

11-3-2003

Current, November 03, 2003

University of Missouri-St. Louis

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University of Missouri-St. Louis, "Current, November 03, 2003" (2003). *Current (2000s)*. 165.
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November 3,
2003ISSUE
1101

The Current

Your source for campus news and information



See page 8

Katie Holmes stars in 'Pieces of April.'

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

Mixed feelings reign after lunch

BY JASON GRANGER
Editor-in-Chief

Depending on whom you ask, the most recent Associated Students of the University of Missouri Lunch with a Legislator was either a great success or a disappointing failure.

State Representative Matt Muckler,

D-Ferguson (district 70), came to UM-St. Louis to talk to students about issues concerning them; but according to Laura Walters Marsh, ASUM member, Muckler had something else on his mind.

see LEGISLATOR, page 3



Jesse Gater/The Current

Rep. Matt Muckler greets guests at the "Lunch with A Legislator" Thursday, October 30 in the MSC Century Room C. The engagement was sponsored by ASUM.

Race relations take center stage

BY JASON GRANGER
Editor-in-Chief

Beth Grindstaff, Student Government Association vice president and Associated Students of the University of Missouri member, saw a problem and decided to take steps to help rectify it.

At the last Coffee with Curt (Coonrod, vice chancellor for student affairs), several African American students expressed their displeasure with an editorial that ran in *The Current*. They decided to relay that displeasure to Coonrod. Grindstaff was at Coffee with Curt and decided she would try to do something to help heal some wounds.

"Some students...expressed concern when we were at Coffee with Curt," Grindstaff said. "The editorial in *The Current* upset some people, so I wanted to get everybody together so we can talk about things."

The editorial at issue questions the need for racially/culturally-motivated

groups such as the Association of Black Journalists and the Hispanic-Latino Association.

"An Association of White Journalists could not exist without racist stigmas," the editorial said. "Why, then, doesn't the Association of

Black Journalists receive criticism?"

To discuss such differences in paradigms and perceptions, SGA and *The Current* are co-sponsoring a race-relations forum entitled "Issues of the Color Line," Nov. 11, in Century Room C of the Millennium Student Center at 1 p.m.

Joe Flees, coordinator for the vice chancellor of Student Affairs, thinks the forum is a good idea.

"I think race relations in America need to be improved," Flees said.

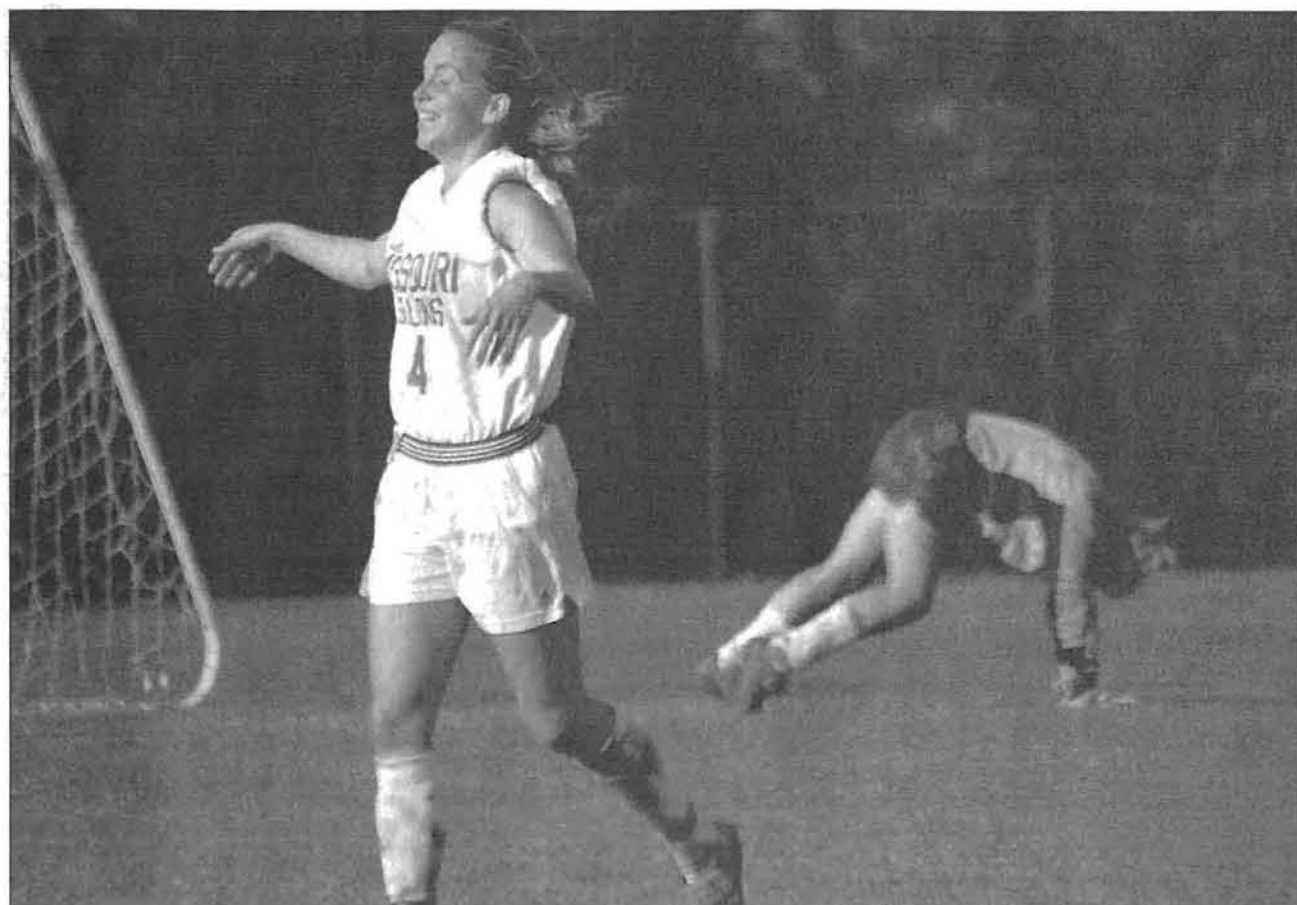
Grindstaff said she is hoping the forum will help to alleviate tensions surrounding voluntary segregation and give both sides of the issue a chance to understand the rationale behind their feelings and the feelings of others.

see RACE RELATIONS, page 3



Beth Grindstaff

The thrill of victory



LEFT:

Riverwomen forward Sonya Hauan runs in front of a St. Joseph's goalkeeper in triumph after scoring the Riverwomen soccer team's first goal on Sunday afternoon during the first round of the Great Lakes Valley Conference tournament. The goal brought the team back from a 0-1 deficit. Only minutes later, Hauan would also score the second goal in the Riverwomen's 2-1 victory. The Riverwomen advance in the GLVC tournament and will next play Northern Kentucky.

and the agony of defeat...

Riverwomen take 2-1 victory over Pumas and advance in GLVC tourney



RIGHT:

Annie Domasica, a forward for the St. Joseph's Pumas, cradles her head on the soccer field after her team's defeat by the UM-St. Louis Riverwomen. The Pumas held the lead past halftime, but then gave up two goals to Riverwoman Sonya Hauan.

Photos by Mike Sherwin/The Current

Just say no to...driving?

BY STEVE SMITH
Staff Writer

Living in the same area for a long time can cause a person to allow calluses in his thought process and fall victim to a pattern of comfortable repetition. Often our stern adherence to routine prohibits us from seeing new tools all around us.

St. Louis has much more to offer than a few choice hangouts. It is easy to be caught in the old navel-gazing "my town is lame" mindset. So many points of interest are hidden in this city; and while some cost a few dollars to enjoy, the ride could be free.

The MetroLink connects those without transportation to a bevy of diverse and remarkable places in St. Louis.



A MetroLink train sits at the end of the line at the Lambert Airport station. MetroLink offers students a free alternative to the hassle and expense of campus parking.

see METROLINK, page 3

Michael Pelikan/The Current

Sumo cum laude



Gordon Stangler, sophomore, physics, eyes his opponent, Stephen Murphy, sophomore, engineering, before a wrestling match Wednesday. Pairs of contestants were fitted in padded "Sumo Suits," and then left to grapple, pounce, tackle, or otherwise bring their opponent down to the mat. The event was part of the ongoing "Humpday Hoopla" held by the UPB and Student Life.

Mike Sherwin/The Current

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Bulletin Board

Put it on the Board:

The Current Events Bulletin Board is a service provided free of charge to all student organizations. University departments and divisions. Deadline for submissions to The Current Events Bulletin Board is 5 p.m., every Thursday before publication. Space consideration is given to student organizations and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. We suggest all postings be submitted at least one week prior to the event. Send submissions via mail at 388 MSC, Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63121, fax at 516-6811 or email at current@jinx.ums.edu. All listings use 516 prefixes unless otherwise indicated.

Thru March

Woodcock Museum

"Image and Imagination: Art of the American West" virtual exhibit is open online at <http://woodcockmuseum.ums.edu>. Featured is paintings and sculptures from the permanent collections of the Woodcock Museum and the Mercantile Library at UM-St. Louis.

Thru Nov. 18

Public Policy Research

"The Price of Progress: The Page Avenue Extension," photographs by Michael Miles opens on Sept. 17. The opening reception will be held from noon to 1 p.m. on Sept. 17 in the Public Policy Research Gallery, 362 SSB. This event is free.

Mon 3

Monday Noon Series

"The Aesthetics of Water" - a slide talk, is the title of the Monday Noon Series. Stephanie Ross, professor of Philosophy at UM-St. Louis, explores various aesthetic roles played by water, as in paintings of water, reflections of water, water in gardens, moving water and musical portraits of water. The program is from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. in room 229 of the J.C. Penney Conference Center.

Mon 3 (cont.)

Coming of Age series

"Student Engagement: An Imperative for Fostering Learning and Success" is at 3 p.m. in the Provincial House Chapel in the Honors College. Charles Schroeder, former chief student affairs officer at UM-Columbia, Mercer University, St. Louis University and Georgia Institute of Technology is presenting the lecture. This lecture is part of the "Coming of Age: UMSL's Role in the St. Louis Region" speaker series. For more information, call 516-5372 or 516-5308.

Tues 4

Gallery 210

Poet Adrian Matejka presents his poetry at 7:30 p.m. in Gallery 210 (210 Lucas Hall). Matejka reads from his debut collection of poems, "The Devil's Garden," which was released in October by Alice James Books. The collection has garnered praise from critics and poets alike. The event is free and open to the public. For more info., call 516-6845.

4

Bible study

Christ Christian Center is holding a Bible study at 7:30 p.m. at Embassy Suites Hotel (Inter. 70 & Lindbergh). 11237 Lone Eagle Drive St. Louis, MO 63044 (314) 739-8929.

Tues 4 (cont.)

Coming of Age series

"Indicators of Student Engagement: What UMSL Student Think" is from 9:30 a.m. to noon in Century Room C on the 3rd floor of the MSC. Charles Schroeder, former chief student affairs officer at UM-Columbia, Mercer University, St. Louis University and Georgia Institute of Technology is presenting the lecture. This lecture is part of the "Coming of Age: UMSL's Role in the St. Louis Region" speaker series. For more information, call 516-5372 or 516-5308.

4

Crusade for Christ

A Bible study is from noon - 1:15 p.m. in room 314 of the MSC. Join Campus Crusade for Christ for fellowship and prayer.

Wed 5

Counseling Services

Choosing a Major Workshop is from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Learn how to match your interests with academic majors and occupations using the Self Directed Search. This workshop helps student identify interests, skills, work values, and learn how to research occupations. pre-register by calling Counseling Services at 516-5711.

Wed 5 (cont.)

International Center for Tropical Ecology

Conservation Forum 2003 is from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at The Living World in the Saint Louis Zoo. Frank Joyce from the University of California presents "Conservation in Costa Rica: Working mutualisms between people and nature." For more info., call Patrick Osborne at 516-5219. This event is free.

5

Biology

"Unmanned Aircraft: The Future in Military Aviation" is from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Century Room A on the 3rd floor of the MSC. Kevin A. Wise, Senior Technical Fellow at Boeing Phantom Works speaks on the X-45 Joint Unmanned Combat Air System. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Nancy Diley at 516-6226.

Thur 6

Spanish Club

Spanish Club meeting at 1 p.m. in room 542 Clark Hall. New officers will be announced and future events and activities will be discussed. For more information, contact Susana Walter at 516-6861.

Fri 7

Coming of Age series

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. is a Teaching and Technology Conference. Sessions showcase faculty engagement with students in research and inquiry and community. At 10 a.m. plenary session "Engaging Students through Research, Teaching and Civic Involvement" is in 200 Lucas Hall. James Groccia, director of the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at Auburn University presents the lecture. Pre-register at www.ums.edu/ctl. For more information, call 516-5372 or 516-5308.

Mon 10

Monday Noon Series

"Dugout Canoes on the Missouri River: In the Wake of Lewis and Clark" is the title of the Monday Noon Series. Jim Wilson, Des Lee professor of experiential and family education at UM-St. Louis, describes how dugout canoes are constructed by hollowing out giant logs with traditional tools. The program is from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. in room 229 of the J.C. Penney Conference Center. The Monday Noon Series is sponsored by the Center for Humanities at UM-St. Louis.

Put it on the Board!

Call 516-5174 for details or email current@jinx.ums.edu

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The Campus Crimeline

The following criminal incidents were reported to the University of Missouri - St. Louis Police Department during the fall between October 25 and October 31. If readers have information that could assist the police investigation, they are urged to call 516-5155. Campus police as a public service to promote awareness provides this information. Remember-crime prevention is a community effort.

October 26 - Stolen auto

In parking lot K, a van was reported stolen from he parking lot while the owner was attending a concert at the Performing Arts Center.

October 27 - Burglary/stealing over \$500

At 7966 South Florissant Rd., entry was made through an insecure window and computer equipment was stolen from inside.

October 28 - Tampering with an auto

In parking lot BB, in an attempt to steal a vehicle, the steering column was damaged and found to have a broken key in the ignition and the contents of the glove box was scattered inside the vehicle.

October 29 - Stealing over \$500

On Mark Twain Drive, in lot M, two gym bags and one wallet with credit cards were stolen

from a parked vehicle.

October 29 - Recovered stolen property

At 7966 South Florissant Rd., some stereo speakers and an adapter were found in the parking lot after an eviction of the neighboring apartment.

Note: An arrest was made in the stealing of a motor vehicle from parking lot S. Two suspects were found occupying the vehicle in the city of St. Louis and through subsequent investigation were identified and arrested. Warrants will be sought for charges in related to this incident through the St. Louis County Prosecutor's Office. As a reminder to all, please lock valuables, or keep them with you at all times while you are on campus. Items will be stolen from your backpack, purse, wallet etc. if it is left unattended.

www.thecurrentonline.com

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Sig Taus help Bel Ridge

BY MELISSA MCCRARY
Staff Writer

On Oct. 31, UM-St. Louis' Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity hosted a Halloween party and haunted house for neighborhood children at the Bel Ridge Community Center located near the Mobil gas station on Natural Bridge Road.

The event was held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. and was free for children of all ages.

"The haunted house and Halloween party was developed to let children within the community go trick-or-treating and have fun in a safe atmosphere," Sigma Tau Gamma member Tom Brooks said.

Children were given the opportunity to wear their Halloween costumes, receive candy, hot dogs and soda and celebrate the holiday in a variety of ways.

The city mayor, trustee and other public officials decided to find a way that children could be more enter-

tained on Halloween and contacted the fraternity for their help.

This was the second year that this Halloween Fest has been in existence.

Brooks said one of the reasons for holding the event again this year was

it has also joined up with the community to provide other services.

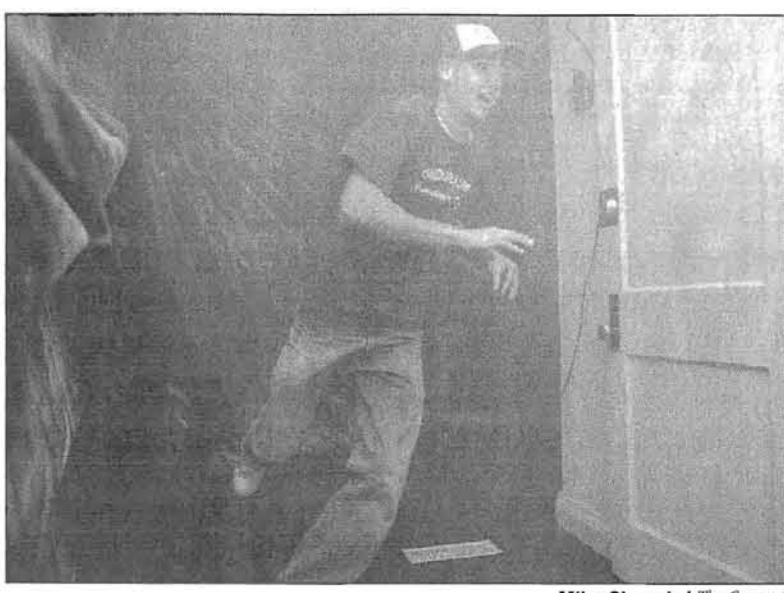
"The Sigma Taus have made numerous cooperative efforts with hosting other events in Bel Ridge," City Trustee Wilma Abernathy said.

"Some of the other things that the group has done to help the city include: painting the Bel Ridge Police Station and organizing a Thanksgiving party for the elderly."

The Thanksgiving party will be held the Wednesday before Thanksgiving at the Community Center. They will prepare a festive dinner for all of the local disabled and elderly citizens. For the residents who are not able to attend the dinner, they will load up meals and personally take them to their houses.

"The fraternity really lends a helping hand with organizing special activities that make the city stronger," Abernathy said.

For information on other upcoming events sponsored or hosted by the Sigma Tau Gammas, contact the fraternity house at 428-5431.



Mike Sherwin/The Current
A Sigma Tau Gamma member runs through the hall of the Bel-Ridge Community Center on Friday night, shouting, "Here come the kids, everybody get ready!"

the success of last year's event.

"Last year was the first year that the Community Center had a free party for children and it began with a line of kids waiting to enter, down the block," said Brooks. "It was estimated that about 150 children attended last year's event."

Not only has the fraternity participated in operating this free event, but

METROLINK, from page 1

The MetroLink is a tool that many students are already familiar with, whether they use it to get to school or to get away from school on the weekend. There are, however, a large number of students who do not realize the potential of this tool that is provided them already by their student fees.

Brad Lake, junior, business administration, recently rode the MetroLink for the first time.

"Riding is a lot of fun," he said. "[MetroLink] helps people who can't afford cars. And you don't have to pay for parking."

With two stations on campus and a line that runs from the Lambert Airport main station in the west to

Scott Air Force Base at the Shiloh-Scott Station in Illinois, the MetroLink is a viable and economy-minded alternative to driving. The light rail system currently runs one East/West line. The MetroLink expansion, which is currently underway, will create an additional line that will branch off, reaching further into some of the areas that are not currently serviced by the system. MetroLink officials say that lines reaching into Clayton and Richmond Heights are in the works, and that the lines should go as far south as Shrewsbury by 2005.

Soon this transportation alternative will be a viable transportation option for people who had not lived or

worked in close proximity to a station in the past. In addition to passing through several of the city's hot spots, such as University City and the Central West End, the MetroLink is a convenient service for UM-St. Louis students to use as often as they wish.

"It helps people get around to see the city. People travel from far away to see the Arch, and we can do it for free," said Jan Mayer, junior, communications.

Instead of begging for a ride to Denny's, students can visit areas they have never been to. Forget about designated drivers and parking hassles. Use the MetroLink and explore the culture of St. Louis.

RACE RELATIONS, from page 1

"We hope to get all issues on the table and create an open dialogue," Grindstaff said. "We want to get people talking and help ease hostilities."

Racial issues have begun to become a major issue in St. Louis again, something that has not been a major issue in a couple of years. In the Parkway school district, race

relations has polarized that district after a 10-year-old white boy taunted an eight-year-old black girl by calling her a "nigger." The parents of the girl felt the school district botched the handling of the situation, and school officials issued a memo that seems to support this assertion.

"We probably did not handle this

as well as we should have." Interim Superintendent of Parkway Paul K. Delanty said. "We are in the position to grow from this."

The issue of race relations now shifts to UM-St. Louis with the SGA/The Current forum on Nov. 11. Sheila Clarke-Ekong, interim dean of the Evening College will be moderating the forum.

LEGISLATOR, from page 1

"Representative Muckler, when asked about UMSL, was uninformed about the school," Marsh said. "His whole focus was on the trauma unit at DePaul hospital."

Beth Grindstaff, ASUM member and Student Government Association vice president, had a different view of the event.

"It was the biggest crowd we've had yet this year," Grindstaff said. "Forty students and faculty showed up."

Grindstaff said she thought there was a good amount of dialogue between Muckler and the audience. Some people took the chance to grill

Muckler on the budget crisis, asking Muckler whether the state of Missouri was in violation of Article Nine, section b of the State Constitution which states, "The general assembly shall adequately maintain the state university and such other educational institutions as it may deem necessary."

Grindstaff said one of the highlights of the session was when one of the audience members questioned Muckler about UM-St. Louis separating from the UM System.

"Dr. Elizabeth Dickhouse asked Representative Muckler, 'Do you think it would be beneficial for UMSL to separate from the UM

System?' He said 'no' because of funding," Grindstaff said.

Despite the turnout and dialogue, Marsh was still not satisfied with Muckler and his presentation.

"He could care less about UMSL and the students," Marsh said. "He just doesn't care about us."

The next Lunch with a Legislator features Clint Zweifel, a UM-St. Louis graduate with a degree in political science. For more information, call the ASUM office at 314-516-5835 or stop by their office in the Office of Student Life on the third floor of the Millennium Student Center.

Programs educate students on health-related issues

BY KATE DROLET
Features Editor

In October, students received flyers, pamphlets and a wide range of other resources concerning several health issues. UM-St. Louis' Health Services hopes to provide information to students on a regular basis from now on.

"This month has been busy," said Kathy Castulik, health educator for Health Services. "We've tripled in growth in programs at student requests."

During their health education awareness week, which took place from Oct. 21 to Oct. 24, Health Services set up an information table next to the escalator on the second floor of the Millennium Student Center. Each day, free information was available about a different health issue.

The efforts of Health Services' awareness drive have received a positive student response.

"I think it's important because a lot of people don't get that knowledge by reading books. They can come on campus, and it's out there. Being at a university, you learn different aspects of life, and health education is one of them," said Breiana Wells, sophomore, psychology.

On the healthy heart day, those who visited the table had the opportunity to get their blood pressure and cholesterol checked. Health Services recently invested in a Cholestic machine, which measures cholesterol levels in a short amount of time. This portable machine only requires a cap-

illary stick, or a small prick on the tip of the finger, to provide results in seven minutes.

Castulik said that not all college students are aware of the importance of cholesterol checks. By measuring cholesterol levels and considering family medical history, students can find out their personal health risk factors.

Other information was handed out concerning AIDS awareness, diabetes awareness, hand-washing awareness and vitamin awareness.

Health services provided interac-

ing flu season.

On vitamin awareness day, visitors learned that the body only absorbs 40 percent of vitamins taken orally. A product called Vitamist was on display for students to test and purchase. The spray, which cost \$16, comes in a variety of flavors and vitamin-types. By spraying the mist directly onto mucus membranes in the mouth, 100 percent of the vitamins are absorbed.

During the week of Oct. 27, Health Services provided information about breast cancer. Missouri Baptist University brought a Mammo-Van where women could sign up for free mammograms. The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Awareness Foundation donated educational materials as well.

"You had to reserve a time, and we ended up being completely full," said Castulik. Health Services also offers CPR and First Aid classes, monthly HIV testing through Planned Parenthood and testing for other sexually transmitted diseases. The organization also offers a nutrition assessment program, where body composition and eating pattern are measured, and a healthy eating program is developed.

A Wellness Resource Center and a peer education called Students Helping Others to Succeed, or S.H.O.T.S., also operate through Health Services.

For more information about Health Services, the Wellness Resource Center or S.H.O.T.S., call 516-5671 or visit the Health Services office at 131 MSC.



Photo illustration by Shannon Hopper/The Current

Jefferson City

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ASUM

The Current and Student Government Association

cordially invite you to attend:

"Issues of the Color Line"

This open forum will be moderated by

Dr. Sheila Clarke-Ekong. Come to Century Room C of the MSC Nov. 11th at 1 p.m.

STANFORD

OUR OPINION

In memoriam
The Current remembers
George "Buzz" Westfall

Politicians are generally tolerated, only occasionally appreciated and rarely liked. So what is it that explains the outpouring of sentiment following the death of St. Louis County Executive George "Buzz" Westfall last Monday? The short answer: He was a good man who did good work, and communities are seldom blessed in finding such people in positions of power.

After three terms as St. Louis County's prosecuting attorney, Westfall, a Democrat, was elected to the position of county executive in 1990. His work in this capacity was so commendable that he was again elected three times.

Known for putting people above politics, Westfall was involved in projects such as developing the St. Louis Regional Health Commission, which is dedicated to providing medical services to the uninsured and underinsured, raising funding for the Children's Miracle Network, championing organized labor, supporting expansion of the MetroLink, developing education, training and resources for average citizens and even helping to keep recreation affordable—he was key in making a provision with the Rams for setting aside a percentage of their tickets for the general public.

Not only was Westfall admired for what he did but also for how he did it. In the many statements given this week, he was often referred to as honest, compassionate, humble and dedicated—by both Democrats and Republicans alike. His own employees added that he inspired trust and loyalty by showing an interest in them personally, as well as by allowing them the freedom to work in their own way.

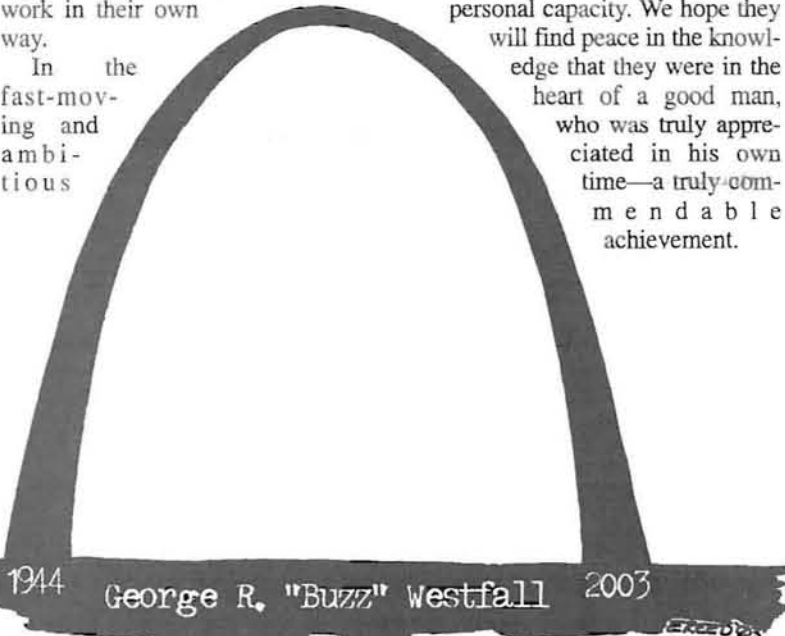
In the fast-moving and ambitious

world of politics, Westfall held the unusual view that it was neither healthy nor productive to sacrifice all for work. He defended his right to privacy and family time, and in doing so, raised the notion of family values through example, rather than rhetoric.

Westfall grew up in the St. Louis area, in a working-class family, and so kept an eye out for average citizens. Few politicians have inspired such a sense of security in their public as he did, from struggling low-income families to the affluent. His uncanny ability to stretch funding for the community while avoiding tax increases certainly helped him win favor in both camps, as did his fair hand in considering the detractors of his proposals.

Surely, no politician can make everyone happy, and Westfall knew this. It was a distressing realization to him when he first took office. He realized that he would occasionally draw the scorn of people whom he both represented and respected. Yet he took the challenge of public life, and proved that a public official need not be everything to everyone, as long as he handled each situation with the respect and consideration it deserved. And really, as a diverse and contrary citizenry, what more can we expect?

What we did not expect was for his time to be cut so short and with so much left undone. Though this is said of many who have passed before now, the sentiment is rarely felt by such a great number of people. We would like to offer our condolences to all the family and friends who had the opportunity to know George "Buzz" Westfall in a more personal capacity. We hope they will find peace in the knowledge that they were in the heart of a good man, who was truly appreciated in his own time—a truly commendable achievement.



1944-2003

What's your opinion?

How do you feel about the topics we've written about?

- "Buzz" Westfall
- Race relations
- Lack of inspiration

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- Submit a Letter to the Editor
- Write a Guest Commentary
- Visit the Online Forums at TheCurrentOnline.com

The Current and race relations

Recently, I gave my approval to Beth Grindstaff, vice president of Student Government Association, for a co-sponsored race relations forum. *The Current* and SGA will be co-sponsoring the event.

So why have *The Current* and SGA decided a race relations forum is necessary? Well, in the Oct. 13 issue of *The Current*, we ran an editorial questioning voluntary segregation. We also questioned the need for racial and cultural issues. The ensuing uproar resulted in a couple of letters to the editor, and some students even brought it up at the most recent "Coffee with Curt (Coonrod, vice chancellor of student affairs)." After said "Coffee with Curt," Grindstaff approached me about co-sponsoring the forum and participating on the panel. I said I would (see the house ad on page three for more information regarding the forum).

So why did I decide to co-sponsor and participate? Because it is something I believe in. The fact is, my whole life I have always had minority friends and I would not have it any other way.

And that is something I do not think people quite understand about the newspaper business. We have an unwritten obligation to report on things people may not want to hear, but we deem they need to hear. Is that an unfair amount of power? I do not think so. Because the simple fact is, we would not go into journalism, specifically the newspaper business, if we were not activists of a sort. We are all passionate about the situations in which we all live. We cannot acquiesce and abandon the principles of journalism because we might step on toes. If we did that, we would cease to be journalists; we would work for the Fox News Channel instead (fair and

balanced? Yeah right). Last year, *The Current* covered things the University would rather we did not cover. We exposed a vice chancellor who misused his funds, pointed out that the University had no anti-terrorism policy (one was instituted within weeks of the article running, by the way) and extensively covered the budget cuts. These are all things that people may not want to hear about; they may not want it to upset their happy routines, but it was something we felt we needed to discuss and point out anyhow.

Journalism is a noble profession. We have to be passionate about it, because God knows you cannot go into it for the money. No, you have to have a strong social conscience in order to do this job.

I am an old news hound at heart, but I have had to kind of set that on the back burner after taking this position. I cannot ruffle feathers near as much as I did last year. There was a time last year that administrators went running when they saw me coming (which always made me think they had something to hide); now I have to be wary of the image of *The Current*, which brings me back to the race relations forum. I am not doing this for the image of *The Current* as I stand behind what we printed. I am doing it because *The Current* did its job. We got people talking. People may have found it offensive, true, but it still got them talking. We said things people did not want to hear, but at least they want to have a dialogue about it.

In the end, *The Current* did its job. We are proud of the work we do as journalists. We get called names like rabble-rouser, troublemaker, muckraker and whistleblower, but we are still proud of what we do. We got people discussing something important, and for that we are not ashamed.



JASON GRANGER
Editor-in-Chief

Finding inspiration

Sometimes, while in the clutches of a particularly grueling assignment, I forget why I am here. Exams, papers and lectures march steadily to the limit of my foreseeable future, and I find myself in self-pitying despair.

Although I am blessed with supportive family, friends and a long-suffering boyfriend who often laughs off (naively, I'm afraid) my oft-mentioned threats to drop out and either apprentice myself in the noble career of plumbing or retreat to a cave in the far north—it is often not enough.

Now and again, I need to be inspired. I realize that some people are excited by the mere act of basking in and absorbing information. I too can enjoy the accumulation of facts and skills in my chosen field—for a time, anyway. Yet it still becomes tedious a few months into the semester when I have already absorbed enough data and theory to mull over for the next ten years, and the only use I put it to is frantic regurgitation on exams. A necessary exercise, but far from fulfilling.

While my hoped-for career remains a distant uncertainty, I require some other proof of application, some reminder of the value of it all, in order to survive this endless studentdom.

Though volunteering or interning would be the first option I would suggest for anyone in a similar funk, such an opportunity might not be reasonable or attainable for all. This is espe-

cially true for those of us who already juggle full schedules.

If, like myself, you are unable to indulge in such wholesome, resume-building, feel-good activities, I recommend that you avail yourself of the quick-fix option.

Though our campus is modestly sized, we do manage to draw some extraordinary speakers and prominent figures from a variety of disciplines. You need not make reservations, buy tickets or commit much of your time. Just show up.

If you cannot manage to do work in your field just yet, the next best thing is to listen to and speak with those who do. Let them remind you why the time and effort you are spending is worthwhile.

In the last couple of weeks, I have been able to meet both Norman Meyers, renowned ecologist, and David Quammen, the award-winning science and nature writer. Hearing them speak on their respective subjects, their projects and perceptions, brought a new perspective and synthesis to all of the disjointed information I have been striving to absorb.

Despite myself, I was excited, I was inspired, I was again a dedicated student rather than a potential resident of the wilds of Alaska.

Essentially, I remembered what I want to be when I grow up, and why. And how better can you spend a couple of hours than that?



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LETTERS

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Letters to the editor should be brief, and those not exceeding 200 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). Editor-in-chief reserves the right to respond to letters. *The Current* reserves the right to deny letters.

Under Current

by Kevin Ottley
Staff Photographer

What would you like in your Halloween treat bag?



Shannon Chaney
Sophomore,
Nursing

I wanna get straight A's in my classes this semester.



Nicole Cusimano
Junior,
Biology

I'd like a plane ticket to New York.



Ryan Uding
Senior,
Chemistry

A six pack of PBR and a bag of funyons!



Robyn Forster
Junior,
International Business

I want the beach in my bag!

The science of myths

Halloween ghosts and ghouls



BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
Science Columnist

With Halloween just passed, today's column is not so much about science as myth. That is, the myth of vampires and other scary beings.

This column might be a tad gruesome, so if you are sensitive, you might just skip it. It has a little myth, a little history and a bit of science together in one boiling cauldron.

There are a number of myths and beliefs that have arisen over time based on peoples' incomplete understanding of nature. Tales of the undead, of werewolves and vampires, even of elves, all may have had beginnings in natural phenomena or diseases that were misinterpreted. The tales were then embroidered with many retellings. Many of these ghostly stories were mostly imagination, but there was often a starting point in the distant past. Ironically, it was people with these rare medical conditions who must have feared the frightened people whose imaginations turned them to monsters.

Let us start with zombies and others returning from the grave. Before modern medical science, it was harder to tell if someone was truly deceased. Listening to the chest, checking for a pulse or the old technique of holding a mirror to the nose, sometimes missed faint signs of life. People in comas or the rare state of catalepsy, a form of temporary paralysis, could appear to be dead, yet revive later. Such incidents were the likely source of tales of the reanimation of the dead. There was the real chance of burial alive, and escape from a shallow grave might not be impossible, bringing forth the appearance of a zombie.

When it finally occurred to people in the 19th century that some people might get buried alive, there were a series of

mechanisms invented to allow the accidentally buried to either free themselves or notify someone of their plight. Fear of being the victim of such a burial led to the fictional tales like those of Edgar Allen Poe. It also led to laws in most states that required every body to be embalmed. The embalmed do not come back.

A number of medical conditions have been suggested as the origin of myths about werewolves and vampires. None of these rare, primarily genetic conditions completely match the tales, and certainly none of these afflicted people were as evil as superstition branded them.

Among these conditions is a rare, genetic syndrome that occasionally has been suggested as a source for legends of vampires. People with a form of porphyria have an unusual sensitivity to light, have abnormalities in the formation of red blood cells and, in some cases, may have reddened mouths and gums. There are actually as many as eight forms of porphyria, all of which involve flaws in the formation of heme, a key component of red blood cells. Erythropoietic protoporphyria is the condition most often mentioned in connection to these myths, but other porphyrias may also have suggested the myths.

Whether any of these syndromes was the real source of the myth cannot really be known.

Let us be clear here. While a rare medical condition could have inspired fear in people without an understanding of the disease and given rise to a myth, the disease is not the myth. The myth is a creation of imagination and retelling, not biology.

The disease erythropoietic protoporphyria (EPP) comes from a flaw in the metabolic pathway that controls the formation of heme, a major component in red blood cells. Porphyrins are chemical compounds that are stepping stones along the pathway, which leads to the formation of heme in humans and to chlorophyll in plants. Heme is the component of hemoglobin responsible for the red color of blood and is essential in the ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen.

A person with EPP does not produce enough of the enzyme ferrochelatase, due to mutations in the FECH gene. Without sufficient enzyme, there is a buildup of the precursor protoporphyrin in the precursors to red blood cells. The excess leaks into the blood's plasma. When the excess is cleared by the liver

and excreted into the bile, it can accumulate in those organs, where there is the potential for damage. The greatest potential for harm is liver damage, but that result is rare.

The major symptom of sufferers of EPP is their sensitivity to visible light. The disease usually first appears in childhood by age six. Exposure to the sun can bring on a variety of symptoms, ranging from burning, redness, itching, swelling and even scarring with repeated exposure. The victim's reaction sounds a great deal like an allergy to sunlight, with the redness and swelling. Interestingly, when the red blood cells of person afflicted with EPP are observed under a fluorescence microscope, many of the cells show fluorescence while normal blood cells do not. The condition can be detected by the detection of excess protoporphyrin IX in the red blood cells, stool or plasma.

Unlike other porphyrias, there is no red color to the urine and excess is not detected in urine. The syndrome appears to be inherited as an autosomal gene, which means it is not sex-linked and therefore may be inherited by either men or women. The trait appears to be dominant, but it varies in the degree to which it is expressed. Family members with elevated levels of protoporphyrin are thought to be carriers.

Generally, the disease needs no treatment beyond sunscreen and sun avoidance. Since the disease is so rare, with only 300 or so sufferers worldwide, little or no research is done on it. The rareness of the disease also casts doubts on its role in the formation of myths.

Patients may have decreased levels of hemoglobin but rarely to the point of needing treatment. Taking beta-carotene can help the ability to tolerate visible light exposure. Liver problems can come with accumulation of protoporphyrin in that organ, and accumulation can also occur in the bile duct with damaging results.

For some forms of porphyria, adding heme does help alleviate symptoms, but it seems farfetched to speculate that people of simpler times could have deduced that. Most likely it is just an odd coincidence. Although the condition is chronic and can be unpleasant, it is not usually fatal.

Real people afflicted with a disease could have been the source of tales of monsters. Perhaps that should make us all wonder about who may have been the real monsters back in those earlier times: the storytellers or the subjects of their tales?

The best album that you've never heard

This week: Wings' "Wingspan"

BY JASON GRANGER
Editor-in-Chief

Wings is a much maligned group, and sometimes deservedly so (what the hell is "Silly Love Songs" all about?). However, when your front man is a living legend by the name of Paul McCartney, you are bound to come out with at least a handful of good stuff. While the lineup changed fairly consistently, three members stay constant throughout: McCartney, his wife Linda and former Moody Blues member Denny Laine.

This week we will be looking at "Wingspan: Hits and History," the greatest hits compilation from Wings. Wings is definitely a greatest hits band (with the exception of "Band on the Run," which is a fantastic album), and "Wingspan" is the best way to go.

So now let us discuss some of the songs you will want to hear on this double album.

On disc one, track number two is "Band on the Run," the title track of the legendary album. "Band on the Run" features three distinct parts. The first part is a slow melody about a man with cabin fever. That is followed by an electric guitar heavy middle eight about a man who wants a beer. This is followed by the main thrust of the song, the band that is indeed on the run. "Band on the Run" features great word play, with McCartney making sense of seemingly nonsensical words. That is one of the great things about the John Lennon/Paul McCartney partnership; they both taught each

other a great deal, and word play is one of the things McCartney learned from Lennon (see "Flaming Pie" from the album of the same name for another excellent example).

Next up on our list is the classic "James Bond" theme song "Live and Let Die."



This is perhaps the most popular of the Bond songs, and why not? It is a rollicking song that is a favorite at McCartney's concerts. This famous song has been covered by Guns 'n' Roses and, in concert, Sheryl Crow. It's a fun song that always brings people to their feet.

Perhaps the best song McCartney did while with Wings is the rocker "Jet." While I cannot tell you what the song is necessarily about, I can tell you that it is an awesome song (once again, it is awesome live). Once again, McCartney strings together seemingly meaningless words and puts together a great rock and roll song. If someone call tell me what this means, I would gladly give them five dollars. Take this

line for example: "And I though the lady/Was a major/Suffragette/Jet! Jet!"

On the second CD of this album are songs that were not necessarily hits, but songs that McCartney really was proud of. The first of these is "Let Me Roll It." At the time this song was written, McCartney and Lennon pretty much hated each other and were sniping back and forth via songs. When he set out to write this one, Lennon had said McCartney was a poor songwriter; that "Yesterday" was the only good song McCartney had written. So McCartney set out to write a John Lennon song. He said this was one of the easiest songs he has ever written, and it did turn out quite Lennon-esque. He then said publicly, "I wrote a John Lennon song, and it was really quite easy. I guess we're both poor songwriters then." It is kind of sad to think that these two men, once best friends and the best songwriters in history, resorted to this snide verbal assault. Oh well.

Finally, we will look at McCartney's finest post Beatle song: "Maybe I'm Amazed." This was featured on McCartney's first album after the breakup of the Beatles and it was not recorded with Wings, but it is on this album nonetheless. It is one of the, if not the, finest love songs ever written. His lyrics are nothing short of spectacular. He plays every instrument on this recording and I am quite fond of it. Take these lyrics for example: "Maybe I'm amazed at the way you pulled me out of time/ You hung me on a line/Maybe I'm amazed at the way I really need you." Great stuff.

Granted, there are some songs on here that are toss-off pieces of garbage (once again, "Silly Love Songs" What the hell?). But it is worth paying \$13.99 to get the great songs that are also on this album.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Enough whining about parking

Dear editor,
Week after week, issue after issue, there seems to always be some mention of the parking "problems" here at UMSL. The subject has gone stale and is extremely overdone. Now in my second year at UMSL I have yet to come across any major issues with the parking. I park everyday in the garage across from the MSC and there are NUMEROUS spots available when I arrive and when I leave. Not to mention the University is striving to meet our needs by building another, rather

large, garage. Yes, I do walk a little longer by parking there, but by the time I would finish driving around looking for a closer spot, I reach my class sooner by parking further. God forbid if anyone has to get a little exercise and walk a little longer to class. Yet day after day I see the same cars making their umpteenth round about the parking lot looking for that prime space, but arriving to class 10 minutes late. In response to Mr. Granger's editorial, I love the fact that we have a new venue to host fantastic

shows and if we have to park a little further to allow the general public to come see what our school has to offer, then so be it. The image of this university is paramount. The better the image the more publicity. The more attention on UMSL, the better the chance of getting the recognition this University deserves. So please stop the complaining and walk a little.

Sincerely,
Todd Williams
Business Administration
Student

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Halloween cover offensive to Catholics

Dear editor,
While the image of a cemetery is certainly well-associated with the spookiness of Halloween, and in keeping with the usual methods of celebrating the holiday in the United States, I cannot, for the life of me, comprehend why the editors of this paper chose as their centerpiece for the cover of last week's Halloween Special a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. While this is, of course, the same Current that earlier in the year printed a movie review describing a nun's devout faith as "chilling," your insensitivity to Catholics this time was really over the

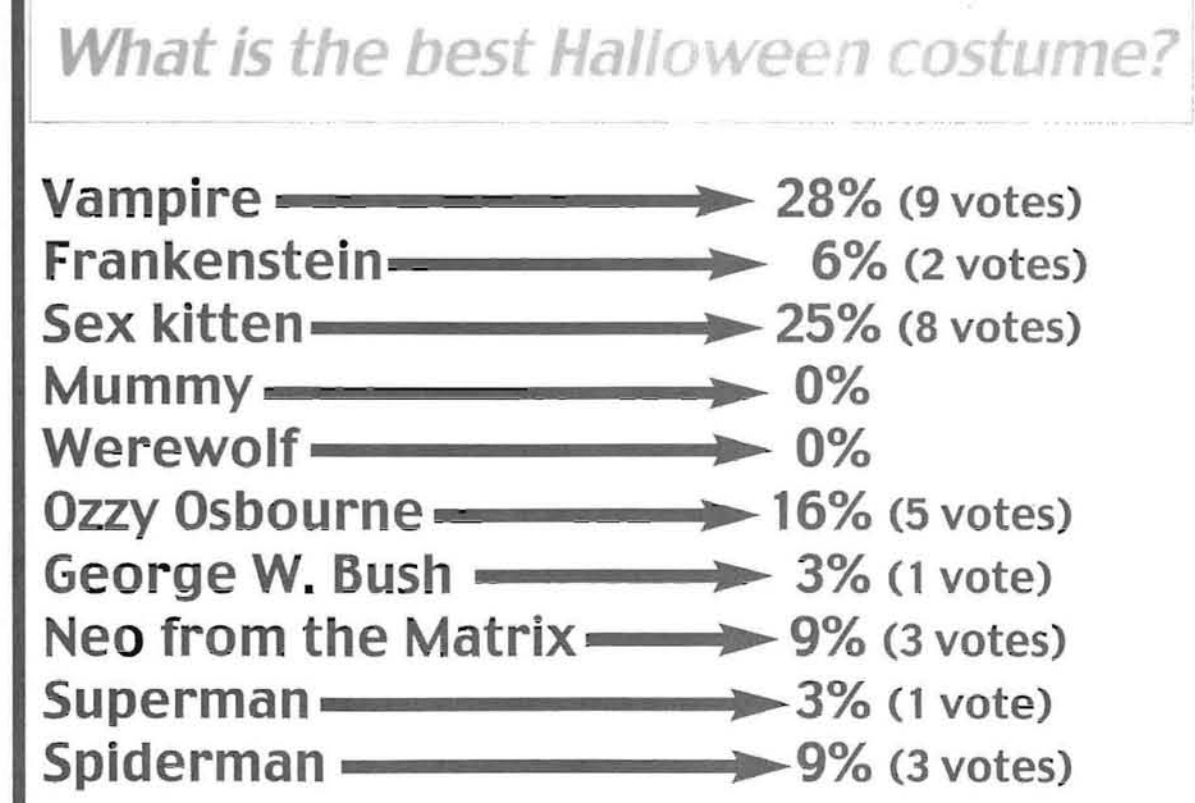
top.
I don't presume that you intentionally set out to offend Catholics, but you ought to know that the image was extremely offensive nonetheless. There is nothing scary about Our Lady. Catholics honor her as the model woman, the perfect example of wife and mother, and for living a beautiful life in dedication to doing the will to God. Needless to say, the careless portrayal of her statue as something to be feared sacrilege.

Look for a moment at the statue and notice what you obviously missed: her hands open to welcome the faithful, her

gentle face gazing downward on the earth, watching over us, her feet trampling the devil. This is the Mary we honor. This is not the Mary you attempted to portray. Why you ever thought of her as fearsome I will refrain from pondering any longer. Suffice it to request that in the future more care is taken to be sensitive to the religious convictions of the members of the campus community.

Blessings,
D. Mike Bauer
Campus Minister, Catholic
Newman Center

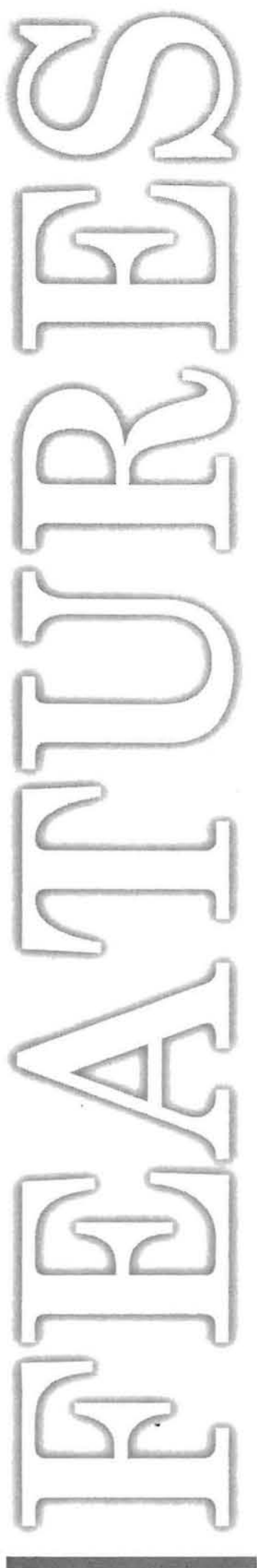
What do the readers think: Results from the weekly web poll:



Results via www.thecurrentonline.com *www.thecurrentonline.com does not limit votes per person and the poll is not a scientific sampling.

Do you have something on your mind? Is something bothering you?

Then write a letter to the editor of The Current. Send it to current@jinx.umsi.edu, or you can drop it by the office at 388 MSC. Letters 300 words and under are preferred



EDITOR

KATE DROLET
Features Editor

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Fighting against hunger

BY MELISSA MCCRARY
Features Associate

With determination, a worthy cause and the promise of a party, UM-St. Louis' Pierre LaCade Honors College Student Association raised money and canned food items during the week of Oct. 26.

"Costumes and Cans" was the theme of the week, which ended with Villa Fest, an annual costume party held in the residence halls.

All week long, members of PLHCSA held a donation and can drive on the bridge of the Millennium Student Center, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

All contributions were donated to TEAM, a Florissant food pantry. By combining Villa Fest and the can drive, PLHCSA received more donations this year than last. "Another purpose for our can drive was most freshman students in the Pierre LaCade Honors College are required to take a citizenship course, and this gave students the opportunity to get involved in a community service activity and help those in need," said Daron Dierkes, president of PLHCSA.

see HUNGER, page 7

Restoring the Missouri River

BY CARRIE LEWIS
Staff Writer

A Washington Post article by Michael Grumwald recently announced that, "The National Academy of Sciences warned...that the Missouri River and its ecosystem will continue to deteriorate unless its natural flow is significantly restored." Jane Ledwin, fish and wildlife biologist, visited UM-St. Louis to discuss this topic as a part of the Monday Noon Series.

Ledwin began by explaining the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's goal: "to conserve fish and wildlife for the continuing benefit to the American people." She also discussed the different branches of the service and their duties. The FWS is responsible for a wide range of duties, from providing recommendations regarding how a project will affect wildlife to dealing with illegal trade of caviar.

Ledwin expanded the focus of her speech by showing two paintings of the old Missouri River. Before it was re-engineered, the river was muddy, wide and unpredictable, with a tangled line of trees covering the banks. The Corps of Engineers, along with Congress, decided to make the river more available to surrounding communities.

They accomplished this by setting up levees and dikes that created a more focused area for the water to flow. While this made the river more predictable, it also destroyed half a million acres of fish and wildlife habitat and caused a severe decrease in abundance and diversity of wildlife.

People began to question how these types of projects could be expanded to improve fish and wildlife conditions. In 1981, Congress and the Corps passed legislation for the mitigation project. This operation is supposed to restore 23 percent of the habitat that was lost, and upon its completion, will cost approximately \$85.4 million.

Ledwin said that the project requires "modifying what's already out there." Some of the dikes must be removed and the land will be scoured. Much of the progress depends on natural water levels. Ledwin made it clear that "You can't rush Mother Nature."

She also showed the audience examples of goals that have already been reached. In some areas, available habitat for living organisms has increased and some bald eagles have even taken up residence.

One of the endangered species that has begun to prosper in the newly expanded Missouri River is the Pallid Sturgeon. The American Rivers' website, AMRivers.org, describes this prehistoric fish as being able to grow up to six feet long and up to eighty pounds. The Pallid Sturgeon was put on the endangered species list in 1990. The first recorded evidence of natural reproduction in the lower Missouri River was collected in 1998.

There is still plenty of work that needs to be done. Progress is being monitored by aerial photography, along with scientific efforts to measure every change the Missouri River makes.

Ledwin ended her speech saying, "I think [restoring the Missouri River]



Amanda Schneidmeyer/The Current

Jane Ledwin, fish and wildlife biologist, visited UM-St. Louis to discuss the restoration of the Missouri River as part of the Monday Noon Series.

is important in some ways for the fish and wildlife but primarily for us."

This final comment brings up another issue regarding the Missouri River that Ledwin did not mention.

Prior to the speech, the audience could be heard discussing the legal disputes surrounding the Missouri River. The American Rivers' website reported that a coalition of regional

and national conservation organizations sued the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for "causing the Missouri River's continued ecological decline and imposing economic hardships on some riverfront communities."

The coalition accused the Corps of releasing water from its dams on a

schedule that was designed solely for maximizing the length of the commercial shipping season for a barge industry. This, the coalition said, has driven several species, including the Pallid Sturgeon, to the brink of extinction.

Currently the Corps is still responsible to ensure navigation along the Missouri River.

The new Greek in town



Mike Sherwin/The Current

Allyson Wilson (at left), coordinator of student services for the Office of Student Life and campus Greek advisor, takes part in a costume party in the Pilot House Thursday. With Wilson are fellow Student Life workers Sarah Clark and Johnathan Lidgus.

BY ANGELA ASHLEY
Staff Writer

Though she only graduated last May, Allyson Wilson is already full of ideas about how to bring together

the Greek organizations on campus. Wilson, who now serves as the new Greek system's advisor at UM-St. Louis, has had Greek experience before and is ready to put it to the test.

Wilson was hired by the University over the summer and has worked with the Office of Student Life on several other projects.

"I like that my days are never the same. I usually come in and work on

some Greek material, then help out with something else. It's great," she said.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Truman State University and went on to graduate school at Illinois State University to earn a Master of Science in Education with a concentration in school personnel. While attending Truman, Wilson was a member of the social sorority Sigma Kappa. She served in several positions for the organization, including vice president, recruitment counselor and a representative to the judicial board. While in graduate school, Wilson served as a house mom and lived in a Sigma Kappa sorority house. Her duties there included paying bills, helping out with their major programs and events and the philanthropy, along with being there for the women of the house in any given situation.

"It was interesting to me because there were no sorority houses at Truman. And though I was a member of that sorority, I now had to function as an authority figure. I got stretched a little too thin sometimes, but it was a great experience, and I would do it again," she said.

When asked what her biggest frustration concerning Greeks was, Wilson said that the notion of Greeks paying for their friends bothered her the most.

"I selected an organization and paid dues to belong to that organization, not to pay to be friends with the sorority. I wasn't friends with everyone in my sorority; it's not feasible to expect that all of the women will get along. Also, I have respect for people that join other organizations and pay dues, and all I ask is for the same respect in return," she said.

To increase the campus' attitude toward Greek life, Wilson would like to improve the visibility of Greek activities and philanthropies to show students that there are several positive attributes and a great support network in the Greek community.

As for the organizations themselves, Wilson also has plans to increase the feeling of togetherness among the different chapters.

"I'd really like to centralize communication and activities so that it's not always so competitive. The students are all Greek, and that is a very special bond that needs to be recognized," she said. "I think that each chapter here at UMSL has so much potential, and each is strong in different aspects. I'd love to see a Greek community spirit established to help the chapters become stronger and grow."

see GREEK, page 7

Kimble keeps law and order

BY GARY SOHN
Staff Writer

He can be found in the residence halls, in the Student Government office and at various campus events. Serving as a resident assistant in Seton Hall and sergeant at arms on the Student Government Association's executive board, Justin Kimble seeks to ensure that the UM-St. Louis educational community is kept in order.

Kimble is currently working on earning a B.S. in criminal justice. He plans to become a police officer in Cincinnati, Ohio, where most of his family resides.

"I enjoy helping people and being involved in [the] community where I live. My best friend's dad was a police officer and got me interested in [law enforcement] many years ago," said Kimble.

He currently keeps order as a resident assistant in Seton Hall. As an RA, he works to maintain a safe and comfortable home for students.

"I deal with loud music and enforce quiet hours to ensure all residents continue to be happy living in the residence halls," he said.

Jason Kunkelman, junior, studying pre-medicine, is one of Kimble's residents.

"Justin keeps things very orderly in the halls. They're nice and clean," Kunkelman said.

This is Kimble's first semester as an RA, and he has lived in the residence halls since his freshman year.

"I love living in the dorms," he said. "It's a good experience to meet people you wouldn't ordinarily meet, as well as living in [a] community with your peers."

Dana Barnard, graduate assistant hall director, facilitates communication between RA's and the Residential Life department. She deals with RA's on a daily basis.

"Justin is dedicated to everything he signs up to do. He's there for everybody. If you need something, he's there for you," Barnard said.

The main focus of being an RA consists of dealing with disciplinary problems and building a community among residents. Kimble said that he enjoys his position and the experience it provides.

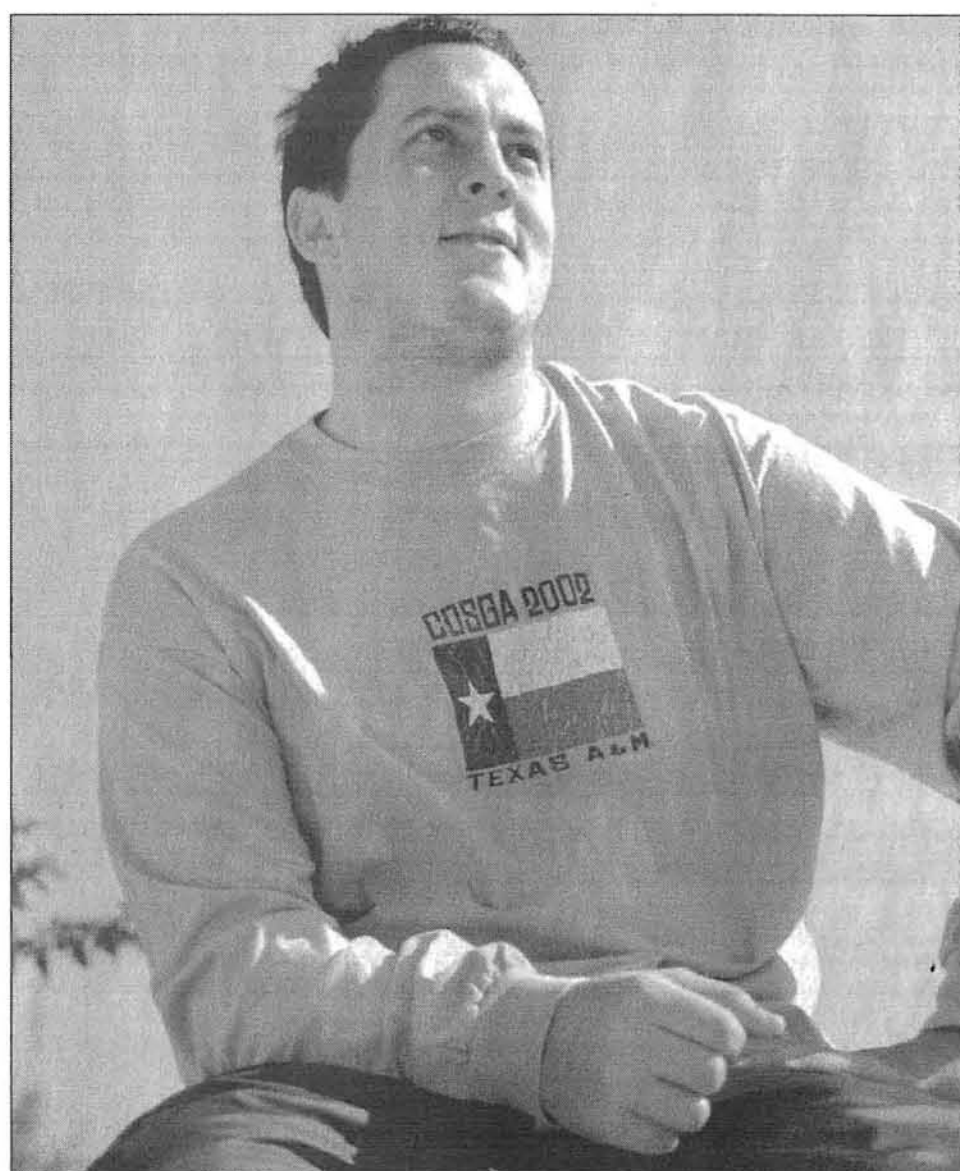
In addition to maintaining stability in the residence halls, Kimble keeps order in other roles on campus.

As sergeant at arms, he plays a large part in SGA's meetings and events.

"[At meetings] I take attendance, set up tables, place placards in their right spots and make sure the computers work," he said.

Kimble says he takes his job as sergeant at arms seriously because his role is vital to SGA meetings. "In order to have an effective meeting, someone, such as myself, needs to make sure that all rules and policies are followed."

see KIMBLE, page 7



Justin Kimble is currently working on earning a B.S. in criminal justice. He plans to become a police officer in Cincinnati, Ohio, where most of his family resides. He currently keeps order as a resident assistant in Seton Hall.

Kevin Ottley/The Current

Culture center offers a variety of resources

BY **MELISSA MCCRARY**
Features Associate

Those visiting the UM-St. Louis German Culture Center may be surprised when they are greeted with "Guten morgen!"

The German Culture Center is located in the Telecommunications Center Building, across the hall from the UM-St. Louis Police Department. The Culture Center is the meeting place for the Der Deutsche German Club Kaffeestunde, which is a coffee hour established to promote the German Club and the culture center.

"The Der Deutsche Club currently has about 25 or 30 students, and we are looking to recruit more individuals who are interested in German culture," said Melissa Dumas, president of Der Deutsche.

The coffee hour meets every first Wednesday and every third Thursday of each month, between noon and 2 p.m. At these meetings, international students share stories about their time at UM-St. Louis, and others can discuss anything they wish to know about Germany. Kaffeestunde provides a chance to meet others and learn about German culture. Coffee,

cookies and chocolates are free to those who attend.

The next scheduled Kaffeestunde will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 5, and Thursday, Nov. 20.

Der Deutsche is composed of students studying the German language or interested in the language's back-

“

The Der Deutsche Club currently has about 25 or 30 students, and we are looking to recruit more individuals who are interested in German culture.

-Melissa Dumas

”

ground. The group works together to plan upcoming events.

"One of this year's events that the German Club will help participate in is the Ferguson Winter Night," said Larry Marsh, coordinator for German Culture Center and Center for International Studies. "This event will be hosted in Ferguson-Florissant on

Saturday, Nov. 30, from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m."

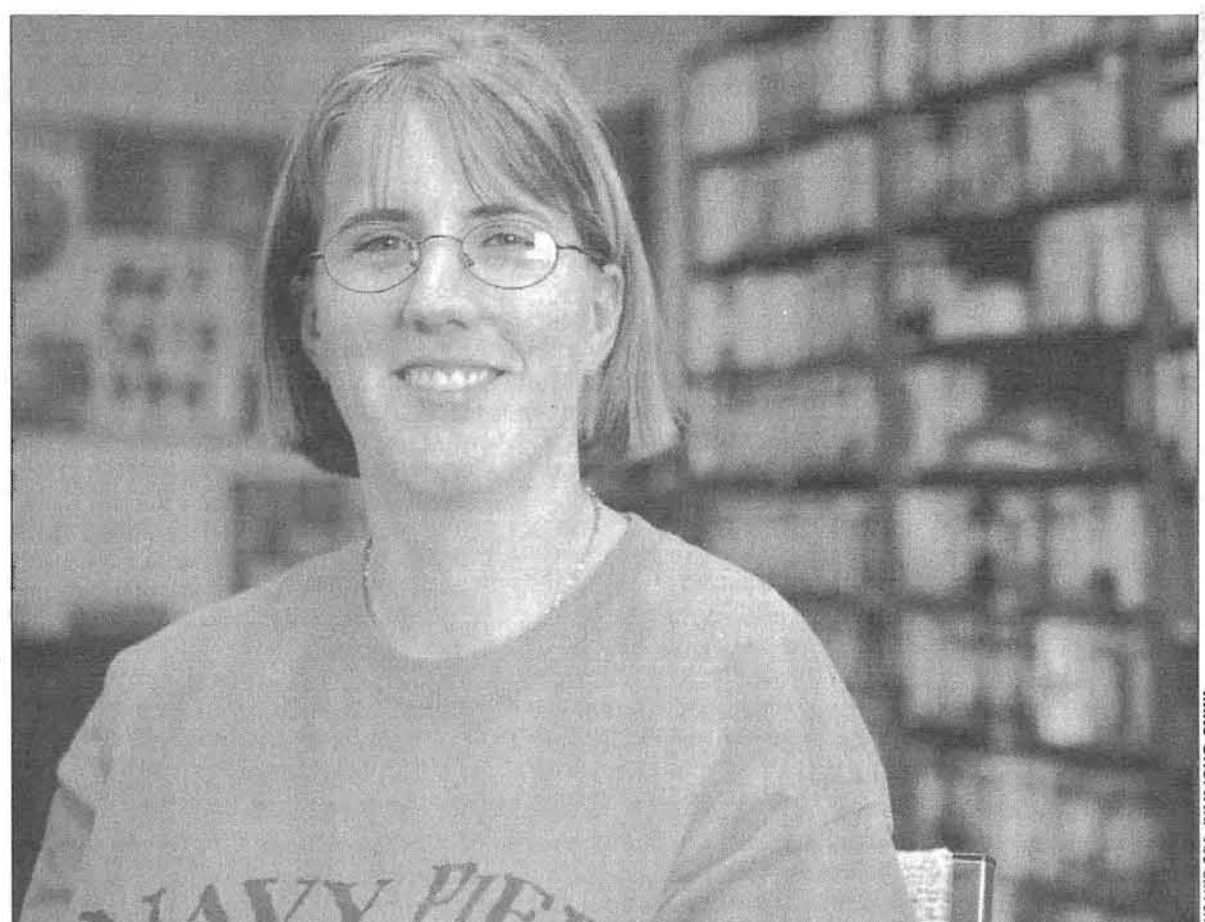
The club also plans to make items to sell at a booth, including German pancakes, calendars and Christmas decorations.

Other upcoming events at the Culture Center include "Doing Business in Germany" and "Ars Vitalis" workshops. "Doing Business in Germany" will take place on Nov. 14, where a discussion about business meetings, presentations, business etiquettes and trade in Germany will be the main objective. There is a \$40 cost for this event and breakfast will be included. "Ars Vitalis" is a German group that will perform a jazz and comedy show at the Kultureverein Halle on Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Along with meetings, activities and events, the Culture Center provides a variety of references for students and staff.

"The Center has numerous dictionaries, grammar books, tapes and videos that can be checked out free of charge," Marsh said.

The Culture Center's hours are from noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday. For more information about Der Deutsche, Kaffeestunde, other upcoming events or culture center resources, call 516-6620.



Melissa Dumas, senior, German, is the president of the UM-St. Louis German club. The club hosts the Der Deutsche German Club Kaffeestunde, a coffee hour established to promote the German Club and the German Culture Center, located in the Telecommunications Center.

GREEK, from page 6

When asked how she felt about how the students were responding to her thus far, Wilson said "So far, so good. I think quite a few people are still tied to John Klein [the previous Greek system's advisor], and that's understandable because he was so good at his job. I want to slowly let

HUNGER, from page 6

"On average, we received about \$50 or more each day of the drive," said Angie Wolke, freshman, anthropology.

According to Dierkes, PLHCSA raised over \$300 and eight boxes full of cans last year. They expected to receive more donations this year and met their goal.

With the beginning of the winter

them know who I am and that they can come talk to me."

Zeta Tau Alpha member Martha DeBuhr, junior, marketing, said that she has been happy with Wilson so far.

"She seems very energetic and excited to work with us. She also has

a lot of fun ideas for the Greek community. I think she'll help us become stronger as a whole versus separate organizations," said DeBuhr.

Students wishing to contact Wilson may do so through the Office of Student Life.

season and rapidly falling temperatures, food banks and pantries require a larger supply of food and items to support those who depend on them. PLHCSA is just one of the many organizations at UM-St. Louis which has lent a helping hand and is making a difference to the community. Villa Fest was held on Thursday, Oct. 30, in the Provincial Hall court-

yard. The party featured costume contests, games, prizes and food. Winners of the Residence Hall Association's pumpkin carving contest were also announced. Those in costume had to pay an entrance fee of one can or one dollar, and those not costumed had to pay with two cans or two dollars. The event took place from 8 p.m. to midnight.

www.thecurrentonline.com, see us online!!!

KIMBLE, from page 6

Kimble has kept order in SGA for three years. Laurie Bainter, SGA treasurer, says that Kimble has been a great asset and team player for the executive board.

"He's very knowledgeable, patient and has helped show me the ropes since this is my first year on the board," Bainter said.

Kimble originally decided to run for the position because it would provide experience for his future career in law enforcement.

"I'm going to be a cop when I graduate, and being sergeant [at] arms is a good experience leading to that goal," he said. "It's also a great way to be involved on campus."

Kimble chose to attend UM-St. Louis because of the criminology department's reputation.

"UMSL has one of the best criminology schools in the world. There's no better place, especially in this state, to get a criminal justice degree," he

said. "The criminology professors and faculty are some of the best in their field—in the world."

One faculty member for whom Kimble has a great deal of respect is

“

Kimble chose to attend UM-St. Louis because of the criminology department's reputation.

”

philosophy professor Thaddeus Metz. "He's a great devil's advocate and brings the issues of the law forth to question," Kimble said.

Kimble is also involved with the UM-St. Louis Student Alumni Association.

"Student Alumni Association links students with alumni that have gradu-

ated and gone into a career in their field of study," he said.

As a part of SAA, he has assisted in tailgating for soccer games and increasing school spirit.

He said that he enjoys supporting UM-St. Louis athletics and interacting with people at the games. Kimble can usually be seen behind a grill or in the stands beating on drums and making noise.

"I love sports and attend almost all sports events," he said.

As a residential assistant, sergeant at arms, member of Student Alumni Association and diehard UM-St. Louis sports fan, Kimble encourages everyone to take part in campus activities.

"Being involved in organizations on campus lets you enjoy your time here at college," he said. "There is no better way to meet people that have same interests as you than getting involved."

Serendipity Day



The weather didn't cooperate, but the UMSL campus community certainly did!

The 40th Anniversary Committee would like to thank the following volunteers and committee members for their planning and hard work to make the Oct. 25 Serendipity Day open house happen. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Loretta Aemisegger
Candi Agnew
Dorothy Akerson
Amy Arnott
Peggy Ashton
Teresa Balestreri
Maria Balogh
Wendell Barber
Joan Barnidge
Lol Barton
Stephanie Belgeri
Stephanie Bell
Joan Berkman
Cindy Bertram
Bob Bliss
Wendy Blocker
Joanne Bocci
Kevin Born
Lisa Brown
Stephen Brown
Ruth Bryant
Mark Burkholder
Chris Burwell
Donna Carothers
Carla Casullo
Sharon Clark
Sheilah Clarke-Ekong

Larry Coffin
Beth Congdon
Curt Coonrod
Mary Beth Creason
Dana Bateet Daniels
Gwen Deloach-Packnett
Grace Derda
Benard Diggs
Betty Ditmeyer
Pat Dolan
Matthew Doughty
Don Driemeier
Melissa Dumas
Jerry Durham
Anne Earney
Regina Faden
Marizela Fehric
Ted Ficklen
Joe Flees
Kate Floyd
Dave Ganz
Joe Garavaglia
Tom George
Tony Georges
Louis Gerteis
Mary Beth Gianoli
Debby Graslaub

Tim Grumich
Steffanie Harting-Rockette
Loy Harvey
Melissa Hattman
Mary Rose Hennessy
Chuck Hickey
Charlotte Hitchcock
Carl Hoagland
Tom Hockett
Daniel Hollander
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Billie Hume
Brenda Jaeger
Rocky Keel
John Klein
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Randy Lahl
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Jerry Siegel
Denise Silvester
Jeff Sippel

Pam Steinmetz
Thomas Stork
Jackie Summers
Jen Swanson
Teresa Thiel
Kedra Tolson
Mark Tubbs
Cindy Vantine
Murry Velasco
Cynthia Vogt
Becky Walstrom
Colin Walters
Colleen Watermon
Andie Ward
Danielle Ward
Bruce Wilking
Joann Wilkinson
Kristin Williams
Emil Woolley
Jackie Wright
Papa Wright
Maureen Zegel
Lucy Zhang

*If we missed your name,
our heartfelt thanks.*



SPORTS

Tournament time! Riverwomen, Rivermen soccer teams ready for GLVC

BY GRETCHEN MOORE
Interim Sports Editor

The UM-St. Louis men's and women's soccer teams have been preparing over the last week for the start of their GLVC tournament. The Rivermen will face the Flyers of Lewis University, and the Riverwomen will square up with the Pumas of Saint Joseph's.

The Rivermen ended their regular-season matches with a GLVC record of 4-5-1. They will face the third seed, Lewis, on Sunday, Nov. 2, at 1 p.m. at the Lewis Soccer Field. The Flyers ended their regular-season matches with a 8-2 GLVC record and tied with Southern Indiana for second place.

UM-St. Louis, the number six seed,

has dropped its last four games. However, the Rivermen's last three losses have been 1-0 in double overtime to GLVC number two seed Southern Indiana; 1-0 to undefeated Truman State, the third-ranked team in NCAA Division II, and 2-1 to 22nd-ranked Gannon.

UM-St. Louis also has 1-0 losses to 11th-ranked SIU Edwardsville and 25th-ranked Rockhurst. Lewis shut out the Rivermen 3-0 in the teams' regular-season meeting.

Lewis has won four straight over UM-St. Louis since the Rivermen recorded a 2-1 upset in double overtime in the 1999 GLVC Championship quarterfinals.

The Riverwomen have earned the right to host the first round GLVC tournament at Don Dallas Field on Sunday, Nov. 2, at 1 p.m. against Saint

Joseph's. The Riverwomen ended their regular-season play with a 6-3-1 GLVC record, placing them in the fourth seed. The Pumas are seeded fifth with a 6-4 record and will face the Riverwomen who have advanced to the GLVC tournament for the sixth straight year.

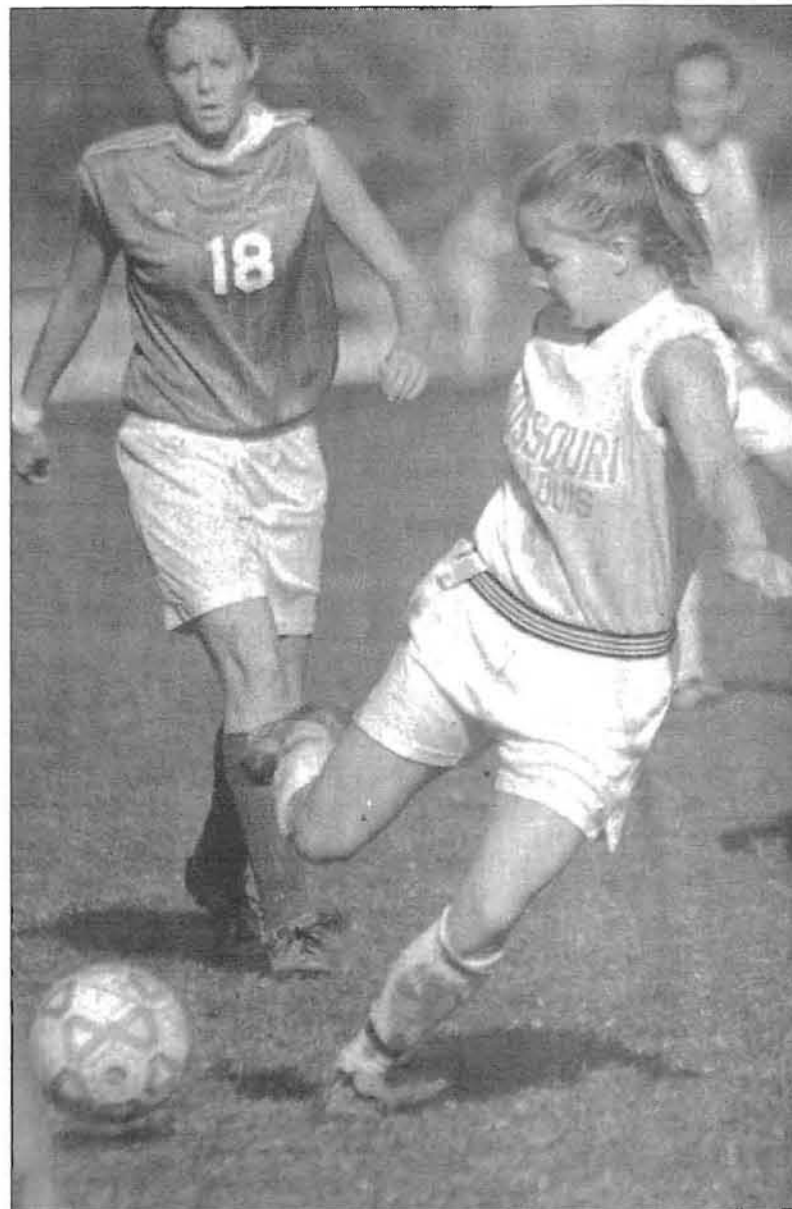
This is the fourth straight year that UM-St. Louis has been one of the top four seeds and hosted a first round tournament game. In the 2000 GLVC Tournament, the Riverwomen hosted Saint Joseph's and came away with a 2-0 victory.

In their meeting earlier this year at Saint Joseph's, UM-St. Louis came away with a 3-2 win in a game that was delayed twice for an hour due to heavy rain and thunderstorms.



LEFT:

Forward Brandi Lucero attempts to steal the ball from St. Joseph's player Melissa Melinauskas during the first half of play Sunday. The Riverwomen were competing in the first round of the GLVC tournament.



Photos by Mike Sherwin/ The Current

ABOVE: Sonya Hauan readies for a kick during Sunday's game against the St. Joseph's Pumas. Hauan was the star player of the game, scoring two goals for the Riverwomen in the second half, leading to a 2-1 victory. The R-women will next face N. Kentucky.

GRETCHEN MOORE

Interim Sports Editor

phone: 516-5174
fax: 516-6811

Questions
or
Comments?

Send me an e-mail:
current@jinx.umsi.edu

WEB

Check out the R-men
and R-women sports at
www.umsi-sports.com

UPCOMING

Women's Volleyball

Nov. 7

• at
Wisconsin Parkside
7 p.m.

Nov. 8

• at
Lewis University
1 p.m.

Ice Hockey

Nov. 6

• vs. Lindenwood at Family
Arena
8:20 p.m.

Nov. 7

• vs. Northern Illinois at
Wentzville Sports Plex
8 p.m.

Nov. 8

• vs. Northern Illinois at
Wentzville Sports Plex
9:50 p.m.

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Mike Sherwin/ The Current

Ronnie Banks

- Guard for
Rivermen bas-
ketball

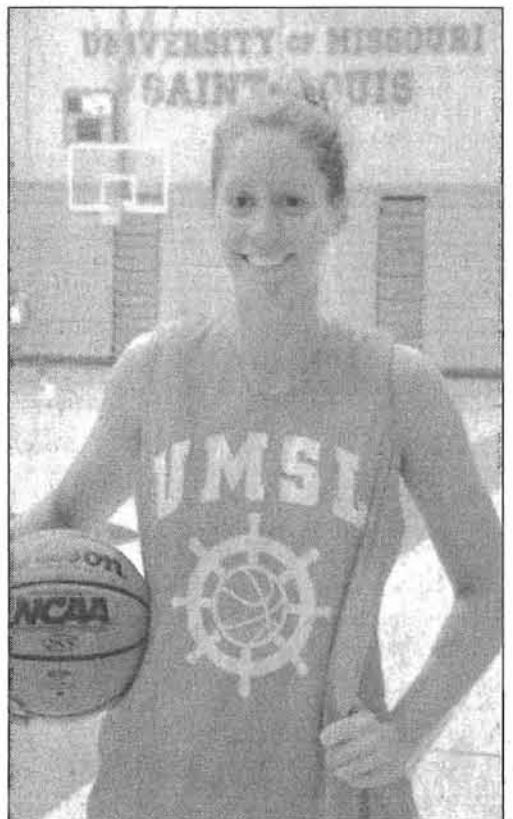
- Junior

- 5'8", 175 lbs

- from Phillips
High School in
Birmingham,
Alabama

- last year led
R-men in scor-
ing and assists

"I think our team is adjusting real well. We're very excited to have a new coach. Coach Pilz is doing a really good job, and he's adjusting to us really well, too. We're going to have a better season than last time - that's a promise. We've got a lot more chemistry as a team, so we're in a very good situation."



Mike Sherwin/ The Current

Debi Debella

- Center for
Riverwomen
basketball

- Senior

- 5'11"

- from Benton
High School in
St. Joseph's,
Missouri

"Considering we have a new team, we are coming along really well. We have a new system and everything is being learned fresh, which is kind of good because we are all learning at the same time and at the same level. We're having a fresh start."

St. Louis Slam: full-contact, all-women football team

BY JUD DIEFFENBACH

Staff Writer

Hey, St. Louis, are you ready for some football...with all female players?

The St. Louis Slam of the National Women's Football Association sure hopes you are. The team has been trying to spread the word about themselves and their league since they arrived here last year. So far, the team has not been short on publicity. Starting with games last April, the Slam has been featured in newspapers like the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and the *Suburban Journal* and in stories covered by television stations such as Channel 2.

The Slam is described as the "first women's full contact football team" in the Saint Louis area. The National Women's Football Association is affiliated with the National Football League, and their games are played with the same rules as the men, only with a slightly smaller football. As of now, there are 30 teams in the league, with more joining every year.

In talking with both students at UM-St. Louis and with area residents, many think the team is a great idea and will generate more equality in athletics. Alina Carron, senior, fully supports the team. "I think it's cool. I wish I could be a part of it. It's a step in the right direction," she said.

Linda Hatch, a St. Louis resident and a staunch supporter of women's sports, feels that the women's football league will only get bigger and better known. "Just like women's soccer, this league has the same potential. Maybe they'll even show games on TV soon," she said.

No one associated with the team is paid, and sponsors cover the majority of expenses like equipment and uniforms. Practices have been held on the fields of Forest Park and Herman Park in University City, and games have been played at local high school fields, such as Gateway Institute of Technology.

The Slam's season runs from April to June, and off-season tryouts have already begun. The Slam had a mediocre inaugural year going 3-5, but it is looking for a big improvement this coming year. The team is run by four co-owners, one of them being Nancy Simonds. Not only is Simonds a co-owner, but the coach of the Slam as well.

The Slam have their own website where fans can look up team statistics, check out team rosters or order tickets for upcoming games. Their website is www.stslam.com.

For those women out there interested in playing, the Slam will hold several tryouts for the 2004 season. Anyone with interest in the Slam can contact the team through their website or by phone at (314) 241-7526 or (314) 241-SLAM.

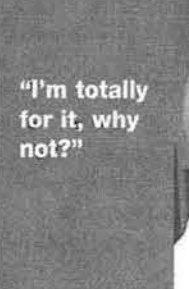
YOUR OPINION:

What do you
think about
contact sports
for women?



Alex Kerford, junior,
engineering

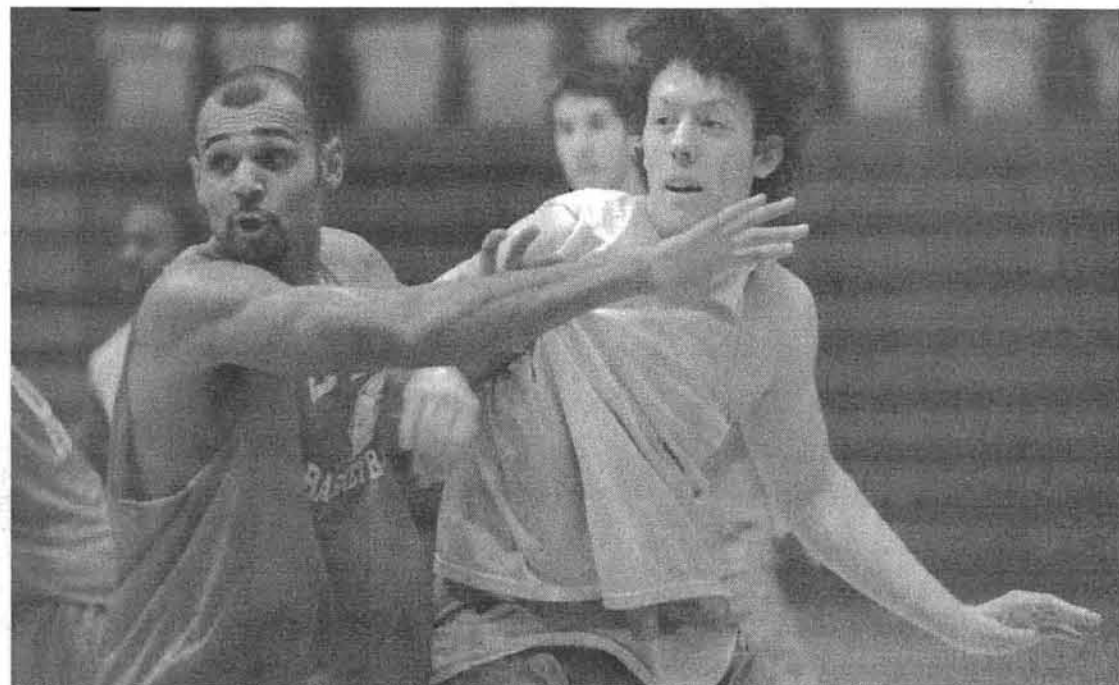
"I think it's fine, but I don't think women's football will get much viewing coverage, though."



Courtney Carmody, freshman,
physical education

"I'm totally for it, why not?"

Practice makes perfect

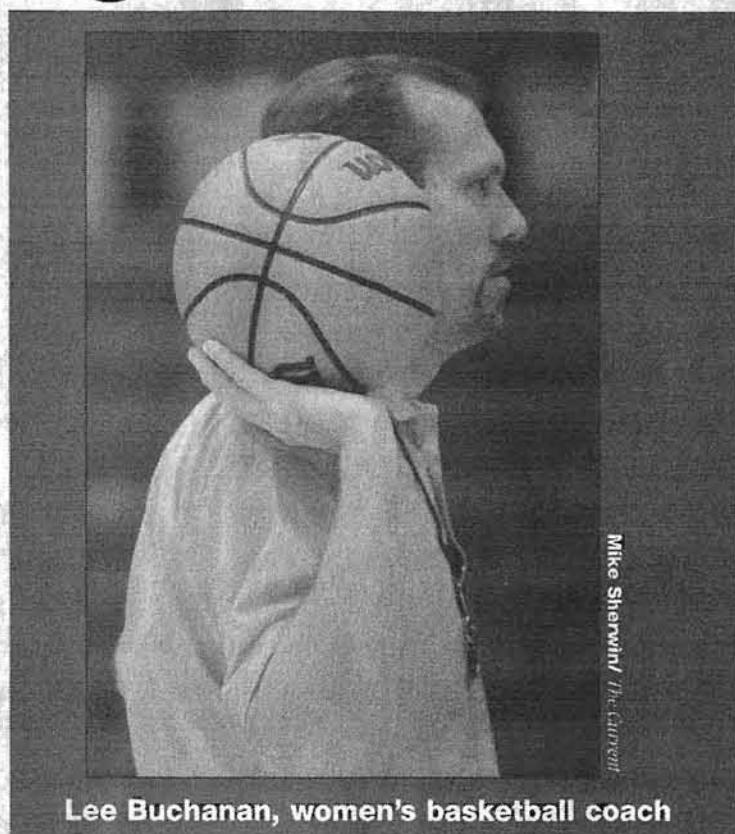


Mike Sherwin/ The Current

Rivermen basketball players Ike Attah (left) and Jared Pratt scrimmage during a practice Friday afternoon at the Mark Twain Athletic Building. The Rivermen will play an exhibition match against the Reebok All-Stars on Nov. 8 at 3:15 p.m.

Checking in on basketball

Q & A with Coach Buchanan, Pilz



Lee Buchanan, women's basketball coach

Question: Coach Buchanan, what is your biggest goal for the season?

Answer: We are going to try to win every night out. And if we can't win, we at least want to know we gave our best effort.

Q: What is your biggest hurdle this year?

A: Everyone on the team is new. We have new coaches plus eight new players from eight different places. And only having eight girls, it is really hard to run drills that are made for more than eight.

Q: What are some words to describe the women on your team?

A: Tremendous effort. Great attitudes. Team unity.

Q: Who are going to be your biggest competitors?

A: Northern Kentucky was a runner-up in the nation last year, and this year Quincy is in the top ten in the country.

Q: What are you focusing on in practice?

A: Teaching a new offense and defense. Everyone has to learn over again and starting from ground zero is never easy.

Q: What are some drills you like to run in practice?

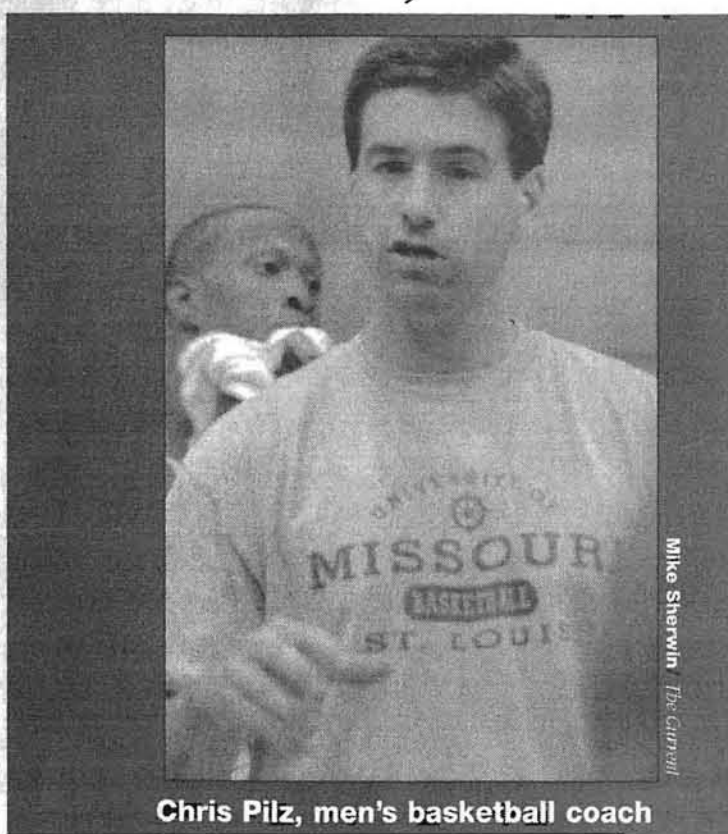
A: I use running as a discipline. If we are not working hard, then we run. If we don't want to run, then we work hard.

Q: What is the SLU Exhibition?

A: We are playing at 7 p.m., on Thursday, Nov. 13, at St. Louis University, for an exhibition match to warm up for the season. We don't play our first home game until Dec. 4. That is good and bad. The positive is that we will look better and be more adjusted to playing as a team; however, it's a lot harder playing on the road.

Q: What are some words of encouragement for this year?

A: We have coined the phrase "You're first!" We are all new at this and in the same position. We are going to be positive and work hard throughout the season.



Chris Pilz, men's basketball coach

Question: Coach Pilz, what is your biggest goal for this season?

Answer: We want to create a competitive atmosphere in practice to carry over in games. We want team unity and togetherness. Our team also wants everyone who comes to watch the games to feel that they got their money's worth and to come back again.

Q: What is your biggest hurdle?

A: We are going to take one game at a time and build a tradition of "one play, one day and one game at a time."

Q: Who are going to be your biggest competitors?

A: Kentucky Wesleyan, Southern Indiana and Northern Kentucky. We really need students there to support us for those big games.

Q: Being an alumni of the basketball program yourself, what is your best UM-St. Louis memory?

A: Beating SEMO in the conference championship game on our own floor on a last second shot. I've also made some really good friends and been on some really great teams.

Q: What are you focusing on in

practice?

A: Being the best conditioned, hardest playing and best defensive team around.

Q: What is a favorite drill you run at practice?

A: Well I know the guys really like a drill called 4-44. They sprint down the court and then the other way backwards four times in a timed period. When we started the drill no one could make it in the set time, now we have two or three that can do it. So that shows the improvement we've made so far.

Q: What is the Reebok Exhibition game?

A: We are playing at 3:15 p.m., on Saturday, Nov. 8, in the gym against ex-college players and professional players to warm up for the season.

Q: What are some words of encouragement you have for the season?

A: We are going to be very positive and put out a good effort. If we do the right things, the wins will fall into place. We have the best team we can have and want to stay together and be strong to keep forging ahead.

R-men ice hockey ties games vs. SLU

BY GRETCHEN MOORE
Interim Sports Editor

The Rivermen ice hockey team faced up with the Billikens of St. Louis University on Oct. 24 and 25, for a two-game series. UM-St. Louis came out with both a 2-2 and 5-5 tie.

Coach Neal Diepenbrock reflected on the Rivermen's games. "We need stronger finishes. We have a strong defense and great team unity. We just need to work on breakouts and balanced scoring."

Freshman goalie Mike Poepping thought the communication among the team was good. "We played very strong, but need to work on conditioning. We are only getting better as time goes on." Mike Winkler, treasurer and captain of the Rivermen, leads the team with the most goals and looks forward to winning the league tournament. "We could have played

better and won. We plan on winning the imperative games and winning the league tournament."

"We are a lot better team than we showed. We lost our wind in the third and needed to get our legs back under us. Stupid penalties really hurt us, too," Captain Craig Housman said.

"In practice we've been working on breakouts, power plays and working with the goalies," Matt Fiske said.

The Rivermen ice hockey team faced up with Kansas University on Oct. 31 at St. Peter's Rec Plex for the first game in the series. They faced each other again the next night at 8:20 p.m. at the Chesterfield Sports Center.

"We plan on playing two solid 60 minute games and coming out on top," Winkler said before the games.

Housman said, "We are going to pick it up and win both games and take the rest of the season. We would like to see fans in the stand and promise a good show."

Basketball's "Tip-off Luncheon" set for Nov. 5

Information courtesy UM-St. Louis Athletic Department

The UM-St. Louis basketball programs will host a tip-off luncheon, offering fans a chance to meet both of the new head coaches as well as the players on this year's men's and women's basketball teams.

KSDK Channel 5 sports reporter Frank Cusamano will represent his alma mater and speak at the luncheon. Cusamano played basketball with the Rivermen and will proudly attend the luncheon to kick off their 2003 season. Randy Karecter from radio station 550 AM will emcee the event for the Rivermen.

The UM-St. Louis Tip-off Luncheon will take place on Wednesday, Nov. 5, at noon at the Missouri Downtown Athletic Club. Those wishing to attend should contact Donna Carothers in the Alumni Relations Office at (314) 516-6453 for reservations.

This year will be a season of change for the UM-St. Louis men's and women's basketball programs, as both teams are welcoming new head

coaches to guide the programs. Lee Buchanan was hired as the new women's head basketball coach and brings a wealth of experience to the team. Buchanan came to UM-St. Louis after one year as the associate head coach at Southern Mississippi. Prior to that, he spent four years as the head coach at Division II national power Francis Marion (S.C.) and was the head coach for 13 years at Brescia University (Ky.) where he helped start the program from scratch.

The men's program has a new coach, but a familiar face to lead the team this season in Chris Pilz. Pilz, former All-American for the Rivermen during his collegiate career, comes to the University from Hazelwood Central High School where he built the program into a perennial powerhouse. This will be his first coaching job at the collegiate level, but he offers a wealth of experience on how to win at UM-St. Louis from his playing career. Pilz is the second all-time leading scorer in UM-St. Louis history and was member of the last UM-St. Louis team to advance to the NCAA Tournament.

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Calendar

Movies

*Film openings are subject to change.

FILM REVIEW

‘Pieces of April’ charms with humor and heart

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
Film Critic

“Pieces of April” is a delightful, indie film comedy that also realistically shows the humor and heartbreak of families. The director aptly calls it “a comedy that is trying to break your heart.”

Hollywood produces many films that purport to be funny and touching at the same time. Most of these movies have the same false, predictable, cloying scenes and characters. “Pieces of April” is something else entirely, because this character-driven story remains unpredictable and, therefore, much more like real life. The funny and charming film is just the kind of first film you would expect from writer/director Peter Hedges, who wrote “What’s Eating Gilbert Grape?”

“Pieces of April” takes place on a family’s Thanksgiving celebration. April (Katie Holmes) has always been the troublesome one of the family and has never gotten along with her mother Joy (Patricia Clarkson). All the same, she and her boyfriend Bobby (Derek Luke) decide to invite her suburban family to their Lower East Side New York apartment for Thanksgiving dinner. April has never cooked a turkey before, but she is confident she can do it, until she discovers her oven does not work. It is too late to call the dinner off, for her family has already started their five-hour drive. The family has no idea what to expect from the rebellious April, and they have never even been to her apartment or met her boyfriend. Certainly, no one had ever seen April cook.

Throughout the film, you can almost hear the clock ticking and get

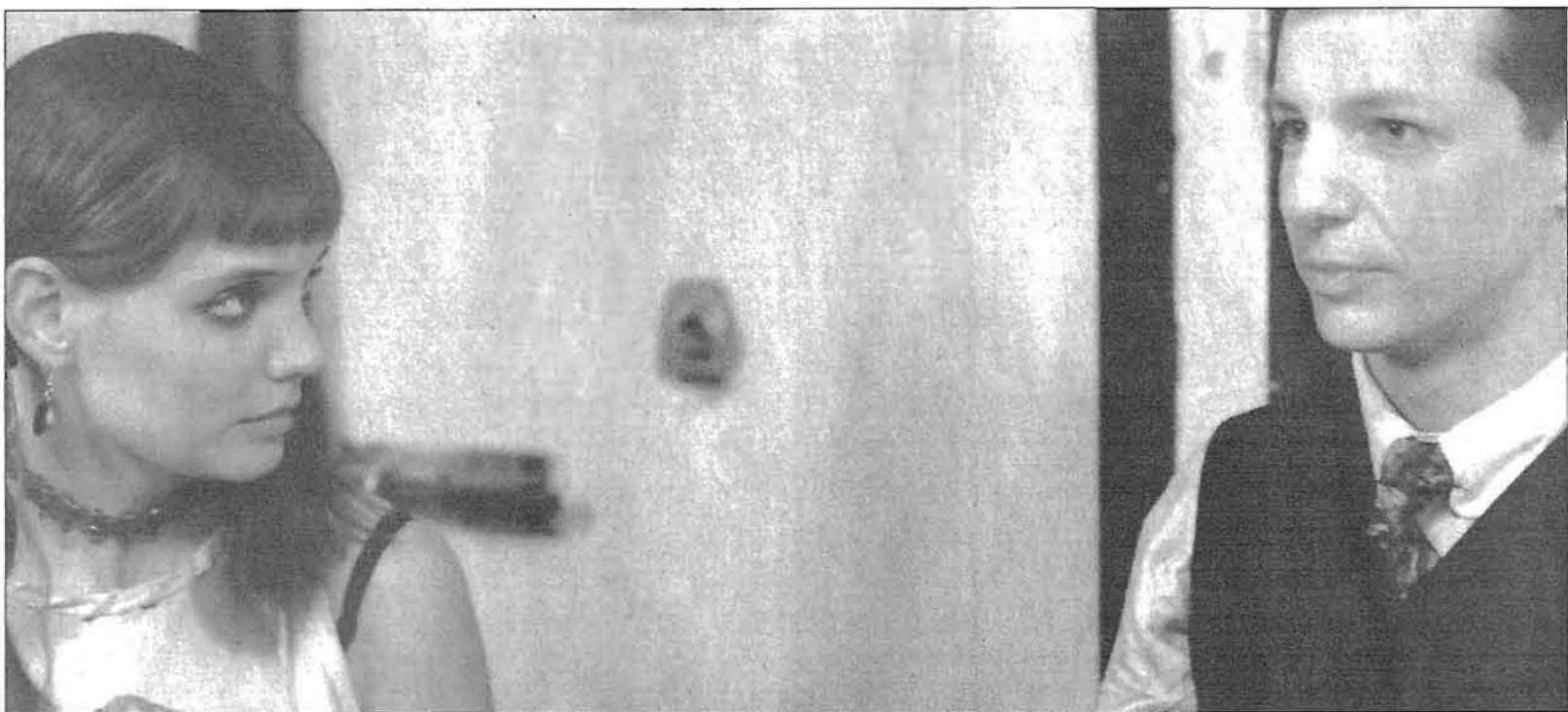


Photo courtesy United Artists

Joy (Patricia Clarkson) and Timmy (John Gallagher Jr.) are on their way to Thanksgiving dinner in United Artists’ comedic drama **PIECES OF APRIL**.

the feeling of running out of time. “Pieces of April” is a film about families and love and about things said and unsaid, but it never for a second forgets it is a comedy. The unpredictable, beyond-our-control, real-life feel of the story sharpens the humor and makes it seem a bit like a thoroughly funny family story someone might tell you.

The film runs on two tracks, one following April as she knocks on the doors of the other people in her building, desperately trying to find an oven for her turkey, and the other following the family road trip to April’s apartment. April’s dad Jim (Oliver Platt) has

an unflagging positive outlook, trying to encourage everyone to try to be upbeat about the dinner. It is a hard sell to the rest of the family, especially April’s mother, Joy, who rather than being joyful, has a sharp and sarcastic sense of humor and continually undercuts Jim’s efforts with her biting witty comments. The dark, humorous element darkens by the reason behind this holiday invitation: Joy suffers from cancer, and the family hopes to come together and make some good memories before it is too late. To get them in the holiday mood, the family tries to recall positive memories of stormy April at Dad’s urging, but with

spare results. Jim’s sincere efforts are undercut by perfect-daughter Beth’s (Alison Pill) reminders of her own accomplishments and Joy’s sarcastic remarks. Younger son Timmy (John Gallagher, Jr.) tries to keep out of it by cracking jokes and taking photos while Grandma (Alice Drummond) can barely remember who anyone is. Still, Jim remains undaunted in his efforts to make it a happy family day.

Meanwhile, April’s unconditionally supportive boyfriend has left on an unspecified errand before April discovers the defunct oven, so the volatile April must cope by herself. She rings every doorbell and subsequently meets

people living in her building. Some help her; some hinder her, but all provide comic results. She uncovers an assortment of folks who are different races, speak different languages or are just different, such as Wayne (Sean Hayes), the fellow with the little white dog and the brand-new, expensive convection oven. The characters are believable and realistic, which makes what happens more unexpected and funnier. While Bobby’s quick errand turns into a longer project, April has her ups and downs about whether or not her dinner will get cooked.

see **PIECES**, page 12

MOVIE REVIEW

‘The Human Stain’ reflects on society’s prejudices

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
Film Critic

“The Human Stain,” a reflection on society’s prejudices and the repercussions in people’s lives, is a powerful adaptation of the Philip Roth novel and probably the first Oscar contender of the season.

Coleman Silk (Anthony Hopkins), the first Jewish man to rise to the top ranks of his field, heads his college’s classics department. Although he has taken his small college from obscurity to prominence, he has made enemies along the way. When a remark he makes about two students is misconstrued as racist, no one in the department comes to his defense, and his career crumbles. After the death of his wife and the loss of his position, the crusty professor befriends a young writer, Nathan Zuckerman (Gary Sinise), who struggles with writer’s block. Together, they start to find their way through their troubles, but they fail to see eye to eye when Silk’s affair with a much younger working-class woman, Faunia Farelly (Nicole Kidman), starts to become too public and too messy for their middle-class world.

turn will likely further elevate her status as an actress, if her performance in “The Hours” was not enough to change minds about her ability. Newcomer Miller excellently completes his first big movie role and, based on this performance, we will see more work from him in the future. Also, he will likely gain a supporting actor nomination for this film. One of the rewarding things about “The Human Stain” is that the characters are all complex and more than they seem at first. We get to know them, but they are not necessarily always people we like. As the tale unfolds, however, we come to understand better why they might feel impelled to act as they do. To avoid figuring out plot points, you should probably stop reading here.

For those willing to risk reading on, I’ll try not to spoil the plot. This is one film that will play best if you have not read the book. Coleman Silk is outraged to have his remarks put in racial terms, when the same remarks made twenty years earlier would not have taken that meaning. That he was unaware of the race of the students involved makes the situation all the more absurd to Silk. As a man who grew up in the era of country clubs and restaurants that banned Jews, Coleman

ethnic, racial or social class. In the era of political correctness, ethnic and racial jokes are gone but there is one last “safe” prejudice—social class, the group in which trailer trash like Silk’s lover Faunia suffers. In this situation, Coleman recalls his younger life and the audience might recall “The Great Gatsby.” Coleman’s friends are all smirks about his younger lover, until she becomes too public. When her messy past resurfaces in the form of her unbalanced ex-husband (Ed Harris), Coleman’s friends urge him to run.

“The Human Stain” says something about our country’s divided past in a more powerful way than other contemporary films have. It does a better job of bringing the discrimination of the past into modern perspective than last year’s “Far From Heaven,” a recreation of a 1950s melodrama about prejudices and race. Where that earlier film took place in the world of the past, Silk’s flashbacks to his own memories and his present-day experiences are the more powerful lesson that prejudice lurks not as far behind us as we imagine.

Just taken as a piece of moviemaking, “The Human Stain” is an engrossing drama, but the added layer of

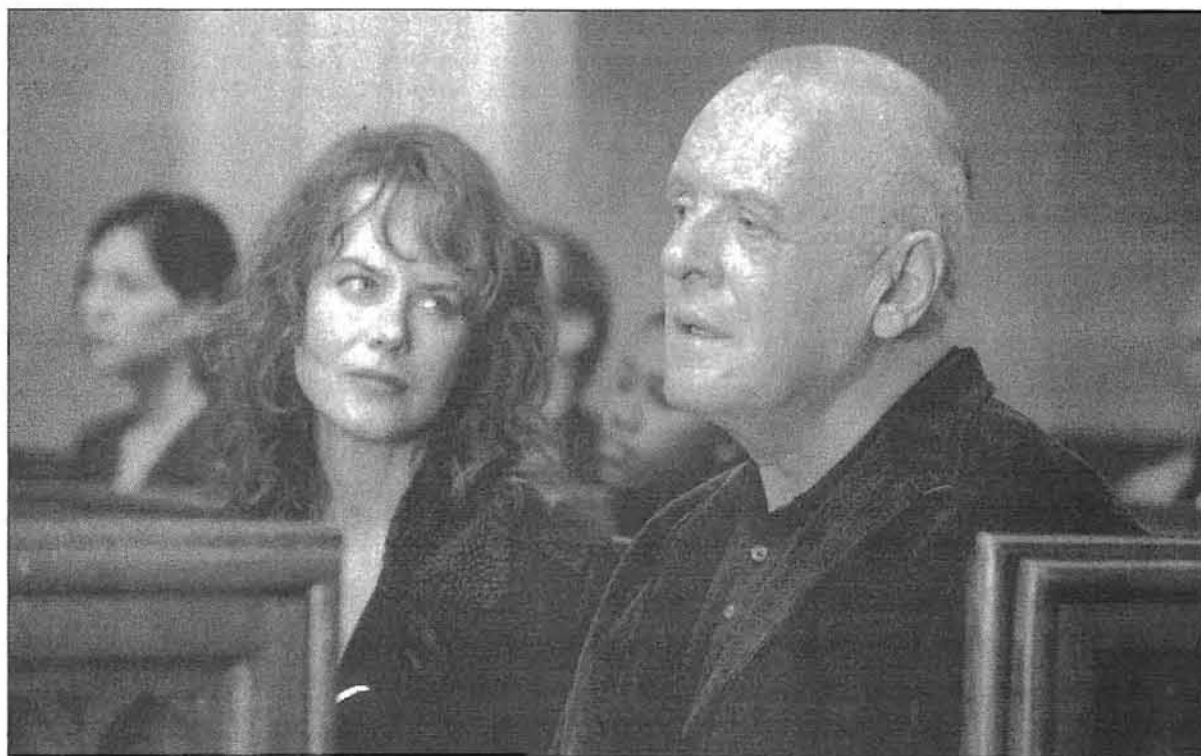


Photo courtesy Miramax Film

Nicole Kidman and Anthony Hopkins in **THE HUMAN STAIN**, a new Miramax Films release.

“The Human Stain” speaks of prejudices, of appearances and of an old man remembering life’s earlier choices. Beyond that, it is best if you know nothing else. The plot plays a crucial role that is best savored if you don’t know where it leads. This much you should know: It has some marvelous performances. Among the most noteworthy are Kidman as trailer-trash Faunia Farelly and Wentworth Miller as a young Coleman Silk. Both performances are outstanding, and Kidman’s

smarts under the accusation of racism. Although after the death of his wife he says no more about the injustice done, the audience still remembers, and we are aware that, as an older man who was on the other side of prejudice, Silk remembers how it used to be. While the story moves forward in the present of the older Silk, the story of the young man he once was also unfolds.

America has always been the land of immigrants, but it has also been the land of prejudices, be they religious,

meaning makes it the more exceptional film. The visual polish, the perfect pacing and the riveting performances are all worthy of the topic. Director Robert Benton has had successes before with “Kramer vs. Kramer” and “Places in the Heart” but is still in the top of his game with this project. Too many films right now have great visual style and outstanding performances supporting an inferior or flawed story. This film is refreshing in its worthiness of good performances.

CD REVIEW

Pop punk parade

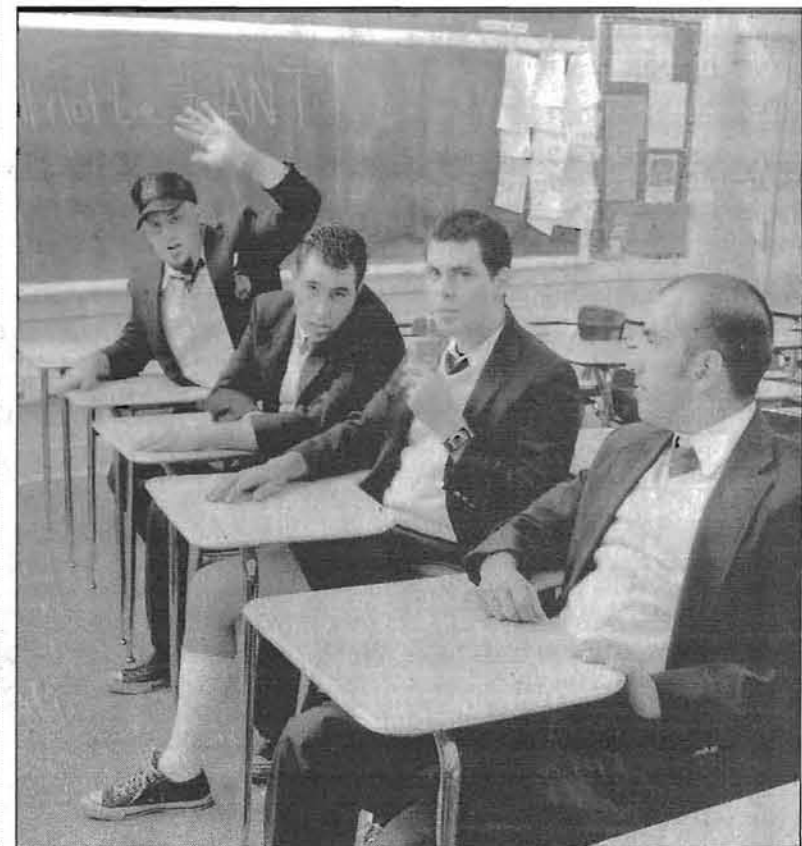


Photo courtesy Dreamwork Records

L to R: Terry, Tye, Dryden and Mike come together as **Alien Ant Farm**.

BY AMY GONWA
Music Critic

Alien Ant Farm’s newest release, “Truant,” begins with an exaggerated soft rock track titled “1,000 Days.” This song and the ones to follow carry a sound of punk rock confusion with no respect for authenticity. Picture Incubus meets Blink 182.

Maybe it is not punk that Alien Ant Farm strives for, and I do hope not. Whatever the sound, it carries a loose definition. Throughout “Truant,” simple chord patterns echo over crashy drums, with no hope for revision. We have all seen our friends from high school play in their garages, and it turns out that some of them got record deals. When you begin to look beyond Alien Ant Farm’s simplistic tones, what you will find in lyrical form is even more disheartening.

“I sit and think of you/I hope the feeling is mutual,” from the track “Those Days,” offers the height of lyrical complexity. They are not your average, well-spoken Romeos and with love songs like this, their pool of romantic options may evaporate. “Would you like to work me/I’d like to work you,” will surely earn the quartet a slap in the face. The short-winded words that fill “Truant” are clearly geared toward the high-school audience.

I find it odd that men in their late twenties would choose to name their album after a sixteen-year-old’s coolest prank. At this point, Alien Ant Farm may want to consider evolving in their acts of rebellion. If their audience still experiences an adrenaline

rush from skipping third period, however, then they may be on the right track with “Truant.”

To cut the Ant Farm some slack, their catchy songs are quite marketable right now. A number of young people choose to turn their heads from real life issues and submerge themselves in the world of noncompliance. This has taken a strong hold of modern music, and bands with catchy innocent love ballads are earning a hearty living. Unfortunately, political groups and music infused with controversial rebellious meaning are slipping into the underground.

The carefree meaning behind the tracks in “Truant” appeals to those who seek music for relaxation. With themes of dating, skating and drifting through life, Alien Ant Farm will certainly discover an audience interested in their words. “Truant” will find its way into the Discmans of local high schoolers everywhere.

For Alien Ant Farm, this newest release may be a step in the right direction. “Truant,” quite similar to their previous releases, will ensure that their longtime fans stick by them. As far as reaching out to gain new listeners, “Truant” will not be their strongest tool to use.

If you seek sophisticated rhythm and inspiring, well-developed lyrics in an album, “Truant” is not for you. If you desire a break from seriousness and seek youthful interjection, however, you may want to check into Alien Ant Farm. To me, Alien Ant Farm is a typical product of modern music marketing techniques, which find people who can play chords, paint tattoos on their arms and write lyrics simply to sell.

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Salad bar chains compete



Michael Pelikan/ The Current

BY STANFORD A. GRIFFITH
Staff Writer

Buffets can be dangerous to your waistline. Of course, when it is an all-you-can-eat salad bar, there is a bit more of a choice of healthful items. Even if you are not counting calories, you will almost certainly find something to enjoy when the spread is fresh salad fixings, soups, breads and potatoes.

Two main choices exist in the area for such make-it-your-way dinners. The first, aptly named Souper Salad, is an excellent choice at approximately \$5. The second, Sweet Tomatoes, is about twice the cost. So what is the difference? Very little.

Freshness of ingredients is paramount on any buffet; but when it is a salad bar, the selection must be farm fresh. Luckily, both places are high in this regard. Diners will notice that items are constantly refilled in either restaurant. The bread at Souper Salad is kept warm and moist by a steam table. The breads at Sweet Tomatoes just sit in baskets under heat lamps, causing the baked goods to dry out.

Selection and variety are also important at a buffet; after all, that is at least half of why you go, right? Souper Salad and Sweet Tomatoes are fairly even in this area, but Sweet Tomatoes does come out slightly ahead. Sweet Tomatoes has a selection of five soups daily while Souper Salad has four. Both have specialty pre-mixed salads. Sweet Tomatoes has a slightly larger selection of breads as well, but the types of bread offered by Souper Salad are more diverse than those from Souper Salad. For the actual salad bars, they are even. The main difference actually comes about with types of dressings offered. Souper Salad offers more traditional dressings, such as ranch, while Sweet Tomatoes serves up specialty dressings, such as roasted garlic. (Sweet Tomatoes does

not have ranch.) The baked potato bars are equal. Souper Salad offers a Tex-Mex section; Sweet Tomatoes, pasta.

Quality and taste of the food are, of course, vital. Souper Salad's soups taste better and richer. Sweet Tomatoes wins the bread selection. The salad bars serve the same lettuce and toppings, so they taste the same. A friendly suggestion might be to avoid the Tex-Mex bar at Souper Salad and the pasta bar at Sweet Tomatoes, based on taste alone.

The service can vary from visit to visit, but overall a pattern seems to exist for each restaurant. Souper Salad servers bring and refill drinks; Sweet Tomatoes leaves its patrons in charge of that, which does allow for specially mixed soft drinks. Souper Salad is better than Sweet Tomatoes about clearing away the many plates that pile up from the multiple trips. The employees of Sweet Tomatoes "watch" diners at the salad and soup and bread bars. Personally, I do not mind if the employees watch me disregard the signs about which cheese I can mix with my soup, but it could easily intimidate many patrons. At both

restaurants, however, the servers are usually moderately friendly.

Atmosphere greatly affects appetite and taste. Souper Salad has become much more of a family and children destination. That, of course, means that the sound level has gone way up. A year and a half ago, I studied for finals there. Now, unfortunately, I cannot imagine trying to hold a private conversation there. This is not really the fault so much of Souper Salad, however, as that of the parents who seem to treat the restaurant as a free-for-all for their children. Sweet Tomatoes, by contrast, is quiet.

When it comes to value for the dollar, Souper Salad is the winner if you want great food, good service and do not mind some noise. For those who would prefer a quieter venue at twice the price, Sweet Tomatoes is an excellent choice. With either selection, you will get a daily rotating selection of fresh ingredients.

For more information, to find the nearest Souper Salad or Sweet Tomatoes or to view a menu of the day's choices, visit SouperSalad.com or SweetTomatoes.com

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CONCERT REVIEW

UMSL at Sheldon Hall

BY KEVIN OTTLEY
Staff Writer

On the night of Oct. 21, The Sheldon Concert Hall on Washington Boulevard presented Early Music St. Louis on Tuesday. An audience of UM-St. Louis students and faculty graciously attended the event.

Early Music St. Louis has presented St. Louis area audiences with solo, chamber, orchestra and operatic music from the Renaissance and Baroque eras. All their concerts are performed by experts who play on instruments characteristic of these periods or on authentic reproductions. The sextet includes Nancy Bristol (soprano vocalist), William Bauer and Celina Casado (Baroque violinists), Elizabeth Macdonald (Viola da Gamba musician), Neal Richardson (harpsichord player) and the versatile Jeffrey Noonan. Lutes, Theorbo and Baroque play guitars.

The group opened the evening by playing five pieces composed by John Dowland, a British lutenist of distinction who published his first collection in 1597, followed by a second collection in 1600 and a third collection in 1603. After a brief intermission, EMSL performed five more pieces—one by 17th-century English composer Christopher Simpson and four others by anonymous composers. The highlight piece of the night was "Watkins Ale," a fashionably humorous story of a beverage and its influential nature to those who partake of its essence. However, the overall mood of the music played was very soothing and melancholy. Jessica Sachs, majoring in music with the cello as her instrument of choice, explains that the "violinists hold their bows slightly higher to get that tone that sounds from back then."

At the end of the performance, patrons approached the stage to view



Kevin Ottley/ The Current

The Sheldon Concert Hall was taken over by Baroque and Renaissance musicians during a concert Oct. 21.

the impressive instruments and ask the players relative questions. The majority of people were most interested in Noonan's lute. Noonan explained that the lute is built with only wood and glue; there are no nails or screws used in its construction. The construction and the strings are very light, much lighter than a guitar. As the first instrument for which one finds a large quantity of written music, the lute was a respected musical instrument in its time and probably the most popular string instrument of the Renaissance. There was more music written for the lute than any other instrument during the Renaissance.

The six-player performance was just a part of EMSL's repertoire. Members of the group, often supplemented by expert players from across

the country, have performed intimate house concerts, large-scale works for baroque orchestras and newly discovered chamber operas. Additionally, ensembles from EMSL have offered community outreach and educational programs with concerts and lecture demonstrations for school and community groups throughout Missouri.

EMSL instrumentalists and singers have devoted themselves to the study of the techniques and tastes of European performers and audiences of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, with the goal of offering modern audiences a glimpse of the variety and beauty of early singing styles as well as the timbres of original instruments. For more information about Early Music St. Louis and its concert and recital schedule, call (314) 773-8769.

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Down on the Bayeux



Maksimilian Szostalo, senior, history, looks at the end of a long, smaller-scale reproduction of the famous Bayeux Tapestry in professor Steven Rowan's "Europe in the Early Middle Ages" course. Students formed a wide circle to accommodate the lengthy "tapestry," which depicts the Norman Conquest of 1066.

PIECES, from page 10

While "Pieces of April" is writer/director Peter Hedges' first film as director, he has a long list of screen-writing credits behind him. Hedges has written novels and plays, as well as adapted stories for the screen, including his adaptation of "About a Boy," for which he won an Oscar. It is the characters and their unpredictability that make "Pieces of April" fun to watch. Just like real life, where you never really know what people will do next, we have to just go along for the ride. Despite the serious undertone that motivates the characters, the film focuses on comedy and how humor helps people cope in different ways. The director used a handheld camera that follows the actors to give us the feeling that we are being pulled along, with no idea what the next turn will bring. "Pieces of April" has the kind of real-life freshness that most mainstream movies lack.

High caliber acting and a script full of wonderful characters are what make this little film so enjoyable. Oliver Platt and Patricia Clarkson do their usual wonderful work as the long-married Jim and Joy, adding depth to the relationship and their feelings about what they both know lies ahead through small gestures and actions, without obvious dialogue. More unexpected is the strong performance from Katie Holmes as April, as changeable as the month she is named for. Holmes has a lot of screen time, and she handles this load well. Holmes does well letting us get to know her character and her feelings about her family as she copes with all the ups and downs of her day. Derek Luke plays the unconditionally loving Bobby, a character as different from his previous role as Antwone Fisher as you might imagine. The smaller roles are also sparkling gems too, with Sean Hayes' Wayne as funny and memorably weird and as completely unlike his character on TV's "Will and Grace." All indie films have to cope with smaller budgets but often reward audiences with better stories, as this one does. Director Hedges opted to shoot on digital video for his first film, perhaps to spend more on the better-known cast, with names familiar from TV and film. The cast is well worth it since each member brings a unique performance to the screen, quite unlike previous roles, and creates the perfect ensemble

of characters to carry the film. Working on digital allowed the filmmaker to save money since the film was shot in only 16 days, but there are visual limits to digital video. However, the character-based story and director of photography Tami Reiker's efforts to use the home-movie look of digital video to their advantage help make the choice work for this film.

There are plenty of Christmas films, so it is nice to see a Thanksgiving film with the potential to become a perennial favorite. In the hands of the usual Hollywood forces, this film would have become a series of predictable "required" scenes and two-dimensional stock characters. Writer/director Peter Hedges wisely lets his actors bring his script to life and lets these more complicated creations drive the film. His trust in the audience's ability to recognize the communality in the human experience of families spares us from the trite and predictable scenes of sentiment one sees only in movies and never in real life. The focus on real life makes this enjoyable little comedy the kind of film you might want to see again and again.



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