

12-5-2016

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University of Missouri-St. Louis

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The Current

1966

Celebrating 50 Years as

2016



UMSL'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWS

VOL. 50

ISSUE 1518

DECEMBER 5, 2016

Holiday Guide 2016

Non-Specific

National Cookie Day

WHEN: 12/4, 12:00PM-4:00PM
WHERE: Delmar Loop
WHAT: Collect a new cookie recipe and/or try out some of the great baked goods available. The Craft Alliance will host a craft event – stop by and make a candy cane mouse you can take home or trade for a cookie at a participating retailer. Keep an eye out for holiday characters!

UMSL Women's Chorale

WHEN: 12/6, 7:30PM
WHERE: UMSL, Touhill, Lee Theater
WHAT: The UMSL Women's Chorale will be presenting a concert entitled, "Songs of Peace and Unity."

Ambassadors of Harmony

WHEN: 12/9, 2:00PM, 8:00PM; 12/10, 2:00PM, 8:00PM; 12/11, 2:00PM, 7:00PM
WHERE: UMSL, Touhill, Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall
WHAT: The Ambassadors of Harmony will be performing "Sounds of the Season 2016."

2nd Annual Great Gift Hunt

WHEN: 12/10, 9:00AM-1:00PM
WHERE: Delmar Loop
WHAT: Make a purchase during the Great Gift Hunt and receive a holiday gift bag. The gift bag may contain candy, a gift certificate from that business, or a gift certificate for the grand prize, The Loop Family Day Package (including everything you and your family need for a fun filled day in The Loop). Don't forget to check out the Holiday Market!

National Ugly Holiday Sweater Days

WHEN: 12/16, 8:00PM; 12/17, 12:00PM-4:00PM
WHERE: Delmar Loop
WHAT: On Friday, there will be an Ugly Sweater Pub Crawl and Sweater Contest that will start at The Eclipse Bar at the Moonrise Hotel. The Ugly Sweater Reindeer will present the ugliest sweater winner with a night's stay at the Moonrise Hotel. On Saturday, pose with Santa or the Ugly Sweater Reindeer. Don't forget those ugly pet sweaters! El Monstero tradition will be at The Pageant both days.

Kwanzaa

33rd Annual Kwanzaa Holiday Expo

WHEN: 12/17, 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; 12/18, 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
WHERE: Better Family Life Cultural, Educational and Business Center
WHAT: In this expo featuring films and speakers, learn about Kwanzaa, eat some great food, and take your children to a safe space where they can engage in culturally inspiring activities.
COST: \$5 donation at the door (pre-purchase your tickets at kwanzaa-holidayexpo.com/)

Kwanzaa: Festival of the First Fruits

WHEN: 12/28, 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
WHERE: Missouri Botanical Garden's Ridgway Visitor Center
WHAT: This Kwanzaa ceremony highlights a day of storytelling, craft and jewelry displays, and authentic African drumming and musical performances.

Kwanzaa Celebration

WHEN: 12/28, 4:00 p.m.
WHERE: Delmar Loop, Market Plaza
WHAT: Enjoy the Kinara Lighting Ceremony and a performance by stu-

dents from Bertha Knox Gilkey Pamoja Prep. Academy at Cole.

Kwanzaa Celebrations at the Saint Louis Art Museum

WHEN: 1/1
WHERE: Saint Louis Art Museum
WHAT: Enjoy an afternoon of culture, performance, and tradition during the Saint Louis Art Museum's annual Kwanzaa celebration.

Hanukkah

Hearing Without Listening, Seeing Without Listening

WHEN: 12/5, 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
WHERE: UMSL, Fireside Lounge
WHAT: Join the UMSL Jewish Student Association to hear from Rabbi Goldson for a fascinating commentary on communication and Chanukah.

Chanukah: Festival of Lights

WHEN: 12/18, 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
WHERE: Missouri Botanical Garden's Ridgway Visitor Center
WHAT: A traditional celebration that includes festive Israeli music and dance, a menorah-lighting ceremony and Chanukah merchandise provided by local vendors and the Garden Gate Shop.

Show Me Chanukah Menorah Lighting

WHEN: 12/24, 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: Delmar Loop, Market Plaza
WHAT: Join the Menorah Lighting officiated by Rabbi Novak. Afterwards, enjoy live Klezmer music by a student band, Chasidic dancing, free hot latkes, and chocolate gelt.

Christmas

Mass on Campus: Feast of the Immaculate Conception

WHEN: 12/8, 12:30PM
WHERE: UMSL, JC Penney Building, Room 204
WHAT: Join us to celebrate this feast of the Immaculate Conception! All are welcome-- you do NOT have to be Catholic to attend!

Christmas Candlelight Tours

WHEN: 12/9-12/10
WHERE: Daniel Boone Home, Defiance
WHAT: Take a trip back to the 1800s this Christmas. Stroll through the historic property as thousands of candles light your way.
COST: \$15 for adults, \$10 for children. A limited number of tickets are available and reservations are highly recommended. To make a reservation, call (636) 798-2005.

Tenth Annual Christmas at the Cathedral

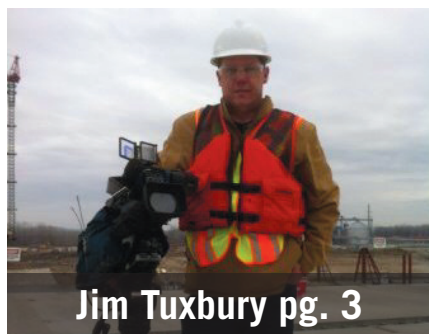
WHEN: 12/10-12/11
WHERE: Cathedral Basilica
WHAT: This concert is the perfect way to celebrate the holiday season. It includes the Archdiocesan Adult Choir, Children's Choir, Handbell Choir, and Orchestra.

The Nutcracker by the St. Louis Ballet

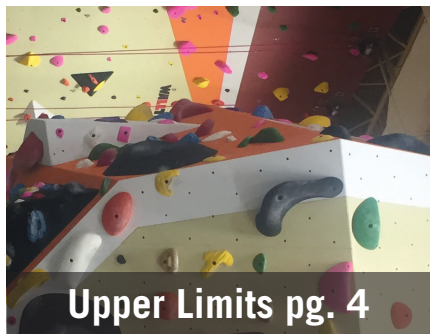
WHEN: 12/16-12/23, 2:30PM, 7:30PM
WHERE: UMSL, Touhill, Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall
WHAT: Gen Horiuchi's version of The Nutcracker incorporates spectacular effects such as glitter, smoke and pyrotechnics plus new choreography each

More events at thecurrent-online.com

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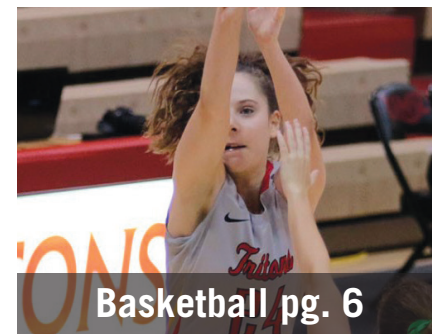
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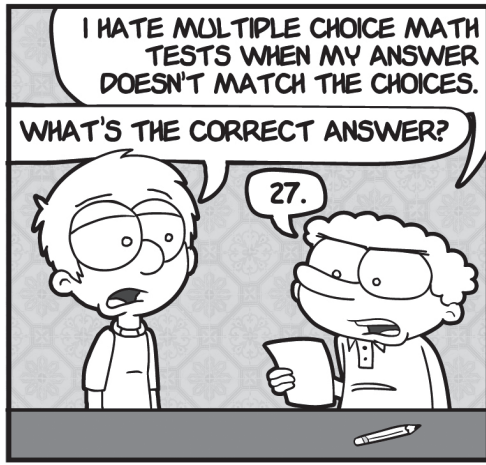
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ON THE QUAD BY MIKE DILIBERTO

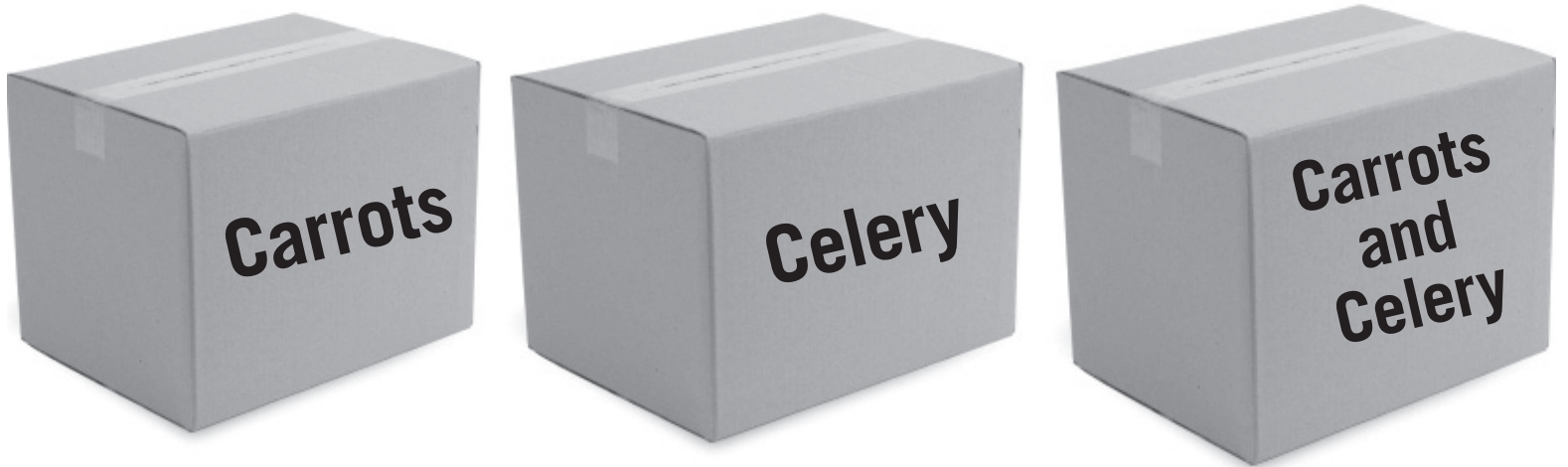
WANNA GET INVOLVED ON CAMPUS?

Learn more about student organizations, leadership opportunities, service activities, and more with the Office of Student Involvement
umsl.edu/studentinvolvement

GAME CORNER

The UMSL MATH CLUB Presents: Problem of the Week

This week's puzzle: There are three boxes. One is labeled "carrots", another is labeled "celery", and the last box is labeled "carrots and celery". You know that each box is labeled incorrectly. You may ask me to pick out one vegetable from one box, whichever you choose. By doing that, how can you label all three boxes correctly?



Who is The Free Hugs Guy?

BRIAN SHERRILL
STAFF WRITER

One student has allegedly been coasting throughout the University of Missouri—St. Louis campus giving people something free all semester. His shenanigans have been elusive, and he has been mysterious, but The Current has sought him out.

He glides across the quad

like a falling leaf in the wind, and he slides in and out of buildings with a tall, brown, cardboard sign on a stick with "free hugs" scribbled on it in black sharpie, searching to serve out some justice and some smiles. Many students have probably already heard of him. Some have laid witness to his antics. They call him "The Free Hugs Guy," and he gives

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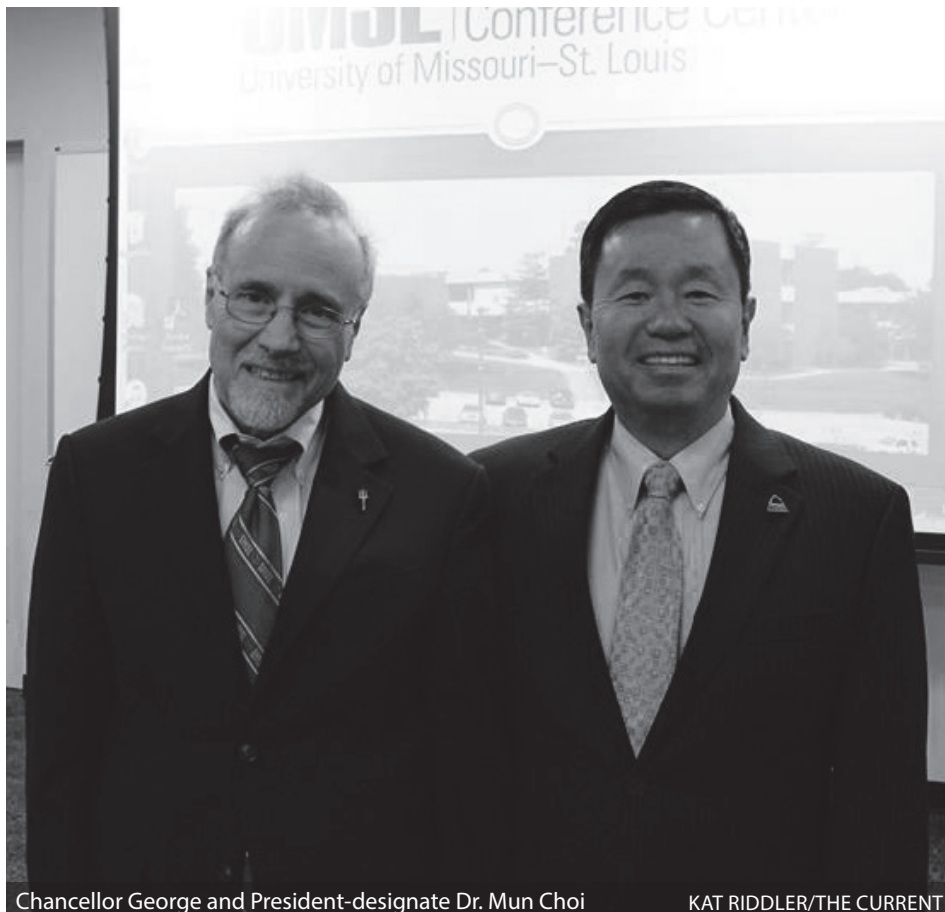
"Free Hugs Guy" or Jacob Ragsdale BRIAN SHERRILL/THE CURRENT



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Weather forecast table with days of the week and temperatures: MON 46/37, TUE 44/29, WED 37/19, THU 25/15, FRI 26/16, SAT 37/29, SUN 37/24



Chancellor George and President-designate Dr. Mun Choi

KAT RIDDLER/THE CURRENT

New UM President-Designate Visits UMSL

LORI DRESNER
NEWS EDITOR

Visiting all four of the University of Missouri campuses last week, UM System President-Designate Mun Choi made his first stop at the University of Missouri-St. Louis on November 29. A public reception to welcome Choi was held that morning in Century Rooms A and B of the Millennium Student Center.

Around 150 faculty, staff, students, community members, and reporters from several media outlets crowded the room to hear remarks, which were made by Dr. Choi, Chancellor Thomas George, and Pamela Quigg Henderson, chair of the University of Missouri Board of Curators.

"The University of Missouri is a strong and proud institution, and together, working with you, we want to increase the level of excellence and stature. But we can only do that if we come together as a group, and I look forward to doing that with all of you," said Dr. Choi in his remarks.

Thanking the audience, Choi concluded, "I'm very pleased to be at UMSL today and very pleased to lead this wonderful University of Missouri System."

After remarks concluded, Chancellor George invited those in attendance to come forward and speak with Choi.

Dr. Choi, Chancellor George, and David Russell, Interim Chief of Staff, met with a variety of students from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in J.C. Penney 202. Dr. Choi asked to hear from students on their experience with UMSL and improvements they would

like to see from the campus up to the UM System as a whole.

Dr. Choi discussed what he hopes to achieve as the next president of the UM System. "The key goal I want to help implement is to have all of the university—all four campuses—surely become a university of excellence," Dr. Choi said. "A student-faculty focused approach is what is going to be taken at the system's office."

Dr. Choi continued to discuss what is important to focus on at the four universities in the future. "...We have to continue to hire outstanding faculty members who are nationally competitive and who perform research, but also commit to teaching. Their research informs their teaching and their teaching informs their research. That's how we are going to become a better, stronger, more reputable system," he said.

While graduation ceremonies on all the campuses overlap, Choi promised if he could not make it to each campus at that time that he would visit another time. Dr. Choi said, "Even though my office is in Columbia, I am not going to be a stranger to St. Louis."

Following his visit to UMSL, Dr. Choi visited the Missouri University of Science and Technology on Wednesday, the University of Missouri-Columbia Campus on Thursday, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City on Friday.

Named the incoming president on November 2, Dr. Choi will officially assume his position on March 1, 2017. Dr. Choi currently serves as provost and executive vice president of the University of Connecticut. He will be the 24th president of the UM System. Michael Middleton is the current Interim President of the UM System.

CAMPUS CRIME REPORT

SARAH HAYES
A&E EDITOR



The following is a series of daily crime reports issued by the University of Missouri-St. Louis Police Department between November 23 and November 30. Reports for December so far have not been made available online as of the writing of this article.

November 23: At 3 p.m., a student at Benton Hall reported losing their cell phone. At 5 p.m., UMSL PD towed an abandoned Dodge Caravan at West Drive and Natural Bridge after it had been parked and left behind in the roadway.

November 24: No incidents were reported on this date.

November 25: At 10:41 a.m., a campus pick-up truck that had been reported stolen on November 11 was recovered off campus.

November 26: At 1:15 p.m., a campus visitor in Lot E requested an ambulance after reporting pain in their hip and leg.

November 27: The report for this date was erroneously misfiled with the report for October 27. Information for November 27 is not available.

November 28: At 12 p.m., a staff member was transported from the Millennium Student Center (MSC) to the hospital after reporting feeling dizzy. At 12:36 p.m., a computer tower in Benton Hall was reported stolen at a time between November 18 and 28. At 7:15 p.m., a purse was found in the Social Sciences & Business Building (SSB) and turned over to the UMSL PD for safe

keeping; the owner was notified.

At 10:10 p.m., UMSL PD responded to a report of a suspicious person on West Drive. The person was determined to be a relative to a student on campus who was in a computer lab. At 11:10 p.m., an ID was found in Bellerive Hall and was turned over to UMSL PD for safe keeping; the owner was notified.

November 29: At 11 a.m., a cell phone and charger were found in SSB. They were turned over to UMSL PD and were later retrieved by their owner. At 1 p.m., UMSL PD responded to a report of a suspicious older male in the MSC TV lounge. The man was identified as an alumnus and left without incident. At 1 p.m., a car key and fob were found in the Mercantile Library and were turned over to UMSL PD for safe keeping.

At 3:20 p.m., a purse and checkbook were found in the Mercantile Library and turned over to UMSL PD; the owner was notified. At 8:15 p.m., a driver's license was found at Oak Hall and turned over to UMSL PD. At 10:17 p.m., a debit card was found at SSB and turned over to UMSL PD; the owner was notified.

November 30: At 12:52 p.m., a set of car keys was found in the Research Building and was turned over to UMSL PD. During the day, Provincial House reported a past accidental injury incident after a visitor was taken to the hospital by a relative after falling on campus property.

NSLS Inducts New Members

LORI DRESNER
NEWS EDITOR

The National Society of Leadership Success (NSLS) chapter at the University of Missouri-St. Louis held its most recent induction ceremony on December 1 at 7 p.m. Eighty-eight new members were inducted into the society and 50 people attended the ceremony, which was held in Century Rooms A and B of the Millennium Student Center.

Inductees received a Certificate of Leadership Training at the ceremony. Members are inducted upon completion of several steps in a leadership program, including orientation, a leadership training day, three speaker broadcasts, three success networking team meetings, and participation in the induction ceremony.

There are currently 88 additional members in UMSL's NSLS chapter who are working on completing steps toward induction. President Fatima Amtashar,

senior, biochemistry and biotechnology, said, "We're very proud of our members. The Society has had a significant impact on our campus, inspiring our students to become better leaders and helping them build a better future for themselves, the campus, and their respective communities."

The selection process for membership in the NSLS is based on students' academic standing and leadership potential. Membership in the NSLS is for life, and members receive access to scholarships, awards, exclusive on-campus events, an online job bank, and discounts on computers, textbooks, grad school prep courses, and insurance, among other benefits.

Founded in 2001, the NSLS is the nation's largest leadership society. The society was founded to build a community of like-minded, success-oriented individuals who come together to help each other succeed. The NSLS has 525,000 members on nearly 500 colleges and universities.

Upper Limits Opens New Chesterfield Location



One of the bouldering walls at Upper Limits, which features "cave climbing"

LEAH JONES/THE CURRENT

LEAH JONES
FEATURES EDITOR

University of Missouri–St. Louis climbers who did not have the chance to go to the bouldering competition on November 15 at the Recreation and Wellness Center (RWC) could have gone to the grand opening of a new Upper Limits climbing gym in Chesterfield on Saturday, November 12. The gym held a soft opening for members a few weeks before, but this event introduced the general public to the climbing

facility. Local businesses promoted their products in the parking lot while a man on stilts made balloon hats for both children and adults. The mobile wall, a climbing wall on wheels, jutted into the open air, giving climbers a chance to experience climbing outdoors as well.

The activities and events inside the facility were just as exciting and busy as the events in the parking lot. Liz Hanson, an employee at the new facility, said, "I know we did over a hundred within the first hour. We are probably around three or four hundred [now]."

The patrons also had the opportunity to win prizes. "The first hundred people through our door this morning got a ticket and then they were entered into the raffle for a free year membership," said Hanson.

Henry Cook, another employee, said "For a year membership, it is going to be around \$650, so it's a huge value."

The new gym features a 14.5-foot-tall bouldering wall. The boulder boasts an open cavern which extends nearly 15 feet back underneath the wall. This means that climbers spend a large

portion of these climbs upside-down, before they reach the vertical portion of the wall. This upside-down climbing, known as cave climbing, can be exhausting and requires climbers to use their arms, legs, and core muscles.

Cook pointed out these bouldering routes are also longer than most bouldering routes, requiring an average of 25-30 moves per climb. "You need crazy endurance," he said.

Owner Chris Schmick agreed and said, "It's almost like doing a [tall wall] route, but you don't have to rope up.... You get so tired at the end." Schmick included the unique feature because the space had previously been used as a gymnastics studio. The cavern area used to be a foam pit. "So, I figured we'll keep the pit and have the climbing wall come out of it," Schmick explained.

Another unique feature of the new facility is the Wacky Wall. The Wacky Wall caters to both children and the young-at-heart. "There's not that many of them in the country. It's kind of a new thing, especially for this area...It's climbing elements, but it's not your traditional climbing elements," Schmick said.

The Wacky Wall is housed in its own room away from the bouldering and tall wall. It features a beanstalk, a maze wall, faces that spin, and a game in which climbers move a puck up the wall as they go. Schmick said, "It's kind of like a climbing challenge course."

Continued on thecurrent-online.com

Returning Student Jim Tuxbury Finds Lifelong Mentor

CANDICE MURDOCK
STAFF WRITER

Jim Tuxbury, senior, is a returning student who is currently obtaining a degree in electrical engineering with a math minor. However, Tuxbury, who is graduating this year on December 17, is more than just a regular student. He is a student who is transitioning from a career in media to a career in electrical engineering.

Long before his journey into the engineering world, Tuxbury had a burning passion for media. His passion for media was apparent as a small child through his loyalty to radio, news, and the world at large, while he says his peers' interests were more directed towards music. His curiosity about the world plus his interest in media turned in to his desire to make it a career.

Tuxbury talked about the origin of his passion for media. He explained, "While all my friends were listening to music on their radio, I was listening to KMOX radio because I was so curious about what was going on in the world around me; as I got older that curiosity just got deeper, so that eventually turned into a career."

His childhood passion inspired him to study media further at the University

of Missouri–St. Louis, where he began his college career in 1983. He earned his BA in speech communication with an English minor in 1988 at UMSL. While attending UMSL, he cultivated his interest in media by working at *The Current* as an assistant news editor. He also met one of his long-term mentors in his sophomore year of college. His mentor, Michael Murray, who is currently a media studies professor at UMSL, became his advisor.

After receiving his degree in speech communications, he went to Iowa and began cultivating his skills at a local television market, learning the craft of working a television camera. While learning the craft of camera work and also building his resume, he landed a job at the local St. Louis news station KSDK. Even though Tuxbury is a trained photojournalist, he realizes that honing the craft is still as important as it was when he began. He said, "After all the training, I'm still learning. Every day is different, and no two situations are the same. As a trained photojournalist, you better be ready to handle any situation that comes your way."

Around 10 years ago, Tuxbury began to evaluate his future goals and decided to take an astronomy class at St. Louis Community College at Meramec.



Jim Tuxbury, on location with camera in hand

COURTESY OF JIM TUXBURY

After succeeding in the astronomy class, he realized that he could take on the next challenge in his life. He explained, "I took an astronomy class at Meramec to see if I could keep it all together, and I kept moving along; I'm not sure how it became engineering, but I took a math class next and one thing led to another and I'm graduating in December."

This time around, Tuxbury became involved in the joint engineering program, which includes taking classes at UMSL and Washington University. Although the major he studies is different from his previous degree, there is one element that has been consistent throughout his journey: his mentor, Professor

Continued on thecurrent-online.com

'Pokémon Sun' and 'Pokémon Moon' Bring A New Feel To An Old Franchise

KAT RIDDLER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The new Pokémon game seems to shift from the beloved theme of “to be the best that no one ever was” to “to catch them all is my real test, to train them is my cause.” “Pokémon Sun” and “Pokémon Moon” are the newest Pokémon installments, released on November 18 in the United States. The game was highly anticipated this year, as 2016 celebrates Pokémon turning 20 years old.

Those who have played the previous Pokémon games will notice the difference immediately in the Alola region as gym battles are turned into island trials. Instead of training your Pokémon to compete and collect badges, trainers face an totem Pokémon (aka a Pokémon with a power-up). Once you defeat the single Pokémon—or a couple Pokémon, as wild Pokémon can now call for help during a battle—or face a grand trial then you are given a Z crystal. The crystal can be used during battle to power up certain types of Pokémon moves and can also be shown to Pokémon Center clerks for more item selection. Also, no Pokémon League. But there is a Battle Tree for those seeking more competition.

The shift away from competition is also seen with the player's rival, if that



The logos for the latest two Pokémon games

COURTESY OF NINTENDO

is what you call Hau. Traditionally, the rival always chooses his starter Pokémon with the type advantage against your starter Pokémon. Instead, Hau chooses the Pokémon with a type disadvantage, making battles with him super easy. His personality is also very laissez faire as he does not seem to care that he is easily defeated each time.

There are 801 Pokémon available to catch in the game. That may seem like a lot. From the previous game, “X” and “Y,” there are 721. So only a little less than 100 were added. But to make the old ones seem new, there are Alola forms of certain Pokémon from the original 151 set. Those Pokémon

change type and have a new set of moves it can learn along with a change in physical appearance. With that many Pokémon, trainers are constantly catching Pokémon as they travel through the grass. This also puts a focus on catching over battling.

With experience share given at the beginning and experience share going to your whole party, it then becomes super easy to level up Pokémon. There are also lots of healing opportunities besides the many Pokémon Centers on the four islands of Alola. Heal up often, keep catching Pokémon, and battle the occasional trainer.

Battling Pokémon and knowing

type advantages is less of a focus in the game. If you have seen the Pokémon before or if you have caught it, the game remembers it and tells the player which moves are super effective. While it can be argued that it is helpful when trying to remember 801 types and what is good against what, it kind of takes away from knowing the Pokémon. People can just look up the Pokémon type once, fight it using the internet's advice, then rely on the handicap from then on.

Even in Global Link, where one can battle anyone around the world—a place of traditional competition—there is still a feel of camaraderie within these events. The first global mission is from November 29 through December 13. The goal is for trainers to catch as many Pokémon as they can to reach a combined goal of 100 million Pokémon. If met, each participant receives 1,000 Festival coins to use, and if not they receive 100 coins to use.

Overall, I love Pokémon. That being said, this Pokémon game is not what I am used to when I think of traditional Pokémon games. But change can be good. “Sun” and “Moon” make bold new choices to add to the gameplay, making the 20-year-old game feel new. Just know that it is definitely shifting from the traditional competition feel to “Gotta Catch ‘em All.”

Rating: B+

Opera Returns To Touhill With Markou Concert

DANYEL POINDEXTER
STAFF WRITER

The saying goes, life is a test. Apparently, opera is no exception.

On December 1 at 7:30 p.m., Dr. Stella Markou brought opera once again to the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center through a free performance showcasing the stages, appearances, and concepts of love. Acting as both director and narrator of the production, Dr. Markou informed the audience at the beginning that, while it was a show for us, this performance was also a test for the students—a test which many would agree after the applause from the night's performance the performers passed with flying colors.

Before the individual performances are introduced, however, one must first thank the pianist, Donna Pyron, for constantly keeping a steady hand at the piano. She flawlessly complimented the students' performances and brought a professional air to the atmosphere while never losing a beat.

It is common knowledge that, as it pertains to love, there are ups and downs that people must endure to

move on. Unfortunately, that aspect also includes driving through the stage of isolation and destitution, a stage veraciously performed by Cory Frank, freshman, vocal performance, through the piece “Lonely House” by Kurt Weill, which opened the concert. Frank combined his talent for singing with his talent for acting, allowing his voice to be the guide for his physical emotions. In fact, each piece performed by these student not only held a quality of strong, willing voices, but captured their emotional turmoil and delight through the movement of hands, stomping of feet, and wringing of faces.

Shortly after, he was followed by the embodiment of love itself, presented by Valencia Branch, junior, music, singing soprano for Christoph Willibald Gluck's “Gli squardi trattieni.” This piece was an admirable compliment to the one before it, showing that while loneliness may come with the consequence of love, it is best to heed warning signs that may stop you before it is too late. This warning or trouble of love was very adamant in many other performances like the famous piece

Continued on thecurrent-online.com

'Don't Breathe' Is A Don't-Miss Movie

MICHELLE REYNOLDS
STAFF WRITER

When I first saw the trailer for “Don't Breathe,” I thought, oh no, not another cheesy horror movie. Upon seeing the movie, my previous thoughts were completely forgotten. “Don't Breathe” is a refreshing, spine-tingling addition to the overcrowded horror movie genre.

The film follows three teenagers, Money (Daniel Zovatto), Rocky (Jane Levy), and Alex (Dylan Minnette), who feel trapped in their run-down town of Detroit. They decide to rob a man who is rumored to be sitting on \$300,000 and use the money to escape to far and better places. With the target being blind, they thought the heist would be easy, but it is anything but easy. The blind man (Stephen Lang), who is never actually named in the movie, turns into someone like Liam Neeson from “Taken” and teaches the audience never to underestimate anybody.

Twenty-sixteen seemed packed with horror movies: “Lights Out,” “Purge: Election Year,” “The Conjuring 2,” “10 Cloverfield Lane,” “The Boy”—the

genre seems to be getting overcrowded. But “Don't Breathe” stands out like a bright beacon in a dark forest. With its cast of up-and-coming actors like Levy and Minnette, this movie was able to focus on plot and shine. With its constant nail-biting drama and plot twists, it had something other movies were lacking. “Don't Breathe” is a full-body experience, causing the audiences' hearts to beat rapidly out of their chests, palms to sweat, and to jump in their seats and occasionally shriek.

With a budget of \$9.9 million, this 88-minute movie exceeded everybody's expectations, grossing \$89 million in the U.S. alone. “Don't Breathe” will make moviegoers cringe and some even gag, and have them alternating between shrinking in their seats and being on the edge of their seats. “Don't Breathe” gives the viewers constant hope that everything will be okay before crushing said hope. It is this constant give-and-take relationship that puts the suspense in this suspenseful film.

According to Wikipedia, horror is “a film genre that seeks to elicit a negative emotional reaction from viewers”

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Perfect Time To Jump Onto Triton Men's Basketball Bandwagon



The men's basketball team

COURTESY OF UMSL ATHLETICS

LANCE JORDAN SPORTS EDITOR

To nobody's surprise, the University of Missouri-St. Louis men's basketball team is a force to be reckoned with in the Great Lake Valley Conference. Aside from an exhibition set back against Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and an eight point game difference in the home opener against Ferris State, it is still the perfect time to jump on the Triton men's basketball bandwagon.

Last year, the Tritons dropped their first three games to the likes of St. Louis University, Ferris State, and Grand Valley State in a less than spectacular fashion. Despite opening this season with a loss to Sallkiss and Ferris State, the Tritons were able to edge out a victory against Grand Valley State this year, 56-51. The Tritons followed this up with another home game win against Robert Morris-Peoria, 102-64. Currently, as of Thursday, the team has a record of 4-4, better than the previous season game record of 3-5.

With winter break starting soon, the Tritons provide a reason to stay on campus: hosting three home games in the Mark Twain Athletic and Fitness Center, home of the Chuck Smith Court, which serves as the home facility to the UMSL men's and women's basketball teams and the UMSL volleyball team. Designed to accommodate 3,700, fans, students are more than encouraged to invite family and friends with general admission tickets at only seven dollars.

The match-ups during winter break will include a December 8 game against Trevecca Nazarene, a January 5 game against Indianapolis, and a January 7 game against St. Joseph's. The last two matches up will also be GLVC conference match-ups, sure to be even more competitive and intense.

While stirring up the coaching staff can be less than appealing, new assistant coaches Scott Gauthier and Jesse Shaw are all about winning championships and look to prove it this season. Gauthier was instrumental in aiding the Webster Groves Statesmen to nine

Suburban South Conference championships, three district championships, two state quarterfinal appearances, and the 2008 Missouri Class 5 state championship. As for Shaw, his Pratt Community College Beavers were the only team left standing after the region tournament's final buzzer sounded, qualifying for the national tournament for the fourth time in the history of the school. With their experiences they will lead the team in the right direction.

As for the roster, it is surely the number one reason to be a Triton fan.

This is due in part to players such as the 6'2" guard, Steven Davis, junior, business management. In the November 21 match-up against Webster University, Davis came up one three-pointer shy of the school record of nine. Davis netted eight three-pointers and totaled 26 points in the game leading UMSL to a 72-64 win. Davis scores a team-best 11.6 points per game with an insane 77 percent of points from beyond the three point line. This ranks him second in the GLVC and 23rd in the NCAA DII.

Hunter Reine, senior, criminal justice, follows suit with 9.0 points per game with 7.9 rebounds per game, ranking him 5th in the GLVC.

The men's basketball team has been known to invest in the community and look for the best ways to connect to the school while generating a buzz about games. With an exciting new and improved team, it would be hard not to jump onto the Triton bandwagon.

UMSL's next match-up will be against Trevecca Nazarene in the Mark Twain at 7 p.m. December 8. To follow the men's basketball team and other UMSL athletics visit www.umsltritons.com.



Szorenyi Scores High, Despite UMSL Falling

LANCE JORDAN SPORTS EDITOR

From Budapest, Hungary, Laura Szorenyi, sophomore, communications, has proven to be the player to watch in the upcoming season for the University of Missouri-St. Louis women's basketball team. December 1 saw Szorenyi score a season best and game high for UMSL who fell to the Drury University Panthers.

Szorenyi, who originally played one season at West Virginia State, collected a total of 23 points in Thursday's game. Szorenyi scored UMSL's first point in the first quarter with a fast break in the paint, getting the layup while also drawing a foul which allowed Szorenyi to get the free throw.

At the 5:18 mark, Szorenyi gained another layup adding five points to UMSL's twenty in the first quarter. Kansas City native, Shelby Dahl, junior, elementary education, also saw her own bit of success in the first half scoring seven points. One of those shots was a three-point shot which nearly tied the quarter for UMSL 14-15 at the 4:28 mark. The quarter ended, however, 21-20 with Drury in the lead.

In the second half, the Panthers controlled an 8-0 run. Their first basket, a three-pointer, set the tone of the Panthers' impressive performance in the second quarter at their home court. At the 6:50 mark however, UMSL's Paige Bunn, freshman, criminal justice, put UMSL back into the game with a layup. Szorenyi, en route to her season best, put away three more free throws in the second quarter. Bunn scored the final point for UMSL making it a 42-29 game, a 13 point lead for Drury.

Szorenyi scored ten of her points in the third quarter, in which the Tritons

were finally able outscore the Panthers, 18-17. Scoring the jumper and final point of the quarter, UMSL still remained down 12 points with the score at 59-47.

The layup from Sammie Sproul, junior, business, kicked off the fourth quarter. Due to this and two free throws by Robeisha Lee, senior, liberal studies, 93 seconds into the fourth UMSL was able to close a bit of the gap. However, Drury pulled away from UMSL after the Tritons missed the next four baskets, while Drury scored five straight.

The match-up concluded 72-58 Drury, but not without Szorenyi being recognized for her effort in scoring 23 of UMSL's 58 points. Also, UMSL collected a season-high Thursday of 13 steals.

Going into Thursday's match-up with an overall record of 3-3 for the season and a two-game losing streak, the Tritons are in an interesting position to turn things around before the spring semester opens up on January 17. During the course of the winter break, the Women's Basketball team will face 11 teams. Five of those games will count to their GLVC record which, as of Thursday, stands at 0-1.

In a GLVC pre-season poll, UMSL was picked to finish fifth in the West Division by the league coaches. Drury was tabbed as the favorite, while Quincy and Truman State were second and third, respectively. Rockhurst finished in fourth place ahead of the Tritons, while Maryville (sixth), William Jewell (seventh) and Missouri S&T (eighth) rounded out the poll.

To find upcoming Triton basketball games and other athletic events during the winter break check out www.umsltritons.com.



Laura Szorenyi takes a shot

COURTESY OF UMSL ATHLETICS

Don't Buy New Textbooks

DANIEL STRAWHUN
OPINIONS EDITOR

With the end of the fall semester approaching, students of the University of Missouri-St. Louis will once again find themselves standing at the counter of the exceptionally well-lit and poorly stocked Triton Store, paying entirely too much for textbooks. It is no secret: college textbooks are exorbitantly priced.

While nearly everything is more expensive today than it once was, the average price of a textbook has risen exponentially, far outpacing the relative price inflation of other goods and services. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the cost of educational books (i.e., college textbooks) has increased 812 percent since 1978. For comparison, the BLS reported that medical services, another subset of the economy whose extortionate price increases have been publicly decried, have risen only (only!) 575 percent since 1978. Obviously, there is a problem.

What is perhaps most upsetting about textbook price-gouging is that the increase in price in no way reflects a proportionate increase in quality. Take, for example, "Texts and Contexts" by Steven Lynn, an introduction to Critical Theory of literature. The book is a standard 8.5" x 5.5" black-and-white paperback. The latest (seventh) edition has on its cover a graphic of a partially solved puzzle depicting a tree growing out of the middle of an open book. An ethereal light conveniently radiates from, and hence obscures, the point at which the tree meets the binding. The cover design basically screams 90s kitsch, and not in a knowingly ironic way. Furthermore, the actual content itself is facile and reductive and cursory. The writing is simplistic, and not in a good way: the book has a self-published, this-was-written-by-someone-you-know feel to it.

However, the book was in fact published by Pearson, the largest educa-

tional publisher in the world according to a 2015 article by Publishers Weekly. According to the article, Pearson earned over \$7 billion in 2014. For Steven Lynn's middling survey of modern Lit. Crit., Pearson's suggested retail price is \$90.40. \$90.40 for 270 pages of paperback pabulum—"Texts and Contexts" is hideously overpriced indeed.

The root of the problem has to do with a lack of competition, as one might expect. The educational publishing industry is dominated by only five companies: Pearson, Cengage Learning, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Scholastic, and McGraw-Hill. These five entities control the entire industry, having more than enough capital to buy out any smaller company that might try to undercut their sales.

However, there is reason to believe that this oligopoly might one day soon be dismantled. HR Bill 3721, commonly called the Affordable College Textbook Act, is a bill that seeks to "achieve the highest level of savings for students; expand the use of open textbooks at other IHEs; and produce open textbooks that are of the highest quality, that can be most easily utilized and adapted by faculty members, that correspond to the highest enrollment courses, and that are created or adopted in partnership with entities that will assist in their marketing and distribution."

Of course, such a bill will not be perfect, nor is it likely to be passed with any sense of urgency. In the meantime, we highly encourage college students at UMSL and elsewhere to make use of websites like chegg.com, campusbooks.com, and amazon.com to buy and sell their used textbooks. We hope that students will choose not to buy new textbooks if at all possible, only used. In doing so, they will be choosing not to support an industry that only seeks to exploit them.

Point-Counterpoint: Is Christmas Music Good?

Yes

It seems that the Christmas season comes earlier and earlier every year. It was long before Thanksgiving that I began seeing the first of Christmas decorations, gifts, and all things festive in big name stores like Walmart and Target. Surprisingly, however, there is an age-old debate about the Christmas season that arises each holiday season: whether or not Christmas music should be played on the radio.

There are always two groups of people: those who love Christmas music and those who despise it. I happen to be in the group of people that loves it. There is something uniquely nostalgic about classic Christmas songs that are played year after year that brings back the wonder and awe of Christmas that can only be experienced in childhood.

Some argue that Christmas music is overplayed or played too early in November. Christmas and the holiday season, however, come only once a year. When you think about the fact that many mainstream songs are played over and over throughout the entire year,

Christmas music is simply a welcome break from the pop culture songs and artists that infiltrate the radio the other 10 months out of the year.

As some Christmas songs contain Christian lyrics, some say that Christmas music is offensive to individuals who celebrate other holidays and hold other religious beliefs. I personally think that Christmas music is more so about the spirit of the season, regardless of which religious sect to which one belongs. I personally never think about lyrics of Christmas songs beyond face value, and I would challenge others to focus on the mere positivity and festivity that Christmas music brings.

Yes, the same 25 classic Christmas songs may be played over and over on local radio stations each year. As with any other time of the year, though, plenty of radio stations continue to play the same genres of music as always. If festive Christmas music is not for you, the solution is simple: just change the station.

No

Every year, it seems like Christmas music creeps further and further into the month of November. In St. Louis, we have an entire radio station that dedicates itself to playing the holiday genre 24/7, usually beginning around November 15. For those of us who do not enjoy this cheery, jingle-jangly assault on our ears, the fact that it can be pumped through public spaces a full 15 days before December even starts is a source of annoyance, to say the least.

There is nothing to like about Christmas music. No other type of music is so bad that it has to be quarantined to a certain time of the year. People only think that they like Christmas music because they have been conditioned since they were children to associate it with happy memories consisting mostly of receiving gifts and eating food. But they don't actually like it; they only like the unconditioned stimulus with which Christmas music is associated. If a person who had never listened to Christmas music or celebrat-

ed Christmas as a child were to listen to it as an adult, they would certainly not enjoy it. That's because there is nothing to enjoy. Christmas music is simply a mishmash of clichés and religious symbolism. There is no original thought involved in creating a Christmas song.

Everyone has already heard every Christmas song that exists, and to make matters worse, the same five or six songs repeat over and over in stores and public places. And even if the exact same song isn't played, one of the hundreds of cover versions that exists is likely to come on the playlist soon after.

Christmas music ruins the entire month of December, and now half the month of November too. A few days of Christmas music would be tolerable, and maybe even enjoyable. However, week after week of hearing the same stilted songs is wearisome. Christmas music should be reserved only for the days directly preceding December 25, and it should stop the day after.



The Current

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The Mystery of the Free Hugs Guy: Jacob Ragsdale



"Free Hugs Guy" Jacob Ragsdale hugs a student

BRIAN SHERRILL/THE CURRENT

Continued from page 1
those in need free hugs.

Jacob Ragsdale, a 16-year-old high school junior from O'Fallon, Mo., first made the sign back in June. He said, "I brought it with me to Camp Kairos, which is a Christian camp, and I've been carrying it ever since. I take the sign almost everywhere. At first I didn't bring it to UMSL because I was a little embarrassed to do this, but now I carry my sign proudly. Now I bring it all the time and I love it. I love when I get to make people smile because of it. I think I've learned to be more outgoing. A lot of people will laugh when they see my sign, but I don't care. I just keep smiling and keep walking."

Alex Mork, junior, information systems, said, "I think it's weird, a guy walking around with a 'free hugs' sign."

Khalfani Mar Na, senior English major, said, "Hugs are always welcome. People are too closed off in the wake of the political and social movements as of late."

The Free Hugs Guy commutes 40 minutes, three to four days a week to campus to take Japanese at UMSL for dual credit. He brings the sign with him everywhere and has learned that some places give out more hugs than others. Ragsdale said, "Like Costco for exam-

ple, I get a lot there. I'm not sure why. I usually don't get a whole lot at UMSL. There are some days I only get one, or none at all, except for the day after the election. I got a lot that day. I guess people needed a hug that day."

"I don't want to be one of those Christians that goes around telling everybody they're a sinner," Ragsdale said. "Instead, I'm simply spreading God's love. That's not the only reason though. You just never know who might just need a hug. You'll see somebody and think they're just going to keep walking, but then they turn and take a hug, and that's cool. What's really fun is when one person in a group of friends takes a hug, and the rest sort of give in and they all get a hug. Honestly the coolest thing that's happened is this interview. I had no idea I was famous enough for this kind of thing! I'm not doing this to gain popularity or anything, but it is kind of cool."

Finals week is next week and anxiety levels are undoubtedly going to be high. This time of the semester may be when students need The Free Hugs Guy most—for good luck and maybe for some Christmas cheer. Whichever your reason, Ragsdale wishes everyone good luck and a merry Christmas.

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