically free market Republicans, according to raving leftists like the *Wall Street Journal* or *Investment News*, the "weekly newspaper for financial advisers," are behaving much more like Vladimir Putin's Russia or post-Mao China than free-marketiers. The children and friends of the politically connected get the sweet deals and siphon off state assets. For example, recent headlines from the *Investment News* read: "Paul O'Neill's Sweet Deal: IRS backs off closing loopholes averting tax liability for execs and Treasury chief."

Enron concealed its fraudulent business practices and squirreled away its domestic assets in various tax shelters, all of which helped keep its Byzantine financial arrangements from the light of day. Lawrence Summers, the sought-out Treasury secretary, sought to crack down on tax shelters but was stymied by congress-

sional Republicans such as Billy Tauzin, who is now leading the investigation. His successor Paul O'Neill has renounced even the most modest steps to discourage tax havens proposed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

They concealed their financial trouble by booking high-estimate profits at the beginning of a contract rather than as they really occurred in order to pump up stock prices, which was important to the executives with stock options.

Additionally, the *New Republic* reports that the single biggest reason Enron escaped detection is that it invested in a particular kind of derivatives—a complex financial arrangement that due to its newness, escaped regulatory oversight altogether. There was no law that required Enron to disclose its derivatives investments on its balance sheets at all.

Some regulators found this alarming. In 1997, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission proposed more stringent disclosure require-

ments for derivatives. Financial interests, including Enron, vigorously resisted with the support of Bush Republicans.

Bush conservatives did not prevent the Enron fiasco, but many don't even grasp its failure now. Bush's adviser Lawrence Lindsey called Enron's fall "a tribute to American capitalism." O'Neill echoed, "Part of the genius of capitalism is people get to make good decisions or bad decisions, and they get to pay the consequence or to enjoy the fruits of their decisions."

From this perspective, Bush's economic plan is a lot like Enron's business. Cuts in progressive taxes (especially for the top 1 percent, or the political-donor class like Enron executives) are pleasing for the short term, but create deficits which have to be financed by social security funds. Social security taxes, on the other hand, are deeply regressive. A person making up to \$80,000 pays 10 times the rate of someone making \$800,000 or 100 times the rate of someone like Ken Lay or Paul O'Neill, making \$8 million. Most of their money is tied up in stock options, which are tax free until sold, and unre-

Bush's tax cuts may seem great initially, but eventually someone will have to raise taxes to get on to pay off the deficits, sound familiar? Ronald Reagan did it, and so did Bush in Texas. Tax cuts for the rich and minimal funding for health care of poor children.

Bush's administration has more invested in Enron than they care to share. Not only did they seal presidential documents which might have incriminating evidence, but they helped facilitate Enron's money laundering schemes. Enron had over 600 shadow corporations "doing business"

By Jeremy Davis
Staff Writer

The national media and Washington insiders have been hungry for a good Bush scandal ever since he took office. When the Enron fiasco began Bush's critics thought they had hit pay dirt. However, Bush and friends have continually dodged the bullets fired at them and the president's 80-plus approval ratings prove it.

No politician of either party has been implicated of any wrongdoing with the Enron collapse, but the Democrats are desperately trying to tie this around the neck of George W. Bush.

Enron CEO Kenneth Lay contributed millions to Republicans and President Bush in particular. When it was evident that Enron was going down like the Titanic, Lay called former Clinton Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and asked him to see what he could do to help. Rubin called the Treasury Department and was quickly denied any help from the Bush administration.

Other Bush officials like Commerce Secretary Don Evans were contacted and none of them offered any help to Enron. President Bush says he did not know of these contacts, which makes sense because any sane person can see that the president doesn't need to be called every time one of his cabinet secretaries doesn't break the law.

Criticism has been thrown at he will not release the details of his meetings with energy leaders and environmentalists concerning the drafting of the national energy policy. Cheney readily admitted Enron officials were present at these meetings because they were one of the largest energy firms in the country and the meetings were about energy policy. Cheney

also said the company's finances were never discussed.

During an interview with NBC's Tom Brokaw was present at the meetings as well and they got more of what they asked for than Enron did. Since when is favoring a political enemy over a staunch ally wrong? It may be rare but it is not wrong.

If Cheney did nothing why does he continue to stonewall the General Accounting Office's request for disclosure of the meetings? The GAO does not have the power to demand such documents from the White House, and when they threatened to sue the White House, Cheney told them to go ahead and try. Besides, that would set a precedent that all private policy discussions at the White House should be made public. That would be absurd and Cheney is right to defend his right to private counsel regarding public policy.

Other critics have claimed the Enron debacle proves the need for campaign finance reform. They claim Enron had undue influence in government because of their massive campaign contributions.

Let me get this straight. Ken Lay gives millions of dollars to politicians, mostly to Republicans, sees policies from a critic of the administration get picked over his, goes bankrupt and gets demonized in the media. If that's what soft money contributions buy, then every CEO in America should reconsider donating to political parties.

The bottom line is a generous Bush supporter was promptly shown the door when he asked the administration for a favor. All this proves is money does not necessarily corrupt politicians, and the American public can give a big sigh of relief that this president and his staff cannot be bought.

On the other side of the aisle,

From the right Enron will not hurt the Republicans

Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle and Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe have begun to use a proper noun as verbs and adjectives. They have said Bush's budget will Enron America's seniors and Republicans are trying to "Enron-ize" the American people by creating budget deficits and using Social Security and Medicare money to pay for higher military budgets and tax cuts for the wealthy.

Not only is this bad English, it is bad politics. Why would anyone believe a president with record high approval ratings and a Harvard MBA on his wall would make the same mistakes as an inept businessman like Kenneth Lay? They wouldn't and the Bush team knows it.

Daschle has said the tax cuts caused the imminent budget deficit. I guess Daschle hasn't noticed the recession that started before the tax cut was signed into law and the war was thrust into. Everyone knows tax cuts spur economic growth and that's what is needed during a recession.

Even Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said in a congressional hearing that the tax cut prevented the recession from being deeper than it is. And how does Daschle explain the fact that 12 Senate Democrats voted for the tax cut he claims was so bad? He can't and that's why the American public is sticking with Bush.

People don't care about a bunch of numbers on a piece of paper when our friends are being blown apart in their offices and our neighbors are losing their jobs. Budget surpluses do not create economic growth. Economic growth creates budget surpluses.

President Bush has said he will spend as much as it takes to protect the American people

See Right, 4

Scholarship

The Amy Spain Memorial Scholarship, in the amount of \$500 will be awarded this spring to a graduating senior attending an attending law school this fall. Amy Spain was an alumna of Middle Tennessee State University and an active member from 1982-1986. Upon completion of her undergraduate degree she went on to graduate with honors from the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, where she obtained a position as an Assistant United States Attorney in Memphis. She held this position until a tragic automobile accident ended her exceptional life.

To continue Amy's legacy, some of her friends and family have established this scholarship. The Memorial Fund will be used to further the education of an MTSU Greek female who plans to attend Law School. Candidates must demonstrate the leadership, dedication, commitment, and integrity which characterized and described Amy.

If you are interested in applying for this scholarship, please obtain an application from Betty Smithson, Associate Vice President and Dean of Student Life Office, Keathley University Center Room 212. Deadline for applications is March 4, 2002.

Friends of Amy Spain

See Left, 4

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Editorial

THEC, good luck getting state to take you seriously

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission's recent decision not to abandon its "60/40" policy exemplifies the growing trend of the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the people in charge of our higher education.

The "60/40" policy basically allows THEC to provide a proportional amount of funding for college students, who pay the 40 percent, thus ideally cushioning the amount of tuition and fees Tennessee students have to pay to go to college.

While it's admirable that THEC had the courage to admit that it hasn't stuck to its policy, it still demonstrates part of what's wrong with our state's higher education system: acknowledgement of inadequacies coupled with a lack of incentive or leverage to change them.

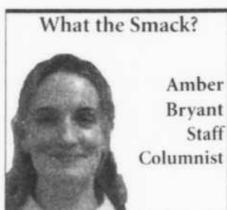
We understand that THEC is caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place. They literally can't do much of anything without support from the legislature, which has been forthcoming with little more than short-term band-aids.

THEC officials said they hope their acknowledgement of their shortcomings will pressure the legislature to take the funding problem seriously enough to take real action.

Rich Rhoda, THEC executive director, said athletic programs might be at stake if the funding situation continues to worsen. According to him, almost \$20 million per year go to athletics at most institutions and could be redirected into other programs. Is this what it will come to? What other major programs are at stake as well?

In their quest to bring the legislature to their senses, all we can say to THEC is the same thing we could say to any other group trying to catch the attention of our lawmakers: good luck ♦

Valentine's tips from a jilted and jaded single



What the Smack?
Amber Bryant
Staff Columnist

The other 364 days of the year I can be at peace with my inability to interact with other humans, but on Valentine's Day I can't help but feel like a loser because I don't have anyone to snuggle with and call "Honey Bunny Puddin' Butt."

Even my beloved Wal-Mart, which usually supplies me with the love and acceptance only a manipulating, consumer-driven warehouse full of crap can, is filled to the brim with

pink and red.

So, until I find someone as socially unacceptable as myself to smooch with, I will make it my mission in life - OK just today - to give unprecedented advice to those who wish to attract someone before this or next Valentine's Day, depending on how fast you work.

Ladies, in case you haven't noticed, the quality of men on this campus has reached an all-time low. Unless you lower your standards to incorporate drooling imbeciles whose vocabularies are limited to four-letter words and an occasional dated expression, such as "Dude!" you should go ahead and look elsewhere.

Also, I hope to live the remainder of my days

without hearing another woman use the phrase, "He's just a guy," to excuse some disgusting male behavior. Unless someone can prove to me that one male organ possesses the power to control the entire being, I don't want to hear it. Girls, this phrase is the root of all evil and will land you one of the drooling imbeciles mentioned above.

Finally, he may be the cutest thing you've ever seen, but if he watches *The Man Show*, hike up your skirts and run for your life.

Men, it is slightly uncouth to ask a woman if her friends, roommates or mothers are "hot." As much as we want to promote another female's "hotness" over our own, it simply isn't going to hap-

pen. If you continue throwing that question about as if it were fertilizer, you will probably remain single for the whole of your life. If not, then God help us all.

It is not cool, nor will it ever be, to call a girl's answering machine and bust a rhyme about how much you enjoy her company. You will only succeed in alienating yourself from her and all the people she lets listen to the message. Bottom line, nobody can benefit from your attempted rapping.

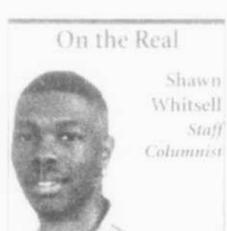
In order to prevent any heartbreaking mistakes, please let women know if you have any huge flaws that cannot be remedied with antibiotics. For example, if you spend most of your time thinking up

elaborate lies to tell, participating in weeklong video game marathons or quoting lines from *The Matrix*, you should mention it before we get too attached.

Last but not least, it is not acceptable to drive your car with one hand on the top of the steering wheel, cocked way back in your seat and leaning over so far your cheek is touching the door handle. You look like a moron, which is probably the opposite effect you intended to have.

While I'm no love guru, as evidenced by my bitter response to the human race as a whole, I've always firmly believed that I'm a genius. If my love advice leads you to that special someone, feel free to send me some money. ♦

Don't succumb to the anti-Muslim hysteria



On the Real
Shawn Whitsell
Staff Columnist

A couple of weeks ago, my family traveled to Fort Benning, Ga. to attend my brother's graduation after completing basic training in the U.S. Army. After his "turning blue" ceremony (the pre-graduation event), my family went to

the mall in Columbus to do a little browsing, a little shopping and a lot of eating at the food court.

My fourteen-year-old brothers were shopping alone, and a woman came up to my adopted brother, Triston, looked at the droo rag on his head and said something like, "What's that thing on your head? Are you a Muslim? Because I'm afraid of them."

Both of my brothers were shocked by the woman's words, but they're 14, so they didn't take it as seriously as I did. I wish I had been around

because I would've definitely given that woman a careful of information with hopes to negate the stereotype she has of Muslims.

I understand that most people in our country are still on edge from the tragic events of Sept. 11. Believe me I'm still shaken, too. However, that gives me no reason to start thinking ignorantly. As a matter of fact, it's made me more aware.

The bottom line is, it's unfair to generalize an entire group of people, regardless of what the circumstances are. In our

society, we use categories and generalizations to simplify things but we should be conscious of the generalizations we make.

For example, statistics may show that voter registration is low among young adults in the inner city. But this doesn't mean that young adults in the inner city don't vote. It's just that simple.

I don't necessarily think the woman that approached my brother is a nasty person. She's just afraid, misinformed, extremely honest and perhaps a little rude. I just

hope she realizes that it was the negative energy in the world that caused the events of Sept. 11, not any particular group or group of people.

I still wonder why the woman, who was approached my brother if she thought he could be dangerous. What was her purpose for saying what she said? It didn't accomplish anything.

Please, make a conscious effort to rid yourself of any stereotypes you may hold. Open your mind. ♦

From the Opinions Editor

'Intelligent design' theory just creationism in sheep's clothing



who vouch for the validity of creationism, but most of these people are no more scientific professionals than I'm a Burmese figure skater.

This small corner limits me to one very important example: Carl Baugh. He is a tireless proponent of the Paluxy River tracks, which he proclaimed to be fossilized human footprints alongside dinosaur footprint. Independent researchers later discovered that the human prints were merely dried mud, although the dino prints were authentic. Baugh claims to hold not one, not two but three Ph.D.s. Two of his three fictitious degrees came from unaccredited universities, one of which is merely a division of a corporation of which Baugh himself is president.

I digress. Whether "intelligent design" is creationism in disguise, or as Robert Lattiner, a member of Science Excellence for All Ohioans described it, "nothing about religion, merely the inference of it," is irrelevant. The bottom line is that there is no verifiable evidence for this scientifically useless theory. I pray the Ohio school board will confine the propaganda of creationism to places of worship and sociology classrooms because heaven knows it doesn't belong in science classes. ♦

Backers of evolution, including the Ohio Academy of Science are justifiably outraged. In an article published at www.cnn.com, elfner puts it bluntly: "It's not science, it's creationism."

I couldn't agree more. At this point in time, evolution is the only theory supported by legitimate, independently verifiable research. Sure, there are slews of self-proclaimed scientists

who vouch for the validity of creationism, but most of these people are no more scientific professionals than I'm a Burmese figure skater.

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Boston church need not reveal names

To the Editor:

I am writing in reply to Patrick W. Chinnery's column, "Church must provide child molesting victims' names." Although I agree with the gist of his article, I feel the Church is not responsible for providing names of victims for a few reasons.

The first reason is that the Church is considered a non-profit organization; they are not defense lawyers that can spend large sums on defense lawyers to protect certain priests who are not living according to rules of conduct. In fact these priests should be excommunicated for their actions, or never be allowed in ministry.

Secondly, these cases of molestation are a criminal manner in which the local police write up reports with the names of the victims. Therefore, the victims' names should already have been submitted, but not by the Church. After all, the Spanish Inquisition happened along time ago; the Church no longer plays the police officer, judge, and executioner.

If the Church does give the names of the victims, then the money which Catholics tithe and contribute will pay for police reports on these rogue ministers. Just as we taxpayers may be angry at mismanagement and government waste, these tithers would also be frustrated to waste their tithe on individuals that are outside God's will.

I also want to mention that the Church does not design any hidden agenda "to limit the negative publicity of the church." These 80 or so priests have violated a sacred oath, and the negative publicity should only reflect their individual actions.

I think they are doing all they can right now. The fact that they are actually helping should be positive. They also do not have to worry about negative publicity because you have only quoted a small number in contrast

Letters to the Editor

to those unnamed St. Therasas and those selfless ministers like John Michael Talbot.

I feel for those ministers and priests, because they bring a lot of good news to the world despite Chinnery's trying to give them a black eye.

Stephen D. Brace

Any passenger can be a potential terrorist

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to Nick Tepley's op-ed piece, "My grandmother is not a terrorist." Tepley asks if intense scrutiny of everyone, including his grandmother, is necessary. The answer is yes! The fact is, anyone could be a potential terrorist, including Tepley's grandmother.

Terrorists do not always fit a specific profile, as Tepley argues. Take John Walker, for instance. With his head shaved, Walker looks like an ordinary American teen. And Moussaoui? He looks like an ordinary African American man. Should we begin profiling all African Americans?

The FBI estimates that there are hundreds of terrorist cells operating within the United States. It is probably safe to say that not everyone in those cells fits a specific profile. Perhaps, there are one or two white guys, maybe even a couple of African Americans within those cells. It does not matter that the majority of suspects have been middle eastern; it only takes one person to put a bomb in his shoe or try to break into a cockpit.

Tepley's most offensive statement was that the German girl studying art and the Chinese man studying medicine with expired visas do not pose the same threat as the Saudi enrolled in flight school. Prior to Sept. 11, the Saudi enrolled in flight school was probably not much of a threat either.

In regard to racial profiling, Tepley says

that the fear of offense and political incorrectness were buried in the rubble of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. If law enforcement authorities begin singling out Americans because of their race or ethnicity, we might as well bury the Constitution and the very protections it offers American citizens as well.

Once law enforcement authorities begin to relax their guard and pay less attention to "normal" looking Americans, the country will again be in serious danger.

Respectfully,
Matthew Guy

'Eyesore' piece needs some fine tuning

To the Editor:

I am writing concerning the "Eyesore of the Week" feature detailing the "inadequacies of our campus." While I applaud the effort of attracting attention to such problems, I feel as if the *Sidelines* staff is not going anywhere far enough to achieve the goals of the feature. Wouldn't it be a better idea to accompany such an "eyesore" photograph with an in-depth article identifying who is to blame? How can the *Sidelines* staff expect anything to change or any pressure to be applied with nothing more than a picture? I for one have no idea whether to blame MTSU, the Board of Regents, the Tennessee legislature or governor Sundquist on the construction of the new elevator in the James Union Building.

While I certainly agree that such "eyesores" are a disgusting reality on this campus, I know that merely plastering a picture on the front page is not going to make them pretty any faster. Without knowing who is accountable, how can we bring about any change?

Andy Fleenor

SIDELINES

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FEATURES

6 ♦ SIDELINES

Thursday, February 14, 2002

Murfreesboro, Tenn.

MTSU professor creates new art theme

By Jeremy Highers
Staff Writer

Some students and faculty may have noticed the poster-adorned, free-standing walls, the blue table and blue and yellow chairs that make up an art exhibition that opened last week in the Keathley University Center.

The objects are situated as if they, or whatever objects they happen to contain, are what most warrants attention. In one corner there is a coffeepot and

several bags of coffee beans on a stand. Opposite the coffeepot is a portable stereo and two stacks of CDs on another stand.

Titled, "The Coffeehouse of My Dreams," the exhibition also contains another piece — the artist himself, Joseph Whitt.

Originally from a small town in Alabama, Whitt received his degree from the Rhode Island School of Design and began teaching here at MTSU last fall.

He's a mild man whose voice becomes animated when discussing his work and what he hopes people will take away from it.

"Growing up, I always wanted to own a coffeehouse," Whitt said over a cup of coffee. "It's an art opening without the art."

The exhibit is everything that a coffeehouse purports to be. It encourages intimacy, physically and mentally.

Each of Whitt's posters, including photos of Andy Warhol, musical acts such as Tim Wauts and The Boredoms and films such as

Fantastic Planet and *Julien Donkey-Boy*, have influenced him and convey a part of his personality.

All in all, the exhibition conveys an acute sense of person and place of intimacy and shared thoughts. This juxtaposition of very private elements with a public place is part of the exhibit's charm.

"Is he art?" asked philosophy major Kirsten Julsgard Johnson after seeing the exhibit.

Whitt is not on display merely to be scrutinized. On the contrary, he is a fully interactive exhibit.

Students, faculty, staff and any one else may enter the cube if they feel inclined to and be treated to coffee, music and conversation.

Because it is an exhibit about situations, interaction with others is almost essential for it to realize its purpose. Everything about the exhibit is intended to spark dialogue.

In fact, the exhibit is a vehicle for social interaction, because its success will be measured on how many people venture to be a part of it. "The Coffeehouse" is anti-intellectual in that even the most instinctual reactions to it and what it communicates are as equally valid as any highbrow commentary that it happens to excite.

"This is an exorcism of the

cynical part of me that is suspicious of strangers," Whitt explained.

Generally speaking, it's a rarity for people to interact with strangers under the sole pretense of sheer communication.

Whitt's exhibition provides a means of overcoming the invisible barrier that separates the line between one person's subjectivity and another's.

He has created a coffeehouse.

Well, his idea of the perfect coffeehouse.

A coffeehouse craves little in the way of aesthetic interpretation. It takes people to leave its spaces with warmth and emotion. In this idealistic sense, a coffeehouse becomes more than its practical purpose. It's the people that lend artistry to what would otherwise be devoid of originality.

"It wasn't until I started making art about the politics of love instead of making art to bring love," Whitt said, "that I began to feel a part of something bigger than myself."

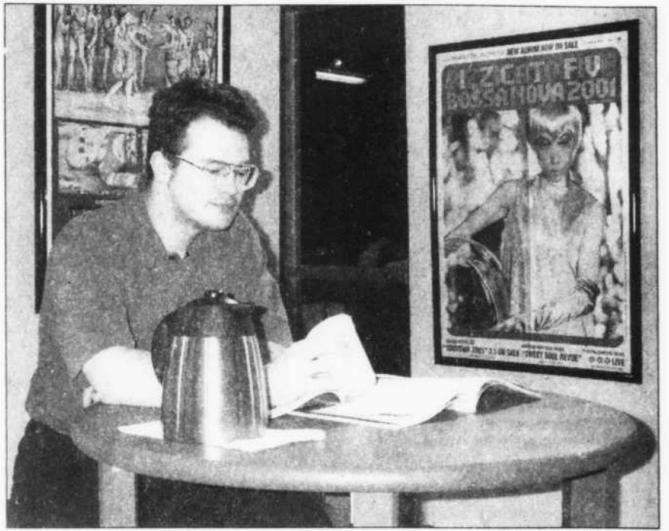


Photo by Steve Cross | Staff



Photo by Steve Cross | Staff

Joseph Whitt enjoys coffee while reading.

Joseph Whitt is an associate professor of music here at MTSU.

"[He's] defining a new form of art," said recording industry major Justin Davis, "art that is not about what is made but what is accomplished."

Some students have other opinions about the exhibit, however.

"I don't know if I'd call what he's doing art — socializing, yes; art, no," said computer science major Curtis Stevens.

Until art has been assimilated into the individual consciousness and internalized, it

can't really be said that a particular piece of artwork has realized its purpose. Art requires a human mind to appreciate it. To ascribe to the characteristic of being "art," it would seem that Whitt is attempting an extension of that concept. Be the art, be the scenery and be seen.

Whitt will be available for viewing on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at varying times through Feb. 28 in the KUC Cube Gallery exhibit. ♦

Valentine's Day sentiments stem from 4th century Roman festival

By Justin Ward
Staff Writer

Through the hustles and bustles of buying roses, chocolates and corny cards, few people stop to realize where Valentine's Day originated and why every Feb. 14 they can indulge in a little extra love.

The story of Valentine's Day begins in Rome in the fourth century B.C. Records show that the Roman citizens celebrated the feast of Lupercal Feb. 15. During this festival, the names of teen-age women were placed in a box, and the young men would then draw a name from the box. Whichever maiden the young man drew would be his partner for a period of one year until the next drawing. Some of the partnerships would eventually lead to marriage.

This festival was outlawed centuries later when Rome became the center of the early Christian church.

Pope Galasius issued a decree in A.D. 496 which forbade celebrations of the Lupercalian festival. The pope did not do away with the celebration outright, though.

The drawing was still held, except now, the citizens pulled out the name of a saint instead of a woman. The young men were expected to emulate the life of their chosen saint for the rest of the year.

The church still needed some martyr or saint to dedicate the festival to, so they found an ideal candidate who had been executed by the emperor Claudius some 200 years earlier to become Saint Valentine.

Claudius was waging war on several fronts and was badly in need of soldiers. He felt that single men would make the best fighters because married men might be less willing to leave their homes and families. And so, he outlawed marriage.

Bishop Valentine did not like this deci-

sion at all. He let it be known that he would perform marriage services secretly. When he was discovered and brought before Claudius, he tried to convert the emperor. This did not move Claudius at all, and he sentenced Valentine to death.

While waiting for execution, Valentine

Cupid is the god of love in Roman mythology. In Greek mythology, he is known as Eros.

Cupid was the son of Venus, the Roman goddess of love. The ancient Romans depicted him with wings and a bow and arrow. Traditionally Cupid has used these arrows to evoke love between two people. If a person were shot with Cupid's arrow, then he or she would fall in love with the first person they saw.

Cupid has been used extensively in literature. William Shakespeare once wrote in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind; and therefore is winged Cupid painted blind."

Valentine's Day has evolved down through the annals of history but has kept its original meaning of love.

Today the holiday is built around lovers and romantic rendezvous.

Many couples can be seen dressed up and going out for a romantic dinner on that night. Enormous amounts of flowers are sent, and a dozen roses seem to be the special arrangement for the occasion. Lovers everywhere also will receive

the famous box of Russell Stover's assorted chocolates.

"The greatest happiness is the conviction that we are loved — loved for ourselves, as rather, loved in love of ourselves," Victor Hugo, a 19th-century author wrote.

The prevalent feeling of Valentine's Day is love. Ever since the young men and women celebrated the feast of Lupercal, and ever since bishop Valentine sent his first Valentine to the jailer's daughter, the holiday has had a special place in lover's hearts.

Today, all over the world, husbands, wives, girlfriends and boyfriends will be saying, "I love you." ♦



Illustration by Luke Antoniak | Staff

fell in love with the blind daughter of his jailer. This jailer could do nothing to avert the bishop's fate. The day before he died, Valentine asked for pen and paper to write a farewell to his beloved.

He was dead before she opened it. When she did, the note said "From Your Valentine," and her blindness was cured.

Valentine was clubbed, stoned and beheaded. He died Feb. 14, AD 269. Two centuries later, Galasius made Valentine the Patron Saint of Lovers and the overseer of his newly invented festival.

Valentine's Day gets its name from Saint Valentine, but there are other figures associated with the holiday, such as Cupid.

Holiday beneficial to businesses

By Brittani Giansante
Contributor

MTSU students celebrate the holiday in a variety of ways. Valentine's Day comes and goes for many. While girlfriends search for a way to make Valentine's Day special, and the boyfriends try to make a big deal about it, many local businesses reap the benefits of this love bird holiday.

Its traditional gift of flowers, especially roses, tends to put a hole in many students' pockets, but local florists have no complaints. They gain a lot of attention from students trying to find the perfect bouquet at the

best affordable price.

"I have 700 to 1,000 deliveries at MTSU for Feb. 14," said David Lynn, owner of Murfreesboro Flower Shoppe.

Blue Raiders give him 15 percent of his business year-round. Although students do not receive discounts, 17 florists in the Murfreesboro area compete for business.

The average cost of a dozen red roses at this time of the year is \$70 plus delivery.

However, according to several local florists, the average cost a student spends on flowers is about \$40. With these prices, however, flowers are much more appreciated this time of

year.

During off season, the price of a dozen roses drops by \$20.

Bi-Lo, located on Memorial Boulevard, is one of the few florists that manages to keep the same prices year round, though. So a dozen roses only costs about \$20.

"Guys think the girl always get flowers," sophomore Carrie Lea said. "When really, it isn't as often as you think."

Although this is the most popular time of year to give flowers, girls do enjoy receiving them year-round. It is, after all, the thought that counts.

Local florists are busy with hundreds of orders, and Marsha

Cross, of Design for You by Sandye Rigsby, said the most common arrangement for students is loose roses.

Frank Crowder said he sent his girlfriend roses "because it means a lot, especially to a girl." Jo Carpenter, manager of the floral department at Bi-Lo, understands that money is tough year-round for students and believes each customer is special.

Carpenter said students are about 25 percent of the floral department's business. She also said she'll work with any student in any way she can, on

See Roses, 7

Movie Review



Photo provided

Fate finds its way in 'Serendipity'

By Rebecca Parker
Staff Writer

Love, fate and destiny — these are the key elements in Peter Chelsom's movie *Serendipity*, now playing at the Keathley University Center Theater. There couldn't be a more perfect movie to show around Valentine's Day.

This hilarious cast will take you on an adventure through the trials and tribulations of Sara Thomas (Kate Beckinsale) and Jonathan Trager's (John Cusack) fate-inspired meeting.

The journey begins at Bloomingdale's during an argument over a pair of gloves and then plummets the two characters into coincidental meetings all over New York City. Each of them is already committed to someone else, so they are somewhat hesitant to react on the "love at first sight" feelings they are experiencing.

Sara, a strong believer in fate, decides to tempt it by first writing her name and number in a book and selling it to a used book store, and then by writing Jon's name and number on a five dollar bill and cashing it. She tells him that if either of them come in contact with these items in the future they are meant to be together.

Though interesting and funny, you would think the events of the first night's meeting would let them know that fate is on their side.

Years later, they have yet to find each other again but are engaged to be married to other people. Right before their weddings, each of them keeps seeing and hearing references to the other.

Throughout the film, there are situations where Sara and Jon barely miss each other. These, though funny and ironic, make the audience want to scream at them not to deceive destiny any longer.

Sara and Jon's antics are not

the only one's that keep the movie going. Jon's best friend and best man, Dean Kansky (Jeremy Piven), uses his *New York Times* job and connections to help Jon find Sara. With his witty remarks, Cusack is sure to keep the audience laughing.

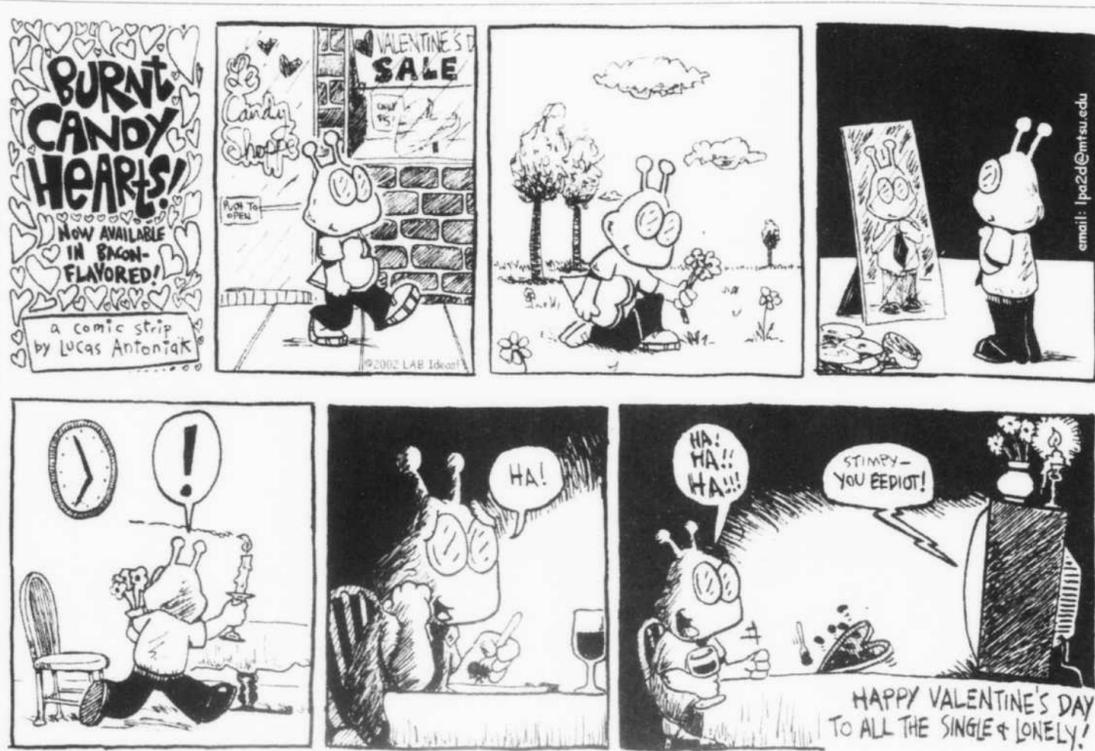
Sara's friend, Eve (Molly Shannon), who is the owner of a new age store, keeps the audience smirking with her sarcasm and wit as she helps Sara on her journey to find Jon.

Their friends are the one's who keep the comedy going, but at the same time try to give them reason to their insane search for fate. Other characters help to stem the plot, such as Lars (John Corbett), who is Sara's dimwitted musician fiancé.

This movie is the perfect romantic comedy because it sheds light and love on the dreamy category of destiny. Though you may get a little tired of the characters constant searching and missing the story, the film will certainly touch your heart and make you think that what is happening truly could be fate.

Serendipity will be playing at the Keathley University Center at 7 and 9:30 p.m. tonight and at 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

♦



CAMPUS EVENTS

Compiled by Leslie Fike | Features Editor

Thursday, Feb. 14

MTSU School of Music presents a Jazz Concert Series in the Wright Music Hall at 7:30 p.m. The performance will feature jazz and blues vocalist Ernestine Anderson with the Middle Tennessee Jazz Orchestra. The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, call 898-2469.

Friday, Feb. 15

The MTSU School of Music sponsors the annual 2002 Guitar Festival in the Wright Music Building at 8 p.m. The festival will feature MTSU professor of music William Yelverton and guest artist Roger Hudson. The festival also will feature Elliot Frank Feb. 16, Andrew Zohn Feb. 17, Salome Sandoval Feb. 19 and MTSU junior Brent Coleman Feb. 20. Each concert is free and open to the public. For more information, call 898-2493.

Monday, Feb. 18

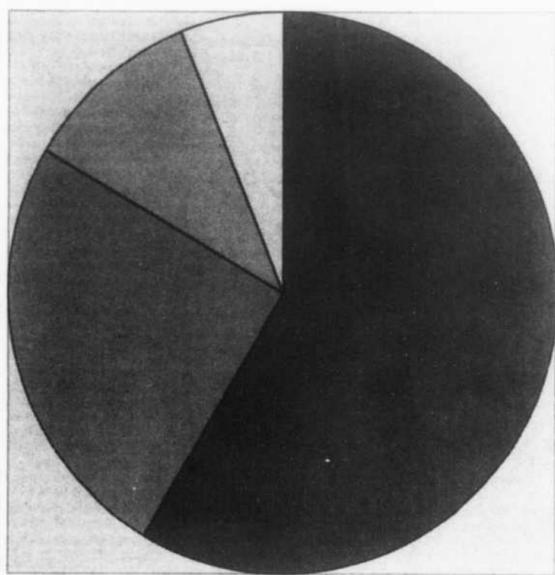
The Survival Honors Lecture Series will discuss "Shortchanging the Public Education" with speaker Gloria Bonner in Peck Hall, Room 109A, from 3 to 3:50 p.m. For more information, call 898-2152.

Thursday, Feb. 21

Pi Sigma Epsilon, a national sales and marketing fraternity, will have an informational meeting at 6 p.m. in the Room S301 of the Business and Aerospace Building. For more information, call 405-1989 or send an e-mail to RussellFurney@bellsouth.net.

What will you be doing this Valentine's Day?

Poll results from www.mtsusidelines.com.



- Nothing. But hey, thanks for opening that wound and pouring salt in it.
- Having a quiet, romantic evening with my special someone.
- The Ronald McDonald circus is in town that night. What else would we do?
- Telling my crush I like him/her for the first time. It'll be romantic, I swear.

Roses: Students discuss holiday commercialism

Continued from 6

price, selection and type. Sarah Cogdill, owner of The Flower Center, located on the Square, said she's been in business for 22 years and has more than 100 deliveries for MTSU students.

Money spent on flowers between all the local florists emphasizes the effort placed on Cupid's day.

Just like the variety of conversation hearts in a box, though, a range of opinions exist on the importance of Valentine's Day.

"It's not right to commercialize a holiday about love just to make money," Jeff Watkins said. "I think you should prove it to that person every day."

However, MTSU band member Lesley Van Atta believes, "it's sweet and expensive."

Crowder thinks if V-Day is spent alone, it's definitely one of the saddest days of the year.

Freshman Tara Stamps does not even know how she will be spending Valentine's, but she is sure she will be celebrating the day.

Whether it is walking in the park, or an evening with the stars, Valentine's Day represents a little something different for everyone.

Despite all the clichés and commercialism of Valentine's Day, it can be as romantic or as fun as desired. Whether homemade cards and candy are part of the celebration, or a store bought card with a Russell Stover box of chocolates, it is sure to be remembered.

Just like each couple has a different love song, whether it's a jive, the cha-cha or the waltz, a variety of ways exist to commemorate the day.

Traditionally, red roses are expected, but a valentine is anything that says, "I love you, and I care about you." ♦



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No. 28 tennis looking to weekend matches

By Rebecca Pickering
Assistant Sports Editor

The No. 28 nationally ranked MT men's tennis team is hoping for a 6-0 record after their match-ups against North Carolina State and Indiana University this weekend.

The Blue Raiders, 4-0 on the season, moved up 10 spots in the Omni Hotels National Rankings conducted by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association yesterday.

MT will host NCS Saturday and IU Sunday at the Murfreesboro Racquet Club.

Statistically, both matches should pose little threat to the Blue Raiders' flawless record. NCS is not ranked and IU is at No. 55. Neither team has nationally ranked players or doubles teams.

"On paper, we should match up well," said MT head coach Dale Short. "We'll definitely have to be at our best to give us the edge."

NCS comes to Murfreesboro with a 1-2 record. The team lost to both No. 31 University of South Carolina, Columbia and No. 47 ranked University of Tulsa. Their lone win was acquired from Oral Roberts University.

IU brings a 5-2 record with them to face the Blue Raiders. They gave up matches to No. 51 University of Louisville and No. 32 Vanderbilt. One of their wins was against No. 79 Ball State University. The loss to Vanderbilt, however, was 3-4, showing promise for the No. 55 team.

"We have lost to lower ranked teams when we were even higher ranked," Short said. "You can never rest."

In doubles, No. 34 ranked

Daniel Klemetz and Kirk Jackson enter the matches undefeated this spring. The duo of Oliver Foreman and Robert Gustafsson is ranked No. 9 nationally, and is also undefeated on the spring season.

Returning to the No. 1 singles position after taking a break against the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga last week, No. 12 ranked Klemetz will be trying to maintain his perfect singles record on the season. Currently 3-0, he will be taking on UNC's Matt Lucas and IU's Milan Rakvica.

Lucas, also a junior, is 1-2 on the season, beating Jared Welch of ORU 6-4, 6-1.

"It happens all the time that unranked players beat ranked ones," Klemetz said. "I am going to definitely be ready."

Senior Rakvica, however, is also coming into Sunday's match-up with a 3-0 record. The top-ranked opponent he faced was Vanderbilt's No. 63 ranked Bobby Reynolds.

Two other singles standouts on the season for the Blue Raiders are sophomores Trevor Short and Michael Staniak.

Although coach Short anticipated Short easing into the season after facing illness and surgery in the fall, he has come out strong. With a 3-0 record playing in the No. 6 position against the University of Hawaii and Indiana State University and at No. 4 against UTC, Short looks to be a great attribute to this team.

Melbourne, Australia native Staniak also currently holds a perfect record on the season. Playing in the No. 4 position in all matches, with the exception of UTC at No. 3, Staniak is finding his niche with this MT team.

MT hosts NSC Saturday at 1 p.m. and IU Sunday at 10 a.m. ♦



Photo by Amy Jones | Chief Photographer

Greg Pollack serves a ball in a recent match.

Softball team to play in Mardi Gras Classic



Photo by Amy Jones | Chief Photographer

Kristina Heib prepares to field the batters' hits during Tuesday's scrimmage.

Raiders try to rebound from losses, win at home

By Justin Ward
Staff Writer

The Middle Tennessee men's basketball team (12-13) will face the University of Denver (7-15) Saturday at the Murphy Center at 7.

The Blue Raiders are coming off two consecutive losses last week to make their record 5-7 in the Sun Belt Conference. A conference win against Denver will help them out greatly as the Sun Belt Tournament is just two games away. The Blue Raiders hold third place in the East Division of the Sun Belt ahead of Arkansas State (4-7) and Florida International (4-8).

This is the first match-up of MT and Denver this season. Last season, the Pioneers defeated the Blue Raiders 59-57. This year, Denver is 2-9 in the Sun Belt Conference, and they currently hold second-to-last place in the West Division. They are ahead of South Alabama (2-10) only.

Lee Nosse will lead the Blue Raiders Saturday night continuing to play well as he has done all year. He has a .548 field goal percentage and a .436 three-point percentage. His free throw shooting percentage is very impressive, hitting 66-76 free throws to have a .868 percentage for the season. Nosse also leads the team in rebounds, averaging 7.7 a game.

Sophomore Tommy Gunn has also performed well this season, averaging 12.6 points a game and four rebounds. William Pippen is right behind him with 9.3 points and 4.6 rebounds a game. John Humphrey continues to be hot with 15 points against Arkansas-Little Rock last Saturday. That was his second highest score for the season. Humphrey will definitely play a large role in the game Saturday.

"We have seven or eight guys that can come out and hit 15 or 20 points," Nosse said. "It's not really resting on one person to

come out and score all of those points. We play hard every day in practice and in games. That's one thing that sets us aside from everyone else."

B.J. Pratt will lead the Pioneers, averaging 15 points per game and 2.7 rebounds.

Sherman Rochell will be backing him up, averaging 13 points a game and 5.8 rebounds. Wahhab Carter will also be in there averaging 11.1 points per game and 5.6 rebounds.

"I think our half-court offense is very good," said Blue Raider head coach Randy Wiel. "The only area I think we really need to be aware of is in transition. We need to take care of the basketball. We have athletes, so we play up-tempo. A byproduct is that you'll turn it over some, but you shouldn't turn it over too often."

The Blue Raiders play their second-to-last game this season against Denver Saturday night at 7 in the Murphy Center. ♦

Lady Raiders play first three tournaments on the road

By Colleen Cox
Sports Editor

The Middle Tennessee softball team begins the 2002 season at the Mardi Gras Classic in Monroe, La. Friday through Sunday.

The road will become familiar for the Lady Raiders this season as they play only eight home games. The first three tournaments MT plays are on the road.

Pitching starts everything for the Lady Raiders. Jennifer Martinez and Stacy Preator serve as a one-two punch on the mound for MT. Martinez and Preator have a 1.22 and 1.52 ERA, respectively in 2001. The two pitched a combined 400 innings, striking out 368 batters and throwing 22 shutouts last season.

The offense struggled at the beginning of last season but came around to score 203 runs in 64 games. Martinez led the offense as well, playing as the designated hitter when she wasn't pitching. She posted a .497 slugging percentage and a .329 batting average.

Lindsay Azevedo provided the power for the Lady Raiders, hitting 15 doubles, four home runs and 35 RBIs last season. Kip Phillips served as the speedster for MT. Phillips stole 22 bases last season.

MT starts the tournament facing off with Troy State. The Lady Trojans (3-1) swept Florida A&M in doubleheader action Tuesday. Pitchers Kim Unkenholz and Christi Curran combined for a one-hit shutout in the first game of the doubleheader. The TSU pitching staff has a 0.25 ERA and has allowed 11 hits in four games.

The Lady Trojan offense posts a .238 team batting average and .310 on base percentage. TSU scored 13 runs in their four games.

MT squares off with Texas A&M-Corpus Christi (0-7) in the second game. The Islanders are 0-7 on the season and lost to No. 21 UL-Lafayette 5-1 and 2-0 Sunday. The Islanders also lost to No. 17 Southwest Texas State earlier this season. Shelley Oetken scored the only run of

the game for the Islanders.

In the third game of the tournament, MT plays the University of Louisiana-Monroe. The Lady Indians started their regular season with two one-run losses to Baylor University and the University of Texas-San Antonio. Lori Tande blasted a two-run homer in the loss to UTSA.

The Lady Raiders enter pool play Sunday.

Martinez should start the first game on the mound with Preator and Amanda Kendall starting games two and three, respectively.

Tulsa, Centenary, Southeastern Louisiana and Fordham also are part of the tournament. The Lady Raiders game with Troy State starts at 3 p.m. ♦



Photo by Amy Jones | Chief Photographer

Jennifer Martinez pitches during her two hit, 14 strikeout performance in Tuesday's scrimmage against Motlow State Community College. She will pitch the first game.



Photo by Amy Jones | Chief Photographer

Lee Nosse shoots the ball over a defender's hand.

Men's golf finishes 10th

Staff Reports

The Middle Tennessee men's golf team finished 10th at the Gulf Coast Classic in Gulfport, Miss. to open the spring season.

The Blue Raiders finished with a three round 915. Host the University of Southern Mississippi won the tournament with an 889.

MT led the tournament after the first round but two rounds of 311 and 306 dropped the team to 10th place.

"With the good start we got off to I am a little disappointed with where we finished," Blue Raider head coach Johnny Moore said. "We did not play with any consistency. We're not going to win many tournaments like that."

Charlie Gibson led the Blue Raiders, finishing ninth with a three round 221. He had MT's best rounds of the tournament with a first round 72 and a third round 73.

See Golf, 10

Baseball team opens season against former OVC rival

By Kevin Rose
Staff Writer

After spending the past eight months preparing for the 2002 season, the Middle Tennessee baseball team finally gets the opportunity to show their skills against an opposing team in 2002.

The Blue Raiders open the season with long-time Ohio Valley Conference rival and in-

state rival Austin Peay State University Sunday.

The season opener for both teams makes an interesting match-up, according to Blue Raiders head coach Steve Peterson.

Peterson looks forward to the challenge of opening with a program such as Austin Peay.

"I like the opportunity to compete against Austin Peay," Peterson said. "I know their

organization. I know they have a good organization and they take baseball seriously."

The Blue Raiders return many key players from last year's 2001 Sun Belt Conference Championship team. These returning players will look to lead the Blue Raiders in their home opener. First team 2001 All-Conference junior outfielder Justin Sims is the leading returnee on offense (.377 10HR,

and 66 RBIs). Senior Marshall Nesbitt returns after having a breakout season as a Blue Raider (.346, 21 2B, and 46 RBIs). Defensively, senior shortstop Jason Howarth leads the Blue Raiders. Howarth started 53 games last year at shortstop.

The Blue Raiders also return sophomore center fielder Chuck Akers, who started 57 games last year as a freshman. The pitching staff will be led by sophomore left-hander John Williams (7-1, 3.59 ERA), a freshman All-American in 2001 and second team 2001 All-Conference, and senior Jeremy

Armstrong (4 SV, 3.00 ERA). The pitching staff should also benefit from the services of senior Adam Larson, a transfer from Mississippi State. Larson is expected to be one of the leaders of the pitching staff.

The Governors, picked to win the OVC title by league coaches, return many key players from last year's team. Offensively, they will be led by All-OVC catcher A.J. Ellis (.335, 58 RBIs). Michael Johnson also returns after having a stellar first year (.341, 15HR and 45 RBIs). The Governors return two of their top pitchers from

last year: senior left-handers Stephen Pew (8-4, 4.85 ERA) and Mike Weel (6-6, 4.40 ERA). Peterson and his team will have the advantage of opening at home for the second year in a row.

"Opening day is special for any baseball player," Peterson said, "but it is especially special when you're at home."

Williams will start at pitcher for the Blue Raiders. Weel is the probable starter for Austin Peay.

The opening pitch is set for 2 p.m. at Reese Smith Field. ♦



2 p.m.
Reese Smith Field
Sunday

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Basketball Notebook

By Shane Marquardt
Staff Writer

The men's basketball team hit a two-game skid on the Arkansas highway but look to recover as they make their way back to the Murphy Center for a conference battle with Denver Saturday. The road to the tourney continues.

Gun Law:

The Middle Tennessee basketball team had problems understanding the laws of shooting within the state of Arkansas. No one was quite sure when to pull the trigger. Lee Nosse was the only Blue Raider to score in double digits against Arkansas State, collecting 14 points. Nosse could have used some help in the 32-point shellacking, but his teammates apparently received shooting permits a game late. Tommy Gunn was held scoreless in the ASU game, but responded with 18 points against Little Rock. Unfortunately, Nosse could only manage two points in the one-sided loss.

Road Weary:

The Blue Raiders have two games left on the schedule – and thankfully only one of them calls for the squad to get back on the road. MT is 2-11 on the road this season and sitting precariously in the middle of the Sun Belt Conference pack. To make matters worse, the remaining road game is Western Kentucky. The Hilltoppers are Sun Belt favorites and have regained their star seven-foot center.

Don't Give Up, Don't Ever Give Up:

The Blue Raiders are 12-13 overall and 5-7 in the conference with two games remaining. Now is the time to get everyone on the same page in the playbook. After such a rocky season, a winning record

would be quite an accomplishment for the MT squad.

The Middle Tennessee Lady Raiders are feeling quite comfortable in the confines of the Murphy Center. It's good news, because the Lady Raiders have one game left at home against South Alabama before two more conference road trips cap the regular season.

No Place Like Home:

The Lady Raiders can seize a winning record at home this Thursday when they host South Alabama in the Murphy Center. A win would give MT a 4-3 record against conference opponents and a 7-7 record overall.

Let's Hear it for the Girls:

Team play highlighted the Ladies two home wins against the teams from Arkansas. Four Lady Raiders scored in double figures against Arkansas State. Jennifer Justice (15 points, 7 rebounds), Patrice Holmes (14 points, 4 steals), Jamie Thomatis (11 points, 6 rebounds, 6 assists) and Keisha McClinic (16 points). Little Rock had to deal with both point production and complete board domination. Thomatis had 18 points and 9 rebounds, making 22 of 23 games in which she has reached double figures; Tiffany Fisher had 9 rebounds and Patrice Holmes and 11 points and shared 7 assists. Strong play going into the Sun Belt Conference tournament.

For the Record:

The Lady Raiders have won five of their past six games and are 14-3 when they hold their opponent under 70 points. They play South Alabama Thursday at 7 p.m., and then hit the road for the final two conference games of the 2001-2002 season. ♦

COMING SOON



CAT'S MUSIC

Golf: Ron Smith Invitational

Continued from 8

"I was very proud of the way Charlie played," Moore said. "He made smart decisions and managed the course the right way. He has a bright future in our program."

John Beddies tied for 28th with a final score of 229. Willie

Daniel shot a three round 233 to tie for 48th. Patrick Williams, who shot a first round 73, fell to 55th with a 235. Freshman Carter Henderson rounded out the scoring with a 240.

The Blue Raiders play in the Ron Smith Invitational in Tampa, Fla., Feb. 22-24. ♦

Men's rugby takes first seed

By Maura Satchell
Staff Writer

The Moosemen mauled their way to a first-seed berth in the upcoming Northern Conference playoffs by taking two important games in league play at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill last weekend.

The team rolled over the University of Tennessee Rugby Football Club Saturday winning 42-5 in a very physical meeting. The Moosemen took Sunday's match against the University of North Carolina 21-16 thanks to a last-minute run by Mark Kane.

Both opponents beat MT last year in league play and Moosemen fullback Hogden Mainda credited the team's experience to the pair of victories.

"The team has more experience this year," said Mainda. "Last year's team was kept and we gained other players too."

Mainda, a native of Kenya, will be leaving MT and heading to law school in either Memphis

or Knoxville after graduation this spring.

In the pair of games last weekend, Mainda managed a try in each game. In addition to Mainda's 5 points against UT, Philip Maddox, playing prop, scored a pair of tries as did scrum half Mark Kane. Fly half Cayo Nicolau made good use of his boot by making good on two penalty kicks, three conversions and running for a try of his own. Nicolau put 17 points on the scoreboard in the game.

"UT played us tough. Every point we scored we worked for," said Novices' coach David Watkins, a native of Wales who has been with the team since August. Watkins said a number of players had minor injuries following the UT match, including Nicolau who received a gash to the head.

"We took it to 'em on Sunday. North Carolina had a huge crowd but we stuck with the game and played the whole of the game," Watkins said about Sunday's victory.

"The game was a hard fought battle," said head coach Tony

Neely in an e-mail after the weekend's games.

"The lead changed hands several times and the score stood tied at 16-16 in the waning seconds of the game. MTSU scrum half Mark Kane scored the winning try as time expired," Neely said.

Kane, from New Zealand, had a big weekend with the two tries in the game Saturday versus UTRF and the game-winning try in Sunday's match against UNC with a last-minute dummy pass and runaround of UNC's defenders.

"Kudos to UNC and their coaches for putting together a great game plan that denied our backs any substantial ball. There is a good chance that these two squads will lock up again in Myrtle Beach," Neely said, referring to the March 23-24th Rugby South Collegiate finals. The winner of that weekend's matches goes onto the USA Rugby Collegiate National quarterfinals.

Saturday at 2 p.m. the Moosemen take on eighth-ranked the Ohio State Buckeyes

in non-conference play.

"Ohio State is a worthy opponent," said team captain Scott Knox. "It's a big team with three sides. We've just gotta beat them with our backs," said Knox, referring to the Moosemen's backline which includes the likes of Kane, Nicolau, named to last year's All-American team, South Conference All-star outside center Derek Wolfe and Mainda at the fullback position.

"We have the best backs in the South," said Jarden Thorton, a pack player from Hendersonville.

Thorton played two years of college football before having to sit out a season for eligibility reasons. That's when he turned his attention to rugby.

"I'm excited. I'm definitely excited," Thorton said of this weekend's meeting against OSU.

The match will be held at the Nashville Metro Center at 11 a.m. Saturday. ♦

WEEKDAY FEATURES

- MORNING BEAT (6-9AM)
- ASSOCIATED PRESS NEWS
- OVERNIGHTS WITH BOB PARLOCHA

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