

# MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

EDITORIALLY INDEPENDENT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2008

VOL. 84 NO. 54

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Beautifully Crude galvanized by a dedicated Street Team of local fans.

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Blue Raiders return home

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## COMMUTE

Alumni Drive from Blue Raider Drive to Friendship Street will be closed for the fall semester for road improvements. With the closing of Alumni, there will be no access to the Library parking lot. During the construction period, the northern portion of the parking lot by the Honors Building will be changed from green to white. The southern end of the lot by Ezell Hall will remain green for students. You will not be able to access the campus via Womack Lane.

Due to construction, several lots have been rezoned. All legal parking areas are designated by signs, painted stripes, or other marks. Be sure to check the posted signs BEFORE you park your automobile. If it is not marked, don't park!

For more information, visit [www.mtsu.edu/~parking](http://www.mtsu.edu/~parking).

# Obama defeats McCain

## Youth, minority vote help swing the vote to Obama in 2008's historic election

By FAITH FRANKLIN  
Assistant News Editor

Democrat and Republican student supporters were not surprised by the landslide victory that President-elect Barack Obama won over Sen. John McCain Tuesday night.

Seniors Lani Lester and Matt Hurtt participated in the 2008 Student Debate last week. Lester, a mass communication and political science major, debated the Democratic position, while Hurtt, a history and the Republican position.

"Part of me was expecting it, but another part of me was afraid to expect it," Lester said. "Obama is not just the first African-American to be elected to president, but he is someone that I really believe in, whose policies I really believe in."

As the first black president-elect, Obama will be sworn in Jan. 20, 2009. The year will also mark the centennial anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"I think it means a lot of different

things to different people," Lester said. "As a county we have reached a milestone. Although we have not yet experienced complete racial equality, we are that much closer to realizing that dream that Martin Luther King articulated so many years ago."

According to Hurtt, the unpopularity of President George W. Bush and Obama's excellent campaigning contributed to McCain's loss.

"The victory was not a big surprise to me," Hurtt said. "I have thought for a while that John McCain was the sacrificial lamb of the Republican Party for the 2008 election."

Both Lester and Hurtt were surprised by some of the swing states that Obama won.

"I knew that Obama was going to win, but I wasn't sure of the margin," Hurtt said. "I was surprised he won Indiana and Ohio. He pulled more electoral votes than [he] actually needed."

To win the election, either candidate needed a total of 270 electoral

votes. Obama received 349 to McCain's 163.

Lester said she was surprised that votes were still coming in even after Obama was announced as the winner.

"I am not sure how many swing states I was expecting Obama to win," Lester said. "I was overjoyed that he won Ohio, because I don't think that a Republican president has ever won the presidency without winning Ohio."

During McCain's concession speech to his supporters, he seemed genuine, Hurtt said.

"McCain has always said that we are Americans, so that whatever happens, we have to come together and reach a consensus," Hurtt said. "What's good for Republicans isn't always good for Democrats and vice versa, but when we work together, we can figure out what's good for America."

Read more

online

### Election Quick Facts

- ◆ Joe Biden is the first Roman Catholic ever to serve as vice president.
- ◆ It is estimated that 136.6 million Americans voted for president this election, up from 122.3 million in 2004. That would give 2008 a 64.1 percent voter turnout rate, the highest since 1908.
- ◆ Obama raised more money in this election than any candidate in history.
- ◆ Obama is the first Democratic presidential candidate to win Virginia since 1964.
- ◆ Between 21.6 and 23.9 million Americans in the age group from 18 to 29 years cast a ballot, up from about 19.4 million in 2004.
- ◆ By the end of Nov. 4, about 2.4 million users had signed up as Facebook supporters of Obama.

U.S. News & World Report, The New York Times and the Associated Press

## Students take a stab at free expression



Photo by Jay Bailey, staff photographer  
Cops arrive at Gracy Hall Tuesday night, where an Obama-painted pumpkin was smashed.

By TANNER EADS  
Contributing Writer

A pumpkin bearing Obama's face was found stabbed, covered in red paint and hanging from an MTSU dormitory just after the election results were announced Tuesday.

When President-elect Barack Obama won the presidency Tuesday, a pumpkin was found that had a picture of Obama's face attached to it. The pumpkin was found hanging from a rope on the third floor of Gracy Hall, a dormitory at MTSU.

A crowd had already gathered when freshman Sedric Yunupingu came out of the Woodmoore Dining Hall and noticed the pumpkin hanging overhead. According to Yunupingu, he and a friend, Alexandra Bigel, headed up to the third floor to deal with the pumpkin and discovered two girls, both white, who are allegedly responsible. One girl was still holding the knife.

"When we got up there they had

the knife from the pumpkin and had taken the picture off of it," Yunupingu said. "[The girls said that they were the ones who] did it but it wasn't supposed to be a race issue."

Bigel, also an MTSU freshman, said she helped Sedric remove the pumpkin after the girls refused to remove it from where it hung.

She said soon thereafter someone called the police.

"In order to move forward [as a nation], we need to get over something as trivial as the color of our skin," Bigel said.

The MTSU Public Safety Dept. was flooded with calls reporting the issue, and soon three officers arrived on the scene to deal with the disturbance. The officers were unavailable for comment.

According to the Public Safety Department's crime log, which is located on its Web site, they have received several calls starting at 11:31 p.m., and the event was filed as malicious mischief.



# Students up their antes for Homecoming

By ALEX MOORMAN  
Assistant News Editor

The week of Homecoming kicked off Monday with Casino Night, hosted by the Student Government Association and Student Programming in an effort to get students more involved in Homecoming.

"The theme for Homecoming is Bet on Blue, so it seemed normal to have a Casino Night," said Bonnie Hicks, freshman marketing major. "This creates a fun environment for students to meet people and have a good time."

The event was free for participants and took place in the Tennessee room on the first floor of the James Union Building from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.

"This a great way to get people socializing with

ery year.

"Our main goal for Casino Night is for everyone to have a good time, and I think we achieved that," said Jason Hubert, junior recording industry major. "This night is great because a lot of people showed up."

At the door, students were given cups filled with fake money and gambling chips.

Attendees were asked to put a ticket into a drawing for later that night and the winner would receive prizes.

"It's been a lot of years since we've had a Casino Night, and this actually really gives students an opportunity to do something they couldn't normally do in Murfreesboro," said Debra Sells, vice president of Academic Support Services.

The room was complete



Photo by Jay Bailey, staff photographer  
Getsomani Torres beat the tables with the help of his good luck charm Lauren Still during Casino Night in the James Union Building.

**“The theme is Bet on Blue, so it seemed right to have a Casino Night.”**

BONNIE HICKS  
FRESHMAN, MARKETING MAJOR AT MTSU

each other," said Shannon Jankowski, senior marketing major.

The members, in an effort to get the word out about Casino Night, posted flyers around campus.

Pipeline featured it in its upcoming events, and they created a group on Facebook. They also relied heavily on word of mouth to get the information out to students.

"This is a free and fun way to get students out on campus and more involved in Homecoming," said Greg Johnson, freshman finance major.

The aim of the members was to spur excitement about homecoming but also to give students something enjoyable and different to experience instead of doing something that happens ev-

with slot machines, blackjack tables and poker tables.

The dealers, all students, were dressed up as casino dealers and taught players the rules of the game.

"I came tonight because it's a great way to interact with my classmates and learn how to gamble," said Tabitha Bills, freshman nursing major.

One member thought that experience would be good for students for more than just learning how to gamble.

"It offers a different event for students to experience. It's not just another pep rally of spirit day, it's fun and interactive which is what makes the event great," said Chanera Pierce, sophomore international relations major.



Photo by Jay Bailey, staff photographer  
Cord Martin plays the slots next to Sondra Wilson.

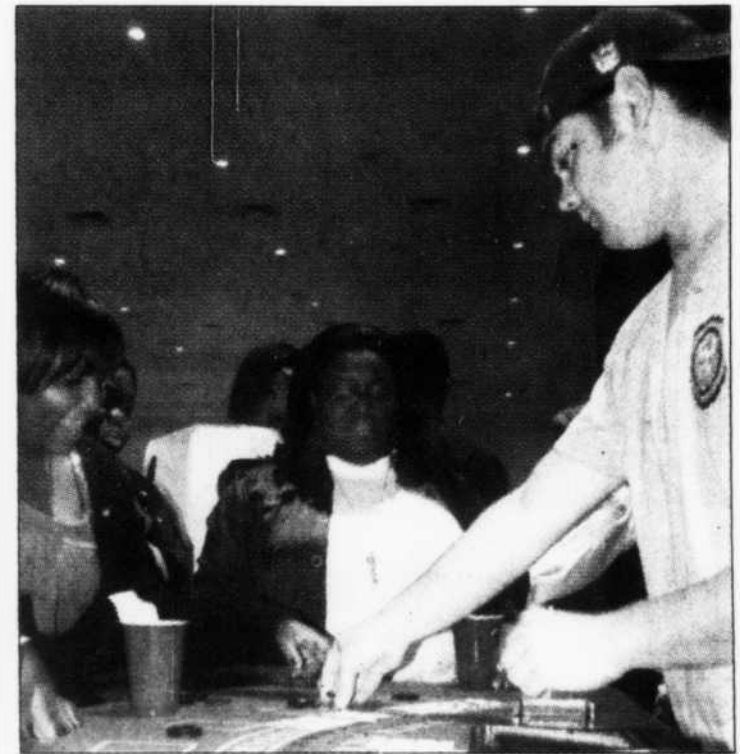


Photo by Jay Bailey, staff photographer  
Joe Welch deals cards on the table to blackjack participants.

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<p><b>Tuesday, November 4</b> <b>SWAP DAY @ THE KUC</b> <b>MTSU IDOL</b> JUB Tennessee Room 7:00 pm</p>	<p><b>Friday, November 7</b> <b>CHILI COOK-OFF</b> Murphy Center Lawn 5:00 pm</p> <p><b>NPHC STEP SHOW</b> Murphy Center 7:30 pm</p>	<p><b>Saturday, November 8</b> <b>HOMECOMING PARADE</b> Middle Tennessee Blvd. 10:00 am</p> <p><b>RAIDER WALK</b> Walnut Grove 12:30 pm</p> <p><b>MTSU v. UL - MONROE</b> Floyd Stadium 2:30 pm</p>

Student Government Association Presents:  
**HOMECOMING 2008**



# Lambda Theta Alpha hosts Unity Election Party Nov. 4

By KELSEY FRANKLIN  
Contributing Writer

The ladies of Lambda Theta Alpha sorority hosted MTSU's 2008 Unity Election Party to offer students an opportunity to gather in an unbiased location and enjoy the election.

The event took place at the Keathley University Center Grill on Election Day from 7 to 11 p.m.

Upon entering the grill guests were greeted by members of the sorority and everyone was invited to sign the guest book in order to receive a follow up and thank you e-mail.

In addition to signing the guest book, participants were given a ticket for a raffle and free food. The front entrance was lined with donation boxes and gifts donated by participating co-sponsoring groups for the event's silent auction.

All proceeds from the silent auction went to the Domestic Violence Center of Murfreesboro.

Some of the co-sponsors for the event included Col-

lege Democrats, Student Government Association, Pinnacle Honor Society, Older Wiser Learning Students, The Department of Intercultural and Diversity Affairs, Lambda Theta Phi Latin fraternity and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Middle Tennessee State University Chapter.

Many other organizations put forth a tremendous effort in making this night's event a great success including the 100 Collegiate Black Men, Blue Raider Veterans, Economy Club, American Association of University women-TN, Phi Alpha Delta

the election, pressing issues or life in general.

Music played throughout the night, and the entirety of the KUC grill became a dance floor.

"I just wanted to be surrounded by other people with the same views as me, and I wanted to be able to dance," said Antonio Benson, freshman accounting major.

A main contributor for this event was Moni Denny. She is the Community Service Chair for Lambda Theta Alpha as well as the President of OWLS and a student affiliate of the American Association of University Women.

Inspired by the events that took place while attending Presidium, Denny brought back some ideas and held round tables

to get the input of members of the organizations.

In response, the Lambda ladies had been organizing the Unity Election Party for a few months and gained support from other organizations on campus.

The purpose of the Unity Election Party was to unite

**"I just wanted to be surrounded by other people with the same views as me, and I wanted to be able to dance."**

ANTONIO BENSON  
FRESHMAN ACCOUNTING MAJOR

Honor Society and Culture Shock Magazine.

There were many components that went into making the party fun and educational. Both candidates had guest speakers and the party included a freedom microphone where participants expressed their opinions on

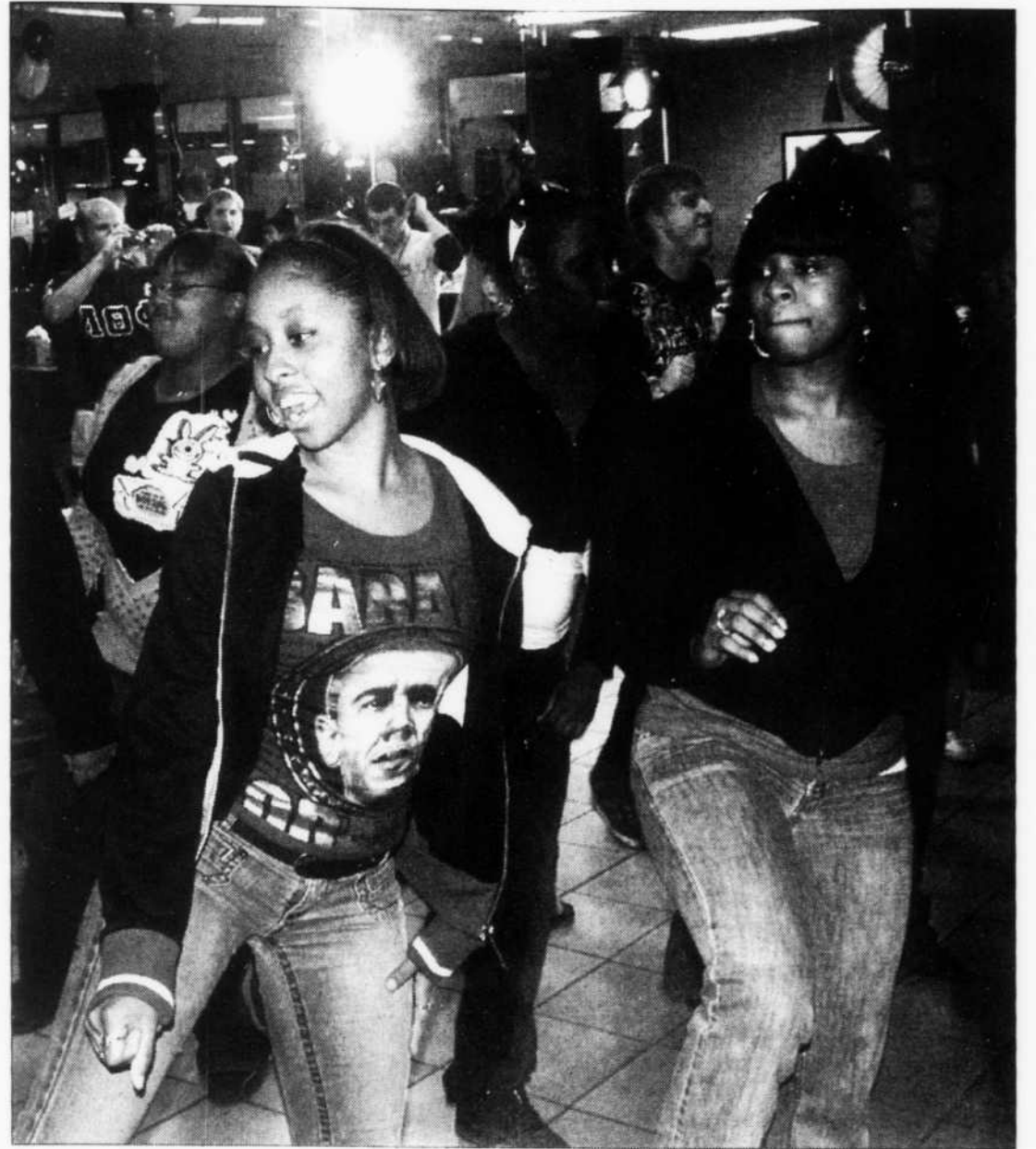


Photo by Jay Bailey, staff photographer  
Students dance in the KUC during the Unity Election Party before state results were released.

MTSU students regardless of their political affiliation.

"Everyone is caught up on the label, but we are all representing the same values," Moni said. "This was such a great turnout, [and] I never expected it to be this big."

Terri McMoore, President of Lambda Theta Al-

pha, said it was going to be a monumental event because everyone was united for the common cause to vote, and it did not matter who won.

"This was my first time voting and it's great to have people coming together without discrimination," said Mike Scroggs, junior re-

cording major.

Excited and eager to hear the results, guests continued to eat, socialize, debate and make history at MTSU's nonpartisan event hosted by the generous Lambda Theta Alpha ladies.

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## ATLAS provides aid for local K-12 homeless students

By BYRON WILKES  
Community News Editor

Rutherford County Schools has reported that more than 600 enrolled children within their educational system are homeless and have homeless parents for the year 2007.

"Right now, we have 605 pupils in the Rutherford County Schools that reported being homeless," said Danielle Kaminsky, the homeless student liaison provided to the schools under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act passed by Congress in 1986. "That's not including the Murfreesboro City

Schools."

Rutherford County Schools is comprised of 41 Pre-K-12 schools and also one adult education center. Kaminsky works as a homeless education liaison for the school with a group called Academic Time Leads, which strives to enhance enrollment and attendance and improve the success of students by teaching them to work hard in school.

"The biggest thing to realize about children experiencing homelessness is how broad the thing is," Kaminsky said. "It might be that they're doubling up or sharing with others or their

parents might be renting a house and not be able to afford it any more."

ATLAS liaisons are trained in identification so that they can contact parents later in a more confidential manner.

"We've had people come because of house fires or that are living in a shelter," Kaminsky said. "We've seen a lot of people who've lost their job or are victims of the bad economy."

Read more



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# OPINIONS

## FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

### Voter reactions a show of disrespect, immaturity

By now, the entire world knows that the next president of the United States is Barack Obama.

On Nov. 4, after the loss of the Ohio electorate for Republicans, John McCain delivered his concession speech in Phoenix, Ariz.

In his speech, he urged his supporters to accept the defeat with grace and support the newly elected president.

"I urge all Americans who supported me to join me in not just congratulating him, but offering our next president our goodwill and earnest effort to find ways to come together," McCain said Tuesday night. "Whatever our differences, we are fellow Americans."

His Arizona supporters responded with booing and obscenities.

And we wish we could say that was the beginning and the end to a night of poor sportsmanship. We wish we could say that—but we would be wrong.

At Baylor University in Waco, Texas, the campus newspaper, *The Lariat*, has reported exchanges of racial slurs by McCain supporters to Obama supporters.

North Carolina State University is offering counseling to McCain supporters who feel "down or distressed about their candidate losing," according to *Technician*, the N. C. State newspaper.

Last night, *Technician* also reported that students were walking around the campus, "voicing their opinions in dissent of the nation's choice and, on occasion, countering cheers with 'Palin 2012' and 'Socialist!'"

And still, floods of reports from other colleges are coming in. Students are posting Facebook announcements about minor vandalism at Tennessee Tech and small riots at UT-Martin.

Even here, we've had our own show of unnecessary and disgraceful displays of "malicious mischief" in the form of metaphorical lynching.

Hanging a pumpkin with anyone's picture on it isn't funny; it isn't political discourse; it isn't even a legal form of free speech. It is hate speech, plain and simple.

To the perpetrators of this heinous display of dishonor to both President-elect Barack Obama and Sen. John McCain, grow up.

If this was done because McCain lost the race, it is obvious you had no intent to hear his concession speech. Had you bothered to listen, you would have never done such a disrespectful act.

It is very obvious that McCain was able to muster more grace and dignity in roughly 15 minutes than you apparently have been able to do in your entire life.

Short of filling out the paperwork and running for office yourself or relaying your desire to have Obama impeached to your congressman, the next four years are going to be relatively similar to other presidencies in our lifetimes so you may as well save yourself the time and energy. Let's act like grown-ups.

## Now is the time for a united front

History was made Tuesday night. It was going to be made no matter which way the chips fell. Whether we elected the first female vice-president, the oldest president, or the first black president, a precedent was going to be set.

While I am a supporter of Obama, I am first, and foremost, a supporter of our country and its relations with the world. I think, honestly, that we would have been okay either way. McCain is an experienced, intelligent man who would have been more than capable of doing a fine job in the White House. While I don't agree with his choice for running mate, I do respect McCain for his efforts and determination.

To be honest, I felt a bit of sadness when I watched McCain's speech. It was a fantastic speech. He was gracious, professional and collected. I admit I teared up a little when he talked about how he had served his coun-

try for 50 years and would continue to serve it now under his new president. He is to be commended for the service he has provided to our country.

It was very moving. And it really showed me an unfortunate side to all of this. McCain didn't lose because he wasn't a good man for the job. McCain lost because people are so jaded by Bush. They are jaded by a man who messed up so royally in office, in so many respects that they fear McCain would do the same. While the election Tuesday was fair in terms of the fact that nobody cheated, I wish that McCain had been given the opportunity to run on his own terms—not the negative terms he was up against created by the Bush administration.

In the end, I do have hope. I have hope that Obama will lead us to a more unified America. Polarization will never get us anywhere. McCain has demonstrated his



Grammar Gal  
Schools You  
Jessica Laven

ability to be moderate—and a moderate majority is what we need to work toward.

Sure, there will always be a left and a right, but my hope is that we will support or refute the issues that affect us because we actually feel passionately about them—not because they are red or blue.

We need to stop lobbying for laws that don't affect us. We need to stop treating homosexuals as second-class citizens because their relationships have no physical or direct effect on anyone but

themselves. We need to stop assuming that all women want to be married and have children. We need to stop assuming that everyone wants to live according to the Bible. We need to stop illegal immigration. We need to bring our weak, tired military home. We need to strengthen our country from the inside out. We need to reform welfare. We need to work to bridge the class gaps. We need to figure out an economic system that doesn't rob any one class of their money, regardless of income. We need affordable healthcare available for the millions of us, myself included, who literally cannot get it on their own.

There is a lot of work to be done. But it can be done and it will be done if we work together rather than pushing further and further away from each other. The petty, immature bickering needs to stop. Gloating needs to stop. We need to prove to the world that we aren't idiots,

because contrary to popular American belief, we are not viewed as an amazing world beyond that everyone loves and envies.

We need to work together to improve our image and improve our relations with other countries and work with those countries to eliminate threats to a peaceful world. We need to stop acting like we're better than everyone else. We need to start taking tips from countries that have existed for more than 200 years.

I realize this is probably too much to ask in four years. And it's too much to ask of one person. But if we even accomplish some of it, we will be on the right track. As Gandhi said, "We must be the change we wish to see in the world." I've said it before, and I'll say it again.

Jessica Laven is in the graduate education program and can be reached at [slopinio@mtsu.edu](mailto:slopinio@mtsu.edu).

## FROM THE EDITOR

### Experiencing the election in the technological age

Tuesday night was just one of those moments that you just know—even as it's unfolding—that it's going to permeate your memory for as long as you're alive. No matter who you voted for, it was one of the moments you know you'll tell your children and grandchildren about.

It was one of those moments where you want to soak in and memorize every detail.

Our parents remember exactly where they were when John F. Kennedy was shot. Our big sisters and brothers remember where they were when the Berlin Wall fell. We remember where we were when the planes hit the two towers.

And years from now, we can tell the story of where we were when the first African-American was elected President of the United States of America.

I was sitting in front of the TV, a laptop on my lap and a cell phone by my side. I flipped the channel between CNN and Fox, NBC and CBS, eager to get results the second they came in. I incessantly checked my cell phone for text messages from my friends and family, all equally glued to their respective technological sources of information.

In 2004, I lived in New York City. I was only able

to vote through an absentee ballot, and I really didn't feel as integrally involved in the process. I sat in my dorm room that Election Day with my eyes glued to the news, but I drifted to sleep before any official results were announced. I barely remember turning on my computer or picking up my phone.

This year, I relentlessly drifted between *The New York Times*' Web site and the interactive map on CNN.com.

Even more, I kept finding myself drawn to Facebook.

I refreshed the status updates more times than I can count, equally appalled and elated at my peers' reactions. They ranged from abysmal (One online acquaintance was "heartbroken for America's future") to brilliant ("God Bless these United States, and let us work together, Democrats, Republicans and Independents to keep this country strong!"), from witty ("Voting for McCain makes as much sense as getting mild chicken wings") to downright embarrassing (So and so was "pissed about Osama as this country's new president").

Everyone, though, had something to say. There was a palpable, virtual excitement in the air, and I genuinely felt a part of a new and lasting era.

The microblogging service Twitter exploded with elec-



From the Editor  
Sarah Lavery

tion updates, commentary and speculation. Miraculously, the Web site's servers lasted the night and had quite a lot of terrific and hilarious election commentary (in messages known as "tweets") to serve up for hungry news hounds.

The tip of the technological iceberg came with CNN's use of holograms to employ a new interviewing technique. Correspondent Jessica Yellin beamed her image from Chicago to the CNN press center in New York City, where Wolf Blitzer and the rest of the team were covering election returns. The Black Eyed Peas' Will.i.am appeared via hologram for an interview with Anderson Cooper. I couldn't tell if I was watching election coverage or some sort of parodied *Star Trek* reenactment. But nonetheless, it added to the electronic-boundary pushing of the election.

Even though it's only been a few short years since the last election in which I was able to vote, I can tell a perceptible, pervading differ-

ence in the importance of technology in politics.

And it's only going to get more involved.

Between 21.6 and 23.9 million Americans between the ages of 18 to 29 years cast a ballot, up from about 19.4 million in 2004, numbers-crunchers at the Center for Information and Research of Civic Learning and Engagement reported.

Based on those figures, more young people went to the polls this year than they did in any election since 1972 when the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18.

Young people have the power to sway an election. And young people are surely wired in.

A record-breaking 46 percent of Americans have used the Internet, e-mail or text messaging to get news about the campaign, share their views and mobilize others leading up to Nov. 4, according to a study done by the Pew Research Center. Yet despite the growth in the number of people who are politically engaged online, Internet users express some ambivalence about the role of the Internet in the campaign. On one hand, 28 percent of wired Americans say that the Internet makes them feel more personally connected to the campaign, and 22 percent say that they would not be as involved in the campaign if not for the

Internet.

Above all else—beyond analysis of McCain's gracious concession speech and Obama's stirring acceptance speech—I am genuinely awestruck by just how important a role technology played in my experience of the election and just how personally invested and connected I felt to Tuesday night's events.

I've never been prouder to be an American or a member of my plugged-in generation.

Sarah Lavery can be reached at [sleditor@mtsu.edu](mailto:sleditor@mtsu.edu).

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**Mass Comm 269**

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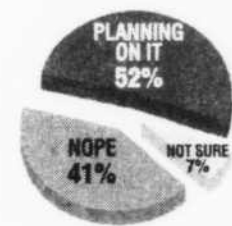
Frank Hasenmueller



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# FEATURES



WILL YOU GO TO THE NEXT HOME FOOTBALL GAME?

BASED ON VOTES FROM MTSUSIDELINES.COM

## Couchsurfing: Bridging cultural gaps one couch at a time

By ALEX BLACKWELDER  
Photography Editor

To some college students, a couch is merely a comfortable place to crash. But to others, it provides a unique way to explore the world and connect with like-minded people.

The CouchSurfing Project is a community of people from around the globe that open their hearts and homes to broaden cultural understanding.

Members have the opportunity and the resources to find couches to crash on in more than 200 countries, from the 15,000 surfers in Paris to the one on the island of St. Helena. This cash-free arrangement requires that travelers and hosts must trust each other.

The idea of couchsurfing was created when founder Casey Fenton traveled to Reykjavik, Iceland and e-mailed over 1,500 students looking for a place to stay. After spending a week hanging with his hosts in the city, Fenton decided he would

never pay for accommodations again and founded the project with his close friends.

Although it might just seem like a budget traveler's dream, the non-profit organization's goal is to make the world's smaller and more peaceful through friendship and cultural exchange.

With over 500,000 couches available worldwide and 2,000,000 positive home-stay reviews, the CouchSurfing Project breaks societal boundaries in travel and cultural exchange.

Senior philosophy major Colin Robinson says he couchsurfed to have a more intimate, unique experience while traveling in Edinburgh, Scotland.

He e-mailed 10 couchsurfing members while staying at a hostel and received a call from a willing host within four hours. That night he met with Nicole and her boyfriend and felt comfortable right away.

Robinson says he remembers experiencing many things that probably wouldn't have happened if he travelled traditionally, like singing

karaoke with his host's boyfriend, partying with locals, playing a whiskey-tasting cricket game and visiting castles with a fellow surfer from Australia.

To Robinson, couchsurfing is more than a cheap way to travel. He says he thinks the mutual cultural exchange between the host and surfer is vital to building a peaceful world.

"Through staying with a host, you can be introduced to a country's culture in a

**"Surfers are at first strangers, but then you immediately find yourself laughing and crying with them."**

Bailey Todd  
MTSU student and participant in the CouchSurfing Project

completely different way than you would if you were to remain the average tourist," Robinson describes. "The connections and friendships that couchsurfing fosters are

life-long and life-changing."

Many students are unable to extensively travel because of money, internships or classes, but hosting surfers in one's own home can often

connect with more than a dozen people from five different countries.

"It (couchsurfing) is creating a world in which warmth and giving can be practiced," she explains.

Todd says the most important thing she has learned by hosting is that, despite language or cultural barriers, she has more in common with people than she first thought.

"Surfers are (at) first strangers, but then you immediately find yourself laughing and crying with them," Todd says.

Todd says one of her most memorable experiences with couchsurfing was when she and her roommates hosted Kristofer Svónuson, a twenty-year-old student from Reykjavik, Iceland.

The two became close friends and Kristofer extended his stay with Todd from two days to two weeks.

"We simultaneously clicked, and it was as if we had known each other for years," Svónuson recalls. "They were so welcoming, and I definitely made some friends that I'm going to cherish for the rest of my life."

According to Svónuson, couchsurfing allowed him to better understand Southern-American culture.

"Coming from a small island populated with only 300,000 people where the policemen don't even carry guns, I knew I was going to see different ideology, especially in the South," Svónuson says.



Graphic by Alicia Wilson

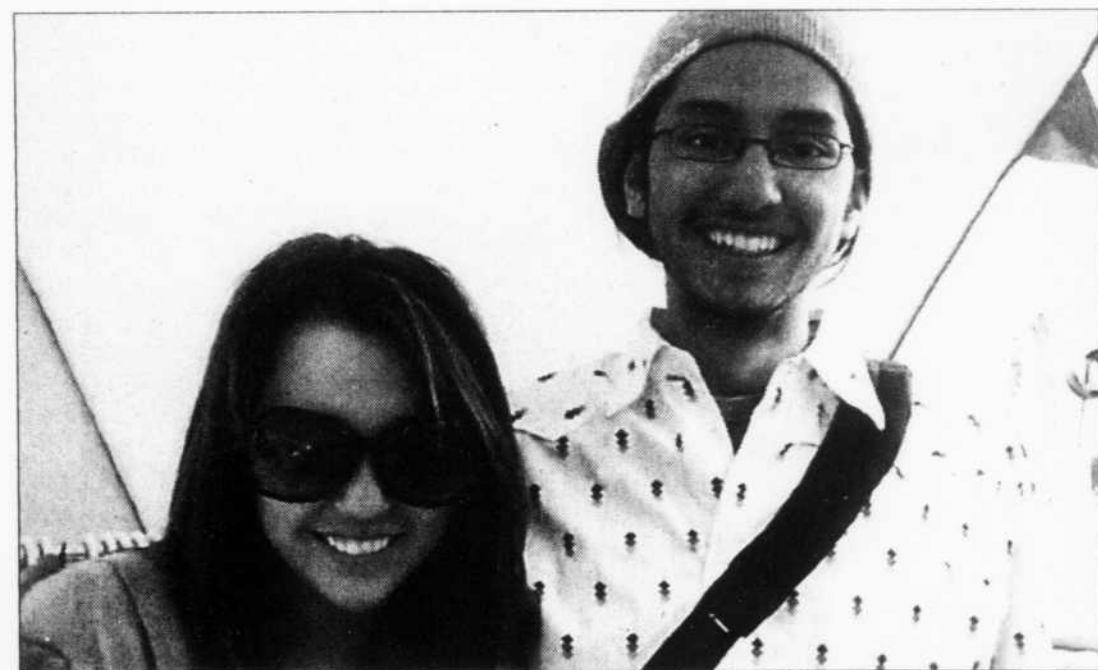


Photo courtesy Bailey Todd  
(Left) Couchsurfer Kristofer Svónuson meeting Miley Cyrus while in Nashville during his surfing adventure in America.



Photo courtesy Colin Robinson  
(Right) Colin Robinson, right, performs karaoke with his host's boyfriend in Scotland.

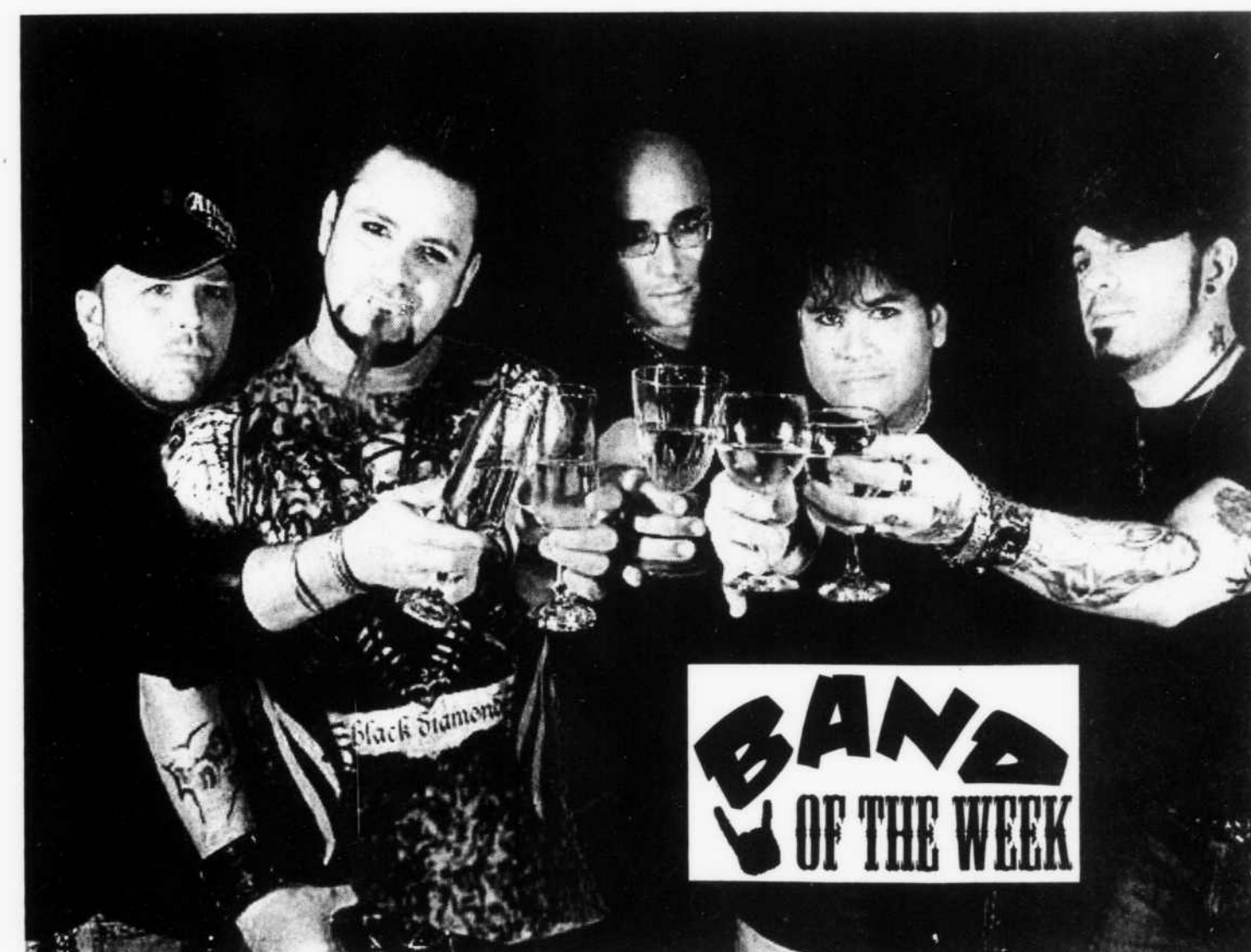


Photo courtesy Beautifully Crude  
(L to R) The five men of Beautifully Crude, drummer Gary Belcher, vocalist Michael Ashley, guitarist Tommy Krantz, guitarist Scott Moore and bassist Derek Daprano, came together after three area bands broke up.

## Don't always judge a band by its cover

By LAURA RAINES  
Staff Writer

This week's Band of the Week, Nashville's Beautifully Crude, has a name, look and sound that may give outsiders the wrong impression of who the guys really are. But the men of BC are just some down-to-earth people who aren't the typical musicians. I found this out as I discussed their journey over beers and a college football game at Wall Street on Saturday night.

It was then I found out that these four musicians are of a completely different breed.

The group is a culmination of three different

bands that come together to form a musical powerhouse.

"Generation Down, which was most of the band, Nashville's Light and Red 40 came together after those projects failed for one reason or another," says Scott Moore, guitarist and vocalist. "We all knew each other from high school and the music community, and we clicked."

Upon Moore's reminiscing, Texas scores against Texas Tech, and the bar erupts in a mixture of cheers and boos. A flare on the play causes everyone at the table to take a swig of their drinks.

When the noise returns



**COUCH FROM PAGE 5**

says. Svónuson says he expected to find such stereotyped images of the south as guns and racism, but instead found real, kind people oozing with love. "It did not take a long time for me to fall in love with the South and its culture," he remembers. Svónuson recommends that couchsurfers stop obsessing with planning their travels and just see where their adventure and relationships take them. "We have a saying in Ice-

land, 'jetta reddast,' which basically means that everything is going to work out," Svónuson says. "In my experience, it always does." Todd says she will be visiting Svónuson this summer in Iceland. Sleeping on strangers' couches might seem a bit weird, but Robinson says he had no reservations. A self-proclaimed free spirit, he had no problem relying on the CouchSurfing Project's vouching and rating system, which allows users to rate either their host or their traveler. Todd says she use to be reserved about hosting but soon got over it.

"The majority of people that couchsurf are obviously on the Web site for a good reason - they are traveling and are in need of a place to stay," Todd explains. "This mutual trust in one another creates a safe environment. If I can meet their needs as travelers, they will be appreciative and respectful of my needs as a host." Todd says that she sets a few ground rules while hosting, such as only hosting when her roommates are around and meeting travelers in person in a public space before inviting them to her home. She also relies on the CouchSurfing Project's vouching and rating system.

The feedback system boasts a very high success rate. Out of the 15,000 couchsurfing experiences during this past week, only 20 people left negative ratings for a member. "Through staying with a host, you can be introduced to a country's culture in a completely different way than you would if you were to remain the average tourist," Robinson says. "You will be a richer person for couchsurfing." Tell us about your Couchsurfing stories online at: [www.mtsusidelines.com](http://www.mtsusidelines.com)

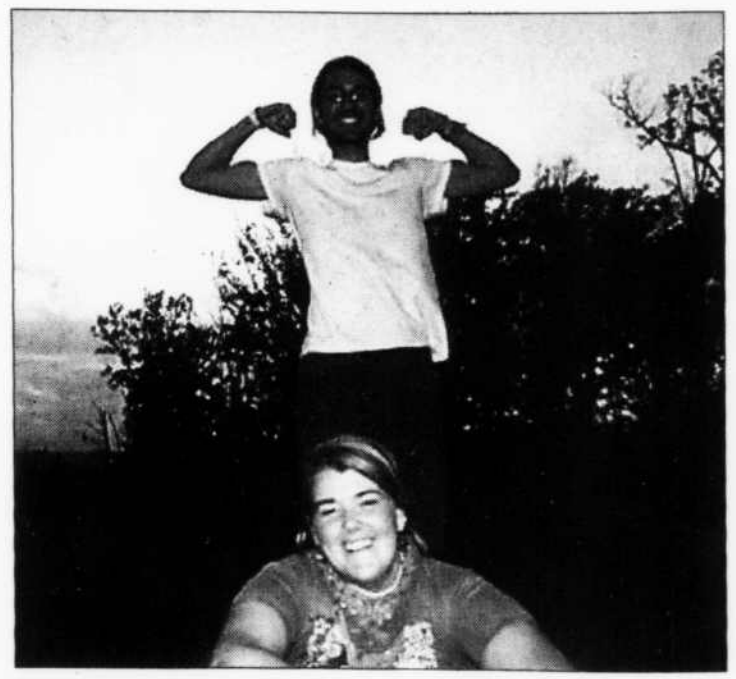


Photo courtesy of Bailey Todd  
Bailey Todd poses with Kristofer Svónuson in Franklin, Tenn.



Photo courtesy Beautifully Crude  
Bassist Derek Daprano whails on his four-string bass guitar.

**BAND FROM PAGE 5**

to a dull roar, BC goes on to talk about a new album in the works, but screams from the surrounding crowd once again interrupting as Texas scores another touchdown. "We have started writing and recording our next album at The Sonic Benchmark Sounds on Music Row in the old Emerald Sound Building," drummer Gary Belcher screams over the enthusiastic football crowd. "Its working title is 'The Ties That Bind,' scheduled to drop Dec. 6. It is the first rock album recorded there, so we are pretty proud to be breaking new ground." The guys credit their street team's guerrilla marketing tactics with most of their success. Growing their fan base is a top priority of the band's. "Our home is in Nashville, but we come to Murfreesboro a lot," says Michael Ashley, lead vocals. "The fan base here has definitely grown over the years thanks to our fans who paint the town with flyers for our shows." Malina Wigginton, one these painters, recalls the great lengths she has gone through to see Beautifully Crude. "We have driven as far as four hours to Kentucky to

**UPCOMING SHOWS**

**Dec. 6 (8 p.m.) CD release show @ Exit/In-Nashville**

**Feb. 21 2009 (8 p.m.) The Rutledge-Nashville**

see BC perform," Wigginton recalls. "I was a fan of the former projects, Generation Down and Shadows of Light, so when they finally converged, it was even better for me." Wigginton, along with a few other die-hard fans, make up BC's official street team. Ashley says the band appreciates this group of dedicated people who do considerable amounts of promotion. The guys laugh as they remember the time the team had cigar boxes made with the BC logo on them. "They remind me of Alice in Chains, Led Zeppelin and some great 80's rock," fan Zack Condell says. The self-described "mellow rockers" certainly come off as hardcore on the outside. As heavily tattooed as they are, metal music might be to mind to someone who hasn't heard them. But the five say they are best


not-too-heavy bands-but-see BC perform," Wigginton recalls. "I was a fan of the former projects, Generation Down and Shadows of Light, so when they finally converged, it was even better for me." Wigginton, along with a few other die-hard fans, make up BC's official street team. Ashley says the band appreciates this group of dedicated people who do considerable amounts of promotion. The guys laugh as they remember the time the team had cigar boxes made with the BC logo on them. "They remind me of Alice in Chains, Led Zeppelin and some great 80's rock," fan Zack Condell says. The self-described "mellow rockers" certainly come off as hardcore on the outside. As heavily tattooed as they are, metal music might be to mind to someone who hasn't heard them. But the five say they are best

we owe them one hell of a show." Just before they leave to go upstairs for their set, the band shares some life lessons that they say Nashville has definitely taught them. "Above all in this tight-knit community, always be the nice guy or girl," Ashley advises. "If you come off as too Hollywood, the major players in Nashville won't look at you twice." Belcher has a little something extra to add. "We try to befriend everyone, from other bands to the people who run Music Row, because we have found, through personal experience and mistakes, that you have to work with them, whether it be on stage or in recording sessions," Belcher says as he finishes his beer in one gulp. "Don't half-ass it either," Deprano interjects. "The audience can always tell if you're not 100 percent in it with your heart and so can your band mates." With their set only moments from starting, BC runs up the back stairs and up onto the stage. Without so much as a mic check, the guys grab their instruments and rock the building for a solid hour. If Beautifully Crude sounds like a band that you wanted to be backed by, visit [myspace.com/beautifully-crudemusic](http://myspace.com/beautifully-crudemusic).

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The proposed referendum states to increase the Student Activity Fee from the \$20 to \$40 for students with 7 hours or more. This would allow SGA, student organizations, sports clubs, student programming, and Distinguished lectures to have more money allocated to their respective areas. The last time that the student activity fee was raised was ten years ago. This referendum is proposed on the basis that prices have risen, and these areas of the University are not acting to their full potential through lack of funds.

Currently the funds are broken down where Student Organizations receive \$10, SGA receives \$3, Student Programming receives \$3, Distinguished Lectures receives \$2, and Sport Clubs receive \$2.

Voting will be similar to Homecoming & Freshman Senate elections. **All students will receive an email with a link that will take you to the voting website.**

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# SPORTS

## Blue Raiders come home to battle Warhawks

By CASEY BOWMAN  
Assistant Sports Editor

This Saturday will mark the return of the Blue Raider football team to the friendly quarters of Floyd Stadium.

After playing on the road for the entire month of October, Middle Tennessee will look to find some more magic in Murfreesboro and attempt to get back on the right track.

Homecoming week has never been a more fitting title.

The Blue Raiders will await conference foe Louisiana Monroe, a team they beat last year on the road in miraculous fashion. With less than a minute remaining in the fourth quarter, former Blue Raider Bradley Robinson returned a ULM kickoff to the house to give Middle Tennessee the lead and the victory.

Time is running short on MT (2-6 overall and 1-3 in conference play) to get its season turned around. Head coach Rick Stockstill said during Tuesday's press conference that his team of young players should begin to improve on the field.

"Going into our ninth ball game, the young guys have played a bunch, and it's time for us to play our best football as a team," Stockstill said. "We had three good practices last week and got off to a good start [Monday]. We have to play better in all three phases than we have in order to beat ULM."

With the arduous part of their schedule behind them, the Blue Raiders can still put together a streak of wins that could land them in bowl eligibility bracket, but running back Phillip Tanner says the team is only taking things one game at a time.

"All of our focus is on ULM. Everyone wants to talk about winning several straight, maybe getting back into a situation where we can go to a bowl or something, but the team is focused on ULM. This is the only game that matters to us right now," Tanner said.

Middle's record may not be where anyone wants it to be, but Tanner also stressed that he and his teammates aren't looking at the past, but rather looking to end on a right

note.

"We have a lot of people who love playing football. Our attitude is right and while it's true that our record is not what we would like it to be, but we are still working and trying to finish strong," Tanner said.

Senior quarterback Joe Craddock will get the start this weekend for the Blue Raiders. Last year, Craddock torched the ULM secondary on his way to a career night in which he threw for 401 yards and accounted for four touchdown passes, two of which were hauled in by Desmond Gee.

While Craddock may have an edge on Monroe, Stockstill made it clear that both Craddock and sophomore Dwight Dasher will split time in the pocket for Saturday's contest.

Stockstill says that with both quarterbacks seeing action, the Blue Raider offense becomes better. If the ULM game becomes a shootout again though, Craddock should see the majority of the snaps.

"Both quarterbacks will play, and I think it helps our offense when both of them play," Stockstill said. "We planned on playing Dwight more against Mississippi State, but it got into a throwing game with us behind in the second half, and we thought Joe gave us the best option to win the game."

ULM will be coming to Murfreesboro riding high after its thrilling defeat over conference leader Troy last week and will undoubtedly be looking for some payback to give to Middle after last season and the "Miracle in Monroe" that Middle pulled off.

Saturday's meeting will be the first time these two teams have locked up in Murfreesboro since 2005, when Monroe beat Middle in a 34-31 heartbreaker.

ULM (3-6, 2-3) will start senior quarterback Kinsmon Lancaster against the Blue Raiders. Lancaster suffered a hand and knee injury against Troy, but ULM coach Charlie Weatherbie said his quarterback should be good to go by Saturday.

Kickoff is slated for 2:30 p.m. following the morning's Homecoming festivities.



Photo by Alex Blackwelder, photography editor  
The Blue Raiders prepare for Homecoming against Louisiana-Monroe. The Warhawks are seventh in the SBC in total defense.

MT		LEADERS		ULM WARHAWKS	
	YARDS	TDs		YARDS	TDs
<b>PASSING</b>			<b>PASSING</b>		
Joe Craddock	1756	9	Kinsmon Lancaster	1652	14
<b>RUSHING</b>			<b>RUSHING</b>		
Phillip Tanner	345	6	Frank Goodin	561	3
<b>RECEIVING</b>			<b>RECEIVING</b>		
Malcolm Beyah	462	5	Darrell McNeal	443	4
<b>TACKLES</b>			<b>TACKLES</b>		
Danny Carmichael	60		Cardia Jackson	91	
<b>INT</b>			<b>INT</b>		
Three players tied	2		Greg James	3	
<b>SACKS</b>			<b>SACKS</b>		
Eight players tied	1		Aaron Morgan	4	

## Newcomer Clark collects double-double in first Lady Raider action of the season

By TIFFANY GIBSON  
Campus News Editor

In the first exhibition game of the season, the Lady Raiders triumphed over Kentucky Wesleyan 82-51 with Emily Queen and Alysha Clark collectively scoring 47 points.

MT Head Coach Rick Insell said that he was happy with the performance of the team, but admits that its defense could use some work.

"We have got to get better or we're going to have problems," Insell said. "I would have liked to see us get more on the floor and skinning an elbow or knee."

Throughout the exhibition, Clark was continuously double-teamed and yet still managed to walk away with 20 points, two assists, seven steals and 11 rebounds.

"She had two or three on most of the night and that's the way it's going to be the rest of her career," Insell said. "A lot of people are

going to double and triple Alysha."

Clark said that being double and triple teamed only helped her pass the ball to her open teammates.

"Playing like that before and having teams that double team me, I learned to get myself open and find my teammates," Clark said. "I'm not always going to score the first time, so I just kick it back out and repost."

During the game, Coach Insell not only gave everyone a chance to play, but he brought in Tina Stewart, freshman guard, to run the point and Dana Garrett, junior guard, to add to the intensity.

"Overall, I'm happy with Tina and Dana and what they did," Insell said. "We've just got to bring them a little further this week."

"And Shytoria [Davis] got a nice block, which is always helpful."

Stewart played for 14 minutes and made one 3-pointer and one field goal. Garrett finished with four points, one steal and one rebound within the 9 minutes she was on the floor.

As the second half began, junior guard Chelsia Lymon came alive and made a 3-point shot that put the Lady Raiders up by 13.

With 13:58 left in the second half, the physicality took a turn when Queen was fouled and crashed hard to the floor. She shot three for a technical foul and made one basket.

"It's Division 1 and we're going to play physical games night in and night out, so you come to just expect that and just play through it," Queen said.

Queen said that she felt a lot more comfortable on the court this year because she is back to her natural position. For most of the game,



Photo by Alex Blackwelder, photography editor  
MT was able to hold the Panthers to 33.3 percent shooting.

Queen played on the wing, and Insell said that this was because he was trying to rotate players in and out.

"[We are] rotating Queen, Brandi [Brown] and Alysha in on the four and five," Insell said. "I don't really care if Alysha or Emily come out and take the three."

Insell also said that he

would have liked to see more rebounding, considering it was one of the biggest weaknesses last season.

"I knew going in we weren't going to be as good of a rebounding team," Insell said. "But I also thought the intensity was there."

"I can't say we didn't play hard."

## Owls don't give a hoot, end MT's season

By DAVID POWELL  
MT Athletic Communications

Middle Tennessee opened the scoring just six minutes in but could not pick up the victory as they were knocked out of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament with a 2-1 loss to Florida Atlantic at Mean Green Soccer Complex on a windy Wednesday afternoon.

The Blue Raiders (9-8-3) came into the match having clinched the fourth seed in the conference tournament after completing the regular season portion of the Sun Belt schedule with a 2-2 draw with rival Western Kentucky last Friday. Jen Threlkeld provided the match-tying goal with a header with just



## SBC names Jones Freshman of the Year for soccer

By DAVID POWELL  
MT Athletic Communications



Shan Jones

Three Blue Raiders were honored by the Sun Belt Conference for their performances during the 2008 regular season highlighted by Shan Jones being named Sun Belt Freshman of the Year as announced at the pre-tournament banquet on the campus of North Texas on Tuesday evening.

Jones was honored as the conference freshman of the year as well as being named to the Sun Belt All-First Team. The talented forward ranked 55th in the nation in goals per game and 96th in points per game. Jones leads the Blue Raiders in goals scored, points, shooting percentage, shots on goal, shots-on-goal percentage and game-winning goals.

Despite being in just her first season of collegiate soccer, the Gwynedd, Wales native sits in eighth place in school history for most goals scored in a season and already finds herself in fifth place in school history for most game-winning goals in a career.

"Shan Jones has been excellent for us this season and has scored some crucial goals at the right times for us," Head Coach Aston Rhoden said. "It is great to see her being recognized by the coaches around the Sun Belt. We are confident that she will continue to show well throughout the tournament."

Sophomores Fran Howells and Vanessa Mueggler were named to the conference second-team after perform-

ing on an exceptional level this season in their respective positions.

Howells anchored a Blue Raider backline that is having one of the best seasons in program history. The central defender is part of a defense that ranks 67th nationally in shutout percentage and 72nd in goals-against average.

They have given up just 19 goals this season, lowest in school history. The sophomore leads all Blue Raider defenders in goals scored, assists, shots and shots on goal.

Mueggler has been a vital component to the Blue Raider midfield during 2008. The Pincourt, Canada native has started all but one of Middle Tennessee's 19 contests and has registered career-highs in both goals and point. She ranks in the top-five overall in the Sun Belt in shots, points and assists.

"Fran and Vanessa have been very solid for us in the back and midfield respectively," Rhoden said. "Both players have matured in their game from their freshman seasons and are truly deserving of this recognition."

## Soccer FROM PAGE 7

nine seconds remaining. The fifth-seeded Owls (7-9-2) entered the game having lost just once in their previous seven matches and holding a 5-4-2 Sun Belt record. They concluded conference play with a scoreless draw at Florida Atlantic last weekend.

Middle Tennessee struck first in the sixth minute through a spectacular strike by Hope Suominen. The freshman ran onto the ball 35 yards from the goal and turned to see Florida Atlantic goalkeeper Jessica Badders off of her line. The midfielder launched a high shot towards the opposing goal that tipped off the hand of the back-tracking Badders before falling inside the near post.

The Blue Raiders continued to successfully attack down the flanks but it was Florida Atlantic that equalized in the 14th minute. Owls defender Janelle Blake drove a free kick into the Middle Tennessee area that floated in the tough conditions and skipped off the hand of Blue Raider goalkeeper Kela Casiple. The resulting ball fell directly onto the feet of midfielder Brittany Comer who easily tapped it into the back of the net from six yards.

Middle Tennessee continued to fight for control of the midfield and enjoyed

the majority of possession as the match wore on. Both teams had chances to take the lead on several occasions but were unable to break through. The Blue Raiders held a 21-15 advantage in shots in the match, including 10-4 in the second half.

The Blue Raiders came close to taking a 2-1 advantage twice during the final five minutes of regular time, but Blue Raider attack saw their shots go wide of the net after several doing well to create multiple scoring opportunities.

During extratime, Florida Atlantic began to drop players back behind the ball to stifle the Blue Raider attack and the Middle Tennessee backline took advantage of this and pushed forward to create new avenues of attack for the fourth-seeded side.

However, it was Florida Atlantic that came out on top when Ashley Mannarino found herself in the box at the end of a Jannica Tjeder diagonal pass. The speedy forward curled a shot inside the near post to give the Owls the win.

"This was a tough way to finish the season. I was really pleased with the effort the team played with during the second half and overtime," Head Coach Aston Rhoden said. "I felt we controlled most of the game and were unlucky to not finish our scoring opportunities."

# Blue Raiders land in Mid-Major top 25 poll

By TONY STINNETT  
MT Athletic Communications

Middle Tennessee is ranked No. 17 in the preseason Mid-Major Top 25 poll released by CollegeInsider.com this week.

The Blue Raiders received 203 points in the balloting and are ranked ahead of future foes Belmont (18) and South Alabama (19) and they are the highest-ranked Sun Belt team in the Top 25.

"It's kind of like the preseason rankings for the conference," Middle Tennessee Head Coach Kermit Davis said. "It's something that is there, it's great for fans and it is good publicity but I'm interested to see where we are in March."

Davis has been on the 31-member voting panel for the Mid-Major Top 25 in recent years and he has been selected to serve as chairman of the panel for the 2008-09 season.

"It's a privilege to be the chair because you are surrounded by a ton of outstanding college coaches that coach really good programs," Davis said. "CollegeInsider.com has done a good job for college basketball in general and obviously the coaches on the panel give it tons of credibility. Everyone on the panel takes a lot of time to research the teams playing well throughout the country and it is something they take great pride in doing."

Gonzaga received 15 of a possible 31 first-place votes to assume the top spot in the preseason Top 25.

The Bulldogs were just

three points ahead of No. 2 Davidson, which received 15 first-place votes and 751 points. St. Mary's garnered the remaining first-place vote and is No. 3 with 616 points.

Davis believes the poll is not only useful, but helpful, regarding postseason possibilities for teams appearing in it consistently.

He cites several of last year's NCAA Tournament entries as examples.

"The popularity of mid-major basketball has grown a great deal over the past few years; which is due in large part to CollegeInsider.com's advent of the Mid-Major Top 25," Davis said. "I don't think it's an accident that mid-major programs that have received at-large bids to the NCAA Tournament were fixtures at the top of the Mid-Major Top 25 poll."

"There are some outstanding teams and you will see some of them in the Mid-Major Top 25 have some outstanding out of conference wins. I believe the poll is looked at closely by various committees, why wouldn't it be? The NCAA selection committee is taking every bit of information it can collect into that room so you know they are taking that and looking at the rankings and where the coaches who see and play these teams rank them."

As chair of the panel, Davis initiated the concept of an on-line "Mid-Major Forum" to involve voting members and educate fans regarding the process.

"I have discussed with Col-



Photo courtesy of MT Athletic Communications

The Blue Raiders are the preseason favorites to win the SBC.

legeInsider.com the idea of a "Mid-Major Forum," which will give fans the opportunity to ask questions about the process, to be answered by me and other members of the voting panel," Davis said. "I think it's important to create interaction with fans and I believe this forum will be an excellent way to help do that. Fans can look for the forum on the CollegeInsider.com site in the coming days."

The Mid-Major Poll is made up of teams from the following conferences: America East, Atlantic Sun, Big Sky, Big South, Big West, Colonial, Horizon, Independents, Ivy, Metro Atlantic, Mid-American, Mid-Eastern, Missouri Valley, Northeast, Ohio Valley, Patriot, Southern, Summit League, Sun Belt, and West Coast.

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Check out pictures from the Lady Raiders' exhibition win over Kentucky Wesleyan on Monday at [mtsusidelines.com](http://mtsusidelines.com)