



SIDELINES



Volume 75, No. 3

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Murfreesboro, TN

New Director of MTSU's Gore Center

Staff Reports

Dr. Lisa Pruitt will be the new director of Middle Tennessee State University's Albert Gore Research Center as of July 1. Pruitt is currently an assistant professor of history at Campbell University in Buies Creek, North Carolina. She will be taking over for the Research Center's current director, Dr. Jim Neal, who has served as the director since 1971.

In answer to the question of how her past experience will benefit the Center, she said that it will help her to set priorities and establish policies for adding new collections and improving access to current holdings.

"My experience both as a researcher and as an archivist means that I understand the kinds of questions researchers ask of their sources." She goes on to say, "Such an understanding is essential for creating the guides and catalogs that provide access to the information buried in large manuscript and archival collections. Finally, my experience teaching and working with students will prove useful as I seek to enhance the Center's role as a learning resource for the classroom."

Pruitt says that she has three main priorities that she will work on when she assumes the position of director. "My first priority will be to begin addressing the space problems the center faces. We can't accept new collections or expand our services to students and others without adequate space. Second, I want to focus on intellectual control—knowing what is in the collections and organizing that information in the form of guides, catalogs, and databases that we can make available on the internet. Finally, I want to find new means of outreach and education—how can the Gore Center better serve the larger educational purposes of the institution?"

In addition to teaching at Campbell, Pruitt has also taught history at Vanderbilt University. Her administration experience includes four years that she spent as a special collections librarian and archivist at the James B. Duke Library at Furman University and a year as assistant archivist at Oberlin College.

Much of Pruitt's research has concerned women, religion, and the history of medicine. She is currently working on a public health policy project about North Carolina in the 1940s.

Pruitt has a doctorate in American History from Vanderbilt University, and she received her master's degree in American history and master of library science degree from the University of Maryland. Her bachelor's degree in English is from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Her community service interests include working with Room in the Inn and Habitat for Humanity in Nashville. ■

School prayer returns to Tennessee

Kevin Neal Fisher
Staff Reporter

The national political establishment received a jolt this week from local politicians with startling news from the Middle Tennessee area. In a surprising move, members of the Rutherford County Steering Committee are working on a proposal to return prayer to public school, reversing a 1963 ban on teacher initiated school prayers. The final vote on the recommendation is today, which would then be sent to both the Tennessee State delegation and to the United States Congressional delegation as well. If passed by the Tennessee house (and signed by Gov. Sundquist, long an advocate of school prayer), this bill would present the first major challenge to Engel v. Vitale, the Supreme Court decision which banished school prayer. The state of Mississippi attempted a resolution similar to this in 1994, and was signed by Gov. Kirk Fordice.

In an exclusive interview with Tina Jones, County Commissioner for Rutherford County's 21st District, this would be a major landmark. Jones expressed concern over the youth population of today, in wake of the recent tragedies in Littleton, Colorado and Conyers, Georgia.

"We're not out to force anyone to pray" said. However, students wishing to pray, under this resolution, would be free to do so openly without retribution from school officials.

Dr. Daniel Moore, minister at Third Baptist Church on Mcknight Dr. here in Murfreesboro concurs, suggesting that with "the declining spiritual morality in the school systems, especially in the wake of recent violence, this kind of legislation provides options to students. I think it's a great idea. Moore suggested that since "there is no real separation of church and state" in the constitution. He also felt that while no one should be forced to pray, those who do should not be discriminated against.

Clearly, such a resolution will be a major victory for conservative groups and politicians. So far, each major Republican Presidential candidate has voiced strong support for school prayer initiatives while **SCHOOL PRAYER** neither Democratic candidate (AI continued on page 2

Tuition hike of 8% considered for MTSU

Staff Reports

At their meeting Friday morning, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission considered THEC proposals for tuition increases for the 1999-2000 school year. Due to THEC controversy over these rate increases, these proposals have been put on hold until the board can reach a decision.

This plan calls for an 8 percent tuition increase at MTSU and various other universities, an increase of 12 percent for the

University of Memphis, and a 15 percent increase for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

If MTSU's 8 percent tuition increase is approved, in-state tuition will cost undergraduate students an extra \$152 per year. Undergraduate students currently pay \$1,096 in tuition each year, but this plan would raise that figure to \$2,058. Graduate tuition will also increase, from \$2,560 annually to \$2,765.

UT Knoxville's proposed rate hike would raise undergraduate

tuition costs from \$2,264 a year to \$2,604. The University of Memphis' tuition increase would cost students an extra \$251 annually.

Not all of the members of the THEC agree with the rate hike. According to THEC board member Steve Adams, "Every time we raise those fees, someone's not going to be able to go to college." Adams went on to say that the THEC should be concentrating on enrollment and increasing the colleges' workforce, and a tuition increase would "send the wrong message

at the wrong time."

Another THEC member, Riley Darnell, proposed capping all undergraduate in-state tuition increases at 8 percent. He contends that "the two big universities have more flexibility than the smaller schools. If anyone should be raising 15 percent, it should be the smaller schools." Darnell's motion failed in a 5-3 vote.

The THEC should set the tuition sometime between June and the first of July, when their new fiscal year begins. ■

Patrons walk for a good cause



Staff Photo by Melanie McWhorter

Hundreds of people walked to benefit the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life at MTSU on Saturday, June 12. According to Stacy Newby, president of the Murfreesboro chapter of the American Cancer Society, the goal of this event was to raise "\$99,000 in '99." She went on to say that this event took "many hours and much manpower. It was something that the public could enjoy while at the same time raising money for a good cause."



(Left) Participants stop to drink a beverage from a vendor at the Relay for Life to benefit cancer patients.

There were 50 teams, double last year's numbers, that participated in this year's Relay for Life. Each team consisted of 10-12 members that took turns walking around the track. Each member typically walked for an hour.

Aside from the walking, there were contests, live performances, and a variety of vendors and games.

Gower named new Business Chief

Staff Reports

Michael E. Gower of Franklin is replacing Bob Adams as the new associate vice-president in the Business Office. Adams has left Middle Tennessee State University to work in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

"I am really excited about being a member of the MTSU family and the Division of Finance and Administration," Gower said of his new position. "MTSU is a first-class campus, and having worked at the Board of Regents Central Office, I'm familiar with the great things that are happening here under President Walker's leadership."

Gower has worked with TBR

since 1994, first as vice-chancellor for Business and Finance, fulfilling the roles of both chief business officer and treasurer, then later as associate vice-chancellor in the same division. He was also chief operations officer from 1995 on. Since TBR is the seventh largest system of higher education in the nation, Gower presided over a budget of \$1.2 billion, serving 180,000 students and over 14,000 employees.

From 1987 until 1993, Gower served as assistant commissioner for Finance and Administration with the Tennessee Department of Education. While there, he was chief business officer for 139 school systems with a combined budget of \$3.2 billion, 80,000 employees, and 850,000 students. He also supervised the offices of

Budget, Disbursements, Administrative Services, Local School Finance, Data Management, and Physical Plant.

During that time, Gower also coordinated two-year development and directed the initial implementation of a new education funding plan. He also made several presentations to the Legislature on funding reform and coordinated the development of the Tennessee Education Network, a statewide information systems network involving 1,600 schools with the Department of Education.

Earlier in his career, from 1973 to 1987, Gower served in the University of Tennessee system, first as an accountant in the Office of Treasurer, then as

fiscal officer in the College of Education, and lastly as vice-chancellor of Business and Finance at UT-Martin.



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WEATHER FORECAST



WEDNESDAY
PARTLY
CLOUDY
HI 81/LO 59



THURSDAY
PARTLY
CLOUDY
HI 79/ LO 59



FRIDAY
PARTLY
CLOUDY
HI 82/LO 63

GOWER

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Dr. Duane Stuckey, vice president of Finance and Administration, said of Gower: "Mike brings extensive expertise and experience to our campus from his senior-level responsibilities at TBR and UT. We are fortunate to have his talent in this key position."

Gower received his B.S. degree in Business Administration from UT-Knoxville. While at UT, he was a member of the Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honor Society. Later, he earned his M.A. degree in Education at UT, where he majored in Educational Administration and Supervision, with an emphasis on Higher Education Administration. There he served as treasurer of Phi Delta Kappa, a professional education fraternity. He also participated in the College Business Management Institute at the University of Kentucky. ■

SCHOOL PRAYER

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Conservative activists Gary Bauer and Alan Keyes lead the school prayer supporters, with Keyes noting the "separation of church and state is a misinterpretation of the U.S. Constitution." The Constitution speaks of regulating the amount of influence religion plays in everyday life, not to banish it.

If the recommendation is passed, Tennessee's state house and senate would vote on it as legislation with the governor then having the option to sign it. If signed by the governor, the legislation would become law, unless the Supreme Court intervenes, as they did in the Mississippi case in 1984. In addition, the Steering Committee is expecting to send the recommendation to the United States Congress, where it would likely be voted on (considering Republicans control both houses and next year is an election year) rather quickly.

Commissioner Jones said she is very optimistic and excited about her committee's recommendation. With the final vote only days away, readers can expect to hear more on this development. ■

Methodist officials consider punishing clergy for blessing gay marriage

Steve Geissinger
Associated Press Writer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) - A United Methodist Church committee on Tuesday began investigating whether to charge 68 ministers with violating church law for blessing a lesbian wedding.

The Rev. Donald Fado, who led the ceremony for two church leaders, said he hopes the case will lead to an end of the church's ban on homosexual weddings.

"I can bless people's houses, dogs, tractors, anything," said Fado, minister at St. Mark's United Methodist Church. "There's no restriction on blessing, except if two human beings of the same sex, who love each other, want to make a commitment to spend their lives together."

"To deny this blessing is to deny the Gospel as I understand it," he said.

The Rev. John Sheppard II of the First United Methodist Church of Yuba City is among the ministers who objected to the ceremony. He said he hopes to gather support for the ban at a regional church leaders' conference that starts Wednesday in Sacramento.

"Homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching," he said.

In August, the church ruled that a minister could be removed for violating its ban on homosexual weddings. Fado told his congregation in October that he wanted to protest that ruling by publicly blessing a same-sex union.

Two volunteers responded to Fado: Jeanne Barnett, 69, a retired state unemployment administrator and lay leader of the Methodists' California-Nevada Conference; and Ellie Charlton, 64, a divorced great-grandmother and conference trustee. They have been together 15 years.

In January, more than 1,000 people attended their public wedding at the Sacramento Convention Center. Fado and 67 other ministers blessed the union.

"I think this helps bring it out that there are a number of us who have been members of the church for a long time. We're not outsiders," Barnett said.

Bishop Melvin Talbert said the investigating committee of the California-Nevada Conference, which includes 400 congregations, is expected to meet in private over weeks or even months to decide whether to charge the ministers.

Never before have so many ministers faced the possibility of a formal charge of disobedience, Fado said. In the past, two Methodist ministers have been disciplined for officiating at same-sex weddings. ■



Study on impact of child abuse

College Press Exchange

PHILADELPHIA (CPX) — Controversy stemming from a Temple University study concluding that the long-term effects of child sexual abuse are not as serious as many believe has prompted the American Psychological Association to announce it would carefully consider the "social policy implications" of research it publishes in the future.

The study didn't get much attention when it first was published last July in the APA's Psychological

Bulletin. But it surfaced again recently, becoming a favorite subject among radio talk show hosts and groups such as the Christian Coalition and the Family Research Council, which has said it would disrupt the APA's annual meeting in August in Boston.

An article based on the study, titled "A Meta-Analytic Examination of Assumed Uses of Child Sexual Abuse Using College Students," concludes that scientists should classify sexual encounters between adults depending on the age and "willfulness" of the child. The article was written by Bruce Rind, an

adjunct psychology professor at Temple; Robert Bauserman, who taught at the University of Michigan before becoming an AIDS researcher in Maryland; and Philip Tromovich, a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania.

The researchers evaluated 59 other studies involving college students who were sexually assaulted before turning 18. Their findings concluded that lasting negative effects from sexual abuse were uncommon for men and present in only a small number of women.

Child sexual abuse "does not cause intense harm on a pervasive basis regardless of gender in the

college population," the researchers wrote.

Critics condemned such findings, saying that the studies conclude as saying pedophilia could be all right for some

children or rape is beneficial to some women.

Battered by the public outcry, the APA has said it does not endorse the idea of splitting child abuse into different categories. Organization officials have said the study should have been paired with an article taking a different stance. ■

Church calls for Milosevic to stepdown

Donna Bryson
Associated Press Writer

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) - Dismayed by the streams of Serb troops and civilians speeding out of Kosovo, the Serbian Orthodox Church on Tuesday called for President Slobodan Milosevic to resign for the sake of the people. Ethnic Albanian refugees began returning home en masse.

Hundreds of KLA rebels emerged from the woods of village Kosovo to come back to villages ruined by 11 weeks of war and ethnic violence, and staged a show of strength by marching - armed - through a major town. Near Pristina, British troops were ordered to pull back after heavily armed rebels said they would resist any attempt to disarm them.

The Army general commanding the U.S. contingent said NATO was negotiating with the rebels on whether and when the KLA must surrender weapons, and that NATO would issue specific instructions to field commanders on Wednesday or Thursday.

Ethnic Albanians who had fled the violence crossed from Macedonia and Albania, flooding in despite warnings from international agencies that the southern Serb province was still perilous. Two refugees have died while crossing explosive minefields.

At least 10,000 came in over the border Tuesday from Albania, where some 440,000 of the 860,000 Kosovo Albanians who left their homeland had sought refuge; thousands more also crossed from Macedonia.

Twenty-nine more Russian troops in a convoy arrived in the provincial capital from Bosnia, meanwhile, bringing food, fuel and other supplies to 200-300 troops that have occupied the Pristina airport since Saturday, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

The Russians came to the airport on Saturday; just ahead of

international peacekeeping troops, and their refusal to allow others access to it underlines tensions over what role Russia will play in the peacekeeping operation.

U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen was to meet his Russian counterpart Igor Sergeev on Wednesday in Helsinki, Finland, for negotiations on the issue.

While returning refugees were crowding in from the south and west, the roads leading northward were filled with Serbs - either Yugoslav soldiers departing under terms of the peace deal or civilians frightened of retaliatory attacks for the bloody ethnic violence.

More evidence of the violence's ferocity surfaced Tuesday: a corpse's hand reaching skyward out of a roadside mass grave near Djakovica in southwest Kosovo that local residents said could hold as many as 150 bodies of victims of a Serb rampage.

Twenty charred bodies also were found in a house in another village not far away.

Residents of a village outside Pristina say they buried 30 residents cut down in various raids by Serb snipers and soldiers.

Serbs inflicted some final violence to Kosovo even as they pulled out. Along a road out of Pristina, torched houses blazed and soldiers toting gasoline cans prowled.

"Revenge," said a Serbian soldier waiting to leave Pristina, who gave only his first name, Rade. "Lots of Serbian homes were burned by NATO - so you have this."

Hours later the road was filled with hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles driving at full speed toward Serbia. Interspersed among the military vehicles were civilian cars and trucks pulling trailers loaded with household goods and even cattle.

Moments after Yugoslav forces left the village of Kosovo Polje outside Pristina, ethnic

Albanian guerrillas in full uniform moved in and torched about a dozen Serb homes, according to a British press report.

The withdrawal from Kosovo is a severe blow to Serbian pride. Although Kosovo's prewar population of 2.1 million was only 10 percent Serb, the province is the symbolic heartland of Serbia, full of historic sites and some of the Serbian Orthodox Church's holiest buildings.

The emotional and religious significance of Kosovo lends weight to the church's call for Milosevic to step down. The church does not have the power to force his removal but it is the most significant institution to call for his resignation.

Appealing to "every sensible person," the church said: "We demand that the current president of the country and his government resign in the interest of the people and their salvation."

Milosevic, whose rise to power in the 1980s was largely based on his defense of Kosovo's Serb minority, has appeared increasingly under pressure since the peace agreement mandated a withdrawal of his army and police and the entry of a 50,000-strong international peacekeeping force.

Serbian police were supposed to vacate their headquarters complex in central Pristina by midnight Tuesday - all forces must be out of Kosovo by Sunday night.

Capt. Martin Lambert-Gorwyn said NATO troops got a "very hostile reception" when they entered one of the buildings. Departing Serbs had vandalized it, smashing electrical fixtures, blocking up toilets, breaking doors and leaving piles of burned documents.

But Lt. Col. Robin Clifford, a spokesman for the allied force, said: "We have every indication that the deadline of midnight tonight will be met." A more complete assessment would not be available until daylight Wednesday.

He said 20,000 of the 40,000

Yugoslav personnel in Kosovo during the 78-day NATO air war has already left or were on the move.

Kosovo Liberation Army guerrillas, meanwhile, moved in key areas of the province.

Hundreds of KLA fighters streamed out of the mountains in the Drenica region west of Pristina and began erecting shelters from plastic sheeting in destroyed villages.

Armed KLA fighters also moved into ethnic Albanian neighborhoods of Prizren, Kosovo's second-largest city, and marched through the center of town brandishing their weapons.

German forces that lead the peacekeeping contingent in that sector - one of five in Kosovo that the allies have created - said they were in full control of the center.

The Serb Media Center in Pristina reported that KLA fighters attacked Serb villagers 12 miles southwest of the provincial capital, wounding several people. The report could not be independently confirmed.

A pool report said a Canadian military reconnaissance unit observed Russian forces digging in at the airport under cover of darkness.

NATO has expressed interest in Russian participation in the peacekeeping force if their troops are subordinate to the alliance command - something Moscow has refused.

Hashim Thaci, prime minister of the KLA shadow government, says the Russians - which have longtime ties to the Serbs - are an unwelcome addition to the peacekeeping mission. ■



John Hood of Murfreesboro recently presented WMOT's Development Coordinator Laura Dunn with a check on behalf of Raymond Thomasson and the Tennessee Soft Drink Association. WMOT-Jazz 89 is celebrating 30 years of broadcasting service to Middle Tennessee in 1999.

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Father convicted of murdering wife and children

Associated Press

SHELBYVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - A body shop worker was convicted Tuesday of murdering his three young sons and his ex-wife's 4-year-old daughter by lining them up two-by-two and shooting them.

The Circuit Court jury deliberated about an hour and found Daryl Keith Holton guilty of four counts of first-degree murder. Holton, 36, showed no emotion when the verdict was read.

The trial, which began June 2, went into the sentencing phase after the verdicts were announced. Prosecutors are seeking the

death penalty.

Steven Holton, 12, and his brothers, Eric, 6, and Brent, 10, and half-sister Kayla, 4, thought they were going Christmas shopping when Holton picked them up on Nov. 30, 1997. Instead, they stopped by the auto body repair shop where he worked.

There, Kayla wrote a letter asking Santa Claus to bring her a "Tickle Me Elmo" doll for Christmas.

Eric remained with Kayla when Holton took his older sons to the back of the shop, told them to stand front to back and close their eyes. He then shot them with a semiautomatic assault weapon.

Holton hid the bodies

under a tarp, then brought the younger children to the back and shot them in the same manner, police said. He stacked their bodies on top of the others under the tarp.

Holton then went looking for his former wife, Crystle Holton, and her boyfriend but could not find them, police said. He turned himself in and told police he had made several bombs and stored them at the shop. Detectives believe he may have planned to use them on his ex-wife.

After locating the bodies, police found five Molotov cocktail-type devices in a box. They were detonated outside the building.

During the trial, his lawyer argued that Holton was a caring father but severely depressed at the time of the slayings. Officers said he told them he had not seen the children for two months and was afraid he would never gain custody of them.

Crystle Holton said at the time of the shootings that she had kept the children away after filing a protective order because "he beat the crap out of me."

"He told me before that if I ever tried to leave him and took our kids with me ... that I'd regret it," she said.

The couple had been divorced for four years. ■

New worm virus hassles many computer users

Bruce Meyerson
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK (AP) - The outbreak of the Worm.Explore.Zip computer bug may be leveling off but it could still cause problems for weeks, anti-virus experts reported today as systems managers at infected companies worked to contain the damage.

Spreading both by e-mail and file-sharing links between co-workers, the virus set off a new flood of calls to computer help-lines on Monday after a deceptively quiet weekend.

Today, anti-virus experts reported that the epidemic was at least leveling off, but officials cautioned that the complex design of Worm.Explore.Zip might make it harder to contain than the Melissa and Chernobyl viruses that hit earlier this spring.

The flow of new firsthand reports is not increasing, said Mark Zajicek, member of the government-chartered Computer Emergency Response Team at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. But, he added, "We expect to continue to receive reports of this for days and weeks to come."

The Carnegie Mellon team revealed on Monday that in addition to using e-mail trickery to spread, the new virus takes advantage of the information-sharing pathways that co-workers set up to use files on each other's computers.

There was still no word today on the progress of a criminal probe announced last week by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

As the epidemic first spread last week, hitting tens of thousands of computers at major companies, the primary mode of contamination had seemed to be a friendly e-mail that tricks the recipient into opening an infected file.

During tests over the weekend, researchers at Carnegie Mellon found that the virus would reappear seconds after being removed from a computer - if that machine was linked to another machine that was still infected.

"It only takes one opening, one infected computer within a company, to rapidly spread within that company," said Zajicek. "That helps explain what we've been seeing - that the program wasn't spreading from site to site as quickly as it was within a site."

The added threat may render some of the cures posted on the Internet by software companies last week less effective, Zajicek said, advising people to make backup copies of important files on disks that are not left connected to their machines.

Worm.Explore.Zip, first detected about a week ago, began spreading rapidly on Thursday and Friday, infecting computer systems at many big corporations including AT&T, Boeing, General Electric and even Microsoft.

The virus arrives in a person's e-mail box as a timely reply from an acquaintance. It then invites the recipient to open an attached file that will unleash a two-pronged attack, sending a copy of itself to the address of any arriving e-mail and destroying files stored on a person's machine.

Among the files destroyed are those created by the writing program Microsoft Word, the spreadsheet program Excel and PowerPoint, which is used to create graphic presentations. ■

Rosa Parks honored with Congressional Medal of Honor

Catherine Strong
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Hailed by lawmakers as the mother of civil rights, Rosa Parks was honored with the Congressional Gold Medal on Tuesday, the highest civilian award given by Congress.

Mrs. Parks, 86, was lauded by the House and Senate leadership and President Clinton for an act of defiance more than four decades ago.

On Dec. 1, 1955, the seamstress, tired after a day's work in Montgomery, Ala., refused to give up her seat to a white man on a segregated city bus and was arrested for her defiance.

Her arrest set off a lengthy bus boycott by thousands of blacks - led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., then a local minister. The boycott lasted about a year until the Supreme Court declared Montgomery's bus segregation law unconstitutional.

"She is the mother of the civil rights movement," said Rep. Julia Carson, D-Ind., who pushed for the legislation granting the Congressional Gold Medal to Mrs. Parks, who now lives in Detroit.

"It is a celebration of the life of Rosa Parks, who is receiving the honor while she can still see it," Carson said of Mrs. Parks, who appeared

frail and had to be helped to her feet from her wheelchair, sometimes steadying herself on the arm of House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill.

"I thank God that when your time came, you were not afraid," House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., said at the Capitol Rotunda ceremony. "You had courage, and you sat down for all of America and all of America's freedom."

Congressional lawmakers gave Mrs. Parks an artist's drawing of the medal, which is not yet finished.

"I thank you," she said in a low, halting voice, adding that she accepted the award for a "free people" and for civil rights.

The gratitude went both ways.

"I thank you for what you have done," Clinton told Mrs. Parks.

"She sat, anchored to that seat, as Dr. King said, by the accumulated indignities of days gone by and the countless aspirations of generations yet unborn," the president said. "Rosa Parks said, 'I didn't get on that bus to get arrested; I got on that bus to go home.'"

The president said he was only 9 when Mrs. Parks refused to stand up. He and his friends "couldn't figure out anything we could do since we couldn't even vote. So we began to sit on the back of the bus when we got on."

Mrs. Parks action cost her the seamstress job and prompted harassment and threats to her family. So she moved to Detroit in 1957. She joined the staff of Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., in 1965 and worked there until retiring in 1988.

In 1987, Mrs. Parks co-founded a nonprofit group, the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development, to help young people in Detroit.

A guest at Clinton's State of the Union address in January, Mrs. Parks has received numerous awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The legislation awarding her the Congressional Gold Medal was approved by the Senate without dissent April 19. The House voted 424-1 for

it the next day. The only "no" vote was cast by Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, who said he opposes spending government money on such awards.

Lawmakers initially used the Congressional Gold Medal to honor military leaders but began using it during the 20th century to recognize excellence in a range of fields. More than 320 medals have been awarded.

The first was given to George Washington in 1776 for "wise and spirited conduct" during the Revolutionary War.

Recent honorees include Frank Sinatra, Mother Teresa and South African President Nelson Mandela. ■



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OPINIONS

"Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

—Thomas Jefferson

Murfreesboro, TN

Editorial

Get Involved On Campus

Like many other universities, MTSU not only offers a wide variety of great colleges and programs, it also offers many great extracurricular activities. These activities are just sitting there waiting for you to take advantage of them.

If you are interested in sports, then there are variety of intercollegiate as well as intramural sports to get involved in. There's basketball, football, baseball, track, cheerleading, volleyball, softball, swimming, racquetball, soccer, etc. The recreation center also offers students the opportunity to go hiking, canoeing and mountain climbing.

If you are not an athlete and have no intentions on becoming one, then you might want to get involved in an organization. There are the area governments, which are branches of the United Residence Hall Association, the Urban Music Society, NAACP, Student Government Association, Sankofa, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Kappa Delta Sorority, National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Baptist Student Union, Air Force ROTC Club, and Colleague FFA Club, to name a few. These organizations have their own individual goals but they also have common goals such as academic excellence, brotherhood (and sisterhood), community service, creating a positive atmosphere and to have fun. We do not have the space for an in-depth profile of each organization but we strongly encourage you to do a little research of your own to find out which one of these clubs and organizations best fits you.

If clubs aren't your thing, you may want to consider getting involved with some of the school sports or even writing for "Sidelines" (hint hint). If you have a great love for music, you may consider joining the Band in Blue or becoming a disc jockey for WMTS 88.3, the student radio station. There are so many things to get involved in that we can't even attempt to list all of the opportunities, but we hope we have encouraged you to start looking into something that would be of interest to you. ■

SIDELINES

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Brethren, let's be men

Shawn Whitsell
Staff Reporter

Father's Day is this coming Sunday and many of us will be hitting the stores to get a card and a tie for our fathers. Like Mother's Day, Father's Day is a great time to show our fathers and grandfathers just how much we love and appreciate them. However, I've recently come to the realization that Father's Day isn't just for the celebration of good fathers, but it is also to celebrate good men.

Although I'm only 20 years old (or should I say young) and don't have any children of my own, I strongly feel like a father. I have five younger brothers (the youngest is 15 years my junior), three godchildren, two young nieces and many young cousins and friends. Because of my relationship with these children and the love I have for them, I have a responsibility to be a positive male figure in their lives. I strongly believe in the old African proverb that says, "It takes a village to raise a child." At one point, I didn't know if I really

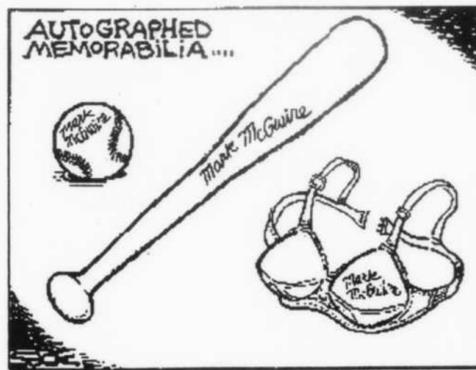
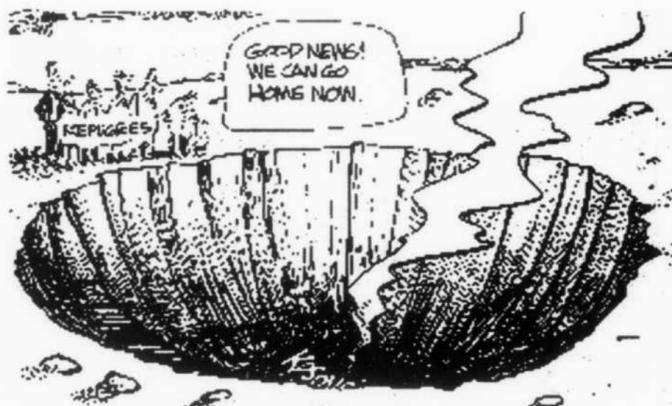
believed that but as I've grown older, the meaning began to unfold. Personally, I think this means that throughout childhood, children will encounter people who will shape their lives in a positive manner whether it be parents, teachers, relatives, pastors, counselors, etc. Besides God, my mother has been the biggest inspiration in my life, however I can't even begin to name all of those who have taught me lessons, given me good advice, complemented me when I did something good and disciplined me when I was wrong. It took a village to raise me and I'm growing into the man that God wants me to be, so now it's time for me to be one of those villagers so that many more children can lead prosperous lives.

You never know how much a few kind words or a few minutes of your time affects a child's life. So, we have to make sure we do right by our children. We have a responsibility to them placed upon us by God to live life righteously so that we can set a positive example. I know it sounds like such a cliché, but the children are the future and

it's up to us to make sure that future is bright. We all have to do our part. I'm not saying that you have to go out and try to save the world. You can just do your part by being responsible men. Believe me, there are children who are looking at every move you make and if you make the right moves, that child may also be inspired to make the right moves. So men, even if you don't have children of your own, you are still a father.

There are a lot of men who aren't fathers to their biological children and I can't judge them for that. God is the one and only true judge and He doesn't need any help from me. However, I can say that if you're missing out on your child's life, you are missing a true blessing. In the Bible, First Corinthians says, "When I was child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." So men, it's time to put the toys away. Be good big brothers, uncles, cousins, friends and fathers. Brethren, just be men! ■

Interested in writing, taking pictures, or graphic design? Give Sidelines a call at 898-2336 or come by the James Union Bldg, room 308.



When it comes to college, remember where you came from

Joe Rodriguez
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

It's the season to give graduation addresses, and I received two invitations from alternative high schools: Would I speak to seniors who had almost dropped out; who needed special attention to earn their diplomas and who were headed for college but still needed a pep talk and advice?

Lord knows I'm no orator. I suffer from stage fright, get all sweaty and stiff. I accepted immediately.

These seniors reminded me of me and some friends long ago. Like us, the first in the family to complete high school or enroll in college or vocational school.

Most of my friends dropped out in junior college. It took me eight years to earn my bachelor's degree.

Looking back, I wrote down 10 things to help the Almost-Didn't-Make-It Class of 1999 get through college or the next stage of their education.

1. Be a total student. Even if you live at home or have to work part-time, you must feel and think like a full-time student who lives on campus. Study is the highest priority. Hang out more at college. Hang out less or not at all with old friends who aren't doing anything.

2. Resist the temptation to buy expensive stuff. Taking a break from school to buy a hot, new car is a sure step toward dropping out. A nice car may carry you 100,000 miles or more, but a good education will carry you for life.

3. Learn to handle family crises that pressure students to leave school. It's never easy, but you can be responsible without dropping out. It takes good planning and learning how to cope with feelings of guilt and criticism from other family members.

4. Don't worry about tuition. Only the wealthy pay their way through college these days. Don't let a lack of money stop you from attending the school you want to attend. Most will work with a combination of grants, loans and work-study programs.

5. Study harder in college. Be prepared for this shock: High school was easy compared to college. Professors and classes in colleges are more demanding and less flexible, and the students are more competitive.

6. Fight loneliness, homesickness and alienation. Many minority and blue-collar students fresh from high school feel isolated at big mainstream or elite colleges. If you're feeling blue, do as E.T. did - call home. Seek out students with similar interests and backgrounds.

7. Get to know students of different backgrounds. Don't isolate yourself by race, culture or social class. College is your gateway to your ever-shrinking, melting-pot world. Success comes to those who embrace change.

8. Ignore career confusion. Only a lucky few people fall from their mother's wombs knowing exactly what they want to do in life. We hate them. Most of us get confused in college, change our majors, stress out big time. It's natural. Blow it off. Here's a little secret about the real world after college: Your major isn't critical.

9. You are much more than a future employee, so don't think like one. A real education doesn't prepare you for a specific job in a specific industry or simply fill your head with information. Rather, it draws out your potential and develops your innate talents and abilities. Here's another secret: That's who enlightened companies really want to hire, people who are well-rounded, creative and confident enough to push the company forward.

10. Remember where you came from. This is the most important rule. The love and support you received from your family, teachers and community are your source of strength. Also remember the hardships and social and economic injustices you endured, but don't let them harden your heart. Instead, study and understand those problems. Only then will you be able to correct them.

The graduates and audiences applauded. I said, "Thank you," and watched them walk into the future. ■

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FEATURES

SIDELINES

Murfreesboro, TN

The Art of Noise



photo provided

(Left to Right) Jason Manley, Bingham Barnes, Mickey Ethridge, and Thomas Hudson make up the alternative band Quimby.

Tracy L. Moore
Staff Reporter

For those unaware, Quimby was formerly Daphne's Operation, that synergistic explosion often referred to by locals as "noise." The reason is, of course, that when musicians pile on too many extraneous tones, the ear "maxes out" — the panicking ear, that is. It is not a question of volume but of density.

Yet, there is pleasure to be

still prevalent, is now intertwined with surreally beautiful fragments of pop.

The band has endured the usual upheavals and breakups — despite various incarnations and side projects (Glossary, Sourdine) they inevitably end up together, like the chemistry of old lovers beckoning them to keep coming back, keep giving it one last try.

And like the maturity and wisdom that comes with the distance of separation, it seems Quimby has learned a thing or two

saturates the ears, and once one adjusts to the sheer dynamism of Thomas Hudson's maniacal drumming and the abstract sequences of intervals, one hears the symmetrical, luminous beauty of Mickey Ethridge and Jason Manley's melodies, the bass lines honed to hummable fragments, kept aggressively in place by Bingham Barnes.

In short, you are compelled to listen. Guitars blend and chime, strings are returned to

There is pleasure to be had from the noisy, harmonious density of the local band Quimby.

had from the harmonious density that shatters into supposed "noise." The pleasure comes in control of the chaos, in parts that are thrown into different octaves, turned upside down, smashed apart, and mutated into song.

Quimby's latest show at Sebastian's was proof of their latest evolution into something, well, easier to digest. It wasn't always so. Daphne's Operation was known for its free-floating chaos, chaos that, while

about playing live. Shows are no longer marked by the jittery self-consciousness of beginners. There is no youthful twisting and shouting, only a bemused, straight-faced exhibition. Voices once nervous and off-key now drip with confident disaffection.

Over the years that Quimby (or Daphne's) have performed, many music-loving types have left their shows in apparent confusion, but never boredom. The fast, rich cascade of tones immediately

unusual pitch collections, harmonies slide out of synch and linger over one another in dreamy clusters.

Quimby has been met with skepticism by other musicians — and perhaps with good reason. At times they come across more as improvisational experimental composers than trained musicians. However, they have clearly earned the right to the luxury of pretension — now it is as if they are both mocking and slyly appropriating their former style. ■

Eightball & MJG give fans hot new album

Lamont R. Gholston, Jr.
Staff Reporter

Take this quick hip-hop quiz: Name three hip-hop pioneers from the Dirty South.

OK. Put your pencils down. Time to check your answers. I'm sure most of you mentioned Houston's own The Geto Boys. I'm also certain that many of you also put down Captain D himself, Luther Campbell a.k.a. Luke a.k.a. Luke Skywalker, founder of the 2 Live Crew. What did you put for answer number three? Unless you know about "Mr. Big," "Lay It Down" or Orange Mound, I don't think you got this answer correct. The answer we are looking for is Eightball & MJG. Now I'm sure many of you will dispute my choices, but I think you will find that each pioneer has introduced something new to the genre of hip-hop that wasn't seen before.

After years of putting in work on the underground scene, Eightball & MJG have returned in the one-nine-nine-nine with one of the hottest albums this year and have patented their trademark "Sound from the Mound." It has been four years since the duo has released an album, but that doesn't mean they haven't been hard at work. Both cats had solo albums during the group's hiatus: MJG put out No More Glory, while the Fat Mac's double CD Lost went to platinum status. But the time apart has given the group time to hone their skills. Dope lyrics was never a concern for Eightball & MJG, but the improved production is what makes this album stand apart from their previous efforts. It sounds like T-Mix has been collaborating

with Organized Noize because you can hear their influence in the songs "Nobody But Me," "Love Hurts," and "Daylight." It doesn't hurt that Mr. DJ from Organized Noize produced five cuts, including "Paid Dues" featuring Cee-Lo and the party anthem "Throw Your Hands Up" featuring Outkast.

But diehard Eightball & MJG fans shouldn't feel left out. There's something here for you too. "Armed Robbery" is a posse cut using a classic Orange Mound beat. "Get It Crunk" - featuring Thorough - is some skunk straight from the M-Town.

If anybody out there is still trying to limit hip-hop to geographical boundaries, please stop. Go out and buy this album. Hip-hop is universal. In Our Lifetime by Eightball & MJG is universal; it is presented from a Southern - specifically Orange Mound - perspective. Open your mind and listen to the trials and tribulations of these lyricists, not their accents.

You can hear all CDs reviewed in this

column on SNM or any other hip-hop shows on 88.3 FM WMTS. Check out the WMTS home page on the Internet at www.mtsu.edu/~wmts. Check the schedule to find the times of the shows you want. For more information, call the WMTS request line at 898-5051. ■



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Second time's a charm

Star Wars Fans Should Give Phantom Menace Two Viewings

Bill McIntire
Staff Reporter

I mentioned in my review of Phantom Menace that as a kid I'd seen Star Wars fourteen times. In all fairness, I decided that Phantom Menace deserved a second look. I was right - and that was a little disconcerting. I liked the movie a lot more the second time I saw it. I reread my review and was relieved that I still agreed with every word I'd originally written. How could my reactions to the films have changed without my opinions changing as well?

The answer is attitude.

The first time I saw Phantom Menace, I wasn't going to see Phantom Menace. I was going to see the new Star Wars movie. The second time I saw it I knew it wasn't going to be as good as the first film, so I had shed that expectation and actually saw Phantom Menace for what it was - a good movie.

The first time I went in expecting Phantom Menace to be great, but it wasn't. Because of that I saw it as a lesser film than it would have been if the Star Wars name had not been attached. A film can only be considered inferior when compared to a better film. Few films are better than Star Wars. The second time I could accept that it wasn't going to be as good as the first and didn't give it the chance to disappoint me.

Don't take this as an apology or a retraction of my initial review. It isn't. I still believe that Phantom Menace could've, and should've, been a better movie than it was. My only purpose in writing this addenda is to let those diehard original Star Warriors who saw the film twenty years ago and were disappointed with Phantom Menace that it is worth a second look. If you can allow yourself to let go of the past and judge Phantom Menace on its own merits, you'll find it's a lot of fun. ■

Australian rock band Silverchair sitting pretty

Steve Smith
The Providence Journal

Millions of kids dream of becoming rock stars. Silverchair actually did it — while its members were still kids.

In April 1995, when the band's members were just 15, their debut album, "Frogstomp," entered the Australian charts at number one — the first time a debut album by an Australian artist entered at number one.

After the album's release a couple of months later in the U.S., the single "Tomorrow" reached number one on the Billboard Alternative and Rock airplay charts; the album reached number nine on the Billboard Top 200 Albums chart and stayed on the chart for 49 weeks. Silverchair's second album, "Freak Show," was released in 1997 and reached number 12. Both albums were certified platinum.

Formed in Newcastle in 1992, the band includes Daniel Johns, guitars and vocals, Ben Gillies, drums, and Chris Joannou, bass, who were friends in school. Gillies, now 19 like the other members of Silverchair, said in a phone interview this week that he, Johns and Joannou "all played instruments, got together, jammed, had a lot of fun doing it and decided to give it a try as a band."

They won a radio contest in 1994 and "the prize was a film clip, or as you call it a video. The next day we got calls from a lot of record companies."

Critics thought that Silverchair had the sound of the Seattle grunge scene, especially Pearl Jam and Nirvana, on their first two albums.

"What are they thinking?," Gillies recalled wondering when the album came out. "Are they too lazy to describe the music? We liked the grunge scene but we didn't set out to make a grunge record. Most of our influences come from Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath."

Johns wrote the songs for their newest album, "Neon Ballroom," after moving out on his own for three months. "The songs are very personal to him," Gillies said. "They deal a lot with his life and his teen-age anger."

The album is a departure from the first two in that it incorporates an orchestra. The songs range from ballads to hard-rockers. Guest artists include pianist David Helfgott (subject of the Oscar-winning film "Shine") and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

"Helfgott was really cool to work with," Gillies said. "He acts just like he does in the movie. Our manager approached him, and we thought it was a great idea, because he was a child prodigy and we could relate to that."

"Anthem for the Year 2000," the single from the new album, is just starting to pick up airplay in the U.S. The band will probably start work on a new album next year, and Gillies "wouldn't mind the next album being rockier, taking it to the roots."

Silverchair is on a two-week radio tour in the United States and then goes to Canada, Europe and Australia. ■

The album is a departure from the first two in that it incorporates an orchestra. The songs range from ballads to hard-rockers.



6 SIDELINES

Murfreesboro, TN

New track nearly completed

Josh Ezzell
Staff Reporter

More changes are occurring on campus as the new track and field facility is moving towards the final stages of construction.

The new facility, which is a certified Olympic facility, has eight lanes (42" wide), features double long jump pits, and, in addition, is capable of holding events in javelin, discus, shot put and hammer throws.

The Ohio Valley Conference 1999 Outdoor Championships will be held at the new facility.

Larry Counts, who has overseen the completion of the facility, is happy that the facility is nearly completed.

ity, is happy that the facility is nearly completed.

"We are very excited that the track is coming to a completion," Counts said. "It is another great addition to our awesome athletic facilities here at Middle Tennessee."

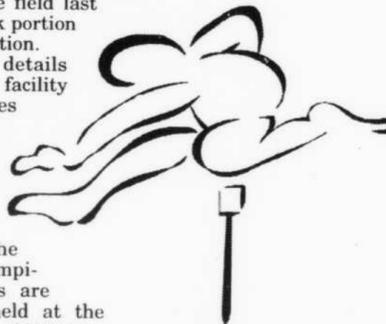
Counts is also happy for Coach Dean Hayes, who has been the men's and women's track and field coach for thirty-three years.

"After all the years Dean Hayes has spent here and with the Olympics, I'm glad we could build an Olympic size track for him and his program."

The new facility will also be home to the Lady Raiders soccer team. The soccer field is a regulation size international playing surface. The soccer team played on the field last year while the track portion was under construction.

Some minor details remain before the facility is to open. Lines need to be painted on the surface. In addition, cleaning remains for the Turner Construction crew.

Other than the conference championships, no events are scheduled to be held at the facility during the 2000 season.



Professional Wrestling hurt by

Bill McIntire
Staff Reporter

The first summer issue of Sidelines included an announcement of Owen Hart's death, and World Wrestling Federation president Vince McMahon's reaction to the tragedy on the sports page. The irony of this sent me into a fit of hysterical giggling for ten full minutes.

Vince McMahon built his WWF empire on the notion that professional wrestling is not a sport, but a form of "sports entertainment". For some reason, fans and wrestlers who have been involved in wrestling long before McMahon made his proclamation did not beat the man into oatmeal for belittling the sport they love.

Yes, wrestling is a sport. Vince McMahon claims that calling it a sport insults the intelligence of the fans. Did it ever occur to him that we've always known exactly what wrestling is and we called it a sport anyway?

Shame on him for saying that it isn't just to make it more marketable.

First, let me address the issue that wrestling is "fake". I love when people tell me wrestling is stupid because it's fake, then tell me their favorite show is Home Improvement or Star Trek. I hate to burst the collective bubble of these naysayers (Okay, I actually love it, but I'm trying to be polite.), but those shows aren't real either. So what? I enjoy it. Let me watch Ric Flair wrestle Hulk Hogan in peace and I won't say anything about you watching Captain Kirk while clutching a toy phaser.

The fact that the outcomes of most matches are predetermined does not invalidate pro wrestling as a sport. The standard of competition is simply different. Wrestling is fun and exciting because of the precision

of the execution in each match. Coming off the top rope and driving an elbow into another person should hurt. In a wrestling ring it looks like it hurts. The fact that it doesn't hurt is the true exhibition of athleticism. Wins and losses

competitions, fitness pageants, and dance team championships, but not pro wrestling. Apparently "real" sports can include men pulling buses with their teeth or women doing jumping jacks in a bikini, but can't have men taking shots to

less cynicism.

And the cynicism is rampant these days.

Owen Hart's death has focused an incredible amount of mainstream media attention on all the potential dangers of the sport. From the physical harm that can befall the athletes to the emotional damage perpetrated on young minds who might idolize the current legion of anti-heroic wrestlers such as "Stone Cold" Steve Austin, the media see a negative trend and stand ready to exploit it.

Excuse me. I feel another giggle fit coming on.

You can't have it both ways. Wrestling is either fake and can't be taken seriously as a threat to anyone's health and well being, or it's real and deserves to be treated as such by the media that so often dismisses it.

Hart's death deserves to be taken seriously, but for the right reasons. Using Hart's death to begin a crusade against wrestling is insulting. The news stations have been trying to blame the sport for Hart's death and get anyone connected with the sport to agree with them. Not even Hart's brother-in-law, wrestler Davey Boy Smith (who was forced into retirement after being injured by a stunt gone wrong), would condemn the sport.

Hart's death was an accident. Period. Focus of the greatness of the man and not the senselessness of the way he died. The supposedly perverse nature of the sport had nothing to do with it other than put him in the wrong place at the wrong time. An error occurred during in the theatrics of wrestling - not the sport of wrestling. It's a small but important distinction.

And that's the bottom line, 'cause Stone Cold says so - and so should every real fan of the sport of professional wrestling.

and championship belts provide a familiar structure that mimics conventional "real" sports.

It's like they teach us in Little League. It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game.

Wrestlers just play the game. It's up to the fans to care about who wins or loses. Since we do care, the promoters set up situations whereby our favorites win and their opposition loses.

Accepting the trappings of traditional sports condemns it in the minds of the general public to a traditional definition.

This definition of "real" sport, as interpreted by ESPN, is broad enough to include World's Strongest Man

the groin with steel chairs or screaming strings of obscenities during interviews or running into the ring, dressed like the NBC peacock.

Why not? Wrestling is the only sport that relies so heavily on personality and showmanship as on athleticism for its success. This should in no way diminish the physical prowess of the athletes. The sport goes on in the ring.

Everything else is designed to enhance the experience on an emotional level for the audience.

The theatrics of the sport are a means to the end of spotlighting the performances of the athletes. The blending of these elements - such as the previously mentioned chair to the groin - is just an extension of the wrestlers' abilities and can involve the crowd in a way no other sport is capable of doing. The mastery of such techniques deserves far more praise and far



I love when people tell me wrestling is stupid because it's fake, then tell me their favorite show is Home Improvement or Star Trek.

Knicks will fall to Spurs in Finals

Josh Ezzell
Staff Reporter

New York has had a great run in the playoffs, but the clock is about to strike midnight for this year's Cinderella.

The Knicks simply have too much to overcome in order to beat San Antonio.

First of all, New York has little depth. Even with an injured Larry Johnson, New York only has eight players in its rotation. Charlie Ward has been a non-factor, which has put pressure on Chris Childs. Marcus Camby must continue to play great off the bench for the Knicks to stand a chance against the twin towers.

San Antonio, on the other hand, has eleven players in its rotation. Malik Rose and Will Perdue provide extra bodies that are willing to bang inside. Steve Kerr and Jaren Jackson are deadly 3-point shooters and they play solid defense. Jerome

Kersey and Antonio Daniels also contribute off the bench.

Secondly, New York is the smallest team in the NBA. The average Knick is only 6 foot 6. This is not going to cut it against Tim Duncan and David Robinson, especially with Patrick Ewing out for the series and Larry Johnson nursing an injury.

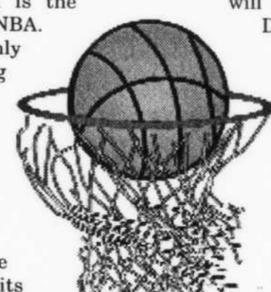
New York does have one key advantage: its guard play. Latrell Sprewell and Allan Houston have been lighting people up in the playoffs. Avery Johnson and Mario Elie will be no different. But, will Sprewell and Houston be able to take it to the hole against Duncan and Robinson? Probably not.

In order for New York to win, Marcus Camby, Larry Johnson and Chris Dudley will have to stop Tim Duncan and David Robinson. Stopping the twin towers would force San Antonio's guards to beat the Knicks.

This will not happen. Duncan and Robinson are simply too skilled for the Knicks big men.

In addition, New York needs to make San Antonio play fast break basketball. This is when New York is at its best.

Unfortunately for the Knicks, San Antonio has the best defense in the NBA. The Spurs will have no problem playing an up tempo game if the Knicks so desire.



Barnett Selected in 22nd

Bleu Holden
Staff Reporter

Aaron Barnett, a senior closing pitcher for MTSU's Blue Raider baseball squad, was recently drafted in the 22nd round of the Major League Baseball draft by the Detroit Tigers.

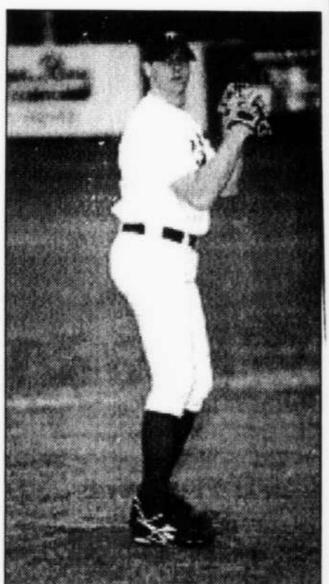
"I was kind of surprised that it was the Tigers who selected me," Barnett said. "I had heard that it would be another club, but I guess that's how the draft goes."

"I'm glad to be part of the Tigers organization. I am just happy to be playing and extend my career."

Barnett, the 59th Blue Raider all-time taken in the draft, had his best year in the blue and white this season. His 29 appearances, all but one of which came from the bullpen, led the MTSU pitching staff. He also led the staff with five saves, the most by a Blue Raider since 1996.

Barnett was especially effective against left-handed batters, allowing them only a .208 hitting percentage. He averaged 8.67 strikeouts per nine innings pitched and concluded the season with a 5.52 earned run average, while failing to make a single fielding error on the year. His final win-loss record was 2-2.

Barnett joins former Blue Raider Jason Maxwell in the Tigers organization.



Lakers want Phil Jackson's name

Ken Peters
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) - While Phil Jackson is in Los Angeles stumping for a presidential candidate this week, he might also use the trip to take a job as Los Angeles Lakers coach.

The Lakers, reportedly offering him a four-year, \$24 million contract, have made their pitch and await his decision.

Lakers executives Jerry West and Mitch Kupchak spoke Monday with Jackson, who had been on a fishing trip to Alaska.

"It was our first actual contact with him," team spokesman John Black said. "The conversation went very well. There is no deal done, but we're hopeful that we can get something done."

Black said that Lakers owner Jerry Buss, West and Kupchak "like him very much and we hope to come to an agreement with him."

An announcement is expected this week.

Jackson already was scheduled to be in Los Angeles on to campaign Wednesday and Thursday for Bill Bradley, a former NBA star.

The decision to pursue Jackson came after the Lakers indicated recently that Kurt Rambis, hired on an interim basis when Del Harris was fired 12 games into the season, would return as coach.

But Buss apparently decided to open his checkbook and go after the high-profile Jackson. The Lakers contacted his agent, Todd Musburger, last week.

Rambis, an assistant before replacing Harris, is expected to remain with the team as an assistant or in some other capacity.

The Lakers haven't won a championship since 1988 and haven't made the finals since 1991.

They were swept out of the playoffs the past two years, this season by San Antonio in the second round after losing to Utah in the Western Conference finals in 1998.

Jackson, who won six NBA titles at Chicago with Michael Jordan, would be faced with the challenge of helping Shaquille O'Neal win his first championship ring.

Jackson took last season off, but it was widely believed he wanted to eventually return to the sidelines.

Jordan, asked recently if he thought Jackson would coach again, said, "I'm pretty sure he will."

Madison Square Garden president Dave Checketts spoke with Jackson about the New York Knicks' coaching job in April, but current coach Jeff Van Gundy may have secured his job by guiding the Knicks into the NBA Finals.

The New Jersey Nets also were believed to be interested in Jackson at one time.

Jackson will try to blend O'Neal and Kobe Bryant, two of the NBA's marquee players, and their teammates into a championship contender.

At Chicago, he was successful in dealing with the very distinct personalities of Jordan, Dennis Rodman and Scottie Pippen, and the Bulls became one of the best teams in league history.

Although O'Neal has three years remaining on his contract, there is a clause that would allow him to become a free agent this year. But Jackson's hiring probably would influence O'Neal to stay, and Fox Sports News reported that the center's agent, Leonard Armatto, met Monday with West to discuss a contract extension.

Stars are stifling, but the Sabres are stumbling in Stanley Cup Finals

Ken Rappoport
Associated Press Writer

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) - The Buffalo Sabres have to figure out a way to solve Dallas' defense quickly, or they can forget about the Stanley Cup.

Coming off one of the greatest defensive performances in Stanley Cup Finals history, the Stars have a 1-1 lead in the series and clearly the psychological edge as the teams prepare for Game tonight.

"I don't think we went into the last game thinking we would hold them to 12 shots," Stars captain Derian Hatcher said. "We just wanted to make them have to fight for space."

Facing the stifling Stars, a team might know what it feels like to play in a phone booth. The 12 shots allowed by the Stars in their 2-1 victory on Saturday night matched the finals record set in 1988 by the Edmonton Oilers.

Now they hope to match the Oilers in another department:

winning the Stanley Cup. "It's not the amount of shots that we give up. We just don't want to give up any quality shots," Hatcher said.

The areas that the Stars try to guard most intensely: the slot and in front of the net.

So far, so good. The Stars' defense has gotten progressively better, allowing the Sabres 24, 21 and 12 shots, respectively. Overall, they have outshot the Sabres 97-57 in the first three games of the finals while outscoring them 8-6.

Saturday night, the Stars blocked 19 shots in front of goalie Ed Belfour - seven more than he faced.

"Everybody just feeds off it," Dallas' Darryl Sydor said. "Guys would put their faces in front of (the puck) because they realize the prize that is at the end."

Belfour used to complain about his teammates blocking shots in front of him because he couldn't see the puck. He's not complaining too much now.

"I'm thankful for them. I know they help me."

The main question posed to just about everyone in the Sabres' locker room on Monday: How do you beat the Dallas defense?

"They block a lot of shots," Curtis Brown said. "One key that we have been working on (is that) we have to make sure our shots get through. Sometimes we are taking too much time winding up for the big slap shot."

"Everyone knows that if you just get the puck to the net, good things happen. So we are just going to try to work on that and cut down the number of blocked shots."

A thought from Rhett Warren:

"One thing we should be doing (is) to be a little more patient. You are not going to get four, five goals (against Dallas); maybe not even three. We might have to win a game 1-0."

A Dallas victory would give the Stars a 3-1 advantage in the best-of-7 series, giving them a chance to head back home for a possible clinching in Game 5 on

Thursday night.

Not so fast, said Sabres coach Lindy Ruff.

"We feel that we are going to do a better job in the area of passing and skating," Ruff said.

The Stars, meanwhile, will not be playing at full strength. Brett Hull, one of their top scorers, figures to miss tonight's game because of a strained groin.

It has resulted in some shuffling of the Dallas lineup, including the possibility of moving Sydor from defense to forward on the top line along with Mike Modano and Jere Lehtinen.

"Sydor would be classified as a big forward because he is over a 200-pound player," Stars coach Ken Hitchcock said. "So I think from our standpoint he probably would have the biggest impact from a physical standpoint. We might be leaning that way right now."

Just what the Sabres need: another defensive forward to get in the way of their shots. ■

Classifieds

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Astros manager undergoes brain surgery

Michael A. Lutz
Associated Press Writer



HOUSTON (AP) - Houston Astros manager Larry Dierker had surgery today to remove a tangled mass of blood vessels in his brain that caused him to have a seizure in the dugout on Sunday.

The operation lasted about 5 1/2 hours. There was no immediate word on Dierker's condition, but a news conference was scheduled for later in the day.

"Nurses say Larry looked good this morning and was in good spirits before he was taken into the operating room," said Methodist Hospital spokeswoman Stefanie Asin.

Two of his players, Jeff Bagwell and Craig Biggio, visited Dierker in the hospital Monday and said he was in

good spirits.

"When we get here (today), hopefully we'll have more good news," Bagwell said Monday night, when the Astros defeated Atlanta 10-4. "We miss him. We hope he has a speedy recovery. He's in our thoughts."

The players, shaken by Dierker's collapse during Sunday's game in the Astrodome, at first feared he had a brain tumor

Dierker went into violent convulsions in the eighth inning of the game against the San Diego Padres. Players and coaches restrained him until medical personnel arrived and took him to Methodist.

Tests Monday revealed he had an arteriovenous malformation - a condition in which people are born with malformed, sometimes tangled, arteries or veins in the brain. Over time, they can become dilated, so that the enlarged vessels either pressure neural tissue or even burst and bleed into the brain.

The Astros put up Dierker's No. 49 jersey in the dugout Monday night in their first game without their manager.

Despite the seriousness of

Dierker's diagnosis, it was not as bad as his players first thought.

"It was scary to hear that he might have a tumor," right fielder Derek Bell said. "You couldn't eat or sleep last night. It was great to see that he is OK. Now we can go out and do what he trained us to do the last three years, have fun and play hard."

Astros general manager Gerry Hunsicker said he was told by doctors that on a scale of 1 to 5 - with 1 the least serious - Dierker's condition is 1.

"But everything is unpredictable at this point," the general manager said. "Until they go in and do the surgery we don't really know."

Doctors also told Hunsicker the mass - about 1 1/2 inches in diameter - is located in a less-critical part of the brain.

Two other managers, Joe Torre of the New York Yankees and John Boles of the Florida Marlins, have been sidelined because of illness this season.

Torre missed the start of the season while recovering from prostate surgery, and Boles missed a total of 13

games following back surgery and a sprained neck.

Dierker's condition added to Houston's growing list of injured and ill players and coaches.

First base coach Jose Cruz left the team May 10 because of an irregular heartbeat, and hitting coach Tom McCraw left six days later for prostate cancer treatment. Cruz is expected back this month.

Outfielder Moises Alou tore a knee ligament when he fell off a treadmill in February and will miss most of the season. And third baseman Ken Caminiti has been on the disabled list since May 22 with a strained calf.

"I've been through some tough years, but from an injury and illness standpoint, there's never been anything close to all this," Hunsicker said. ■

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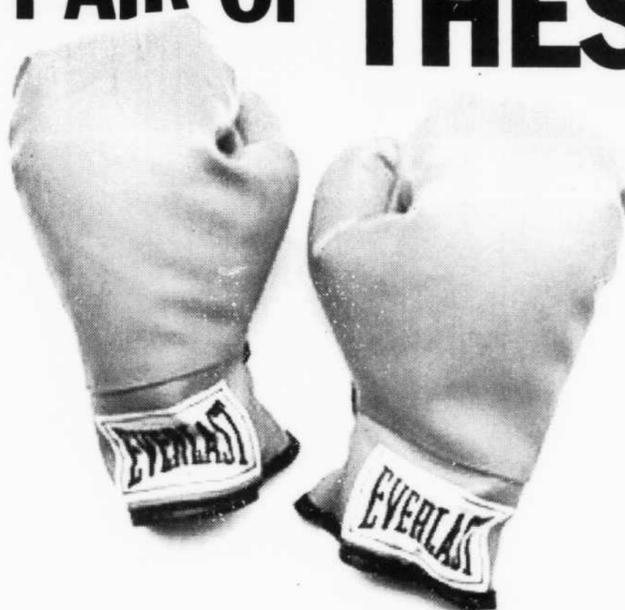
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