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Hundreds of students attend Homecoming Dinner and Dance

KAT RIDDLER
COPY EDITOR

The winter University of Missouri—St. Louis Homecoming Dinner and Dance was held on February 8 from 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Union Station Hotel in Downtown St. Louis. The event ballroom was filled with students, faculty, and alumni enjoying a catered three course meal, photo booth, and dance floor. A cocktail reception was held in the lobby of Union Station while waiting for the ballroom to be ready to seat.

UMSL's first Homecoming dance was held on February 1, 1963 and was accompanied by a basketball game. In 1974, the traditional event changed from February to October and accompanied a soccer game. This year marks the first year that Homecoming has been held in February since 1974. This was also the first year that the Homecoming committee asked for donations from departments and sponsors. The committee raised \$10,000 from its 19 sponsors and created a beautiful setting for this year's dance while helping to keep the cost reasonable for participants.

The room was decorated in UMSL red and gold to match this year's theme of "Forever Red and Gold." Colored balloon columns were placed along the walls and a coinciding balloon arch was placed on stage. Students checked in at the front table to receive dinner tickets and find their seats on the chart of tables. Students could not enter until close to 7 p.m., but were greeted with salads, desert, and water at their seats to get started right away. Once the whole table was done with their salad course, the plates were promptly taken away by the friendly staff and the attendees were brought whichever hot meal



1) Students turned up in droves for the event 2) Homecoming King and Queen Adam Delgado and Marissa Steimel 3) Table settings for group dinner

that they preferred: chicken, beef, or vegan. Once finished with the delicious dinner course, guests were able to enjoy one of two deserts placed at their table: turtle cheesecake or chocolate fudge and nut cake.

"The best part of homecoming was the food, especially the cake," said Haley Cole, senior, psychology.

Once most of the room were finished with their meals, the evening's ceremony began. The Homecoming Spirit Award for a student organization was given to Delta Zeta. Of the 17 participating offices and campus departments,

the Information Technology Services Office won the award for decorations in their office. The big event of the Homecoming program was the coronation of the Homecoming King and Queen. Homecoming King went to Adam Delgado, junior, liberal studies, and Homecoming Queen went to Marissa Steimel, senior, communications. "I knew there was some tough competition, so I was surprised when I won," Steimel said.

These two ran together as candidates with the slogan "Short for the Court" and used social media to garner votes.

"We spent the entire week using #ShortForTheCourt all over social media and it caught a lot of people's attention," Steimel said. "Several people told me they voted for us immediately after seeing our slogan because it made them laugh."

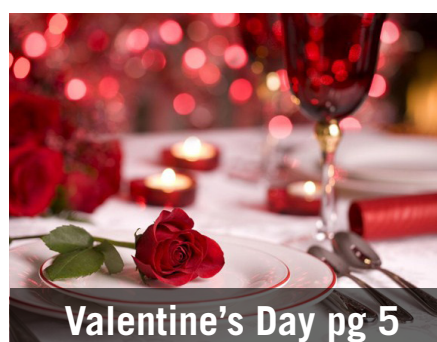
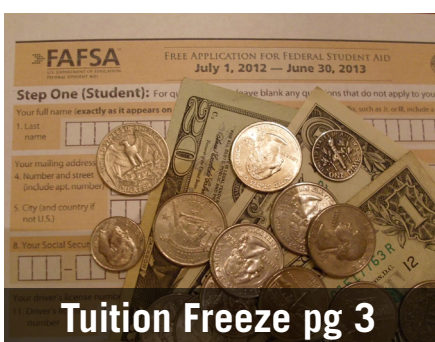
After the ceremony and King and Queen dance, there was an open dance and an opportunity for attendees to grab pictures with fun props at a photo booth. People danced to a variety of music and were even entertained by an impromptu dance-off competition. The DJ asked the audience to form a circle and have performers dance to a classic

Michael Jackson song.

"I definitely cannot choose a favorite moment, there were just too many," Steimel said.

Asked how Homecoming could be improved, Cole said, "It could be better if there was a competition between the departments, like a faculty-student dance off."

Changing the date back to February from October did not seem to hinder the event at all. The Homecoming Dinner and Dance were a big hit and participants were seen with smiles throughout the night.



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- TV review: “Rake”
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- Comics
- Weekly polls

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor should be brief, and those not exceeding 250 words will be given preference. We edit letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent, or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number. Students must include their student ID numbers. Faculty and staff must include their title(s) and department(s). The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to respond to letters. The Current reserves the right to deny letters.

CORRECTIONS

In the February 3, 2014 issue of The Current (Vol. 47: Issue 1428) , a letter to the editor regarding the impending closure of the Ward E. Barnes Library was incorrectly credited to Jason Fisher. The letter's author is Jason Fletcher.

The Current values feedback from the campus community. Let us know of any corrections at thecurrent@umsl.edu.

NOW HIRING!

The Current is now seeking students to fill a number of positions. These positions are available on a volunteer basis or for internship credit. Applications are available on our website at thecurrent-online.com. Please submit completed applications to 388 Millennium Student Center or thecurrentjobs@umsl.edu to be considered for open positions. For more information, contact us at thecurrentjobs@umsl.edu.

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THE UNDERCURRENT

By Siyun Zhang

OF THE COURSES YOU'RE TAKING THIS SEMESTER, WHICH IS YOUR FAVORITE?



JACALYN EBERLE
Biology, Sophomore

“I think my favorite course this semester is going to be my Drumming Cultures of the World class, taught by Professor Matthew Henry. This semester I decided to take a few groovy, really-learn-something-different classes. My major is Biology. The science classes are awesome, but it's lovely to step into a class like this one twice a week.”



ALAA SAFFAF
Pre-Medical-Biology,
Junior

“Arabic, because I’m Arab and I’m learning the language of my people.”



NOREEN HEYARI
Biology, Freshman

“My favorite course is Philosophy because we are learning how to argue, which can become useful in real life. I’m also learning how to think like a philosopher.”

MON 18^{HI}
1^{LOW}

TUE 21^{HI}
12^{LOW}

WED 36^{HI}
19^{LOW}

THU 50^{HI}
27^{LOW}

FRI 36^{HI}
27^{LOW}

SAT 45^{HI}
33^{LOW}

SUN 45^{HI}
31^{LOW}

Board of Curators vote to freeze tuition rates

HEATHER WELBORN
FEATURES EDITOR

Tuition will not increase for resident undergraduate students at any of the four University of Missouri campuses for the 2014-15 school year. Members on the Board of Curators came to a unanimous vote on the tuition freeze at their Columbia meeting late last month.

University President Tim Wolfe recommended the freeze to voters at the curator meeting. His advice came in response to plans recently announced by Governor Jay Nixon in his State of the State address in January. In his speech, Nixon vowed to increase spending on higher education by \$100 million. He paired this financial promise with an appeal to universities to freeze tuition rates.

Of the proposed \$100 million in additional university funding, \$22 million – roughly a fifth of the \$100 million pledged by Nixon – will be set aside for STEM students. STEM refers to students pursuing a degree in science, technology, engineering and math.

“Under my budget,” Gov

Nixon said in his address, “Missouri undergraduates at our public universities should not have to pay a penny more for tuition next year. Not a penny.” He went on to highlight the reality of financial constraints for many college students struggling to make their tuition payments. “No student should have to settle for less education just because their parents make less money.”

In a meeting last November, the curators had considered a state-wide 1.5 percent tuition increase. Tom Richards, the UM system interim vice president for finance, attended the curator meeting last month. Richards said the raise in fees would have yielded a \$9.7 million increase in revenue to the university system. The plan to increase tuition was replaced by the freeze at Gov. Nixon’s request.

Pending the approval of the governor’s funding proposal by the Missouri General Assembly, Richards said the UM system could see an additional \$20.7 million, a net increase of \$11 million. This extra money would

be available to any educational program at the university.

The UM system released a statement saying tuition and fees have increased annually by 2.2 percent for the last five years. This is considerably lower than the 6 percent increase seen by equivalent institutions in neighboring states. The statement went on to say that the direct cost of attending college in Missouri has seen the lowest increase in five years of any state in the nation.

Don Downing, chairman of the board of curators, released a statement on behalf of the curators, saying “We are proud that we are able to make our mark with tuition rates below the national average compared to similar institutions.” Downing asserted that Missouri universities “set the pace nationally in keeping education affordable for our students.”

President Wolfe called the tuition freeze a way to “help ensure that an education from the four campuses of the University of Missouri System remains affordable to all students that



desire one.”

Wolfe is currently traveling across the state to promote the importance of obtaining higher education, specifically at the University of Missouri campuses. In an interview, Wolfe expressed confidence in Gov. Nixon’s plan making it through the state general assembly.

“At this particular point in time, I believe that what will be directed our way as proposed by the governor is the resources that

we need to cover our costs and to continue to provide the quality education experience that we need to,” Wolfe said.

Wolfe advocates for college attendance in his state-wide speeches to Missouri students.

“There is no greater commitment you can make in yourself than higher education,” Wolfe said. “Do not let finances or the sticker prices scare you away from college.”

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The Lipper award is given to the group with the lowest average decile ranking of three years’ Consistent Return for eligible funds over the three-year period ended 11/30/12. TIAA-CREF was ranked against 36 fund companies with at least five equity, five bond, or three mixed-asset portfolios.

TIAA-CREF mutual funds have achieved high rankings over various asset classes and market cycles. The 2012 Lipper/Barron’s overall ranking was determined by weighting five fund categories in proportion to their overall importance within Lipper’s fund universe. TIAA-CREF’s overall ranking was 10th out of 62 mutual fund families for one-year performance, and 29th out of 53 mutual fund families for five-year performance. TIAA-CREF did not qualify for the 10-year ranking. Past performance does not guarantee future results.

Consider investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses carefully before investing. Go to www.tiaa-cref.org for product and fund prospectuses that contain this and other information. Read carefully before investing.

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Gender Studies announces new mentoring program for students and local professionals

KARLYNE KILLEBREW
STAFF WRITER

The Gender Studies Program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis kicked off its Mentoring Program on January 30. The Fireside Lounge was filled with St. Louis professionals and their ambitious prospective mentees waiting to pair up and chat over sweet treats and hot cocoa.

The event itself was meant to acquaint the program participants with one another. Each of the applicants had been reviewed and paired up with someone that the Gender Studies Program hoped would be a useful, relatable mentor. This tete-à-tete was a chance to test the waters.

From the looks of things, the pairings were a success. Amanda Muller, a senior political science major and law school candidate, was paired with attorney Nancy Hawes, a partner with Armstrong Teasdale, in what she called a “very compatible” match.

Because they were both newcomers to the mentor/mentee relationship experience, they had to figure out how to approach their individual duties for the partnership. Besides providing networking opportunities, Hawes plans to function as “a sounding board... [with] Amanda coming into my place of work [and] seeing what

that looks like because that’s a career path she is interested in. She gave me a resume; I would like to provide comments...”

The Gender Studies Program would like the mentor/mentee relationship to provide both experience and growth.

“What started out [was that] we wanted to help our female students get a leg up in their careers. We know that we have a lot of transfer students and a lot of first generation college students, and we want to help our students succeed. Now that we have expanded to include the male students, it’s for the same

reason,” Sally Ebest, director of the Gender Studies Program, said.

Part of the continued success of the program lies in the detailed expectations of each party to facilitate a positive experience and relationship. Mentees are expected to put forth the effort of expressing what their needs are as well as being respectful of the time and energy being given to them. Mentors are expected to be an advisor, coach, counselor, guru, teacher, trainer, supervisor, friend and guide.

Another responsibility that the program coordinators take

very seriously is providing the proper atmosphere to foster a friendship. Events like this meet-and-greet are essential to that process.

For a large number of the female participants present, their introduction to this opportunity came through the Gender Studies Program’s LEAD program. However, it is open to any students who are interested and willing to apply. For further information and application submission, contact Sally Ebest at sebest@umsl.com or return the completed application at 494 Lucas Hall.

-NEWS@NOON-

Sexual Assault in the Military

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2014 | **Time:** 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.

Location: Century Room C, third floor of MSC

Presenters: Jim Craig, Associate Teaching Professor and Chair of the Department of Military and Veterans Studies, with Pamela Dorsey, Sexual Assault Prevention Program Director at Scott Air Force Base

Lunch: Pizza for the first 25 attendees

“News at Noon” is a monthly forum for faculty and student discussion about current events, co-sponsored by The Current and The New York Times, with support from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Student Life at UMSL.

The Current
UMSL'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWS

TOUHILL REVIEW

SO Percussion deliver thunderous performance at Lee Theater

CATE MARQUIS
A&E EDITOR

Innovative, playful, and talented are three words to describe the musical group SO Percussion. Here’s another way to describe them: Four talented guys and a whole bunch of things to bang on. These included drum kits but also bells, a double neck guitar/dulcimer, blocks of wood, tea cups and even flower pots. Yes, flower pots. With music from Wilco’s Glenn Kotche to award-winning contemporary classics composer David Lang, SO Percussion delivered an evening of energetic, innovative musical magic that brought the audience to their feet at the end of their concert on February 6, at the Blanche M. Touhill’s Lee Theater.

SO Percussion gives the impression of a cool group of guys who can make music out of anything. The acclaimed new music/classical contemporary band, who mixes classical music training and training with original, entertaining performance, was formed at the Yale School of Music over ten years ago. Now band members Eric Beach, Josh Quillen, Adam Sliwinski, and Jason Treuting creatively push the boundaries of musical genres with cutting-edge compositions,

with what one reviewer called an “exhilarating blend of precision and anarchy.”

The Lee stage was filled with a dazzling array of percussion instruments, with four drum-kits and a table full of odd objects behind. Dressed casually in black and gray, the four percussionists walked on stage without introduction, sat down at the four drum-kits and launched in unison into their first piece, selections from “Drumkit Quartets” by Wilco’s Glenn Kotche. Raucous rock drumming filled the hall for several minutes then abruptly stopped. The piece next transitioned into a stop-and-start dissonant style, then eased into modern jazz, before moving on the tribal drums. The musicians then switched gears with small bells and tuned cowbells, creating a melodic effect that suggested Tibetan gongs and rain and wind chimes. Returning to the drums, the piece finished up with what seemed a bit like Japanese traditional drumming, until the electronic distortion blended in. It was a truly impressive and invigorating start for the show.

After the first piece, Jason Treuting greeted the audience and



engaged them in friendly chat. However, once the group set out to make music, they were all business, moving in unison with machine-like precision. The next piece, “Chorus Music,” was composed by Treuting, who told the audience that he was inspired by the idea of the Greek chorus. Using only snare drums, the band first made a big show of putting in earplugs, prompting laughs from the crowd. One musician produced a single beat, then another musician, in slow progression, before picking up the pace and layering multiple beats. Like the first piece, it created a sense of both randomness and strict structure. The musicians beat on snare drumheads and the metal rims and then flipped the drums on their sides, before ending the piece

with foot-tapping, as if marching off stage.

For the next piece, excerpts from “Music for Wood and Strings,” SO played a hand-made instrument that was a kind of cross between a double-necked guitar and a dulcimer. Composer Bryce Dessner, both a classical guitarist and a guitarist with rock band The Nationals, worked with Blue Man Group instrument builder Aron Sanchez to create these unique instruments. The piece was more melodic but still percussive at heart, with repeating rhythms, bold or soft, discordant or melodic, on both strings and wood.

After intermission, SO returned with the longest work of the evening: “The SO-Called Laws of Nature,” by Pulitzer Prize-winning

composer David Lang. The three-part piece is a series of repeating cycles played on a variety of musical and non-musical instruments. The stage had been reset with new instruments lined up on risers. SO started at the front on xylophone-like instruments made of wood blocks, which produced a deep, heavy and organic sound. Next, they moved back to drum kits and tubular bells, which produced a more conventionally musical sound but also suggested the industrial. The last part was played on flower pots, tea cups and other small objects. The sounds from the ceramics were softer, high-pitched and often bell-like but also interspersed with leaden beats on non-resonant objects, referring back to the wood blocks.

VALENTINE’S DAY

Immerse yourself in chocolate, music, and dance

DANYEL POINDEXTER
STAFF WRITER

February 14 is the day lovers get together to enjoy one another’s company through chocolate, fine dining, movies, and even romantic performances. So, be on the lookout for these opportunities to spend time with your beloved.

“LOVE IS IN THE AIR,”
A DINNER AND DANCE
PERFORMANCE AT THE
TOUHILL

The heart-warming “Love is in the Air,” presented by the Saint Louis Ballet, is a dance performance filled with the immortal music of Frank Sinatra and Claude Bolling, danced by multiple ballet artists of Saint Louis and choreographed by well-known choreographer Twyla Tharp. Saint Louis Ballet’s Gen Horiuchi directs this captivating ballet performance at the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center on February 14 and 15 at 8:00p.m. If you want to treat that special someone to something nice even before the performance in the Lee Theater, make reservations on February 14 for the 6:30

p.m. romantic dinner. For only \$60, a price which includes the performance ticket, you and your sweetie will be winded and dined with a special menu made just for the night and treated to romantic music. You’ll even have the option of enjoying a sweet treat during intermission. With ticket prices ranging from \$28, \$35, and \$45 at the Touhill Theater, you won’t be able to get enough.

BURNIN’ LOVE FESTIVAL

“Burnin’ Love” is a festival held on Art Hill in Forest Park on February 14 from 4:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. The festival is presented by Ameren on Valentine’s Day to celebrate St. Louis’s 250th birthday. Attend and enjoy food, fireworks and music. The many events range from the screening of a video titled “Here is St. Louis” to an event called “The Lovin’ Moment,” where couples can check out the event’s “couples registration form” to be included in re-engagement or engagement ceremonies.

ERIN BODE CONCERT AT
JAZZ AT THE BISTRO

Some people are just epic music lovers who want to spend Valentine’s Day with that special someone, listening to something classical or, for this event, something jazzy. At 7:30 p.m. on February 14, Erin Bode will be performing extraordinary music at Jazz at the Bistro. Regular admission is \$25 but students need only pay \$15. Jazz at the Bistro is located at Washington Avenue, MO, 63103.

“ENDLESS LOVE”

If you are a traditional romantic then you want to take your date out to catch a romantic movie. Coming out on Valentine’s Day, “Endless Love” is a drama/romance about two young lovers who try to stay together despite their reckless parents. In this heart-wrenching tale, Alex Pettyfer stars as a boy with a troubled past who falls in love instantly with a girl, played by Gabriella Wilde, who’s constantly protected by her father and barely



allowed to see the world. See how it ends or begins for this struggling couple who fight for one another.

“ABOUT LAST NIGHT”

Looking for something funny for you and your special someone to watch on Valentines’ Day? Starring actor/comedian Kevin Hart, actor Michael Ealy, and actresses Paula Patton, Regina Hall, and Joy Bryant, “About Last Night” is a romantic comedy about struggling friendships and looking for love.

“WINTER’S TALE”

Another romantic movie opening in time for Valentine’s Day is “Winter’s Tale,” starring Colin Farrell in a fantasy about a love that survives across time.

“LABOR DAY”

The title does may not sound like it, but this suspenseful drama is also a deeply romantic story of finding unexpected love, starring Josh Brolin and Kate Winslet, based on the best-seller by Joyce Maynard.

Sports Hall of Fame inducts six athletes, two teams

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

The evening could have passed for a presidential banquet. On February 7, the Archview Ballroom on the second floor of the St. Louis Hilton at the Ballpark did not have an empty seat. Everyone in attendance was dressed immaculately, sitting and chatting at tables with crisp white linens underneath crystal tear-dropped chandeliers. The first order of business was to eat. Grilled filet mignon, potato horseradish crusted salmon, or dauphinoise potatoes, there was not a bad option on the menu. However, the food, drink, and hospitality was not the main order of business; everyone in the ballroom had gathered to celebrate the University of Missouri-St. Louis Sports Hall of Fame and its new class of inductees in a beautiful way.

After dinner, the presentation of the 2014 induction began. The ceremony was led by the Broadcast Voice of UMSL Athletics, Harry Schroeder, and was straightforward and consistent in its progression; Mr. Schroeder introduced each of the inductees, and a short video with coaches and significant influences was shown before the inductees approached the podium. What was not as straightforward about the ceremony was the emotion, uniqueness, humility, and joy each individual claiming a spot in the UMSL Hall of Fame expressed.

The first six inductees called upon were Triton alumni with exceptional individual careers. Greg Bierling, Baseball (2000-03),

and Steve Buckley, Men's Soccer (1971-72), led the way. Bierling was a standout pitcher who was a First Team All-GLVC and All-Region selection his senior year. Buckley's accolades include the honors of being a two-time soccer All-American.

Dan Chinnici, Baseball (1993-97), and Kevin Missey, Men's Soccer (1970, 1973-74) were next to the podium. Chinnici led the Rivermen baseball team to two World Series appearances and earned First Team All-GLVC and First Team All-Region honors as a senior. Missey is the only three-time All-American in men's soccer program history and to this day ranks ninth in all time in shots with 128.

Finishing up the individual inductions included Coach Beth Goetz, Women's Soccer (1998-2007), and the recipient of the Marty Hendin Distinguished Service award Frank Cusumano, Men's Basketball (1980-84). Goetz spent 11 seasons as head coach of the women's soccer program where she accumulated a total record of 120-90-9, and helped 26 players earn all-conference recognition during her tenure. Cusumano played 94 career basketball games for UMSL and is currently the sports anchor for KSDK News Channel 5 in St. Louis.

The last inductees into the UMSL Sports Hall of fame were not individuals but rather two significant groups, the 1977 Baseball Team and the 1981 and



2014 UMSL Sports Hall of Inductees are displayed in the Hilton at the Ballpark

1982 Women's Soccer Teams. The 1977 baseball team was coached by Jim Dix and appeared in the program's third world series, accumulating a 30-13 overall record. The 1981 and 1982 women's soccer teams were both led under the guidance of Coach Ken Hudson. In 1981, the women outscored their opponents 92 to 6 while accumulating a 16-2 record, producing five All-Region players and three All-Americans. In 1982, the women defeated the defending national champion North Carolina Tarheels and finished with a 16-2-1 record, all in their first season as an NCAA team.

The impressive facts and numbers of the newest members of the UMSL Hall of Fame present well on paper, but cannot adequately reflect the character and

quality of the individuals on display that Friday. The inductees chose to congratulate their teammates. They thanked the University of Missouri-St. Louis for giving them a chance when no one else would. Entire families were proudly introduced and acknowledged for making the award possible. Many of the inductees broke down into tears of joy and appreciation.

Dan Chinnici was one such individual that captured the exceptional group's character. He took the podium and began to tear up.

"I was a small guy, couldn't hit for power, not a lot to like, really," Chinnici said. "Coach offered me a scholarship worth \$125."

The audience laughed, and he described what he gained from his time at UMSL, having entered the

school with little confidence.

"Aside from fundamentals, you not only taught me how to win but how to be a winner," Chinnici said. "When I got there, I didn't think I could get a hit. When I left there, I didn't think anyone could get me out." As he concluded, he could not stop the tears. "For me, this award is more about what we did together and accomplished as a team."

Dan Chinnici dedicated his induction into the UMSL Hall of Fame to his son.

The induction ceremony was a perfect evening. Though unfortunately it is over, the inductees will forever be etched in UMSL athletic history, their names residing in the Mark Twain Center.

Men's basketball face losses, women extend streak

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

The University of Missouri-St. Louis men's and women's basketball teams played the St. Joseph's Pumas in the Mark Twain Center on February 6. Both UMSL Triton teams walked away with a victory.

The men's basketball team punished St. Joseph's, winning 106-70. The men played well as a team, shooting 64.2 percent (43-67) from the field and 41.2 percent (7-17) from 3-point range. Femi John led the Tritons with 16 points along with 3 assists, 1 block, and 2 steals. Tylor Wimbish and Denzel Reed contributed with 13 points a piece.

The UMSL women also had their way with the Pumas, winning 88-62. Through solid shooting 57.6 percent (34-59) from the field and 38.5 percent (5-13) from 3-point range, visiting St. Joseph's never had a chance. Devonna

Smith led the Tritons with 18 points through the 18 minute span she played. Also contributing for the Tritons was Tierra Snow, off the bench with 17 points, and Alexis Lawrence with 15 points.

Two days later on February 8, both the men's and women's basketball teams returned to the court to host the Indianapolis Greyhounds. The men had trouble finding their stride, while the women played brilliantly.

The Triton men fell to #8 Indianapolis 58-79 in GLVC play, breaking their three-game winning streak. Through a dismal 39% shooting performance from the field to turning the ball over 14 times, the Triton men's basketball team could never find a rhythm. Femi John recorded a double-double, scoring 18 points and grabbing 10 rebounds. Neil

Branham, Acreon Smith, and Tylor Wimbish also contributed with 10 points a piece.

The Triton women fared better and were able to defeat #19 Indianapolis 85-64 putting their current win streak at 5, and adding a conference win. The women played well, offensively shooting 55.8 percent (29-52) from the field, but the success of the game fell to rebounding and second chance points. The Tritons out-rebounded the Greyhounds 40-18. Hazaria Washington led the Triton attack with a double-double, 29 points and 13 rebounds. Devonna Smith and Tierra Snow also contributed with 13 points a piece.

After the past week, the Triton men's basketball record stands at 13-8 overall and 7-6 in the GLVC. They will need to pick themselves up after their loss to Indianapolis,



The Triton men's basketball team warms up prior to play in the Mark Twain Center.

especially facing their next three games on the road. The Triton women's basketball team stands at 16-5 overall and 9-4 in GLVC play. The women currently have accrued the highest number of wins since

the end of the 2006 season, and will look to extend their current five-game winning streak. Both teams will travel to Louisville, Kentucky to take on Bellarmine on February 9.

POINT

COUNTERPOINT

HOMECOMING 2014: WAS THE MOVE TO FEBRUARY A GOOD CHOICE?

POINT:

Changes in date are insignificant

The decision to hold Homecoming in February rather than October was a controversial one. However, any backlash is unfounded – change is a part of life, and at the end of the day, all that matters is the end result. The dates may have been changed from previous years, but all facets of a quality Homecoming celebration were present this year. Homecoming Week boasted a number of new and interesting events, giving students something fun to look forward to every day. There were plenty of opportunities for student organizations to get involved and for the student body to have fun and meet new people through physical activities like Sink My Battleship. The purpose of Homecoming is to bring students together and to offer alumni the chance to reconnect with their alma mater. That’s something the university accomplished in previous years, and continued to do so this year as well.

Holding Homecoming in February also sets up apart from

other universities, and proves that we, as a university, have a unique identity and aren’t afraid to think outside of the box and try new things. Naysayers are simply overreacting. Those opposed to the change are proving themselves to be entirely too sensitive when it comes to accepting what amounts to minor changes. Did the university still host sports games to center Homecoming events around? Yes. Was there a dinner and dance for students to attend? An election for Homecoming court? An opportunity to stop worrying about classes and grades and jobs and get dressed up to have a little fun? Definitely. Sure, the event could have been snowed out - and in October, there could have been a tornado, or any other random event that can’t be foreseen or prepared for. The fact of the matter is, it could have snowed but it didn’t. The Homecoming dinner and dance went off without a hitch. I don’t know about you, but I’d call that a success.

COUNTERPOINT:

October would have been better

Homecoming is what helps bring the students together as one during the first semester. It’s an activity that students, especially the freshman, look forward to during the beginning of the year.

The drop-out rate of freshman students for the first semester of college is high, and each year it gets higher. Each new school year, many freshman attend college, but by the second semester, usually around half of those students decide to drop out or transfer. I believe that the attendance rate for Homecoming will rapidly decline compared to last year because of this.

The first semester of school is usually when students are trying to get more involved in different activities and become more social by participating in events around the campus. By the second semester, students are more focused on their grades rather than going out and having fun.

St. Louis is also known for its unpredictable weather. Lately, snow has been a huge issue, to the point where people have been snowed in, unable to leave their homes to attend work or school.

The activities that were scheduled to take place throughout

Homecoming week had a higher chance of getting cancelled due to inclement weather. This would not have been something to worry about in October. Even though it is chilly in the fall, snowstorms are largely unheard of so there’d be no risk of Homecoming being cancelled due to bad weather.

The attendance rate of Homecoming events held during October is likely to have been higher than in February due to the weather. The colder it is outside, the less likely students are to attend their classes. This principle applies to campus activities as well. UMSL is a university with a high number of students who commute – during cold weather, students are less likely to make the trek out to participate in campus events. Even if the activities were held inside, it’s likely that students would not enjoy even having to walk to the different buildings around campus in the cold.

The overall idea of change and doing something different is good, but I think that changing the season during which Homecoming is held was not a wise move to make, and will result in a less successful Homecoming season for UMSL.

LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING

How obsessed are you with Minecraft?

HEATHER WELBORN
FEATURES EDITOR

I feel as if Minecraft is slowly taking over my life. I don’t know how I feel about that. Sort of neutral, I guess. Is this how video game addiction begins? Is the allure of unlimited one-by-one creative possibilities sucking me in? Would that really be such a bad thing?

This growing obsession with manipulating infinite squares started innocently enough. For days straight, I would see my daughter at the computer, laughing hysterically as she watched videos of Minecraft online game play. I was impressed with the sheer breadth of the gaming experience – the world you interact in is massive, varying just enough as you explore to prove distracting, maddening, even enraging for the inexperienced player. A completely alterable gaming experience. This is going to get awesome and awful, isn’t it?

I bought a copy of the bestselling game for my daughter last week, and I seem to play it more than she does. Way more. I don’t think she’s played much more than the tutorial, though she seems satisfied with it. Lots of items to examine and extreme architecture sprinkled here and there with game play advice. I like watching her play it; she’s completely engaged as she smashes through windows to pilfer items from uninhabited houses.

“Stealing and smashing stuff is the best part of Minecraft, mom,” she says, laughing maniacally. I’m not sure if hearing a seven-year-old say that is horrific or hilarious, but she seems pretty happy with it,

so I let her keep at it. Wreck everything you want, make off with whatever you can carry, knock yourself out - as long as she doesn’t mess with my save file, which I aptly named ‘Julia Stay Out’ in all-caps. Minecraft, you see, is serious business. Swift and merciless punishment (the highly feared revocation of electronics in all forms) would surely follow fiddling around with my world. I am a gal of simple sensibilities, and I ask for very little from my loved ones. Good hygiene, pleasant mood, and keeping their filthy traitor mitts off my – MY – Minecraft save file.

After I’ve been playing the game for a few hours, the reasonable side of me suggests I take a break. Just let me dig three more squares, I plead with my better sense. I’m so close to finding some ore I can taste it! I’m not going to class today, my dog can feed himself, I can spare two, three, four more hours for mining and crafting and losing total control of my mind.

I wake in the night, heart racing, having dreamed of loading the video game disc and finding no file saved. My world, truly annihilated. My poor little heart can’t bear such abuse! Maybe I should go check my game real quick, just to be sure. Oh, good, it’s still there. Well, I’m up, and there’s two hours until daylight. I could harvest some plants and make some food for just a few minutes...

What a game. You simultaneously must and must never play this game. It’s a Schrodinger’s Box sort of thing. Don’t say box, I’ll go right back



to my big screen and boot it up for another marathon of game play. I’m lucky I invested in the Xbox version before the full PC edition. The console issue gives the basics, while the PC offers elaborately designed servers and an astonishing level of modification control. I’m not ready for that type of commitment. And it’s only \$20? I don’t think my GPA can take a hit like that.

Play Minecraft with your kids or kid siblings, play it online with friends and strangers. Find servers that recreate entire environments of classic video games and popular movies (my daughter loves Pixelmon, a Pokemon-designed environment constructed with eerie accuracy). Build a village, start a farm, explore a mine, travel to the beyond - you can literally do whatever you like, controlling every detail square-by-square. I warn you, beg you even, on behalf of all good conscience and appeal to duty and responsibility as it exists in the true, physical, cube-free world – play Minecraft at your own risk.

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IN THEATERS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Do you have a campus news tip? Tell us: thecurrenttips@umsl.edu

RYAN BROOKS/THE CURRENT