9-14-2015

Current, September 14, 2015

University of Missouri-St. Louis

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Mold has allegedly been growing in Villa Hall, the facility for housing those 21 and over on the University of Missouri—St. Louis South Campus for the past year. An outside company, United Infrastructure Corporation, was contracted to do an investigation on mold growth in Villa on August 27. The report that was produced from the investigation states that there was mold growth on the ceiling tiles on all three floors and the basement. Mold growth appeared in water pipes and in bathrooms. Even the third floor lounge was reported to have “efflorescence and water damage along the West wall.” It was also reported that there are areas where mold could potentially occur, such as uninsulated pipes and spots where dust and dirt were piling up.

Maintenance was called in the same month to take care of the mold growth. The ceiling tiles were quickly replaced, as reported by an anonymous student. However, the student was concerned that maintenance was not taking care of the underlying issue.

Larry Eisenberg, associate vice chancellor of facilities management, explains that the underlying problem is due to condensation and deteriorating insulation for the pipe system. The lack of constant temperature causes the pipes to collect moisture, making the pipes drip and thereby causing mold. This indicates that the insulation needs replacement. However, “it’s not that simple,” stated Eisenberg. “We just continued on page 3

**MARY CHICKOS
STAFF WRITER**

The grand opening ceremony of the new Recreation and Wellness Center (RWC) was held at the main entrance to the building at 2 p.m. on September 10. The ceremony and ribbon cutting were followed by tours of the facility and a reception. Student Government Association (SGA) President Cameron Roark, senior, criminology and criminal justice, opened the ceremony with a few remarks. He said that this was the vision of the students who voted for this. They committed their financial resources with their student fees. The actual ribbon cutting was done by several past and present SGA Presidents.

In his remarks, Chancellor Tom George said, “This is really the best. The absolute best. This is a great place to congregate. Come here, work out, exercise and have fun.” The President of the UM System, Tim Wolfe, followed, making a short speech to a small crowd gathered at the entrance to the RWC. Wolfe said, “Students be proud of the student contribution to the St. Louis community and to generations of students to come. I hope that you enjoy this recreation center for many years. It has been amazing to see the impact that it has had on student life. This is a great day to be on campus as we celebrate the grand opening of this unbelievable building. Throughout the University of Missouri System it is one the finest recreation facilities in the State of Missouri.”

A student referendum was passed by a majority of students in the 2011-2012 academic year to build this facility. The construction of a new building is a difficult task and countless hours were spent in meetings. Strong partnerships were formed with the architect Cannon Design and the general contractors, River City Construction.

Construction began in 2013. The RWC adds 100,000 square feet of space for open recreation, intramural sports, and wellness education. It is a building central to the continued University of Missouri—St. Louis campus development process. The RWC frames a campus quadrangle around ponds and provides a dramatic view of the surrounding architecture and landscape while offering a central location for the campus community.

**MARY CHICKOS
STAFF WRITER**

In an age when kids can use smartphones, computers, tablets and social media to do just about everything, teachers and educators face the challenge of finding innovative and modern teaching methods to keep students engaged in the classroom. University of Missouri—St. Louis student, Stephen Hanna, junior, information systems, may have found a solution to that. It all began when an idea to combine cutting-edge technology and education blossomed three years ago.

In 2012, Scott Cole, a family friend of Hanna’s, was working as the Director of Technology at St. Louis Charter School when he had the idea to create an online learning management system to help teachers create homework assignments, group projects, assessments, and surveys, in hopes of improving student performance and standardized test results. Branching off that idea, Cole, Hanna, Isaiah Cole, and another family friend Sam Cummings, got together and started a software company called ECCO (Educate Collaborate Communicate Online) Solutions with the goal of providing the latest technology to schools and small businesses. This past summer they finished designing their first product called ECCO Learning, a free online learning program with a social-media-meets-education outlook that helps bridge the gap between students, teachers, and parents in the learning environment.

“We are witnessing the first continued on page 6
**EDITORIAL**

Lori Dresner

**NEWS EDITOR**

Some may have noticed that the parking meters in Parking Lot E of the Millenium Student Center (MSC) and Parking Lot B of the J.C. Penney Building recently disappeared. In the past, the metered spaces were designated for visitors to the University of Missouri—St. Louis. According to Bob Samples, Associate Vice Chancellor of Communications at UMSL, the parking meters at both of these locations were removed due to new visitor parking being designated at the new Recreation and Wellness Center (RWC). Visitors can now park in the RWC's lot for two hours, but must obtain a visitor sticker from Parking and Transportation if they wish to park longer than two hours. The meters on South Campus remain.

**FEATURES EDITOR**

On the morning of September 13, some parts of North Campus experienced a water outage. The university sent out a campus wide e-mail about the outage at 12:42 p.m. According to the report, the completion of a planned new water connection was the source of the outage. An old joint failed when the line was reconnected, causing several of the campus buildings to be without water. Express Scripts Hall, Social Science and Business Building, Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center, Arts Administration Building, Thomas Jefferson Library, and the science complex were evacuated while the contractor attempted to fix the problem. Other parts of North Campus and South Campus were unaffected by the outage. The report estimated that the problem would be fixed between 2 and 4 p.m.

**THE UNDERCURRENT**

By Jessie Eikmann

**WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING IN THE FALL?**

**AMBER VISTER, Freshman, Criminology**

"Exercising and hanging out with my friends."

**SHEA SUMPTER, Senior, Liberal Studies**

"My birthday is in October."

**JORDAN FLETCHER, Junior, Finance**

"Playing basketball, because that's when my season starts."
UMSL Money Allocation May Lead to Villa Molding  

SARAH MYERS  STAFF WRITER

Continued from Page 1  
don’t have the funds to do it.”

And it could not be less simple. Eisenberg went on to explain that Villa needs money for renovation. This is a problem that does not just affect Villa, but the whole campus. In fact, the university has needed renovations that amount to $380 million. The campus science complex sent requests to the state for renovations back in 1992. Now, 23 years later, UMSL is getting the funds to renovate, though it is only for part of Benton and Studler Hall. “And it’s not even the whole amount,” Eisenberg said. “It’s only two-thirds.”

The university receives most of its operating funds from tuition and fees, but it also receives a significant amount from state appropriations. Looking into the reasons as to why the state does not give the money to UMSL for renovations requires more investigation.

If mold were to grow back in Villa, Eisenberg said maintenance would continue to replace the tiles, though they would want to prioritize replacing the insulation for the pipes. “We try to be quick to take care of it because it’s a potential health issue,” said Eisenberg. Specifically, stachybotrys and alternaria among other less hazardous molds were tested positive in Villa, both of which can cause potential health problems and allergens. One student was said to have been so sick that she left during Thanksgiving break, returning only to pack up her belongings. Another student reported that the mold problem was “not as bad as people think” and other students were unaware that mold was an issue in Villa. Students did report allergies, however. One student reported more sneezing and a stuffy nose becoming worse after moving into Villa. Another reported allergies but speculated that it could be due to allergy season or other reasons. The American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology verifies symptoms of sneezing, itchy throat, and wheezing as responses to a mold allergy. To treat the mold allergy one should stay away from mold and/or take medication. WebMD states that it is estimated that 5% of people have a mold allergy, and those with a severe allergy can have severe asthma attacks.

Dorm dwellers in Villa are left in frustration at the unresolved issue. One can look around and see with their own eyes the stained or peeled ceilings in various buildings, or the water damage in Villa, compared to the polished, newly constructed Recreation and Wellness Center. The observations have caused students to question the allocation of UMSL’s budget. Further investigation on financial sources and how decisions are made to prioritize money for general building renovations versus faculty renovations and the Recreation and Wellness Center project will be addressed in part two of this article.

Religious Protesters Take to UMSL Campus  

SARAH MYERS  STAFF WRITER

Two independent Christian demonstrators, Joshua and Ruth, took to the University of Missouri—St. Louis campus midday on September 10 to proselytize to the student body about their religious beliefs. Stationed just outside of the Millennium Student Center (MSC) bridge next to the main Quadrangle, Ruth explained their mission.

“We just love Jesus,” she said. “We don’t come here representing any name or group. Just the opposite. We just come here to inspire, to encourage you guys to seek out Jesus in a generation full of phonies, hypocrisies.” Ruth went on to explain that Joshua “called ahead and got authorization.” When asked who he called, she said, “I’m not sure. The administration.”

Joshua and Ruth are independent brother-sister followers of Jesus who have strong opinions about modern Christianity. Ruth handed out sets of pamphlets to students passing by.

The pamphlets contained criticisms of “ChriStainity” and the church, stating that modern churches “remain self-absorbed and fixated on the mantra ‘church,’ ‘church,’ ‘church’ to cover their laziness.” The pamphlet also criticized college degrees, explaining that “A degree from The Youniversity of Self-land… leaves all in a nightmare of debt, disillusionment and despair.” Joshua broadcasted with his booming voice across the courtyard, “70 percent of marriages end in divorce” and, “We’ve got to challenge those voices,” he said.

Some students took interest in Ruth and Joshua’s messages, taking a moment to have a more personal conversation with Joshua. The Quad became quiet for a few minutes as some onlooking students of the forty-or-so-person crowd voiced their opinions.

Some students were uncertain about his persuasion methods. “I don’t know if this is the right method or not. If he has a right to be here on this campus speaking, I’m glad to see him exercising that right,” said Nathaniel Marlette, senior, business administration. “I don’t think it’s wrong for him to be out here at all.”

“I’m looking at it from two different sides,” said Kenyatta Miller, senior, media studies. “This might actually help someone. But he’s yelling.”

Some found an opportunity to Snapchat the activity. Roman Franz, junior, psychology, stated, “I find it entertaining,” but found some of the opinions disrespectful. “There was a girl in a hijab by me and he shouted that ‘Mohammed doesn’t have the answers.’ Buddha

RWC Ribbon Cutting  

MARY CHICKOS  STAFF WRITER

Continued from Page 1  

The RWC has a variety of cardio equipment, including treadmills and ellipticals. It features top-of-the-line, strength training equipment, two hardwood gym courts for basketball, volleyball, badminton, and open recreation. There is one court for indoor soccer and floor hockey. It has a scenic indoor track with a short and long loop as well as a two-story climbing wall. The aquatics facility is state of the art, with lap lanes, a zip line, bouldering wall, vortex, leisure space, and a whirlpool. There are multipurpose rooms for fitness classes as well as locker rooms, a juice bar, and pro shop.

Currently enrolled students can use the facility by showing their TritonCard. Faculty, staff, alumni, and the community were also important in shaping the building, and they too have the opportunity to purchase memberships. The RWC offers a place for students to socialize and have fun. It also offers practical experiences for student employment in several areas of the facility. Additional information can be found at umsl.edu/campusrecreation.

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Lucas 494

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On September 2 at 2 p.m., a small crowd packed into Room 303 of the University of Missouri—St. Louis’ Lucas Hall to commemorate a change in the name of the advising office for the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the College of Fine Arts and Communication (COFAC). The advising office was officially named the Marcus Allen Advising Center. Its namesake, Dr. Marcus Allen, was a former professor of French and the first African-American faculty member at UMSL. Among the crowd were some members of Allen’s family, some of Allen’s former students, some of CAS’s academic advisors and other faculty of CAS and COFAC.

Dr. Marcus Allen grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. According to his wife Mary Allen, the inspiration for his career in French started early in his life. “When he went to high school, his sister had a French book. He recognized some words in the book and so he decided to take a French class,” Mrs. Allen said.

Allen first came to UMSL from another teaching job in Annapolis, Maryland in 1966. He was recruited to serve as the young university’s head of the French section of the Department of Modern Languages and Literature. In the twenty years that Dr. Allen taught French at UMSL, he racked up an impressive list of professional accomplishments. He received a post-doctoral Fulbright award in 1972 to study Voltaire’s work. He was also awarded the AMOCO Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award in 1976 and was his department’s chairman at UMSL for eight years. He continued to teach at UMSL until his retirement.

Dr. Allen was quickly able to ingratiate himself to the students, even though his distinction of being the first African-American faculty member was initially surprising to some. Mrs. Allen said, “He told me that one of his students back in his first day of teaching saw that his teacher was a black man and thought he was in the wrong class. Marcus welcomed him though and told him he was in the right class.” Despite such initial hang-ups, Dr. Allen established a genuine and supportive rapport with his students, in part because he was involved with more than just the classroom procedures. He took time for his students outside of class by hosting events like French club meetings at his house.

The large number of former students in the audience at the dedication ceremony was a testament to the impact Dr. Allen made on his students. One of them, Christel Maassen, said, “I miss his wisdom and his listening and his laugh. He was more than a teacher. He was a mentor and a good friend.”

Dean Ronald Yasbin of CAS opened the ceremony with a few words about Dr. Allen’s dedication. “Naming this incredibly successful student-centered facility for Dr. Allen is a natural linkage,” Yasbin said. “Dr. Allen was dedicated to student success and to enriching the academic experiences of his students. Although I was not fortunate enough to have known Dr. Allen, by studying his accomplishments and by talking to his peers I feel that he would have been proud and honored to have his name associated with an Academic Advising Center.”

Other speakers at the ceremony included Mrs. Allen, Associate Dean of CAS Elizabeth Eckeckamp, Associate Provost for Planning and Assessment Evelyn Isaac-Savage and Director of Languages and Cultures professor Birgit Noll. The closing of the ceremony was a dedication of the ceremony in French by Jeanne Zarucchi, professor of French and art history, in honor of the language in which Dr. Allen guided so many people.

To end the ceremony, Mrs. Allen and three other members of Dr. Allen’s family stood in front of the ceremonial ribbon. Mrs. Allen was given the privilege of cutting the ribbon of the Marcus Allen Advising Center. Following the conclusion of the ceremony, a reception was held on the third floor hallway of Lucas.

In addition to the new name, Dean Yasbin also announced that as of the Fall 2016 semester, a new department of Language and Cultural Studies was also established under the CAS umbrella. The Marcus Allen Advising Center will continue to assist undergraduate students in this and other CAS and COFAC departments with degree progress and course selections. Advising hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. To make an appointment, visit the Center at 303 Lucas Hall or call (314) 516-5501.

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UMSL’s Puzzling Pyramid

Upon visiting the campus for the first time, prospective or new University of Missouri-St. Louis students often go on a campus tour. On that tour, guides from the Welcome Center take students to the Thomas Jefferson Library, the St. Louis Mercantile Library, and several other locations. While being led towards the library, students notice the giant glass pyramid which rests on a large patch of grass next to it. Some students wonder why there is a pyramid. If they inquire, they are told that it serves as an elaborately arched walkway over a section of the Mercantile Library addition. Probing questions such as “Why a pyramid?” or “Whose idea was it?” yield an “I don’t know” response from their guide. Any lack of knowledge by the tour guides is not seen as a slight to the Welcome Center staff; they do a wonderful job of acquainting students with UMSL’s campus. But the mystery of the pyramid remains.

The fact of the matter is that the specific history behind the pyramid is veiled in secrecy. Linda Belford, Senior Manuscripts Specialist of the University Archives, provided a wealth of sources to pick through, including issues of The Current newspapers from the late 1980s, when the addition of the Mercantile Library had its beginnings. These newspapers reveal that the architectural contractor was Ittner & Bowersox, the construction began in 1988 and the expansion – including the pyramid and the reading room located below it – opened in 1990. However, information regarding the reasons why a costly glass pyramid was incorporated into the expansion is more difficult to find. Clues as to why the specific design elements were chosen are also elusive.

Dr. Blanche M. Toulouse, former chancellor, said that the attributes of the underground space were to resemble the inside of a ship with blue flooring and white walls, but Bill Bowersox, the chief architect of UMSL’s mystery symbols, pyramid, denied this. Raleigh Muns, assistant at the reference desk, provided information that UMSL’s glass pyramid was built and completed during the same time as the glass pyramid which towers over the Louvre Museum in Paris. The Louvre pyramid was designed by the famous architect I.M. Pei, whose construction company designed UMSL’s Toulouse Performing Arts Center. When asked about whether Pei had collaborated or had any influence on our pyramid, Dr. Toulouse said, “I would be inclined to say that he did. That’s my instinct.” However, Bowersox said that was not the case.

Pyramids have a particular significance within certain secret organizations such as the Freemasons and the Illuminati. The number of glass panes on Pei’s Louvre pyramid is 666, which is an obvious red flag, but Pei has said that the number is merely coincidence. There are 144 panes on UMSL’s pyramid. This number is of significance to sacred numerology and geometry enthusiasts. There also seems to be a connection between ancient occultism and pyramids or triangles within a circle, and UMSL’s pyramid is surrounded by a circular railing. Additionally, the plaque which commemorates the pyramid and library expansion as a whole is right next to the Stonehenge-esque archway bearing a Carl Sandburg quote. This is an interesting connection to mystery symbols, because Stonehenge, like the pyramids of ancient Egypt, is a monumental design and building mystery.

When asked about the inspiration behind choosing to construct a pyramid, the angles, and the number of glass panes on the pyramid among other attributes, Bowersox said, “It was strictly geometry. It just felt right.” Both Dr. Toulouse and Bowersox denied any affiliation with or knowledge of Freemasonry or any other occult practices.

UMSL Student Invents Educational Software

Continued from Page 1

LORI DRESNER NEWS EDITOR

LORI DRESNER NEWS EDITOR

ECCO Solutions Logo COURTESY OF ECCO SOLUTIONS

ECCO Learning incorporates education, collaboration, and communication into one navigable and secure online program. Teachers who use the program are able to create their own profiles and courses for their students, deliver classroom content and classroom news, and assign homework in a three-step process. They can also create formative and summative assessments and surveys for students. There is a classroom news feed, community feed and calendar feature that teachers can update to keep students and parents updated. Teachers can even follow one another and collaborate on ideas.

Students can also create their own secure personal profiles, and each class course is assigned a class ID so students are able to locate and follow their teachers and courses. Within the program, students can submit homework assignments and the gradebook feature allows students to view their grades and progress in a graph format. Each student account also comes with a parent account, which allows parents many similar features as students. They can monitor their child’s academic progress and stay informed on classroom activities. The program uses a messaging feature called ECCO messaging, which allows both students and parents to communicate back and forth with teachers about academic matters.

The program is already being used by a few teachers in the St. Louis area, one from Parkway Middle School, and another from Oakville High School. Hanna and the other founders are now in the process of designing an ECCO Learning app for smartphones, although the website is already mobile-friendly.

Their hope is for ECCO Learning to eventually be recognized and used in classrooms everywhere throughout the St. Louis area and beyond.

“The most effective learning cannot start on Monday and end on Friday. Neither can it be confined to the physical boundaries of classrooms in the daytime hours. We realize that when instructors, students and parents are all actively involved in the education process, it becomes exponentially more effective,” said Hanna.

To see the program and full features of ECCO Learning, visit www.eccolearning.com, and to find out more about ECCO Solutions as well as about their current and upcoming products and services, visit www.eccosolutions.net.
The Arianna String Quartet (ASQ) performed its “Essential Arianna” concert on September 11, 2015 at 8 p.m., at the E. Desmond and Mary Ann Lee Theater in the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts at University of Missouri—St. Louis campus.

In the 40 minute pre-performance, the ASQ discussed three of its favorite composers and why they were included in the set: Wolfgang A. Mozart, Kevin Puts, and Ludwig van Beethoven. The connecting traits among all these artists are change and contrast.

In the pre-show discussion, Julia Sakharova, violinist, described Mozart: “[O]n one hand, it’s very pure music, and you wanna keep it clean and nice, but, at the same time, there’s a lot of drama. There’s a lot going on.”

John McGrosso, first violinist, and Kurt Baldwin, cellist, marveled at the movements of Puts’ works. Drawing inspiration from transportation and common billboards marked “Believe,” Puts created a credo with mesmerizing paces that captured both the ASQ’s and the audience’s attention.

“There’s a certain vanity to variation in mood,” said Baldwin on Beethoven.

The ASQ favors a particular piece from Beethoven, captured by the idea of the mastermind rewriting one of his compositions, a strange thing begins to happen.

The current members did not need to understand the violinists’ own way the audience to lean forward in suspense.

The music at the Touhill was tangible. With crossed eyes, one ventured on an epic hero’s dark quest.

It was lonely. It was limping through a forest of mile high trees in blackness with bleeding limbs. It was five hours of calling out for your friend with no response. It was collapsing in the mud. It was being too drained, too exhausted to shed a tear. It was finally letting the eyelids shut—it was morning, dawnning. It was nature waking up. It was birds chirping. It was branches falling. It was men yelling. It was reunion. It was beautiful.

When it comes to the ASQ’s take on Mozart, Puts, and Beethoven—what ASQ defines as “essential” to its being—magical is the only word that comes to mind. The performers are passionate about their music. They embrace change. They can be found at ariannaquartet.com. For more information on upcoming events at the Touhill, contact 314-516-4949, or visit its website at touhill.org.
UMSL Athletics Hosts Tailgate

Students getting ready to play bubble soccer. KAT RIDDLER/THE CURRENT

The University of Missouri—St. Louis may not have a football team to host a traditional tailgate, but that does not stop UMSL from having a fun tailgate on September 12. The UMSL Athletics hosted their first tailgate at the Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center from 5 to 10 p.m. free of charge. This event was to introduce UMSL sports to students and to keep students aware of what athletics offers and does for the campus. The event was held at the practice field next to the Don Dallas Soccer Field as well as inside the Mark Twain Building. Jared Alexander, assistant AD for external operations, said, “This is the first of its kind that we have tried. We wanted to identify some key events that we could run. In the past we have had Pack the Stands which has traditionally been over the basketball season.”

Students could participate in a variety of sports and constantly moved between the inside and outside during the event. The soccer practice field was used for intramural sports such as bubble soccer, tossing bean bags, washers, and Ultimate Frisbee. Inside Mark Twain offered shooting hoops in the main gym and some other non-traditional sports: Nintendo 64 Mario Kart and ping pong.

Food was provided by Domino’s, Penn Station, and Strange Donuts inside around 6 p.m. Students were hungry from the physical exertion of the sports and eagerly stood in line for the great food.

ASHLEE CARLSTROM STAFF WRITER

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Weekly Sports Calendar

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<tr>
<td>Men’s Tennis ITA Regional Tournament all day (out of state)</td>
<td>Men’s Soccer 12 p.m. vs. Indianapolis (away)</td>
<td>Men’s Golf Break Yard Crossing all day (away)</td>
<td>Men’s Soccer 2:30 p.m. vs. Indianapolis (home)</td>
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The tailgate was not just playing sports, meeting the Athletics Department and UMSL athletes, and eating some food. Athletics also showed Space Jam at 7:30 p.m. as a cool down from the rest of the activities. Alexander said, “We want to create awareness on campus that athletics is here and the students that live on campus come over here and take in the events. We wanted to create an opportunity for the athletes to mingle and mix with the kids on campus.”

There was a great turnout of students that came to the tailgate and many of those students were a part of UMSL athletics. One of those UMSL athletic students was Jordan Boyce, junior, psychology. Boyce said, “We played hillbilly golf and that was a lot of fun.”

Kelly Kunkel, senior, marketing said, “I came to promote the fall sports and for the games and food.”

Evan Garrad, junior, biochemistry, is on the men’s soccer team. Garrad said, “We are trying to get all of the athletes and student body around the campus together and come out to the men’s soccer game tomorrow: Sunday, September 13 at 2 p.m.”

The UMSL Athletics hopes to host more events like the tailgate throughout the semester to introduce other sports- like Haunted Hoops for the men and women's basketball team around Halloween. The Athletics Department also wanted to take the opportunity of the tailgate to announce the opening home game for men and women’s soccer team that will be hosting Truman State University on UMSL’s campus at 2:30 p.m. Check out the athletics page for sporting schedules for opportunities to cheer on the many Triton athletes.

There is no question that the atmosphere on Friday was electric and the energy transferred onto the field. UMSL will be continuing their season in two weeks against St. Joseph’s on Friday, September 18th at 5 p.m.
The Apple Pencil is a Stylus, Deal with it

SARAH HAYES
A&E EDITOR

Ages ago, when the Cult of Jobs was in full swing, Apple just did not do styluses. “Styluses are for suckers!” Steve Jobs said to the group of Apple devotees. “We will never create a device that you need a separate tool for!”

Later, in the year 2015, Tim Cook faced the same group of Apple devotees and said, “Look at the shiny Apple Pencil! You can write on your iPad now! We just invented the stylus! Throw your wallets directly on the stage!”

In the corner of the conference, a group of Windows users glower in the LED light of their Surface tablets, black styluses firmly grasped between their fingers. “Man, whatever,” they muttered. One of them whispered apologies as he swept through reverent images of Bill Gates.

Listen, Apple. I use your iPhone. I use iTunes and the iPad. I do not have an iPad but dang, if you give me a free one, I would use it too. Nevertheless, I would like to formally request that Apple knock it off with the grandiose claims and need to charge nearly a hundred bucks for a fancy proprietary stylus. Perhaps getting over yourself is in order this year?

There is nothing inherently wrong with a stylus. It is a great way to actually write on a digital document, whether you need to sign a contract or do handwritten notes on a manuscript. For people with disabilities, the stylus makes tablets accessible in a way on-screen keyboards are not. Plus, drawing! All drawing tablet users everywhere worship their collection of e-pens and nibs with the kind of respect other people use for historical artifacts.

But the Apple Pencil reeks of arrogance on a level only an Apple product can evoke. First of all, it is a hundred bucks for a stylus. What is inside this Pencil that deserves such a price tag? Was it crafted inside the modern version of the “Harry Potter” shop Ollivander’s, with unique hair and fay years mixed in with the motherboard and wires? I can go onto Google Shopping and buy a fair number of styluses for either iPad or Samsung Galaxy for under thirty dollars. Like most of the items that Apple premiered this September, the Pencil has a price that is hard to check down.

Plus, the way that Apple presented it is the way Apple presents a lot of its devices—as an Apple-only invention, a work of divine technology kissed by the spirit of Steve Jobs and something only their company could craft. Well then, someone should inform them that many handheld and portable devices, including the Blackberry and the Windows Surface, have been putting styluses to screens for ages. After years of a Jobs-led Apple denying the existence of the stylus on their iPads, now it is the right time for them! It all seems circumspect, if not a full frontal attack on Windows’ rising tablet market.

Apple is fully aware that their iAcolytes will grab anything with their trademark bitten apple symbol. They are delivering their product to the loyal following and the loyal following is eating it up without looking at the price tag or asking if they really need it. Why? Because it is Apple. There is literally no other reason.

But please, enjoy your Apple Pencil, especially if you draw on a tablet or have a business tablet that requires a lot of handwriting and signatures. But let us be real: Apple is trying to reinvent the wheel and call it the iRoll. Why should they get away with it?

Yoko Ono an Overlooked Legend of Rock and Roll

ALBERT NALL
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to women in male-dominated musical genres, Yoko Ono, the widow of legendary Beatle John Lennon, is a name often overlooked. Depending on the interpretation, Ono is the oldest musical artist to have a number one hit in one of the musical categories—in this case, the dance charts. Between 2003 with “Walking on Thin Ice,” and 2014 in 2014 when she was 81 (Ono is currently 82) Ono has a total of 11 number one hits on the dance chart. One of those songs, “Hold Me” from 2013, features producer and remixer Dave Audé who has produced for artists ranging from Celine Dion and Rihanna to Celine Dion and Rihanna. All of Ono’s number one dance hits are remixes of previous material. Some of the songs are original recent recordings. Other songs date back to the late 60’s and much of the material she recorded with Lennon.

Traditionally amongst fans, debate rages as to whether or not Ono broke up the Beatles. Many music historians noted that the Beatles had problems well before Ono became a factor. The controversy delved into the experimental material that Lennon recorded with Ono while still active with the Beatles and was credited to the John Lennon and Paul McCartney songwriting partnership. Even to this day, much of the vitriol over the material Ono did with Lennon had to do with McCartney and his assertion that he should have been top billing on many of the works. And was credited to the John Lennon and Paul McCartney collaboration appeared on the Beatles 1968 self-titled LP. This would ultimately lead to the formation of the Plastic Ono Band by Lennon and Ono in 1969. One of the most prolific hits from the Plastic Ono partnership was “Give Peace a Chance,” which was number 14 in 1969. That song would ultimately become an anthem of the public opposition to the Vietnam War and its counterculture movements. In 2008, the 39 year anniversary of the song, a new digital interpretation, along with new vocals by Yoko Ono, enabled “Give Peace a Chance” to reach number 1 on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Play chart.

While Ono’s legacy with Lennon and the Beatles may have tarnished her reputation with the public, the commercialization of the Beatles by way of musical download makes Ono a source of awe. It also begs many questions about the level of proprietary interest that Yoko Ono holds in The Beatles, especially when it comes to the digital transfer of music to a home computer or smartphone, either legally or illegaly. Music stores can make billions from the music download, often with the encouragement of artists such as Ono.

For those who may be lucky enough to come across it, a six-disc collection of Yoko Ono’s work from 1968 to 1985 was produced by the Rykodisc label in 1992. The collection is a significant component of Ono’s legacy, whether with Lennon or solo. From her artwork to her music, there is a growing comprehension of Ono’s place in pop history. While Ono’s work is generally comprehended as being a signi cant leader of 1970’s experimental rock that dared to be acknowledged on its own is a growing recognition of Yoko and John Lennon, the audience was a momentous part of the music they made which continues to find an audience today.

Catching Flies

ABBY N. VIRIO
OPINIONS EDITOR

While the past year has seen an explosion of activism, heightened-awareness and conversation—as well as a resistance to it—some Americans have also dubbed 2014-2015 as “the year America was offended by literally everything.” Clearly, this is a vague and insensitive assumption. The big issues—race, gender identity, police brutality—are valid concerns arising from a legitimately deplorable history of circumstances still present today. On the other hand, could it be possible that the year the US rubber its sleepy eyes open also contributed to a national sense of paranoia and ‘surface’ activism?

In a world where need turns to fashion, fashion to style, style to trends and trends to memes (not to mention, politicians to memes), the US has created the first of its type in national-scale defense mechanisms—the activism trend. Suddenly, your Aunt Betty will not stop posting about Gluten, Cousin Kelly is testing everyone for Whooping Cough and your white, suburban neighbor is disgusted by the idea of a rebel flag sitting in a frame at the county museum. Is there anything inherently wrong with this? Of course not. Everyone has a right to their opinion, and the active participation of citizens in their community, especially as allies to those different from themselves, is key to a functioning society.

But I have a bone to pick with activists of a certain disposition and that is because activism is not a ‘trend’ and should not be used as a form of bullying.

Exhibit A: recently, I was involved in a conversation within a group of intelligent but also strongly opinionated individuals. Out of the blue, the topic of seasonal allergies arose. This was when the fellow to my right made a seemingly innocuous comment in response to a joke he read about allergies—“it is funny because you know, no one ever died of allergies.” Taken out of context, this is obviously untrue, and immediately, the room made a point of making this known to him. Suddenly, everyone’s third cousin-twice removed had a mortal lactose allergy and they were equally offended as if the lad had consciously said that he wished every last person with severe allergies died of anaphylaxis.

I was outraged but not about anaphylaxis. Seeing the embarrassment and shame on the student’s face, in addition to his feverish set of apologies, I could not help but feel protective of this boy. Here was a group of people getting to know each other for the first time, possibly a person looking to make new friends in a new school and discuss a joke he found funny and although it was obvious he meant to say “because the average, seasonal, pollen allergy never killed anyone,” his attempt to open up to the group was met with alienation and con-

Continued online at thecurrent-online.com
Finding a trend that flatters you most can be a challenge. That is why, for the next five installments, this column will explore ways to create affordable looks based on the trend that suits you most!

First up: preppy. When you think of dressing preppy, you may immediately imagine trust-fund kids spending their weekends on their parents’ yachts. Stereotypes can be deceiving. Dressing preppy can also mean a classic, clean-cut, and very put-together look. The outfit below, assembled via my most favorite online shop, is a great example of this classic style.

The outfit below, assembled via my most favorite online shop, is a great example of this classic style. This site, Polyvore.com, allows you to put together outfits with articles of clothing linked to the website they came from, along with the prices so you can get a feel of what your ideal outfit will cost. Polyvore.com is a handy tool in creating looks and finding new trends! It is easy to get down to business in this fall look!

To add a bit of pop to this outfit, I paired the skirt and top with a leopard print infinity scarf. This scarf provides a little bit of print to an otherwise solid color outfit. For some arm candy, a nude leather band-watch and a gold diamond-clustered bangle bracelet add some detailing to the outfit. Stackable jewelry is a huge trend right now and this simple yet classic pairing of the bracelet and watch tie this preppy outfit together. Finally, the handbag pictured is neutral enough that it will not distract from the bold emerald green skirt. This handbag is also the perfect size to hold all of your necessities and it will fit on your fore-arm nicely!

This preppy outfit is feminine and causal. You do not have to be a girly girl in order to dress preppy. Preppy simply says, “I look like I have it together, even if sometimes I do not.” Face it, as young women in college, we have to fake it until we make it and there is no better way to do that other than finding the style that fits your personality the best. Now, the preppy style is not the perfect style for everyone, so it is important to explore your personal preferences, but once you do, flaunt it!

Skirt: $8.50 amazon.com
Shirt: $4.55 amazon.com
Boots: $36.00 jcpenney.com
Scarf: $9.99 scarfand.com
Earrings: $25.00 macys.com
Watch: $18.00 charmingcharlie.com
Bracelet: $8.00 charmingcharlie.com
Handbag: $39.00 charmingcharlie.com
The Iranian Nuclear Deal: Promise of Peace Or Throttling Towards War

KAT RIDDLE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With 42 United States Senators in support of the nuclear arms deal brokered by the administration of President Obama between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany, it appears that a promised Permanent Iran nuclear agreement has been reached. It would take 60 votes in the Senate to end debate and pass a vote of disapproval. What that effectively means is the agreement is a done deal. But with the 2016 Presidential election ramping up the rhetoric, the debate and possible future facts of what is most major foreign policy agreement of our time is far from over. It will likely be a major point of discussion in the second national Republican Presidential debate on Wednesday of this week (9/16/15).

This should be a particularly important issue for students as the impact of a wrong calculation on either side could further destabilize the Middle East, perhaps lead to a preemptive attack either by Iran on Israel or Israel on Iran, a conflict that would inevitably draw in the United States. It has been a generation since many of our fathers were subject to a native Iran during the Vietnam War, while they may have been of college age as well. The type of war we would see in the region - if war broke out between Israel and Iran - would not be over quickly or be waged only from the air. We could see a return of selective service and a tremendous draw in the United States. It has been 40 years did not fifty years did not victory that would inevitably result if they decide to break the agreement, by many estimates, would only be about a year away from bomb making capability. Iran has five to ten years range and an agreement that does not permanently dismantle their nuclear program, centrifuges and all, is only a stopgap on a road to Iran achieving nuclear weapons capability. Iran also has a sophisticated missile producing capability of its own which they have been working on and are less fundamentalist, as well as they can participate in the world economy. They are a well-educated society and are less fundamentalist, as well as more secular, than their leaders. Given time, Iran may be a great thing to watch for, but they are already capable of reaching Israel. This agreement was also the out Russia needed to lift an arms embargo against Iran, leading to a rush in Russian arms producers further modernizing Iran's already large and well trained military.

CON: Iranian Nuclear Agreement Makes World Less Safe

Point: Iranian Nuclear Agreement Best Hope For Peace

KAT RIDDLE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Without an international agreement to curtail Iran's nuclear ambitions, it would only be a matter of time before they had nuclear weapons. Some of the biggest opponents of the deal, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have repeatedly said how close they believe Iran was developing a nuclear weapon. The sanctions have definitely hurt the Iranian economy but given how long they have been in place, it was difficult that its continuation would have brought Iran to its knees before they had acquired a nuclear weapon. Sanctions have not forced the insane North Korean leadership to give up their nuclear weapons, forgo illegal testing or end the development of their guided missile program as they try to develop longer range capability to reach the continental United States. They have been isolated from most of the world for decades and their economy is in far worse shape than Iran's economy.

If sanctions alone are not going to stop Iran from getting a nuclear bomb, then we are faced with Israel's vow to prevent Iran from getting the bomb as a matter of their national survival. A preemptive military strike against Iran's nuclear facility targets would be the most likely response. Given our close relationship with Israel, the United States would be drawn into the ensuing war between Israel and Iran and Iran's proxy forces of Hezbollah.

There is no way to miscalculate as to how far along Iran is in the production of a bomb and one is detonated, Israel has its own nuclear capacity and would use it. Untold millions of innocent civilians on both sides would be slaughtered and a large part of the globe poisoned for generations. In light of this, the biggest risks in the name of peace is worth it.

Opponents on Capitol Hill should understand that while America is a great nation, it is not the only nation in the world. This agreement was not just reached between the U.S. and Iran but with France, Russia, China and Germany. If we were to continue with our sanctions against Iran, those countries would not. We must remember that the negotiations are against Cuba for fifty years did not bring desired regime change either.

The religious demagoguery of some of their leaders are a large part of the Iranian people want peace. They want the sanctions lifted so they can participate in the world economy. They are a well-educated society and are less fundamentalist, as well as more secular, than their leaders. Given time, Iran may be a great thing to watch for, but they are already capable of reaching Israel. This agreement was also the out Russia needed to lift an arms embargo against Iran, leading to a rush in Russian arms producers further modernizing Iran's already large and well trained military.

Owners have likened the victory lap being taken by the Obama Administration to the Prime Minister of Great Britain Neville Chamberlain's reaction to an agreement he believed he had reached with Adolf Hitler on the eve of WWII. In late September 1938, Chamberlain flew to Munich to meet personally with Hitler. The Nazi leader signed a letter with Chamberlain pleading to forgo greater territorial aims in exchange for annexing a large portion of Czechoslovakia. When Chamberlain returned home, he waved the letter at the cheering crowds and said, "I believe it is peace for our time." Less than a year later, on September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland and Great Britain found itself at war, sparking World War II.

The day after an initial six month agreement was announced, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu summed it up the frustration and worst fears of our strongest ally in the Middle East by saying, "What was reached last night in Geneva is not a historic agreement, it is a historic mistake." You do not reward a rogue nation for taking a time out.