

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SIDELINES

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Dwight's faces tobacco sale ban

By DUSTIN EVANS
Assistant Community News Editor

The Tennessee Board of Regents is set to vote Sept. 25 on a revision that would officially ban the sale of tobacco products on its campuses — a ban that would only affect MTSU, the last TBR university to continue tobacco sales.

MTSU previously asked Dwight's Mini Mart to cease its tobacco sales last spring, but retracted its request following public protest and concerns addressed by the vendor, Dwight Johnson.

"I'm sure that they are trying to do what is best for the majority of people," Johnson said. "I know there are some detrimental effects of tobacco, but the only thing I see is that in our country, people should have a choice. Those that choose to harm their body — it's up to them."

Johnson said 40 percent of his profits come from tobacco products, but he plans to find other products to take its place if the ban is passed. He said he is considering offering cessation patches and gum, health foods or other products beneficial to healthy

living as a replacement to the tobacco products.

"If it becomes a policy, then we want to abide by [it]," Johnson said.

Mary Morgan, director of communications for TBR, said the TBR had no role in the institution of the ban. She also said the TBR had no previous policy to mandate the sale of the product, but the vote is taking place because it is the right thing to do as an educational institution.

"We have a higher responsibility to protect our students' health and set an example," Morgan said. "Research overwhelmingly indicates that tobacco use is not only harmful to the health of the users, but it is bad for people in the vicinity."

Brittany Slate, a sophomore pre-nursing major, said while she has purchased tobacco products on campus occasionally, she won't notice a major change.

"It's like taking smoking out of restaurants — it's taking people's right away to smoke," Slate said. "They may think it might cause people not to smoke, but if people really want to smoke — they will find cigarettes."



Photo by Jay Bailey, photography editor

Drew Renfro, sophomore liberal arts major, buys cigarettes, which could be banned from campus after a slated TBR vote Sept. 25.

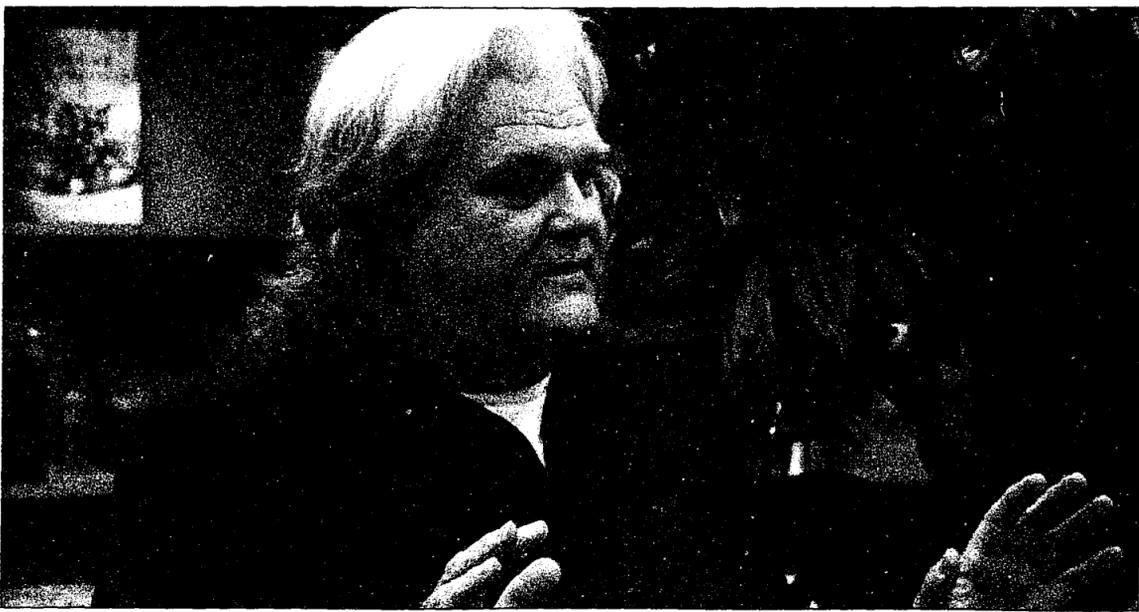


Photo by Meagan McCann, contributing photographer

Ricky Skaggs, a country bluegrass musician, held his CD release party at Barnes & Nobles in Murfreesboro, Tenn. on Tuesday.

Bluegrass legend releases new album

By CHRIS WELCH
Sports Editor

Ricky Skaggs came to the Murfreesboro Barnes & Noble Booksellers on Tuesday to showcase his latest album, Ricky Skaggs Solo: Songs My Dad Loved.

Skaggs is a Grammy award-winning country and bluegrass musician whose new album is the first in 10 years.

The event, a joint venture planned between Skaggs Family Records and Barnes & Noble, was an informal release party for the record. Songs My Dad Loved represents a "return to a more traditional style of music," closer to the music Skaggs played while being raised in Eastern Kentucky.

"It's very hillbilly," Skaggs said about his record. "It's something I've wanted to do for a long time."

Skaggs said country in the early to mid-90s was returning to pop, but he wasn't interested in turning that way.

"I was really happy to get away from that and get back to what the industry called 'insignificant music,'" Skaggs said.

The release party came out of a chance meeting between Skaggs and Leslie Walker, community relations manager for Murfreesboro's Barnes & Noble.

"We got ready to release this project, and we thought this was pretty fitting," said Charlotte Scott, general manager of Skaggs Family Records. "We always want to educate students, and this is a great place to do it."

Skaggs signed autographs in the store and participated in a question-and-answer segment that chronicled his upbringing, his rise to fame and his family.

"Much of my upbringing has shaped and molded my music,"

Skaggs said. "[Music] was my entertainment, and I'm just thankful that I could take out of the mountains the music that was given to me."

Skaggs begins touring with his band, Kentucky Thunder, again today. Their tour will run until April. Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder perform an average of 90 dates a year.

Skaggs is also planning on returning into the studio in October.

"He's going back into the studio with plans to record a gospel project," Scott said. "It will be totally different than anything he's ever done."

In addition, Skaggs is currently working on a book deal with Harper Collins. The autobiography will account Skaggs' musical history, including his accounts of playing with bluegrass legends like Bill Monroe and Earl Scruggs, and more recent collaborations with artists like Ashley Monroe and the Raconteurs.

Obama nominates MTSU professor to serve on TVA board

By ALEX MOORMAN
News Editor

President Barack Obama nominated Barbara S. Haskew, an MTSU economics professor to join the Tennessee Valley Authority board.

TVA's Web site said the company strives to preserve energy, improve the environment and spur economic development in Tennessee.

Haskew worked for eight years at TVA managing the staff that formulates utility rates. She also served as the dean of the College of Business and a one-time vice provost at MTSU.

Haskew said that this nomination is a great honor and she hopes to make a real impact on the TVA board.

With TVA having suffered a crippling year since December's coal ash spill at its Kingston plant, TVA has focused heavily on preventing it from happening again. The coal ash spill in eastern Tennessee has been called one of the largest environmental disasters in the U.S.

"I think energy, its availability and how it is produced is very important, not only to the economy, but to the environment too," Haskew said. "I'm pleased to have the opportunity to be appointed or considered for appointment."

Haskew said she made her interest in being a member of the TVA board known to Tennessee State Congress and that with their help she was able to make it a reality.

"I have talked with a number of people about the fact that I would be interested [in serving on the TVA board] and I made that information available to congressmen in this region," Haskew said. "Other groups knowing about my interest have written letters of support to Obama and the congressional legislation."

Haskew said that while the opportunity to work on the TVA board is amazing, she plans on completing the academic semester with her classes.

"Currently I am teaching economics," Haskew said. "I have a lot of students and it's an exciting semester, so I am certainly planning on continuing with my classes this semester."

Haskew said that being a member of the TVA board would be great not only because of her interest in TVA, but also because Haskew is currently the only female in consideration for a spot on the board.

"I am delighted to be nominated because I am very interested in TVA, but also because it's great to have a woman on the TVA board," Haskew said.

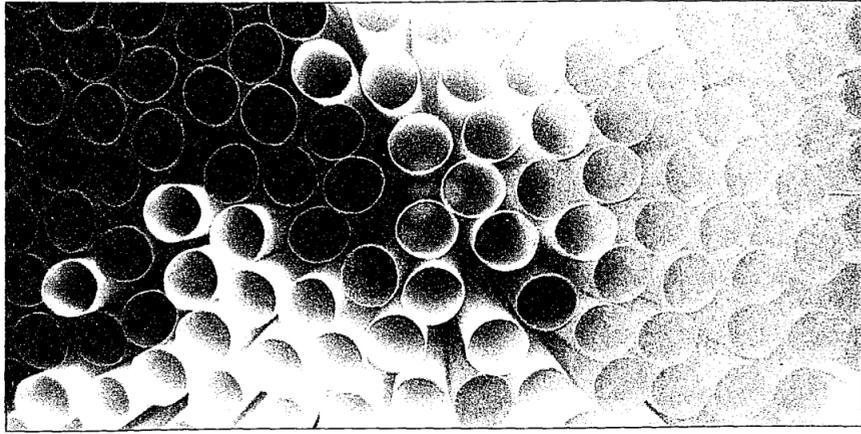


Photo Courtesy of MorgueFile.com

Democratic straw poll commences primaries

By **DUSTIN EVANS**
Assistant Community News Editor

The Rutherford County Democratic Party is set to hold its first straw poll for the 2010 gubernatorial election on Sept. 19 at the Tennessee Ballroom in the James Union Building.

All five candidates, who are competing for the future governorship of Tennessee, will speak to the sold-out crowd before the attendees cast their vote in what Jonathon Fagan, Chairman of the Rutherford County Democratic Party, said is the first glimpse of the primary season. The straw poll attempts to take a sample of the first opinions of candidates straight from the residents of the county.

"We feel that we are the Iowa of Tennessee," Fagan said. "While most of the candidates draw on Davidson and Shelby [counties], all are jockeying for a large Middle Tennessee county to seal the deal."

Fagan said Rutherford County is the key swing

county in the gubernatorial election due to the mixed urban to rural population and the larger size of the county.

"I think it will show which candidate has the most momentum in Middle Tennessee," Fagan said. "It will send a message to donors, the press and the electorate that [the winner is] a serious candidate."

The candidates, Sen. Jim Kyle, Kim McMillan, Sen. Roy Herron, Mike McWherter and Ward Cammack will have an opportunity to speak to residents, Fagan said. While the votes are counted, Congressman Bart Gordon will deliver a speech before introducing the keynote speaker - Congressman Lincoln Davis.

Kim Sasser Hayden, campaign manager for Mike McWherter for Governor, said she feels good about the progress of the campaign and that they should receive a positive response at every place McWherter travels.

"Rutherford County is important in both the pri-

mary and the general election - we are paying a lot of attention to it," Hayden said. "I think it is one test of where the campaigns are now."

Cammack said while his campaign is excited about the event, he does not feel that the straw poll will make or break their momentum.

"You look at the campaign as a series of many steps, and this is one of them," Cammack said. "We are in it to run, and it takes a long time to get the message out."

Chelsea Curtis, president of Raider Republicans, said she is pleased with the choice of MTSU for the straw poll.

"I think it is important that they chose MTSU as a venue," Curtis said. "I think it is good to get students involved in politics [and] it is an honor for the candidates."

To read more, visit us online.



Economy slows student travel

By **ALLISON ROBERTS**
Copy Editor

With improvements to the economy at a standstill, students have made financial changes in their lives that range from eating at home more often to buying only the necessities.

Students who made travel plans for the summer were no exception. Because of the economy's condition, some students were forced to change their vacation plans, or make plans on a budget in order to take the trip they wanted.

"I made a few changes to my vacation plans and decided not to go on a few trips," said Kevin O'Connor, senior liberal studies major.

O'Connor, who works for Northwest Airlines as a baggage handler, was able to travel for close to nothing on the trips he did take.

"As a benefit to their employees, we can fly stand-by for free," O'Connor said. "I spent a few days in Miami, as well as a few days in New York."

While some students



Photo by Jay Bailey, photography editor
With the current economic struggle, students have found it hard to travel.

made plans for vacationing in their dream locations for a few days, one student only made plans to work for the summer.

"I never made vacation plans for this summer because I already knew I wanted to save as much as possible," said alumna Sheteka Maxwell. "I worked the maximum amount of hours I could every week, plus had side jobs such as babysitting and house sitting."

For many, changes in the economy have imposed longer workdays, picking up extra hours at work, doing odd jobs to make a little extra cash, saving more money and paying closer attention to spending habits to avoid unnecessary purchases.

To read more, visit us online.



CRIME BRIEFS

Sep. 10, 5:35 a.m.

Trespassing
Fairview Building
William Mayer was issued a state citation for possession of drug paraphernalia and issued a trespass warning.

Sep. 10, 5:11 p.m.

Vandalism
Friendship Street
Vandalism to a blue Volkswagen Cabrio parked on street.

Sep. 11, 3:21 p.m.

Traffic
MTSU Campus
Subjects came to the station to fill out a hit-and-run report that happened the previous day.

Sep. 11, 3:51 p.m.

Theft
Saunders Fine Arts
Report of a wallet lost in Saunders Fine Arts lobby.

Sep. 12, 12:51 a.m.

Suspicious Vehicle
Rutherford Boulevard
Steven Kibbel and Eric Clements were issued state citations for simple possession.

Sep. 12, 3:29 a.m.

Underage Alcohol Consumption
James E. Walker Library Lot
Kurt Kruszynski Jr., Julian Valerio and Benjamin Shulte were issued state citations for consumption of alcohol under the age of 21 and written trespass warnings. Christopher Bates was issued a state citation for consumption of alcohol under the age of 21.

RYMAN

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Sunday, September 27

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www.joinZTA.com

Obituaries

Brandon Johnson

Age 20, died on Friday Sept. 11 2009. Johnson was a sophomore concrete industry major and member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. Johnson was a cook at Bonefish Grill on North Thompson Lane. Murfreesboro police are investigating his death as a suicide.

Christopher Todd

Age 23, of Douglasville, Georgia died on Friday Sept. 11, 2009. Todd was a senior business major at MTSU. Todd worked as a bus driver at Campus Crossing South on North Rutherford Boulevard. Todd's death is also under investigation as a possible suicide.

WARNING SIGNS, Suicide Prevention

WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

Symptoms that may indicate whether or not a person is suicidal fall into three main groups:

Behavioral changes. Warning signs can include changes in eating or sleeping patterns, withdrawal from friends and family, drinking or drug use, loss of interest in favorite activities, or giving away valued possessions.

Personality changes. Common moods involve anger, anxiety, or depression. Other changes to look for include aggressiveness, hopelessness, hypersensitivity, boredom, difficulty concentrating, or an unexplained decline in school performance.

Health problems. Red flags here could involve any serious or life-threatening illness, and even such "minor" complaints as frequent headaches, weight loss or gain, nausea, or fatigue.

These are signs of a problem and need to be considered carefully. We need to point out that the symptoms above don't necessarily mean someone is considering suicide.

Because the fact is that two-thirds of those who commit suicide give some warning first. That means it's up to us - as friends, teachers, parents, or relatives - to recognize the signal and respond, person to person.

HOW TO HELP:

Here are a lot of things anyone can - and should - do to help a suicidal person. Besides just "being there" (which can make a major difference) it can also help to:

Listen. Sometimes it helps just knowing that someone else knows how we feel - and cares

Be honest. Ask if the person is thinking of suicide. Don't worry about planting an idea that wasn't already there. You won't.

Ask if they've considered a method and have plans to carry it out. The more specific the plans and the more lethal the method, the more serious the threat.

Provide emotional strength. Be positive and supportive. Fall apart later if you need to. But in a crisis, focus on the other person's needs - and give all the compassion and caring you can muster.

• 10.3% OF U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS ADMITTED SERIOUS THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE; 6.7% HAD A SUICIDE PLAN.

• THE NUMBERS OF BOTH SUICIDE ATTEMPTS AND FATALITIES HAVE RISEN STEADILY IN THE '90S, FOLLOWING SIMILAR JUMPS IN THE 1960S, '70S, AND '80S.

• TODAY, AN ESTIMATED 276,000 KIDS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14 AND 17 TRY KILLING THEMSELVES EACH YEAR, AND MORE THAN 5,000 SUCCEED. THE CURRENT RATE IS FOUR TIMES THAT OF 1950.

Suicide Information and Statistics from DoltNow.org

Graphic by Shelley Vernon, production manager

Governor supports books from birth

STAFF REPORT

Gov. Phil Bredesen plans to celebrate the state's fourth annual "Imagination Library Week" with local Murfreesboro preschoolers.

Bredesen is scheduled to visit Bellwood Bowdoin Preschool's library on Sept. 17 at 1 p.m. to talk about his Books from Birth Foundation, a program that focuses on donating books to pre-kindergarten children.

"Now that almost 60 percent of all eligible chil-

dren in Tennessee are registered in this important pre-kindergarten literacy program, I recognize there are still many more families with young children left to reach," Bredesen said.

Each month, the program delivers age-appropriate books to children five and younger. The program is offered at no cost to the family, regardless of income. Each eligible child can receive up to 60 books, delivered to his or her home, before

he or she is five years old. Over 300,000 books have been delivered to children throughout Tennessee.

"Thanks to the dedication and hard work of volunteers in all 95 counties, strong partners like our public libraries and the generosity of local and statewide donors, we are working toward instilling a love of books and reading - at the earliest possible age - in all Tennessee children," Bredesen said.

Mary Beth Ikard, communications director for

the foundation, said Dolly Parton created the event because Parton felt she lacked something in her childhood by not having picture books to read.

"[Parton] created it as a gift to children in her home town of Sevierville," Ikard said. "The governor made a campaign promise to extend it statewide."

Ikard said the foundation was created with legislative funding in 2004, and the program expanded to all 95 counties in less than two years.

Gov. Bredesen is also set to read his favorite books to a state-funded "Pre-K for All" classroom during his visit.

"Imagination Library Week is an opportunity to generate greater awareness for the program, and the importance of reading to children regularly as preparation for formal education," Bredesen said.

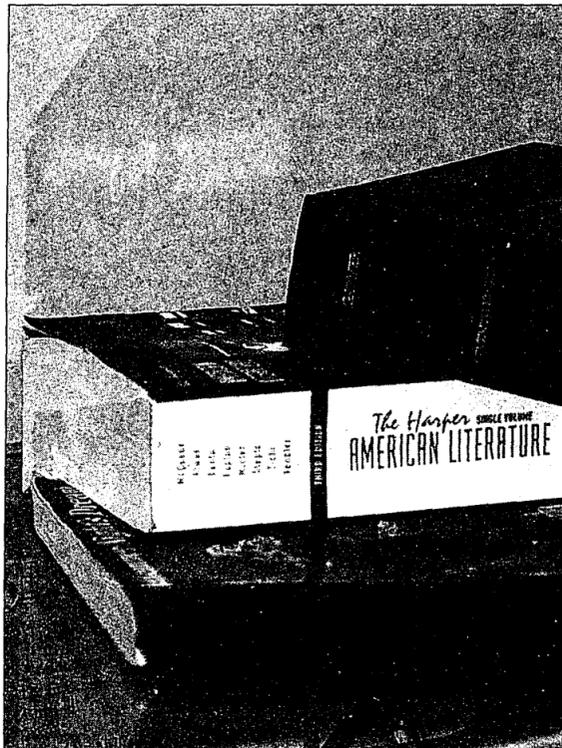


Photo illustration by Jay Bailey, photography editor
Governor Phil Bredesen plans to visit Murfreesboro to support Books from Birth.

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ROGER EBERT, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

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CURRENT EVENTS

Constitution Day: The Internet and the First Amendment
Sept. 17, 9:40 a.m.
Location: KUC Theater
Admission: Free

Constitution Day: The First Amendment in 2009
Sept. 17, 11:20 a.m.
Location: KUC Theater
Admission: Free

Constitution Day: Torture, Democracy and the American Press
Sept. 17, 1 p.m.
Location: Learning Resource Center 221
Admission: Free

Constitution Day: Civil Liberties, Surveillance and Terrorism
Sept. 17, 2:40 p.m.
Location: KUC Theater
Admission: Free

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OPINIONS

Sidelines is the editorially independent, non-profit student-produced newspaper of Middle Tennessee State University. Sidelines publishes Monday and Thursday during the fall and spring semesters and Wednesday during June and July. The opinions expressed herein are those of individual writers and not necessarily Sidelines or MTSU.

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

TBR singles out Dwight's tobacco sales

The Tennessee Board of Regents is preparing to end the sale of tobacco products on its campuses. For Dwight's Mini Mart, this is the end of an era.

Last year, students protested MTSU's request for owner Dwight Johnson to cease the sale of tobacco products in his store. Dwight's Mini Mart is now the only on-campus store that sells tobacco in the entire TBR system.

Although TBR says the regulation is system-wide, the only store this rule affects will be Dwight's. Why single him out?

The Mini Mart is protected by certain federal regulations regarding businesses owned by vision-impaired individuals. This rule won't directly close the Mini Mart, but it will cut into Dwight's bottom line.

TBR official Mary Morgan, director of communications, insists the changes are being made in the interest of student health, but where is the line? The Keathley University Center Grille still sells fried food, and students still smoke everywhere on campus (despite rules limiting such behavior). What's the point?

In the end, the TBR will do what it wants to do, as always. Despite the fact that there are more pressing issues, tobacco sales on campus will cease. Dwight's Mini Mart will take a loss in profits, and be left vulnerable to competition by the giant Aramark, since cigarettes were a major competitive advantage for Dwight.

In the meantime, there's a budget crisis, and the university is working to push out tenured faculty members.

It's nice to see that the TBR is keeping everything in perspective, though.

School speech flap misses point

Previously this week, President Barack Obama spoke to children in elementary and high school via television, encouraging them to work hard and stay in school. The massive fuss thrown by parents of children to whom the president spoke shows the dark side of radical behavior.

One can understand the concern parents may feel when told a politician of opposing views is going to speak to their children. After all, it is the parents' right and duty to instill in their child a moral code that they believe will guide them and aid the child in becoming a good citizen and a well-rounded, healthy and happy person. Nevertheless, if that politician makes his honest message clear and tells anyone who cares to know exactly what he will be saying, the parent should take



Pearl before Swine

Pearl Howell

that into account.

Certainly our president is marked by his liberal ideas and actions, and men and women have a right to disagree with him according to the U.S. Constitution. It must be considered, however, that he made his message known well before it was put in front of the impressionable minds of the American youth. If anyone in this country can be held

accountable to keep what he is going to say and what he actually says the same, it is the president, who is under the media's microscope every day.

Parents overreacted according to their own prejudices, and by doing so, a whole slew of children have been denied the chance to see their president, an opportunity lost that they will possibly regret and resent the rest of their lives.

If these parents do their jobs and they raise their children to respect the beliefs of others and still maintain their own ideas, and if they teach them well, these children will grow up to think independently and with open minds. They should be allowed to learn to make the right decisions.

Another point that cannot be ignored concerns

the respect for the children. After all, they are people, too, albeit slightly smaller ones. They deserve to make up their own minds. Some parents need to trust their children to make the right decision, even if sometimes that means a decision that goes against what the parent believes.

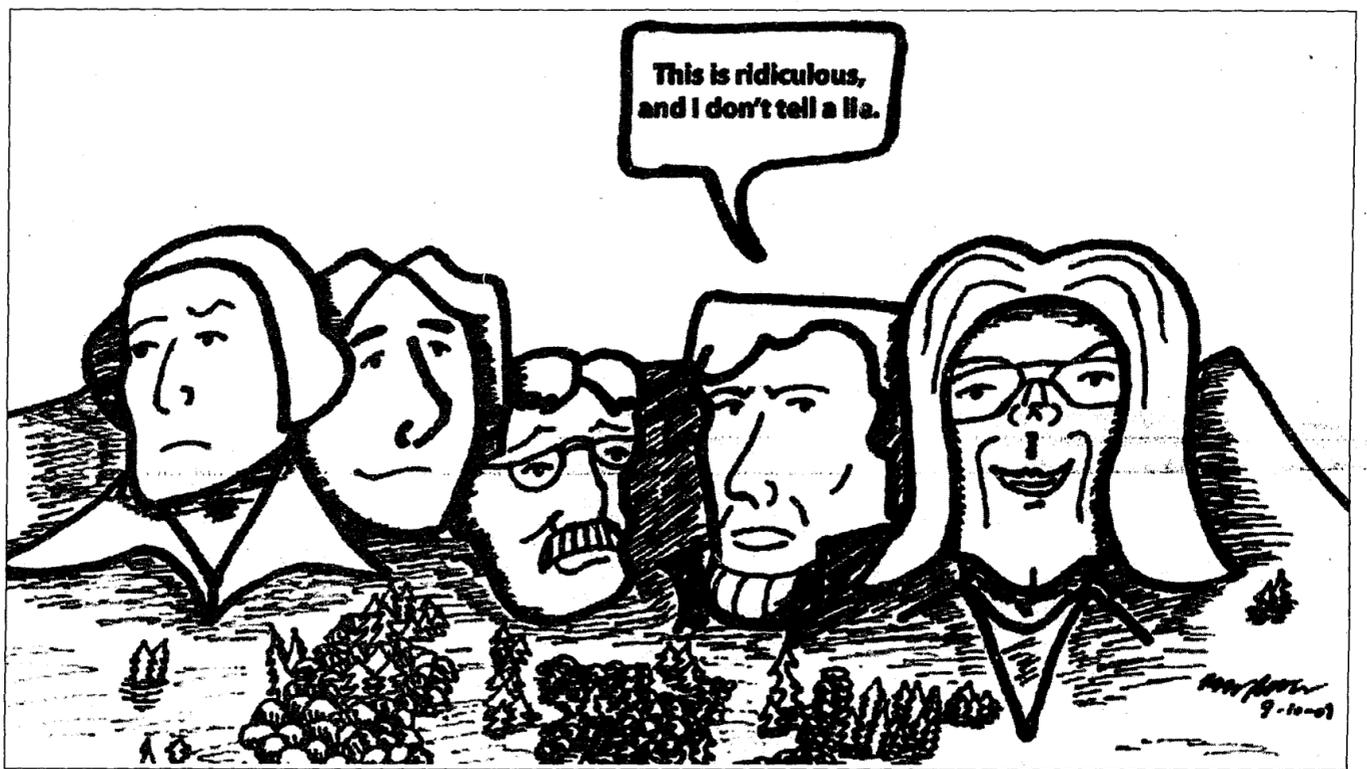
Additionally, it should be acknowledged that the children of this country are being seriously mistreated. After all, politically aware parents haven't really spoken up to address the rights of their kids. They only bristle when confronted with something politically disagreeable.

What about the fact that our schools are ridiculously overcrowded? Do they raise a riot and threaten to withdraw their children from school over the dismal salaries the teachers

are paid? Shouldn't caring parents cry out when the public school system is used as free day care instead of a learning facility? Where are the "loving" parents when abused children are being thrown from biological parents to foster parent to foster parent, etc.?

The fact remains that whatever protest people might have against the president's speech, there are bigger problems that deserve far more attention and aren't getting what they deserve. The banner of children's rights is not a rag to be picked up and thrown down after use. It should be held up unflinchingly until complete reform is achieved.

Pearl Howell is a freshman theatre major and can be reached at rph2t@mtsu.edu



"Seattle Spew"

megapencil5@yahoo.com

Kyle Patterson

Listen to Editorial Board online at mtsusidelines.com/opinions

Helpful tips for football viewership

Since I hail from a town that is crazy about their football team to the point of unhealthy obsession, I understand that watching games and participating as a fan at a game is a terrific rush.

On the other hand, I am now living in a different town and not cheering for the home team. It is an odd feeling.

Luckily, Nashville is full of transplants and I am not alone in my situation. For the most part, people are civil, even more so if our teams are not on opposite sides of the line of scrimmage. When they are, we agree to disagree for four quarters.

However, it only takes one person to ruin that terrific feeling of civility, and because of that, it is necessary to bring up some situations and the proper way to handle them.

First, when sitting on the couch at home watching your team play, there are no rules. Yell all you want, scream four-letter words and get extra hot wings. There's nothing wrong with holding you back. Feel free to go completely crazy. In fact, don't even get dressed! Except, of course, for

your team jersey.

Second, when sitting on the couch at home with friends: make sure you invite people you like. The smartest way to play this is to invite people that are rooting for your team as well, and that way you avoid the whole "opposite sides" issue completely.

Make sure you have plenty of beer or that you tell your friends to bring their own. Do not get angry if you provide beer and someone drinks the last one; you offered. Also, if you are going to provide food and invite friends that eat a lot, plan accordingly. Accepting phone calls from your parents is probably not a good idea unless you can control your sailor-swearing friends.

Third, when going to a friend's house to watch the game, take the friend into consideration. Ask if you need to bring your own beer, or remind him or her that they drank all of yours when they watched a game at your house.

Make sure you are fully clothed. Painting your body in the colors of your team is



My point, and I do have one

Mallory Boyd

probably not appropriate, though your enthusiasm will be appreciated. And remember: no matter how inebriated you are, it is always inappropriate to hit on your friend's mom or significant other.

Fourth, when seeking out a public place in which to watch the game, consider who will be there. Do not go to a motorcycle bar if you do not own a motorcycle. A scooter does not count.

Do not go alone if you are a Raiders fan in Kansas City, a Bears fan in Green Bay or a Colts fan in New England. You may never return. Consider neutral ground; a Buf-

falo Wild Wings, if you will. Not only are they likely to show your game, they also have beer in giant glasses and decent wings. It's a win-win.

If you watch your game in a public place, it is absolutely permissible to cheer for your team. That's the whole point of going, because they can hear you through the television and therefore play better.

Do not acknowledge people cheering for the other team if you are going to act like a four-year-old. Do seek them out if you are looking forward to a terrific game against their team and you can act like an adult if you lose. Do not quote statistics loudly or try to show how many names of the team's players you know; you will just look like you never made it in PeeWee league.

If your team loses, walk out with dignity, for you are still a true fan. If your team wins, feel free to leap out the front door if it tickles your fancy. The losers will be walking out with dignity.

Lastly, and most importantly, if you are going to the game in person, make sure you make the proper prepa-

rations. Clean your grill prior to the morning of the game. Fire up your smoker. Get one of those safety lighters that has two buttons to press so your children (or drunk fraternity brothers) don't light your equipment on fire. Make sure you are well stocked with the necessary barbecue cooking/eating utensils, and also Tums and bottled water, for obvious reasons.

When preparing to tailgate, find someone with an actual tailgate. Your BMW looks silly, unless it is painted in team colors, in which case it is perfectly acceptable. Get out there early; even days beforehand if you're a true fan. If you're at an NFL game, you probably used your child's college fund to buy the tickets, so you'd better enjoy it as long as possible.

Make sure to dress in team garb, but do not wear the same jersey as your significant other. This may cause a chain reaction of violent illness in the parking lot outside the stadium and take focus away from the main event. Remember: it is not about you. You are there for

the team! If it is a college game, prepare in advance to sneak in your alcohol.

Once inside, make sure you know the cheers for first down, touchdown and fight song. Since the people surrounding you are likely your allies, a certain amount of foolishness is allowed. High-five your neighbor after terrific plays whether you know him or not.

If you spend more time in your seat than on your feet, you are not a true fan and should be stripped of your jersey and sent home.

After the game, win or lose, you may continue tailgating. You paid good money for that parking spot (unless you rode your bike, in which case, sober up before attempting to ride it).

If everyone tries to follow these simple guidelines to the best of our abilities, we will have yet another enjoyable, jacksass-free football season. Go blue!

Mallory Boyd is a sophomore history major and can be reached at mnn2b@mtsu.edu

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"SGA needs political parties"

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'Lost Symbol' proves riveting read

Brown's long-awaited book hits shelves at long last

By EVAN BARKER
Opinions Editor

Mystery fans have salivated for six years in anticipation of Dan Brown's latest novel, "The Lost Symbol." After the blockbusters "Angels and Demons" and "The DaVinci Code," Brown's third installment in the Robert Langdon series delves into the untapped riches of Freemasonry. Brown concocts a wild tale of intrigue, secret societies, hidden clues and metaphysics into a hard-driving whirlwind adventure which takes place in less than a day.

The opening, in true Brown style, is bizarre, gruesome and riveting. Eminent symbolologist and perennial hero Robert Langdon is summoned by his old friend Peter Solomon to the U.S. Capitol to deliver a last-minute lecture on Freemasonry and the Founding Fathers.

When he arrives in the nick of time, there is no event; he walks into an empty room.

It is here, in the very beginning of the book, that we meet the villain Mal'akh, who has kidnapped Solomon and left a grisly calling card in the very center of the Capitol rotunda. Langdon's sidekick femme – a Brown trademark – arrives in the form of Katherine Solomon, sister of the kidnapped man.

The entire book is set in the landmark edifices in Washington, D.C., and readers unfamiliar with the layout of the city would do well to keep a map handy; the settings are crucial to the bigger picture, and it is easy to get lost as Langdon and Solomon run from one famous place to another.

Mal'akh is a worthy antagonist, albeit one whose evil motives are frustratingly unclear. Tattooed, castrated

and freakishly built, his background is purposely obscured to serve the ends of the story. The reader may ask why, but it doesn't matter. Brown's intricate plot is the feature here; not the characterization.

The book is awash in obscure literary and mythological references to Freemasonry, promising years of fun Google searches and lively fan debate. Brown's trademark research provides a solid background for a gripping story, except when it gets in the way.

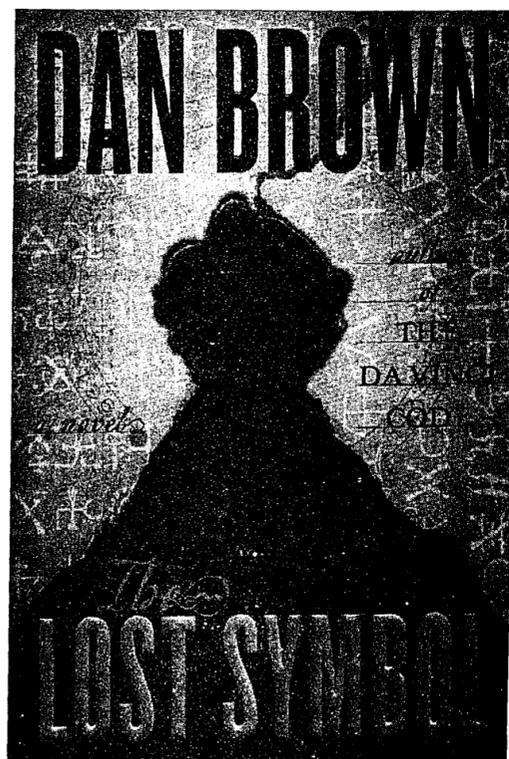
In "The Lost Symbol," more so than Brown's others, the minutiae and obscure Masonic symbols tend to take center stage. Characters sometimes deliver unnaturally long and awkward explanations of the various phenomena and historical trivia cited, often to the detriment of the story's pace. Sometimes the information is important to the plot, but not

always. It's as if Brown wants the reader to know how much research he did in preparation. Some sections are just plain slow.

The dialogue is awkward at times. The phrase "What the hell?" or variations thereof appear no less than 29 times throughout the book, as if the characters have no other way of expressing surprise or bewilderment; sometimes it's difficult to tell who is speaking.

The ending deserves close attention, because it is here that Brown differentiates "The Lost Symbol" from his earlier books.

The resolution of the story includes plenty of earth-shattering possibilities, which Brown's readers expect, but it is here more than anywhere that his tendency to wax philosophical runs slightly amok.



SYMBOL, PAGE 6

"The Lost Symbol" cover art by Murat Taner and Michael J. Windsor

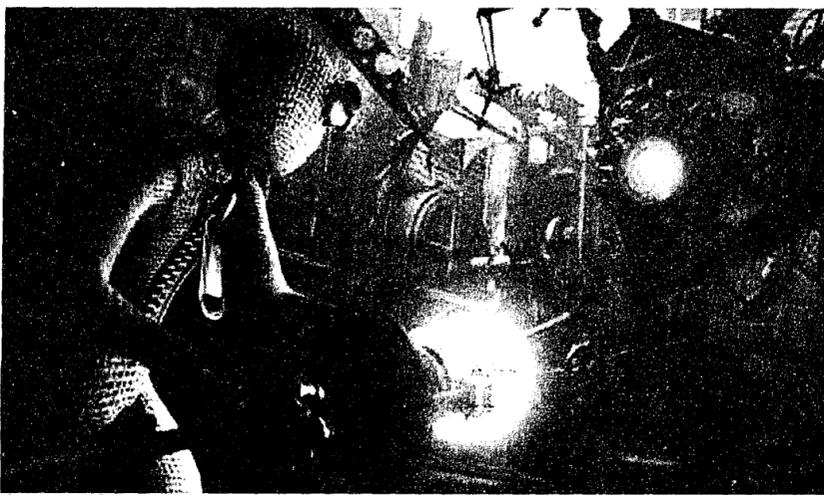


Photo courtesy of Focus Features

The Beast begins to battle with 9 during a scene from the new animated film "9." The film is regarded as one of the first animated features that caters entirely to an adult audience.

Intense animated film not for your little brother

By JOHNATHON SCHLEICHER
Staff Writer

Of all the animated movies out there, "9" is not to be treated like a cute and cuddly Disney film. There is not one singing crab or spontaneous burst of song throughout the entire film, but the movie is still visually entrancing, with an eerie setting that utilizes horror elements to keep you on the edge of your seat.

"9" was released on Sept. 9, 2009, which seems too convenient to be a coincidence. Directed by Shane Acker and co-produced by Tim Burton and Timur Bekmanbetov, "9" pushes the limits of the idea of a PG-13 film without going into grotesque gore and violence. Maintaining the creepy nature that Tim Burton is known for, "9" delivers a solid post-apocalyptic storyline that keeps the audience wanting more.

"9" is based in a time where the world is purged of human life by mechanized weapons that have turned against their creator, sparking a genocidal war.

The only form of humanity left is 9 little dolls that look like they were made from burlap sacks and scrap. This really adds to the creepy factor. The dolls' names are on their respective backs, so it really isn't too hard to distinguish who is who. Try to picture sock puppets, but as little machine-killing, hard-core saviors.

The main character, 9, voiced by Elijah Wood, awak-

ens in a world void of humanity that is later referred to as "the emptiness." The land is covered completely in garbage and the remnants of war, and this adds to the creepy feeling the audience gets when watching the movie. The audience knows something horrible has happened, and you are dropped in the story after this horrible event took place wondering why.

The first thing 9 comes into contact with is a strange sphere with odd symbols etched into it. After assessing his surroundings, 9 decides to journey out a little into the emptiness to see what he can find. Eventually, 9 encounters another doll just like himself named 2. The two hit it off really well, but the pleasure of their company is cut short by an attack by a diabolical machine known only as the Beast.

In the fray, 9 injures his arm and 2 is captured and carried away into the emptiness. 9 passes out, but is luckily recovered by another doll named 5 who brings 9

to safety in a fortified sanctuary. When 9 comes to, he realizes his arm is fixed. 5 quickly greets him and assures him he is in a safe place. The two dolls hit it off really well until 5 mentions 2 and his disappearance. When 9 fills 5 in on the attack from the Beast, 5 suggests that they talk to 1, the apparent leader of the sanctuary. On the way to meet 1, 9 meets other dolls like himself.

1 is not pleased to see 9 and has a holier-than-thou mentality. 9 suggests that they team up and try to rescue 2, but 1 will have nothing of it. 1 sends 9 and 5 off in disappointment, but this doesn't hinder 9's spirit. 9 convinces 5 to accompany him on a rescue mission to find their friend 2 and release him from the Beast's clutches.

After exploring the emptiness, they find the lair of the Beast and see 2 locked in a cage. While trying to liberate 2, the monstrous robot attacks the rescuers.

Those Darlins break girl band stereotype

By JESSICA PACE
Staff Writer

Everything said about Those Darlins tends to focus on either the band's unlikely melding of punk and country, or its decidedly dismissive feelings towards being coined a "girl band."

Those Darlins – three Murfreesboro-based wildwood flowers – are not attempting to change rock fundamentals with diluted, angst-bitch-rock. What they do have is a 21st century take on a rustic roots sound pulled straight from the Grand Ole Opry in its prime time, except that girls like to hammer and pound the country genre until they've crafted it into something a little more their own.

While still on the road playing shows before the Darlins hit up Nashville again, bassist Kelley Darlin talks about their style and the common thread between country and punk, as well as a few things that are just "ridiculous."

Kelley explains the birth of Those Darlins as though it was the most obvious thing in the world. The band's initial formation was a very organic union; as Kelley sees it, the girls all played music, and they all hung out together – why wouldn't they play music together?

By no means the first group of females to play music and run into success, the reasons for critics put so much emphasis on the Darlins' gender are lost on the band. And don't even get them started on the term "girl band," a phrase which ruffles a few feathers among the girls.

"It's ignorant," Kelley says. "You'd never use race to describe a band. You wouldn't say an 'all-white' or an 'all-black' band, and if you did, people would be up in arms about it."

"To get labeled by your gender to describe your music is just ridiculous."

Still, part of the draw to Those Darlins lies in the fact

that while the girls may be feminists as people, they do not use the band as a means of making a statement about the issue, but rather seem to ignore it entirely.

"Feminism reflects our values, but we're definitely not Le Tigre," Kelley says. "It's not a political statement to be in a band of mixed genders."

Those Darlins definitely mix genres. Though overflowing with Carter Family influence, there are elements of punk colloquialism, folk rambling and pop enthusiasm too prominent to call Those Darlins "country." The topsoil appears as such, but a little digging uncovers a strong punk foundation, starting with the fact that the relationship among Those Darlins is based on equality.

With no fixed singer, the three Darlins switch off on vocals depending on the feel of each song and who is best suited to it, as well as interchanging bass and guitar. Everything is kept from going stale with added organs, acoustic slides, steels and accordions or revised covers thrown in like Dave Macon's "Keep My Skillet Good and Greasy."

And there is as much variety in the girls' backgrounds as there is in their sound.

Nikki Darlin, who plays baritone ukulele, was raised in the mountains of Virginia by parents dubbed as "total hippies" by Kelley. Nikki's mother was a visual artist, her fa-

ther a glassblower and her "other dad" a Scottish rock 'n' roll musician. Her upbringing was very different from Kelley's, whose parents had more conservative jobs.

Kentucky native Jessi Darlin, taught to play guitar by her grandfather, is a "determined, creative and self-sufficient kind of being," as Kelley describes her. Jessi graduated from high school early and came to Murfreesboro to attend the Southern Girls Rock 'n' Roll Camp, which was founded by Kelley.

A South Carolina girl who graduated from MTSU with a degree in recording, Kelley notes the difference in the girls' perspectives, saying she has learned to "just lighten up and loosen up a little bit" from spending time with her bandmates.

"I'm kind of the balance of security, while Nikki could give a shit about tomorrow, like right now is all there is," Kelley laughs.

"And Jessi always has everything she needs in her bookbag – sketchpad, guitar strings, nail clippers, a pack of ramen," Kelley continues. "If

I were ever stranded anywhere, I'd want to be stranded with Jessi, not Nikki. Nikki would probably have a bottle

of whiskey and we're screwed."

The shared friendship and keeping themselves entertained is a major Darlin priority, and if a critically acclaimed album comes out amidst the shenanigans, great. Incidentally, that happened.

Having nothing to sell when pressed for tangible recordings, the Darlins released a three-song EP, composed of the songs "Wild One," "Snaggle Tooth Mama" and "The Whole Damn Thing," under their own label Oh Wow Dang Records.

Recording the EP in New York was "like magic" Kelley says, and was the band's first time working with producer Jeff Curtin.



“To get labeled by your gender to describe your music is just ridiculous.”

KELLY DARLIN
BASSIST FOR THOSE DARLINS



Photo courtesy of Those Darlins
Those Darlins recently performed at Nashville's Mercy Lounge for the Americana Music Festival.

Darlins
FROM PAGE 5

The girls played old records for Curtin so he could grasp the sounds they were looking for, and they hit it off.

"He had a genuine interest," Kelley says. "He listened to our ideas and helped us realize those ideas, unlike people who have an agenda or want it to sound a certain way without really valuing how you want it to sound."

Those three songs were the basis of what became the full-length album, also produced by Curtin.

"It was like, holy shit, we've been a band for two-and-a-half years and finally we created this thing together. It's got our name on it. It's ours and no one can ever take that experience away," Kelley says.

The self-titled debut establishes Those Darlins as pioneers wandering a landscape

of folk romanticism and raw punk simplicity. Whether it is Nikki's "Glass to You" about losing a love or "Snaggletooth Mama" about living in the country, the songs are a snapshot of Those Darlins' lives, as Kelley says.

Though it's easy to hear the southern twang at the root of Those Darlins' music and sum it up as country, the girls are only re-embracing that part of their upbringing, rather than paying full tribute to the genre.

But still Those Darlins harbor deep admiration for early country musicians, particularly because they, unlike commercial country artists today, held values similar to artists of another genre dear to the Darlins.

"They were punk," Kelley says of early country and folk artists. "They weren't afraid to do it."

"There's more in common between early country



Photo courtesy of Those Darlins
Those Darlins, pictured from left to right, Kelly Darlin, bassist; Jessi Darlin, guitarist; and Nikki Darlin, baritone ukulele. The Darlins have been performing live since 2006.

and punk than you'd think. They're both the people's music and represent everyday life. One's more amped up and reflecting a sense of decay and urbanism, but there's fundamental similarities."

New York has especially proven receptive of what the Darlins do and brings out the punk sides of their sound.

"The crowds there are crazy," Kelley says. "In New York, whatever show people go to, there are a lot of people into that. They totally get it. They go all out."

"They realize that punk music democratized the stage and the audience, and there's no difference in importance," she says. "We're kind of directing it by performing music, but really the

event is all of them - they're the majority, so they determine how well it goes."

Those Darlins place a high value on their audiences. The girls would sooner be found hanging out, having drinks in a grungy bar after a set than playing a theater, and they would prefer to see a crowd dancing in approval over subdued applause.

"We want people to feel like they're a part of the club, too, like they're darling," Kelley says.

Sept. 16 brought Those Darlins to Nashville's Mercy Lounge for the Americana Music Festival once again, though the girls don't feel quite at home within the Americana scene, and Kelley seems indifferent

toward the term in general.

"I get what they're trying to describe," she says. "They're trying to come up with a word that means not pop-country but still kind of country. Americana just means 'influenced by American music,' but then it should just be called the Rock 'n' Roll Festival."

Imagine the prim and proper southern belle that plays music like mama taught her, then adding her own lyrics after getting trashed on a couple bottles of Jack Daniels'. Like the track "Wild One," Those Darlins seem to love putting some wild, raw and empowering messages within the frame of an old-fashioned verse-refrain country song. Think country-rose romanticism with a sense of humor.

9 Movie
FROM PAGE 5

The evil machine is quickly defeated by another doll named 7 who saw the other dolls in trouble and came to their aid. Little do they know, the Beast was the least of their concerns.

As the dolls celebrated their victory, one of them accidentally activates a horrible invention that was the catalyst for mankind's demise known as the Machine. The dolls retreat after being attacked by their mechanized foe and tried to find shelter once more. After doing some research on the machine, the dolls return to 1 to inform him about the Machine's activation.

Angry emotions run wild with the crew as they return to the sanctuary, but the outburst is cut short as they are attacked by a minion of the Machine. After a terrifying scare, the dolls decide to journey into the emptiness and find a way to destroy the Machine.

Over all, "9" was an entertaining movie with impressive cinematics that stayed true to Tim Burton's style of horror. "9" also added another element of animation because everything looks so different when the protagonist is less than a foot tall.

The only problem is that the movie is barely longer than an hour and the plot is not as sound as it could have been. 9 immediately woke up after the apocalypse with little over three scenes explaining what happened.

The general idea of why mankind perished is presented, but it left much to be desired. Still, this movie is perfect if you liked "The Nightmare Before Christmas." "9" receives 4-out-of-5 dolls.



SYMBOL
FROM PAGE 5

Falling short of providing a neatly wrapped conclusion, Brown wanders through a cornucopia of concepts, which could leave readers with more questions than answers.

Despite the awkward parts of its composition, "The Lost Symbol" is still a gripping read. Due to the mystique of Freemasonry, popular mythology is rife with stories of arcane rituals and hidden knowledge. The secretive nature of high-ranking Masons and swirling rumors make "The Lost Symbol" a seductively packaged thriller, in the spirit of other mysteries such as "National Treasure."

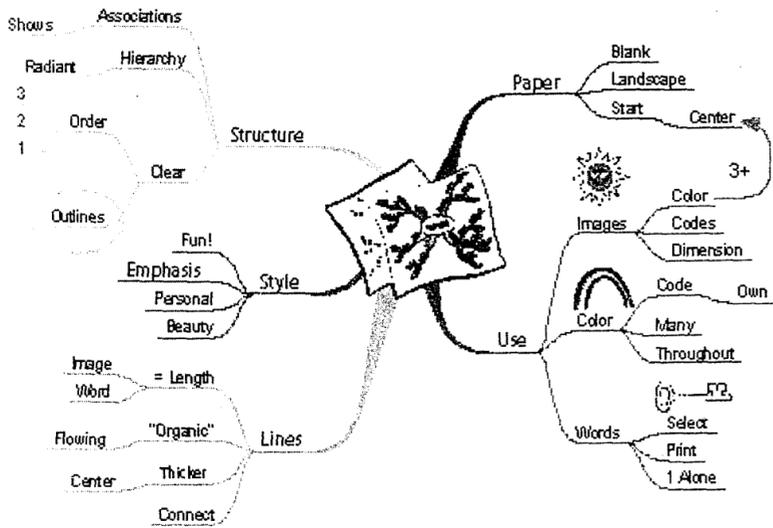
The implications of secret connections between the Founding Fathers, the genesis of Washington and the power brokers of the U.S. government are titillating and largely untested in popular fiction. The who and what of the mystery - the deeper implications - will keep the reader guessing nonstop until the book is done. After all, the book has speed, intricacy and cleverly crafted thrills, and that's why we love Brown.

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SPORTS

MT prepares for rematch with Terps

By CHRIS WELCH
Sports Editor

The Blue Raiders bested the Terrapins 24-14 last season in a home match, but Maryland could be out to get revenge when it hosts the matchup this Saturday.

The Blue Raiders are heading north for their next contest against the Maryland Terrapins, and are preparing to face a tough non-conference foe. They have an excellent offensive leader in the quarterback, a defense-breaking tailback and several dynamic receivers. Sound familiar?

It should. Maryland looks to match up with MT by using the Blue Raiders' own weapons against them. To beat the Terps, MT will have to isolate these traits and then exploit them.

MT travels to Maryland following a huge win over in-state rival Memphis. At the Blue Raider's Blackout game, senior QB Dwight Dasher ran the offense to an early lead from which the Tigers would never recover. Two touchdown receptions and a series of runs into the end zone helped the Blue Raiders to a 31-14 victory.

Maryland comes to this game after an overtime thriller against James Madison University last Saturday. A 26-yard field goal was all that kept the Terps from falling to an often underrated James Madison team.

"James Madison does not

have a good football name, but it is a good football team," MT head coach Rick Stockstill said. "They won the 1-AA National Championships a few years ago and they are always in the 1-AA playoffs."

After Maryland's close call with James Madison, MT is not taking any chances. Rigorous practices and endless drills have characterized the Blue Raiders' practices this week.

"We have got our hands full and need a great week of preparation and practice," Stockstill said.

With recent injuries plaguing second-string QB Brent Burnette and all-star senior starting running back Phillip Tanner, the offense may have to rework itself.

Tanner, who suffered a knee injury in last week's matchup against Memphis, will be out "for a while," according to team trainers. He is certainly out of commission for the Maryland game.

However, MT is prepared to take on the Terps without Tanner. Other players, such as quarterback Dwight Dasher and wide receivers Patrick Honeycutt and Desmond Gee are expected to take the reigns.

"I think we have great leadership on our team," Stockstill said. "We have got some guys on offense besides Dwight [Dasher] and Phillip [Tanner]."

"Dwight does not have to



Photo by Brennan Sparta, contributing photographer

The Blue Raiders run onto the field at the beginning of the Memphis game. The Blue Raiders would take an early lead to win the game 31-14.

do any more because Phillip is out. He just has to drive the bus and manage us where we need to go and not do too much because Phillip is out."

Dasher will have no shortage of willing receivers after Tanner's loss. In the game

against Memphis, the senior QB threw to nine different receivers on the night, including five that had multiple catches.

The big concern for the Blue Raiders might be the Maryland's team of lineback-

ers. Alex Wujciak, a second-team All-ACC selection last season, leads his team with 17 tackles. His teammate, LB Adrian Moten, has 15, including a career-high 13 tackles against James Madison.

The Maryland secondary is

also a veteran squad, returning four defensive backs, all of who were playmakers last season. Senior DB Jamari McCollough led the team with four picks last season.

PREVIEW, PAGE 8

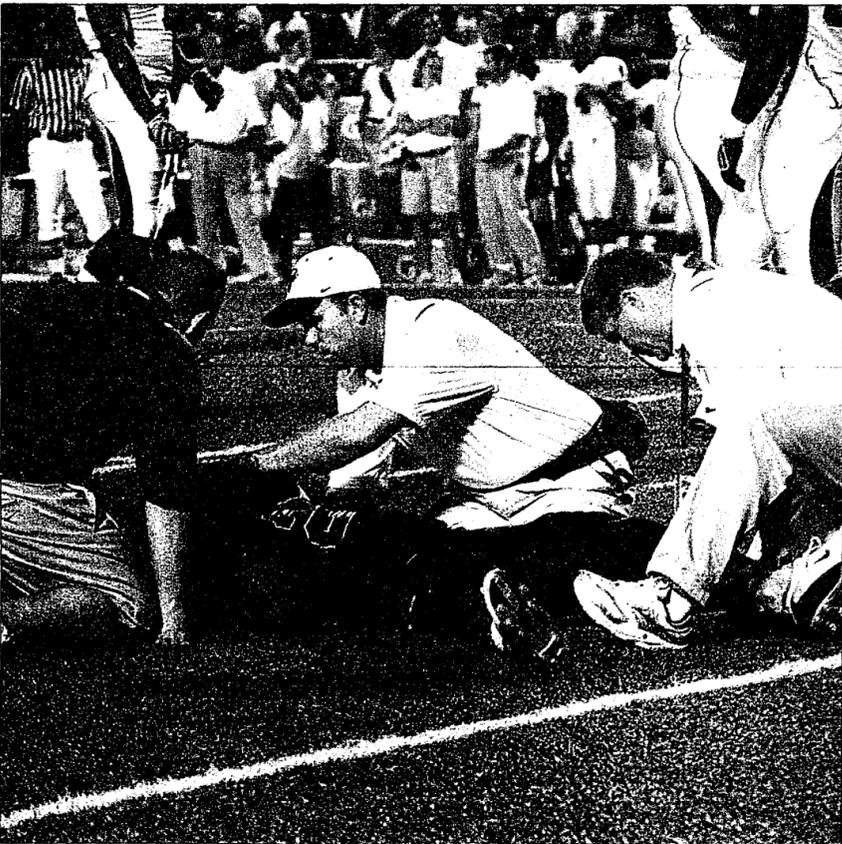


Photo by Jay Bailey, photography editor

Senior RB Phillip Tanner gets treated at the Memphis game last Saturday. He suffered a knee injury.

Knee injury could cost Tanner season

By STEPHEN CURLEY
Staff Writer

The Blue Raiders could be without senior running back Phillip Tanner "for a while," according to the team.

Tanner injured his knee early in the third quarter during Saturday's Blackout game win against Memphis, and spent the rest of the game on the sidelines with a brace and walking on crutches.

Head Coach Rick Stockstill said Monday that the injury could sideline Tanner for a few weeks, and ruled out any possibility of playing Saturday at the University of Maryland.

"It definitely hurts us losing Phillip," Stockstill said Tuesday. "He was such a vital part of the offense as a runner, a pass protector, and another receiver coming out of the backfield to catch the ball."

The loss deprives the Blue Raiders of arguably their biggest offensive threat, who scored 15 touchdowns in 2008 and had scored again earlier in the game. Redshirt sophomore D.D. Kyles, will likely become the team's primary rusher. He carried the ball five times during Saturday's game for 32 yards.

Kyles could also split time with freshman Benjamin Cunningham and redshirt sophomore Marquise Branton.

"Losing him will hurt us," Stockstill said, "but it gives D.D., Benny and Marquise a good opportunity to be part of our offense."

The team could also look to quarterback Dwight Dasher for an even further increased role after his performance against Memphis, but Stockstill denied any fur-

ther leaning on his skills to carry them.

"We have got some guys on offense besides Dwight and Phillip," Stockstill said. Patrick Honeycutt has done a good job, Gene Delle Donne has done a good job, Desmond [Gee] has done a good job. Dwight does not have to do anymore because Phillip is out. He just has to drive the bus and manage us where we need to go and not do too much because Phillip is out."

Regardless of what the Blue Raiders plan to do to compensate the loss, it couldn't come at a worse time with games at Troy University and home against Mississippi State University coming up after Maryland.

Tanner had also missed three games in 2007 due to a knee injury.

Dasher earns Sun Belt Player of the Week

All-star performance against Memphis showcases MT quarterback, garners attention of Sun Belt

By CHRIS WELCH
Sports Editor

Members of the media named MT junior quarterback Dwight Dasher as the Sun Belt Conference Offensive Player of the Week on Monday.

Dasher led the MT offense to a huge win against in-state foe Memphis at Saturday's attendance record-breaking Blackout game. The QB was responsible for 326 of the team's 436 yards

of total offense.

Dasher, a native of Folkston, Ga., threw for 231 yards on 18 of 26 passes, including a long pass of 40 yards. This was enough for his second consecutive 200-plus yard game, the fourth in his career as a Blue Raider. Included were Dasher's two touchdown passes to sophomore WR Shane Blissard and senior wideout Patrick Honeycutt.

Throughout the game

Dasher found nine different receivers, including five with multiple catches.

"[Dasher] has been very consistent throwing," head coach Rick Stock-

"[Dasher] has been very consistent throwing. He's just been at a higher percentage rate."

RICK STOCKSTILL
HEAD COACH, MIDDLE TENNESSEE FOOTBALL

still said. "He's just been at a higher percentage rate."

Dasher was also the team's leading rusher against Memphis, accounting for 89 yards on the ground across 17

carries. This includes his game-best 42-yard scramble on the opening play of the second quarter drive that put the Blue Raiders up 17-7.

The QB outran the Tigers' offense by himself, besting them by 101 yards.

Through the first two games, Dasher has accounted for 585 of the Blue Raiders' 735 total yards, an 80.0 percentage. Two games into the season, Dasher leads the Sun Belt in total offense with an

average of 292.5 yards per game. This ranks Dasher at number 20 in the nation for offensive production.

Dasher was also awarded an honorable mention Helmet Sticker honor from ESPN.com.

Dasher is the 26th Player of the Week winner under Coach Stockstill and the 54th since the Sun Belt started in 2001.

Lady Raiders earn preseason accolades

STAFF REPORT

The Lady Raiders have already started garnering attention, even before their first game.

The MT women's basketball team earned two preseason Top 25 bids by Athlon Sports and Lindy's in their respective 2009-10 College Basketball Preview magazines, now available in bookstores and on newsstands.

Athlon Sports ranked the team at No. 20 and cited "The Blue Raiders have been on the cusp of national success, and it could come this year."

The magazine also included a photo of senior forward Alysha Clark. The photo was taken during the Lady Raiders' NCAA Tournament game at Michigan State on March 22.

Clark was also named to

Athlon Sports' 2009-10 Preseason All-America Second team. The senior forward is joined by Rachele Fitz (Marist), Courtney Vandersloot (Gonzaga), Danielle McCray (Kansas) and Jantel Lavender (Ohio State).

Lindy's ranked the Lady Raiders at No. 21. The magazine added, "Clark is one of the best players you've never heard of."

Clark was also named to Lindy's 2009-10 Preseason All-America Second Team, along with McCray, Lavender, Samantha Prahalis (Ohio State) and Kayla Pedersen (Stanford).

The Top 25 rankings from the Associated Press and ESPN/USA Today will be released closer to the start of the season, in November.



File photo
The Lady Raiders welcome their teammates onto the court. The team is ranked No. 21 in Lindy's and No. 20 in Athlon Sports magazine.

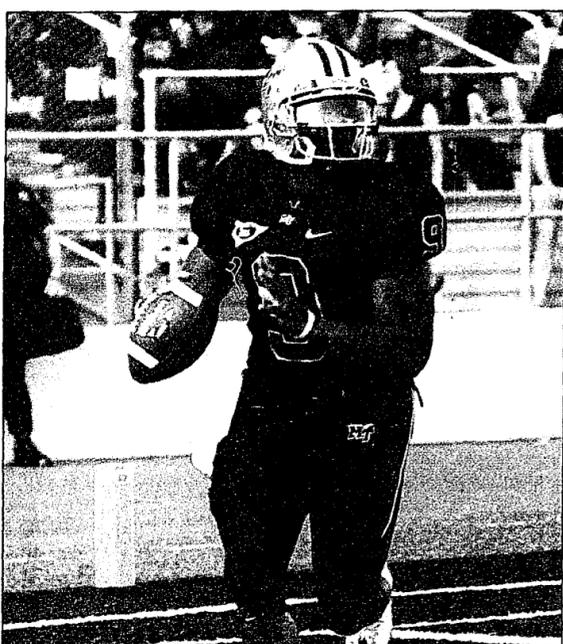


Photo by Brennan Sparta, contributing photographer
Dwight Dasher looks for a pass at the Blackout game last Saturday.

PREVIEW FROM PAGE 7

Also, DB Terrell Skinner is Maryland's second-leading tackler, registering 63 stops last season.

The only loss in the Terps' secondary is senior cornerback Nolan Carroll, whose collegiate career came to an end during the James Madison game last Saturday. Carroll broke his right tibia during the fourth quarter of the game and will remain out for the season.

MT might also need to be aware of the game clock. Maryland is 4-3 in overtime games, and is undefeated in overtime games at home.

But Coach Stockstill is confident that past games will not cause problems in this rematch.

"Their fans probably want revenge, but it is a completely

different team," Stockstill said. "As a player or coach, you do not get caught up in the revenge or payback. That is more in the fan base."

All in all, the MT football squad seems excited to play Maryland again. Even after last year's victory, the perception of playing the out-of-conference Terps has not changed.

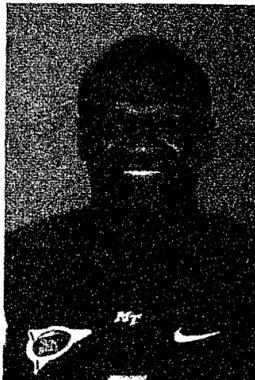
"This is another great opportunity for us to go on the road and play an ACC team," Stockstill said. "We have not had success on the road against these teams but his is a great opportunity for us and I know our guys are excited about competing."

"We just want to play better against Maryland than we did against Memphis."

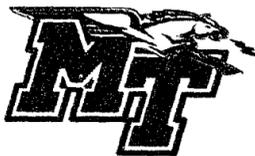
The Blue Raiders will take on the Terps at College Park, Md. Kickoff is scheduled for 2:30. For game coverage, follow twitter.com/SLSportsOnline.

Player of The Week

Dwight Dasher



- Accounted for 320 yards against Memphis.
- Honorable Mention from ESPN.com.
- Ranks 20th Nationally in offense.



Class: Junior
Position: Quarterback
Hometown: Folkston, GA

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