

2-28-2005

Current, February 28, 2005

University of Missouri-St. Louis

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February 28,
2005ISSUE
1145

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The Current

Your source for campus news and information



See page 10
Pacino meets Shakespeare

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

ASUM opposes bill to change name of SMSU

BY PAUL HACKBARTH
Co-News Editor

Southwest Missouri State University's attempt to change the college's name to Missouri State University has caused members of Associated Students of the University of Missouri at UM-St. Louis to respond by opposing the name change.

SMSU has been struggling to change its name to MSU in past years, but students in the UM system are against the name change. Student interns from ASUM have lobbied in Jefferson City to try to block the vote for the name change. ASUM voted against the policy last year and continue to show their disapproval.

Jennifer Staggenborg, senior, music and board member of ASUM, said students from SMSU came by the busload to Jefferson City to take part in a recent hearing over the name change. However, ASUM interns also attended to discourage the legislation. "We have interns down in Jeff City, and I believe they testified against it," Staggenborg said.

This name change is being opposed by other campuses in the UM system, as well. Joe Moore, director of media relations for the UM system, talked about students disagreeing with the name changes at UM-Columbia.

Moore said that a significant group of people at UM-Columbia believe that the name, Missouri State University, refers historically and specifically to their college. In the Missouri Capitol, a plaque is displayed that honors MSU, which later became Mizzou.

The problem stems from the Missouri constitution, which states that MSU is the only official state university and because of that, any college called MSU will receive a particular percentage of funding.

Staggenborg said, "It is part of our legislative policy that we're opposed to it. Basically, we're afraid that if the name change does go through, it will lead to funding. Right now, we're not in a position to even fund the UM system."

Erin Abraham, junior, liberal arts and ASUM executive board member, said ASUM is voicing their concerns through a petition. "We are concerned that this will lead to a slippery slope where SMSU may, at one point, try to take a piece of the UM funding pie. Currently, the budget is already very tight with the four campuses," she said.

UM system President Elson Floyd addressed the board of curators on Feb. 4 about SMSU's effort to change its name to MSU.

see ASUM, page 3

UMSL groups prepare for Women's History Month

BY PATRICIA LEE
Co-News Editor

In March, UM-St. Louis will celebrate Women's History Month with a series of events commemorating the contributions of women to American society and history.

Various campus organizations will be holding women's history-themed events throughout the month. Erin Bullerdieck, graduate student, higher education administration, and graduate assistant in the office of Student Life, is working with different organizations on campus to coordinate the events for women's history month.

"Our office is helping to get information out to students about events planned by different departments and organizations. We're centralizing it through a kick-off event which will expose students to all the events going on," Bullerdieck said.

This kick-off event will take place at the Pilot House on Thursday, Mar. 3, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with live music and free food. "Several academic departments and student organizations will be presenting material on their organizations and women's contributions to their organizations," Bullerdieck said.

see WOMEN'S HISTORY, page 5

Survivor tells story from 9-11

Sujo John worked on the 81st floor of Tower One

BY SHANTE DAVIS
Staff Writer

Where were you on 9/11? That was the question posted on signs, fliers and sidewalks all over the UM-St. Louis campus last week. On Wednesday, Feb. 23, UM-St. Louis students, faculty and staff gathered in the Pilot House at 12 p.m. to listen to Sujo John, a survivor of the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, speak about his near death experience. This guest speaker event was sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ.

Clouds of smoke, screams and fear consumed the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001 when terrorists hijacked two American flights and flew them into the buildings, leaving thousands dead. "9/11 changed the world and the way we live our lives," John said.

After moving to the United States from Calcutta, India in February 2001, John became an employee of Network Plus, a broadband communications company which was located in Tower One of the World Trade Center.

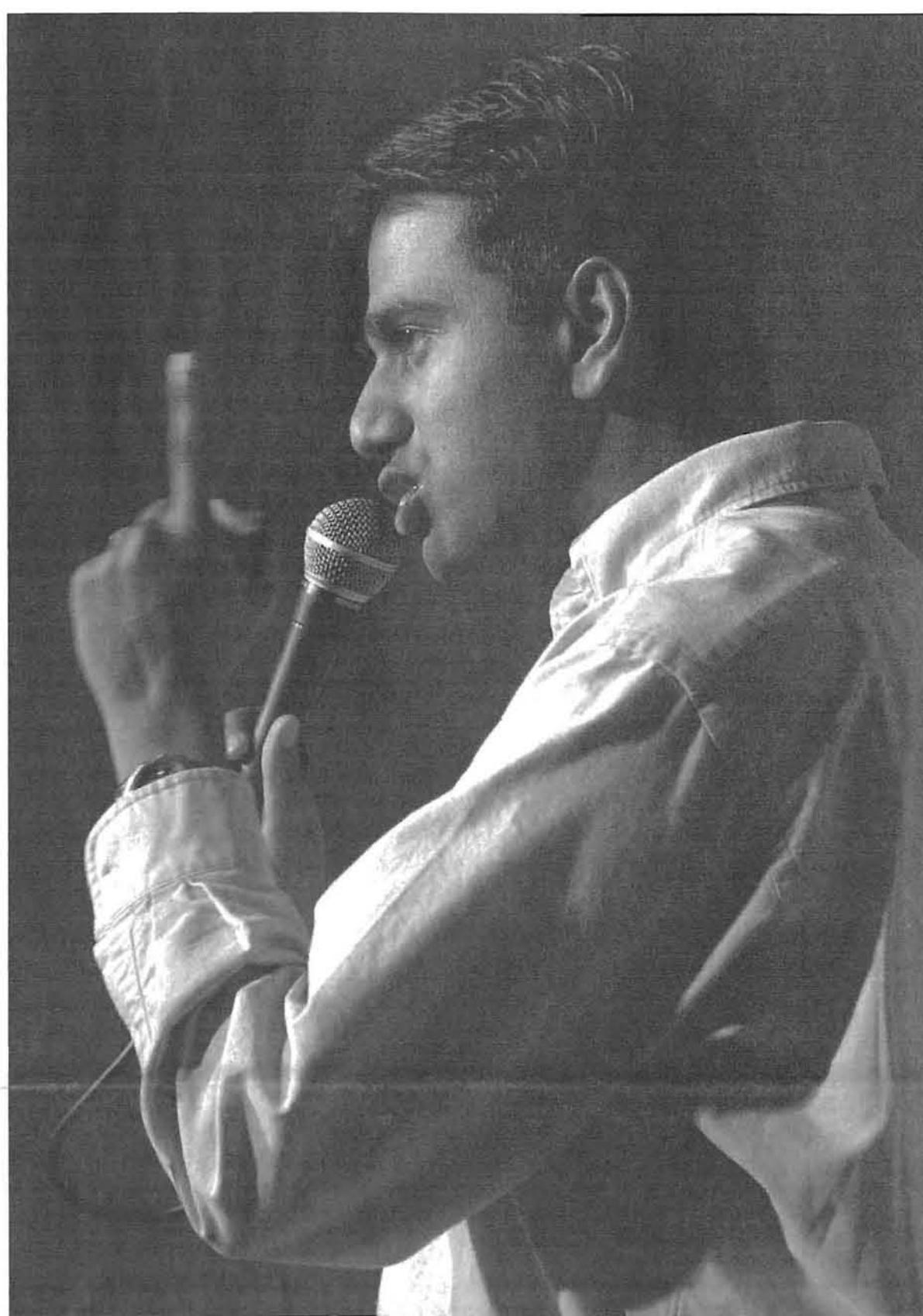
What seemed to be a typical day of work ended in tragedy. John was on floor 81 of Tower One the day the planes crashed into the buildings and remembers being on the telephone when the first plane struck the building. Part of the wing of the plane crashed through the window of John's floor, causing the walls to cave.

He and his co-workers immediately dove to the ground and eventually escaped the building by taking the stairwell before it collapsed. "This place of fun and entertainment now becomes a place of death and destruction," John said.

John described the uneasiness he felt as he searched for his wife, who was four months pregnant, and who worked in Tower Two. "I started walking towards my wife's tower and as I approached the tower, it exploded and began to come down."

John said he then huddled with a group of about 50 people who were all piled on top of each other for about five minutes. He left the huddle still in search of his wife and when he returned, approximately 20 minutes later, he discovered that the majority of the people who were inside were dead.

John went on to describe the



Mike Sherwin/The Current

9-11 survivor and Christian speaker Sujo John talks to students in the Pilot House on Wednesday afternoon about his escape from the 81st floor of Tower One of the World Trade Center. John's talk was sponsored by the Campus Crusade for Christ.

horrific experience that included dead bodies, clouds of smoke that you could barely see through, falling debris and fearful family members in search of their loved ones. Not giving up, he continued to search for his wife

and was eventually reunited with her. "You never ever know what the day has in store for you," John said. "What if you don't wake up tomorrow or the next hour? Are you at peace with yourself, your family, your

God?" Stan Holmes, Campus Crusade for Christ staff advisor, said, "I enjoyed the presentation and the fact that he survived and took the testimonial to share his experience with others."



Mike Sherwin/The Current

Around 650 students and alumni attended the Teacher Job Fair held Friday at the Mark Twain Athletic Building. Long lines formed to meet and schedule interviews with representatives from 63 school districts.

Teacher job fair connects students and school districts

BY BEN SWOFFORD
Staff Writer

Hundreds of UM-St. Louis students and alumni from the department of education filled the Mark Twain gymnasium for a teacher job fair sponsored by Career Services.

Sixty-five school districts from the St. Louis area and around the country set up booths to attract potential teachers.

"A job fair is a program for students and alumni to help them connect with the work force," Teresa Balestreri, director of Career Services, said.

An estimated 650 job seekers showed up at the event. They included undergraduate seniors and alumni who had been out of school

Upcoming Job Fair
March 11
UM-St. Louis Spring Job Fair
at the Mark Twain Athletic Building, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Admission: \$5. Call 5111 for more information.

and the work force for years. Admittance was free to all UM-St. Louis students and alumni who preregistered over the internet. Students who did not preregister and job seekers not from UM-St. Louis were charged five dollars.

"This job fair is for teachers, education majors only," Balestreri said. "Their job search is very

specific in the teaching industry, so it warrants having a specific job fair for that industry."

Career Services offers four job fairs a year, two for education majors and two for all other majors.

"We have four job fairs a year. Today, we have a teacher's job fair, and on March 11, we will have the spring job fair that's for all other majors, with the corporate community and organizations recruiting all other majors," Balestreri said.

The job fair was split into two parts. Job candidates could register, and then enter the gymnasium where they could visit the booths of specific school districts. Each school district had signs describing what type of teacher they needed.

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beat free
money

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Bulletin Board

Put it on the Board! Call 516-5174 for details or email current@jinx.umsi.edu

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

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Thru Feb. 28

Diversity Expo

The Diversity Expo 2005 runs through Monday, Feb. 28 at Gallery Visio. It features historical documentation from photographer and UMSL instructor Kevin Martini-Fuller, and African-centered paintings from local artist Billy Williams. Gallery hours are Mon-Thurs. 11-4. Call 7922 for more information.

Tues. March 1

Racial profiling talk

The Amnesty International UMSL student group presents "Born Suspect: Ending Racial Profiling." Dr. Morris Taylor will discuss problems with the practice of racial profiling in the St. Louis area and how it can be stopped. Dr. Taylor is head of the Racial Justice Project for the ACLU of Eastern Missouri, Asst. Professor at SIUE, and a former St. Louis City police officer. Program begins at 7 p.m. in Century Room B of the MSC. Free and open to the public. Free food and drinks. Contact amnesty_umsi@yahoo.com for more information.

Tues. March 1

Art history lecture

UMSL professor Yael Even speaks

at the Gallery 210 auditorium at 3 p.m. on "Images of Sexual Violence in Renaissance Art."

Tues. March 1

UMSL Handball program

Recruiting for Men's and Women's Teams. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Mark Twain courts. Free lessons from National Handball Association representative. Free pizza and soda. Equipment provided. Call Campus Rec (5124) or Lon Wilkens (6222) for information.

Tues. March 1 & Thurs. March 3

Job fair workshop

Seeking an internship, part-time job, or full-time job? Job fairs are a great way to network with employers and learn about career opportunities... if you properly prepare! Learn how to prepare for Career Services' Spring Job Fair on March 11 in this free workshop. The workshop is held in Career Services, 278 MSC and is open to current UM-St. Louis students and alumni. Advance registration is required; call 516-5111 or enroll in person at Career Services.

Wed. March 2

Gender Studies lecture

Religion and Reproductive Rights:

Rebecca Turner, Religious Coalition for Reproductive Freedom, Sister Jeanne Meuer of Women's Place and Gabriele Abels visiting professor from the University of Bielefeld. Event will take place in the IWGS Resource Center, 211 Clark Hall Wednesdays, 12:30-1:30pm. Light Refreshments will be served. For more information please contact Nikki Doughty at 516-5581.

Thurs. March 3

Job search strategies

This workshop will teach job seekers about important techniques such as networking, utilizing Internet resources for your job search, and provide additional information about the general job search process. This free workshop is held in Career Services, 278 MSC and is open to current UM-St. Louis students and alumni. Advance registration is required; call 516-5111 or enroll in person at Career Services.

Thurs. March 3

Eating disorder awareness

Are your eating habits healthy? Stop by Counseling Services' Eating Disorders Screening table. Take a brief screening, and find out what resources are available. From 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Screening available online at www.umsi.edu/services/counsel/

Fri. March 4

Meet the Composers

Equinox Chamber Players and composers Gwyneth Walker, Barbara Harbach and Gay Holmes Spears at the Music Building at 11:30 p.m.

Sat. March 5

Texas Hold 'Em Tourney

At St. Ann Parish Hall. \$45 entry fee (\$50 at the door). Includes unlimited wine, beer, and snacks. Prizes for final 8 players, ranging from \$500-100. Doors open at 6 p.m., first deal is at 7 p.m. For reservations, call the St. Ann Parish at 385-5090, or the Catholic Newman Center at 385-3455.

Sat. March 5

Free Guitar Master Class

Grammy Award-winning classical guitarist Sharon Isbin will conduct a free, public Master Class at the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center on the campus of University of Missouri-St. Louis on Sunday, March 6, at 12 p.m.

Admission is free and open to the public. Tickets for Isbin's Saturday evening performance with the Arianna String Quartet are still available and can be purchased at the Touhill Performing Arts Center Ticket Office; online at

www.touhill.org; or by phone at 314.516.4949; and toll-free at 866.516.4949.

Feb. 11-March 4

Instructional Computing Classes

The instructional computing labs will be teaching one-hour classes on varying topics. Each class is offered several different times, and there are three marathon sessions with classes offered back to back. Free. Registration required. For more information, ask computer lab consultants, call 516-6061 or visit www.umsi.edu/~iclabs.

Thurs. March 31

Contest deadline

Entries due March 31 for a UN World Holiday contest held by the Center for International Studies. Three \$3,000 prizes will be awarded for each category. Categories include essay (2-3 pages), art and webpage design (submit on CD). Entries should center on the theme, "How would a United Nations world holiday benefit the world, and what will I do to make it happen?" For more information, contact Mike Costello at 516-6454, costello@umsi.edu or visit him at 304-C SSB.

Campus Crimeline

The following criminal incidents were reported to the UM-St. Louis Police Department between Feb. 19, 2005 and Feb. 26, 2005. If readers have information that could assist the police department they are encouraged to call 516-5155. The campus police provide this information as a public service. Remember, crime prevention is a community effort!

Feb. 22 Stealing Over \$500/Arrest - Mark Twain Men's Locker room

A wallet with credit cards was stolen from the men's locker room. The victim had his clothes and wallet in an unlocked locker, and when he returned after his workout his wallet was gone. The UM-St. Louis Police Department made an arrest in this case before the

victim even knew of the theft. An observant officer on patrol in the area of Florissant Road noticed a suspicious person walking along the road with his coat completely covering his head. This officer recognized the subject from a prior arrest and stopped him. The suspect, Tarren Clark, was wanted by the UM-St. Louis Police Department and Washington

University Police for prior crimes, and arrested without incident. Once at the police department, the arresting officer discovered property belonging to the victim in the suspect's pocket. Clark was subsequently charged with this stealing offense and the prior stealing of the motor vehicle, which also occurred at the Mark Twain Building. Warrants were obtained on both counts, and Mr. Clark is currently incarcerated in the St. Louis County Justice Center on a \$20,000 bond.

Feb. 25 Stealing Over \$500-Music Building

The music department reported that they discovered an electronic music keyboard with stand and case, valued at over \$5,000, missing on Jan. 11. After searching the building and speaking with students, they determined that it was stolen. A report was completed on Feb. 25; however, the time frame of the crime is unknown.

NOTE

As a reminder, please keep your valuables secured, or in your possession at all times. Most of the thefts that occur on this campus are because the

owners failed to properly safeguard their property. The Police Department operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week, and encourages anyone observing suspicious people or activity to report it to the immediately at 516-5155, or 911 in the case of an emergency.

MOVING NOTICE

The Parking and Transportation Department has moved from the Police Department Building to 7700 South Florissant Rd. Directions from north campus are: Turn right onto Florissant Road from East Drive/Bellerive Drive. The building is the first one on the right. Parking and Transportation's phone numbers are:

Main Number 516-4190
Alicia Rogers 516-4191
Debbie Allen 516-5298
Leo Gutierrez 516-4192

Any issues involving parking tickets and/or parking permits, including appeals and temporary permits, will be handled by the Parking and Transportation Department and not the Police.

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This young and innovative contemporary ballet company will be performing a mixed repertory program including new works choreographed by new and emerging artists including:

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JOB FAIR, from page 1

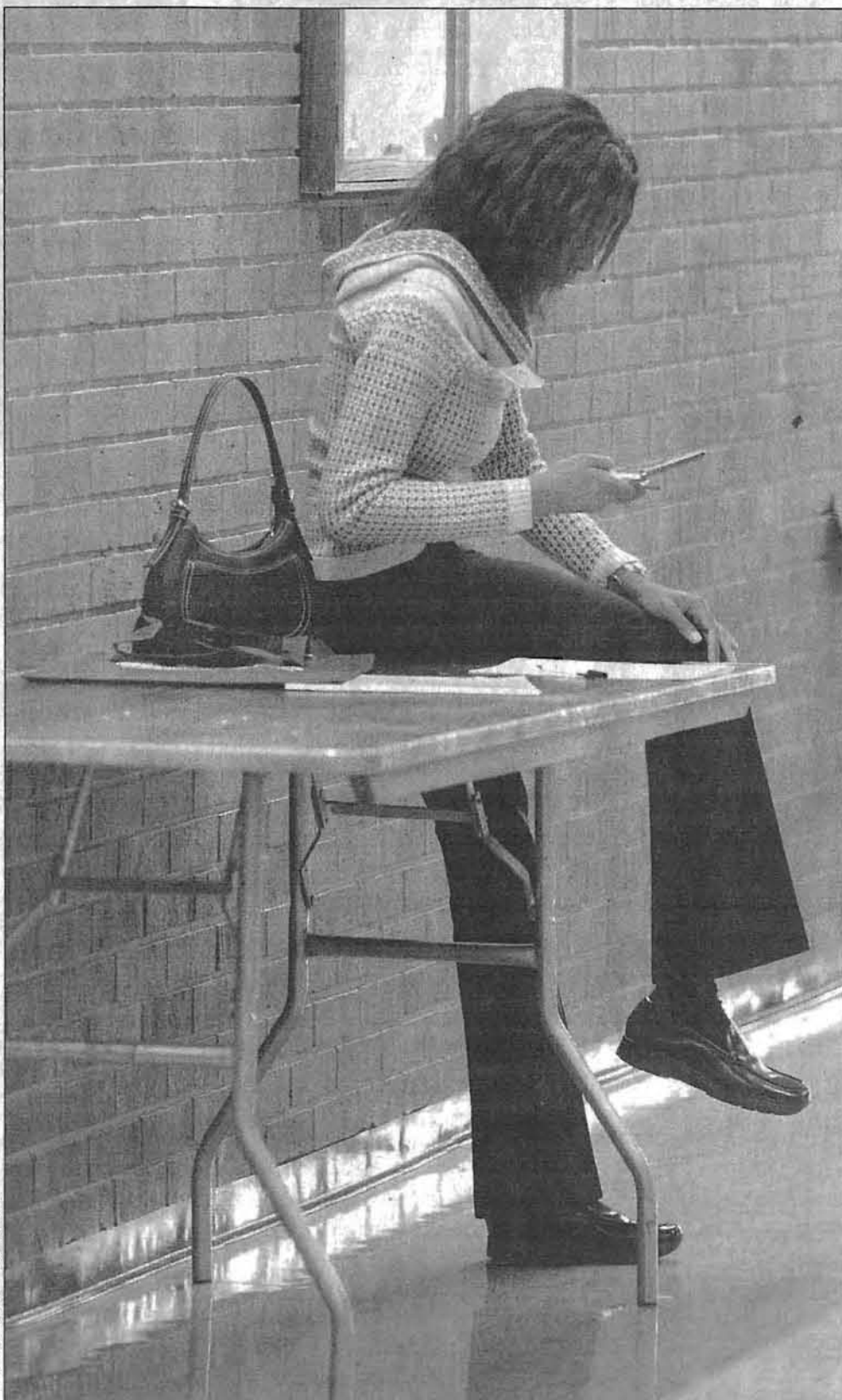
RIGHT:

Andrea Williams, senior, elementary education takes a break during the Teacher Job Fair on Friday. Williams said she passed out six resumes and had one job offer from a district in Indianapolis.

Sixty-five schools attended the job fair held last week. Employer booths ranged from local administrators to employers from as far as Baltimore, Md., Houston, Tex. and Indianapolis.

The College of Education and Career Services organized the job fair.

Mike Sherwin/The Current



"It works. Students get jobs. When you come to a job fair, you are not going to walk out of building with a new job. But it is a student's opportunity to connect and have an employer put a resume and face together," Balestrieri said.

Sixty-five school districts paid the one hundred dollar booth fee to come and recruit students. The booths represented school districts as close as Hazelwood

and Ritenour and as far away as Houston, Baltimore and Indianapolis. Fees covered the costs of the event and the renting of the Mark Twain building.

"We have developed relationships with school districts in the metropolitan area and beyond, and we invite them to the job fair," Balestrieri said. "They sign up to come for our students and alumni."

The College of Education worked in

conjunction with Career Services to advertise the event and inform students.

"My supervisor told me to come," Ben Cornell, senior, physical education, said. "Hopefully, I get a job."

Lisa Kalota, a UM-St. Louis alum, heard about the event from a friend, but she was less optimistic. "My chances are very slim. I go from line to line and hope they say something good."

Consulting firm seeks feedback to improve UMSL's student retention

BY BEN SWOFFORD
Staff Writer

Charles Schroeder, senior executive of the consulting firm Noel-Levitz, visited the campus on Feb. 24-25 looking for students who know how to make the UM-St. Louis experience better.

The provost of Student Affairs is sponsoring a study, conducted by Noel-Levitz, on improving student retention. Schroeder talked to students, administrators and staff to get firsthand feedback on how the campus can improve as part of a multipronged study on increasing student retention.

Schroeder is the former provost of Student Affairs at UM-Columbia and former vice president at both Georgia Tech. and St. Louis University. Noel-Levitz is a consulting firm based in Arizona that specializes in advising universities on recruitment and retention of students.

"The scope of the consultation really is to look at everything we are doing and to see where we can make significant change that will impact student satisfaction and thus retain students,"

Curtis Coonrod, vice provost of Student Affairs, said. "We want to retain the students that we have. It's a serious project. It's a project that has the full support from the chancellor and provost."

Student retention at UM-St. Louis is below the national and University of Missouri system average. For first time, full time, degree seeking freshmen, who complete the first academic year with 24 credit hours and a 2.0 GPA or above, the retention rate for fall 2002 was 64 percent, compared to 81 percent for UM-Columbia, 68 percent for UMKC and 83 percent at UMKC.

The national average retention for freshmen continuing to sophomore year for selective universities that offer doctorate degrees is 80 percent. At UM-St. Louis, this rate fell from 74 percent in 2003 to 68 percent in 2004. 52 percent of incoming freshmen graduate in five years from universities similar to UM-St. Louis on average, but only 35 percent of freshmen graduate in five years from UM-St. Louis.

"Yes, our retention rate is low, and we want to improve that. We want students here to have a positive experience, to be successful in whatever their educational goals may be," Coonrod said.

"Basically, UM-St. Louis is really interested in improving the quality of student life and student learning. When you improve quality of student life...generally students are more satisfied, and they tend to succeed at higher levels and return at higher levels," Schroeder said.

He pointed out that student life meant everything from classroom experience to dorm experience, as well as parking and student activities.

"Retention is simply an outcome of quality transactions," Schroeder said. It is the goal of the study to make UM-St. Louis a quality transaction.

Schroeder's stay on campus was the second of six visits he will make during the semester. He will work closely with a retention team appointed by the chancellor and made up of staff and faculty.

The study is composed of student surveys, particularly the Student Satisfaction Inventory, focus groups with students at all completion levels, student leaders and staff on identifying problems on campus and meetings with administration.

"We are working with a range of people, including student leaders, to

find ways to improve this place," Schroeder said.

"There are lots of things about UM-St. Louis that are fantastic. Fortunately, you have an administration that is not satisfied with what is. They want to get to what can be. This is a big part of the chancellor's effort to make this a better place."

Coonrod said, "The students have been great. We told them absolutely to be honest with us. If you want us to solve problems, we have to listen to the students. They have been very good at identifying problems in a productive and constructive manner."

Over the next visits, a series of goals and solutions will be formed. The study will cost an estimated \$65,000 and will include a detailed action plan upon which the chancellor can decide to act.

"At the very latest, by June 1, we want to have a comprehensive strategic retention master plan that is a template and roadmap that people can monitor as they put in new approaches to old problems," Schroeder said. "Then they can monitor that frequently and use data to see if we are on track, not on track, getting results here, not getting results there."

The study will also tackle the issue of academic advising as a component to improving retention.

"We know that academic advising is a critical issue, and that is an area we will be really focusing on among other things," Coonrod said.

"Fundamentally this is a continuous improvement process. It never ends," Schroeder said. "We've got to build within this culture what I call 'positive restlessness' where we are never satisfied. I certainly see that as the attitude of the chancellor and provost who want to make this a better place."

ASUM, from page 1

Moore explained that the UM system did not take a position on the name change controversy. However, "Dr. Floyd said there were certain needs to be addressed that should be taken up before a vote," Moore said.

Floyd and the curators agreed that the name change must prohibit academic program duplicates that the University of Missouri already offers. The name change should also reaffirm the land grant and research

mission of the University of Missouri. Finally, the legislature must guarantee that SMSU does not receive a greater percentage of funds than the University of Missouri.

The Missouri Senate passed the bill for the name change, which has been sent back to the House of Representatives for a second reading and approval. Staggenborg said the bill must pass the House Rules and Higher Education Committee to

become effective.

"Personally, I think they will succeed this year," Staggenborg said. "But ASUM is still taking the position that we are opposed to it. I don't want to downplay the importance of the name change."

Despite the efforts of ASUM and other student groups in the UM system, the Missouri General Assembly will make the final decision regarding the name change.

3 CONTESTS 3 \$3,000 CASH PRIZES



ART

website

Essay

The CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES at University of Missouri-St. Louis is sponsoring three annual contests for the best student artwork, essay and website on:

UNITED NATIONS DAY, OCTOBER 24: A WORLD HOLIDAY



These contests were established by DOROTHY SCHNEIDER, former Red Cross overseas worker, college faculty member (English Department) in San Diego, and St. Charles, Missouri, and author of the UN Resolution to create United Nations Day as an international holiday.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS students interested in competing for: 1. the ART prize must submit a personal art representation; 2. the ESSAY prize must submit two or three pages, typed, double spaced, on standard 8.5" X 11" white paper; or 3. the WEBSITE prize must submit a website design on CD.

To be eligible, the submissions must include the words "UNITED NATIONS DAY (OCTOBER 24)", "ANNUAL WORLD HOLIDAY" and include the following ideas:

Visualize United Nations Day as a world holiday.
How would the United Nations Day World Holiday benefit the world?
What can I do to make United Nations Day a world holiday?

A panel of three judges from the University of Missouri-St. Louis will judge the contests. Essays and Websites will be judged on content and style. Art will be judged on content and design. All entries must avoid plagiarism and partisan politics. All entries become the property of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Participation is voluntary and previous winners are ineligible. Only one winner per contest will be selected. The winners will be announced in late April at a reception in honor of United Nations Day.

ENTRY DEADLINE: THURSDAY MARCH 31, 2005

For more information, contact: MIKE COSTELLO
Center for International Studies
Room 366, Social Sciences and Business Building
516-6454 - costello@umsl.edu

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UNION

OUR OPINION

HOME SWEET HOME

Halls will enhance campus, social life

When selecting the right college or university, prospective students often take into consideration a school's reputation, location, course availability, cost and housing facilities. Although UM-St. Louis is mainly a commuter school with over 16,000 students enrolled, 10 percent of students live on campus.

Ask about residential life on main campus, and many current students will reply with something along the lines of, "We have dorms here?"

Hopefully the construction of new residential halls will spread awareness and encourage student life. The building's slated completion is summer 2006.

Currently, UM-St. Louis has five main residential halls available to students: Bellerive Hall, LeGras Hall, Seton Hall, Villa North Hall and Villa Proper. Along with the dorm options, students can also choose to live in the three on-campus apartment complexes: Mansion Hills, University Park and University Meadows.

The new residential halls will provide over 400 more rooms for students, making living options more convenient. The new halls will give students the chance to have a more traditional college experience. For many pre-college students, dorm life has a place in the mental picture of university life. A state-of-the-art facility can only enhance UM-St. Louis' image.

Renting apartments or leasing a house while in college can definitely take a chunk out of a student's wallet. Most students who live on campus are students from out of town, out of state or International students, but now local students looking to live on their own will have more possibilities. Living in the residence halls gives newly independent individuals a chance to get accustomed to personal responsibility with built in safety nets.

This new five-story building will give those who choose to live there a wide range of amenities. The on-site main office, lounges, convenience store, kitchen, dining room, game room, fitness center, laundry facility and storage will make it easier for students to find time to build community and experience campus life in one convenient area.

One benefit of the construction of this new residential hall is that it will make the University more appealing to visitors and to potential students. All of the present dorms are in older buildings and have had a variety of renovations

and maintenance problems.

Designers want to make the University more attractive so that other students will be interested in living at UM-St. Louis. The building has been designed to have a community theme, which will make students feel more connected to the University and foster a complete sense of community.

The design of the building will be in the shape of a U and will be located between Seton Hall and the Nursing Administration Building. Parking, as usual, is the main culprit of concern. At the present time, plans for the completed halls do not include ample parking space.

Besides building the new residential halls, campus facility planners are also planning to convert East Drive into a two-way street, which in the long run will take away the already existing parallel parking along the road. Parking spots will be eliminated once the road is repaved. While there will be a variety of handicap-accessible parking spaces, other residents will be forced to park in other locations and will have a further distance to walk. Parking spaces on East Drive already cause problems, since the majority of the parking is designated to the MetroLink station. Finding a spot near the Honors College and the School of Nursing can be impossible during student rush hour.

If the University plans to make such an expansive and expensive improvement, it needs to accommodate for all changes. The new residential facility has the potential to be an enormous asset to this growing campus, and the tired issue of parking should not be the negative factor.

Residential Life has also contracted the design of a new dining facility in Provincial House, the current residence hall. The renovated kitchen is supposed to open this semester, barring any financial or technical obstacles. The completion of another cafeteria is another advancement in UM-St. Louis' campus reputation.

Our sister schools, UM-Columbia, Rolla and Kansas City, cater to students with multi-functional campuses. Those who attend have academic and social opportunities. UM-St. Louis has fallen behind in the latter area, as our designation as a "commuter" school contributes to an overall not-so-involved student population. The new residential facilities will only enhance the social learning environment here.

The Issue

UM-St. Louis

currently lags

behind UM-

Columbia, Rolla and

Kansas City in terms

of social life and

campus residential

facilities.

We suggest

The new residence

halls will improve

the University's

reputation by

encouraging

campus life, social

learning and

student activity.

So what do you think?

Tell us what you think! Drop us a line at the office, 388 MSC, or online at our website www.thecurrentonline.com

Am I obsolete already?

Technology runs too fast

Recently I've heard a disturbing number of people, both male and female, make reference to their "sticks." At first I regarded their comments as lewd phrases meant to make people snicker. I finally sought clarification after a fellow classmate asked me if I wanted to "use his." Once I discovered that the term "stick" is an abbreviation for "memory stick," the improved version of a floppy disk, my surprise turned to embarrassment.

Technology has picked up speed in the last few years, and my willingness to run with it is starting to tucker out. I find half of the new, "efficient" gadgets cumbersome, despite their declining size. Take, for instance, the palm pilot. I received one as a birthday present several years ago and found it difficult to toss out my paper planner. Scribbling notes on my calendar seemed less complicated than accessing my digital schedule, opening the necessary day and trying to write legible notes with an electronic pen.

I also get lost in the lingo. As I mentioned, "stick" had me wondering for days. "PDA" also had me stumped. To me, those three letters stand for "public display of affection," behavior forbidden by middle and high school teachers. Now everyone is a fan of PDA. Apparently the initials stand for something along the lines of "personal data assistant." What do secondary education officials ban now? Is there a new acronym? Did I miss the memo?

The Sharper Image store appears to stay at the cutting edge of technology. I flipped through a catalogue last week and laughed out loud. Some technology is bizarre in addition to being confusing. What man

would really pay \$100 for a device that heated his shaving cream? Who came up with this notion? Is it a concern among the male shaver population?

I am not an advocate of stone-age living. I rely heavily on technology in my personal and professional lives. My online journal allows me to take part in the lives of friends far away. My cell phone connects me to my mother. Computers streamline my job at the newspaper. The invention of "the world's first silent and efficient watch wonder!" is a testament to the fact that technology has run

wildly out of control. Size is a big (actually, small) issue among new contraptions. While small items come with convenience, minuscule appliances have a tendency to get lost in my house.

Some technology does nothing more than advocate laziness. Why vacuum your own house when a \$250 disk can roll around and do it for you? Countless self-cleaning inventions and expediency-increasing devices are available for five easy installments of \$243.59. We might not have flying cars, but pretty soon you might find the Jetsons' "Rosie" on a shelf near you.

Again, some technology has improved the world. Modern medicine, communication, security and production have undergone major advances. Some technology, though, is laughably odd and overpriced. The good must come with the bad (and bizarre), I suppose. Join me now: turn off the electric toothbrush, the iPod, the streaming online music video, the sonic dog bowl cleaner and set down your "stick," and honor the gadgets that paved the way for our world of fast-paced electronics.



KATE DROLET
Editor-in-Chief

Internet makes shopping easy

Today it is easier than ever to shop for anything in your wildest dreams. Type what you are looking for into a search engine on the Internet and go from there. While I enjoy the idea of buying anything I could possibly want or need online, some people are afraid to buy objects in this manner.

The way I see it, everyone is doing it now, so it must be alright. I have not encountered anyone who has had a huge problem buying anything on the Internet. You do need to be careful who you buy from, but only to a certain extent. My best advice for anyone who is concerned about buying from a site would be to make sure and buy from an accredited site, or a company and not an individual.

While individuals are often trustworthy, more people buy things from companies who have online sites. I have also found that amazon.com and ebay.com are usually competent. I do know someone who had one problem with someone they bought from on Amazon, but the problem was resolved. This goes back to being cautious of who you buy from.

Another thing to watch for when buying from a site is their security. You always want protection when using your credit card to purchase something online. On my computer, there is a lock that appears at the bottom of the screen when it is safe to go ahead and proceed with a protected order. I am not sure if it is like that on other computers, but you should check these options.

In addition, be sure you install virus software on your computer. There are also programs that allow you to type your credit card and banking account numbers into the software, so the computer can block anyone

who tries to obtain this information from your computer. Virus software can be bought just about anywhere today, as can Internet security software.

I still enjoy going to the malls to buy things. I think it is only healthy for people to get out of their house and away from the computer every once in a while. There are some things that many people do not feel comfortable buying online. Some clothes may not fit correctly or a piece of furniture may not look exactly the same as it did online. For these reasons, stores will never go out of business due to the ever expanding online shopping experience.

A majority of people also buy many things from out of catalogs today. These have become almost as popular as the online shopping experience. At least once a week my household receives some kind of catalog, and usually it is more often than that. I do not have any problem ordering things from out of these either. Some people are more comfortable with catalogs because they are able to send a check instead revealing their credit card number to unnamed individuals.

Although the online shopping experience is growing more complex and reaching out to more people every day, the good old shopping mall will never be replaced completely. The way I think of it, if malls disappeared what would high school students do in their spare time? Of course there are many other things to do, and not everybody enjoys shopping, but it is a popular and convenient way of overcoming boredom. As for men, things are easier for them, too. They can go online and easily order anything from jewelry to flowers for the woman in their life.



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Letters to the editor should be brief, and those not exceeding 200 words will be given preference. We edit letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number. Students must include their student ID numbers. Faculty and staff must include their title(s) and department(s). Editor-in-chief reserves the right to respond to letters. The Current reserves the right to deny letters.

What's your opinion?

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

- Halls will benefit campus
- Technology runs too fast
- Internet makes shopping easy

You can make *your* voice heard in a variety of ways!

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Under Current

by **Kevin Ottley**
Photography Associate

Where is your favorite place to go on campus?



Conchetta Cockerham
Freshman
Criminal Justice

The gym. I like to work out on the elliptical and step machines, and I enjoy playing basketball.



Lily Nguyen
Sophomore
Accounting

I like to go to the library because they have a big study table on the third floor that I like to study on. But I don't really go anywhere else on campus besides the library, class and home.



Anna Braden
Graduate Student
Early Childhood Special Education

I really like the Millennium Center, although I've only been to the bookstore and the Nosh cafeteria. Because I'm just finishing my masters, I'm not really here often.



Joy Hershberger
Graduate Student
Counseling

My favorite place is in the library on the first floor under the pyramid glass window. I go there to study, which sometimes becomes sleep...

SCIENCE COLUMN

A tale of two biotech futures: St. Louis competes for lead



BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER

Science Columnist

Instead of discussing solely science, let us take a look at biotech as business.

For years we have been hearing that St. Louis is going to be a center for Life Sciences businesses. Biotech is frequently touted by advisors and career placement offices on this campus, and others, as a promising career path in St. Louis. Biological research is often seen by area boosters and governments as a growth field that promises jobs, development and prestige for the St. Louis area.

Despite all the promotion, turning St. Louis, and Missouri, into a biotech Mecca remains more a dream than a reality. Part of the problem is the other biotech hot spots we are competing against: California and Massachusetts. California and Massachusetts have a lot to offer in terms of quality of life, entertainment, culture, and cache. People who grow up in St. Louis may love it and never leave, but moving to St. Louis or Missouri is sometimes a hard sell outside the state. Yet, in order to become a booming biotech center, and make that industry into an economic engine for the region, we have to be able to attract those researchers and those businesses from outside the state to our area.

Lack of home-grown capital has been one obstacle to making St. Louis into a booming life sciences town but a lack of trained biotech

production employees has not, since we have been churning out graduates with biology degrees and biotech skills for some years. Yet few companies are being drawn here from California and Massachusetts and there has been a trickle rather than a rush of new start-ups.

Image is part of the problem. If you saw the movie "Million Dollar Baby," you have a clue how the rest of the country, even the world, sees people from Missouri. When I visited London in 2002, people asked where I was from and when I replied "St. Louis," previously friendly people recoiled in fear. Everyone had heard St. Louis called the "murder capitol" of the U.S. It would be naïve to think that the same image does not occur in other U.S. cities.

Local officials have been toiling long and hard to overcome these issues, and to promote St. Louis as an area good for families, which it really is, and as a place that has good things to offer for young professionals as well.

As if we did not have enough obstacles to drawing biotech businesses and young biotech professionals to the area, we now face a new challenge.

There is a movement afoot in the Missouri legislature to ban certain kinds of stem cell research. Legislators like Rep. Ed Emery (R-126) are working to pass a law that bans stem cell research using somatic cell nuclear transfer, a promising line of research that may make it possible to treat, or even cure, many intractable health problems like Parkinson's disease or diabetes. The technique works by transferring the nucleus from a cell of the afflicted individual into an egg cell from which the nucleus has been removed and then growing the cells for a few days. The cells are then used to grow replacement cells for the missing or diseased cells.

The promise is great but without the research, we will never know whether the promise of the research can be fulfilled. Opponents cite moral concerns about using an egg cell and cultivating the cells to be used in procedures. Oddly, they also point out that since the research has not been done, we do not know for

certain what, or if any, medical benefits will be found, a curiously circular argument. To answer those questions, you must do the research. No one knows the answers until you ask the questions. Some people think this research is worth taking the chance but others do not think it is worth what they see as the moral costs.

If this viewpoint about banning research involving somatic cell nuclear transfer prevails, it will have a chilling effect on all Missouri biotech business. However, if it is banned in Missouri, it is unlikely to be banned in other states, particularly our biggest competitors for biotech business. So the research will happen no matter what Missouri legislators decide. Missouri just will not either participate in or benefit economically from that research.

The people of Missouri are free to make this choice but we should understand the economic results as well as the health repercussions and moral aspects than have been more widely discussed. If we pass this kind of restriction, it will become pointless to try to persuade biotech companies to relocate or startup here. Businesses do not flourish where they face restrictions that are not imposed in other states. Continuing to promote the idea of St. Louis as a future biotech hub will not only become a waste of resources but an exercise in futility. Worse yet, to continue to point students towards this field, already loaded with bachelor's degree holders, without leveling with them about the realistic local prospects for growth, seems foolish or even irresponsible, as much as any educational institute would hope for job growth in this area.

So Missourians need to make the choice with their eyes open to the whole picture, not just to the moral questions and medical potential, but to the economic results as well. If we decide to exclude this kind of research, we need to stop pretending that St. Louis is on the verge of becoming a biotech economic engine. We are free to choose but not pretend that we can have it both ways.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Student enjoys Sohn's column, makes correction

I happen to read your newspaper as often as I can. I do like a lot about it, and I think it brings in some fresh air to a student's life.

Yesterday I saw [Gary Sohn's Feb. 21 column] and I simply had to read it on the spot. I was born in Poland, lived there for thirty years and miss the place very much. I was very excited to read about anything

connected in any way to Poland.

I would like to make a comment on two things. First, the proverb Gary quotes is not Polish and does not even sound like it. How could it be Polish, since we do not have hippos at all? And secondly, what a shame that Gary met somebody who can only talk about Hitler and what he did to Poland... Poles are not like

that; we are fun and outgoing people. We do not live in the past, especially such remote past as the 1940s.

Other than that, I really liked the article, hope to read more soon!

Danuta Lemma
Freshman
College of Education

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Death penalty column lacks fact checking

Kate Drolet's article "The death penalty is inhumane" (February 21, 2005) is simply astounding.

She writes, "He survived the flawed system of punishment, along with 118 others since 1973. According to deathpenaltyinfo.org, of the 949 executed since 1968, our justice system has put to death roughly 750 people with compelling evidence of innocence."

The Death Penalty Information

Center's "exonerated" doesn't equal "innocent." And it is laughably absurd to write that 750 people were executed with "compelling evidence of innocence."

No appellate court allows an execution with such evidence. There is no proof of an innocent executed in the US, at least since 1900.

Possibly, 20 to 25 actual innocents have been sent to death row and later released post 1972, Furman

v. Georgia.

The entire article represents a blind acceptance of any anti-death penalty claim, with a complete lack of fact checking of those claims. Possibly, Ms. Drolet didn't know she was visiting anti-death penalty sites, only.

Dudley Sharp
Director
Justice for All

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Death penalty is ultimate denial of human rights

[In response to Kate Drolet's editorial in the Feb. 21 edition of The Current]

Kudos to Kate. Thank you for your editorial addressing the social injustice and humanity of the death penalty. I'm proud that the Editor-in-Chief of our student paper is willing to take a firm stance on an issue so heavily debated and controversial. I also wish to personally support her opinion, as well as offer the support of the Amnesty International student group here on campus.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases, without exception. [Capital punishment] is the ultimate denial of human rights, as Kate mentioned, and vio-

lates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Here on campus, members of the Amnesty International student group are continually engaged in the promotion and protection of human rights and social justice issues. This includes work to abolish the death penalty. The group does this primarily by writing letters to government officials and those involved in executions. Letters can call for clemency, offer support to the convicted individual's family, or even sympathize with the friends of families of victims. It is important to note that these are not letters in the support of malicious crimes, but rather expressed sentiments aimed at end-

ing cyclical patterns of violence. On march 16, the state of Missouri is scheduled to execute Stanley Hall for the murder of Barbara Jo Wood. The Amnesty International UM-St. Louis student group invites everyone on campus to call for a stay of execution, express concern for the victim's family and help abolish a "detriment to society." For more information, contact amnesty_umsl@yahoo.com

Matt Bales
Treasurer
Amnesty International
UM-St. Louis chapter

INTERN DIARIES

Gary battles the hole punch, experiences intern anxiety



GARY SOHN

New York Correspondent

Hunter S. Thompson once wrote, "Civilization ends at the water line. Beyond that, we all enter the food chain, and not always right at the top."

High above the bustling city of crowded sidewalks, fleeting yellow taxis and tourist attractions is my new office in the GE Building at Rockefeller Plaza. I entered the room with my own name on the door and squeezed behind the desk.

My new office, small and cramped, is filled with Nielsen rating books, digital tapes and binders.

As I looked through the Intern Bible, the phone rang. The caller ID told me that it was Cheese Stick.

Cheese Stick looks and sounds like Homer Simpson's gentle neighbor, Ned Flanders (minus the mustache). That's about as far as the similarities go. Cheese Stick is not a 'love thy neighbor' kind of person.

"Hey Guy," he said, "I need you to go next door and assist Alison with wrapping up the Emmy nominations."

I went next door and introduced myself to Alison. At the early age of twenty-four, Alison has already been a producer on numerous sports programs, which is almost unheard of in the television business. She came with a high recommendation, I heard through the grapevine, to work on the Emmy submissions for sports. I definitely had a lot to learn from her.

"I need you to cut out all the labels," Alison said as she handed me a stack of papers. "and then come see me as soon as you're finished, because we don't have much time left."

I took the stack of papers to my desk and began chopping away. Shreds of paper flew into the air as the scissor blades banged together. I must have looked like Edward Scissorhands.

The phone rang again, interrupting my pace.

"Guy, can you come into my office?" Cheese Stick said. "And bring me what you're working on."

When I showed him the cut labels, he immediately looked peeved.

"What is this," he snapped, annoyed. "No, no, no. These labels are going to be too small." He thrust his hand out. "Let me see one of the video cassette cases."

I handed him a case. He took one of the labels and stuck it onto the plastic cover on the front of the case. A perfect fit.

"Well okay, they do fit." He said

unapologetically. "Good. Now take this list of shows with their entry categories and running times, and write them out on all the labels that you just cut out. And Guy, make sure you print them nice and neat with a black pen."

Before printing the names of the shows, categories and running times on the labels, I practiced writing them out on a blank piece of paper. My handwriting looked horrible. I filled out one of the labels, not confident in my penmanship. I decided to see if it was up to par with Cheese Stick.

"No, no, no!" he said. "You're going to have to write neater than that." He took my pen and a blank label and wrote one out to show me. His handwriting looked worse than mine.

"You want me to print out the labels just like that one?" I asked.

He glanced at his own handwriting and could not ignore the fact that it looked as bad, if not worse, than mine.

"Looks like we are going to have to get a girl to do this. We men are not born with good handwriting skills. Go to Cindy's office down the hall and see if she can do it for us," he instructed.

“
Man, you don't know how to punch holes? Come on, you're in the big leagues now. This is not minor stuff!
”

- Cheese Stick
Gary's boss

After unloading the labels onto Cindy, I went back to Alison's office to see what she needed me to do next.

She told me to get a couple of specialized boxes used for mailing out video cassettes. I went down to the mailing room on the second floor and retrieved two boxes. Back in my office, as I was trying to figure out how to fold the boxes out for the videotapes, Cheese Stick appeared.

"Hey man, if you don't know how to fold them out then don't even bother," he said, ripping the box from my hand.

These complicated boxes did not resemble the typical four-flaps at the bottom kind. "Boy," I thought to myself, "I am so glad to have 'Yoda' here to teach me 'the way' of folding a box."

After Cheese Stick finished folding the two boxes, I was relieved to hear that I could work with Alison again.

She and I went to the editing room and cued all the tapes that would be sent to the judges. The tapes have to be cued so that when they pushed 'play,' the footage would start immediately. If the tape doesn't begin immediately, points can be subtracted from the entry, which could drastically hurt its chances of winning.

As we cued the tapes, I asked Alison how she got into the business. She told me that she worked as an intern for 'Entertainment Tonight' and 'Nightly News' before becoming a producer. She had volunteered to be a 'runner' for the Summer Olympics last year, and that led to her big break.

"The producer I worked for really appreciated how hard I had worked, and through word of mouth I was contracted for this position," she said.

I admitted that I knew little about video production, and she told me not to worry. Alison said that she did not either until getting into the network business. "You learn as you go," she said. "Making it through college is just a way of getting a chance to go through the door. What you do in here is where you really learn how the business works."

Hearing this gave me some hope. Since starting work at NBC, I had heard bizarre, meaningless technical terms floating around. One technical term I overheard was "generic Elvis." I'm still trying to figure that one out.

As we discussed video production and our personal lives, the editing room phone rang. Alison answered. Guess who wanted me in his office again?

Cheese Stick said he needed me to punch holes in some forms for his '2004 Emmy book.'

I noticed that the puncher would cut some of the words off. I moved the paper a little further from the edge of the hole-punch and pressed down. Nausea hit me. I had punched too close to the edge, and the wayward holes cut off the side of the page.

I took the messed up pages to Cheese Stick. He was furious.

"You don't know how to punch holes," he said disgustedly. "Man you don't know how to punch holes? Come on, you're in the big leagues now. This is not minor stuff!"

He glanced at the pages again. "Damn it, I just had the President of USA Networks sign these pages. Bring me the hole punch," he said.

Cheese Stick punched another set of holes and put the page in his Emmy book. He told me to go down to the editing room and get a sports promo tape he needed.

As I passed the Saturday Night Live set on my way to the editing room, I noticed a lot of commotion. Pallet jacks wheeled in several bottles of water and snacks.

After retrieving Cheese Stick's tape, I passed the SNL set again. I heard a man say, "Clear the way."

"Clear the way?" I looked around. "I'm the only person in the hallway," I thought.

As I turned around the corner, I met a large group dressed in hip-hop apparel. As I scanned through the crowd, I got quite a surprise when one of the people spoke to me...

Stay tuned next week when Gary gets a small acting part on NBC's 'Third Watch' and gets a new nickname at an Italian restaurant where he works as a part-time waiter.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION, from page 1

The national theme for Women's History Month is "Women Change America," but UM-St. Louis has its specific theme, "What If?"

"We're allowing them to be creative and just ponder these questions," Bullerdieck said. "For example, what would it be like if there were more women senators? We should have specific ideas throughout the month."

A diverse group of events are planned for the month, including speakers, women's health testing and screenings and Women in the Art events. "Any day of the month that you want to celebrate women's history, you can do that," Bullerdieck said.

The Institute for Women and Gender Studies is one of the departments holding women's history events. It is sponsoring a speaker series featuring faculty members and women in the community. Joyce Mushaben, director of the Institute for Women and Gender Studies, said that would be a chance to showcase UM-St. Louis faculty and others.

"It gives people the opportunity to hear from people who seem to be moving and shaking things outside of the University campus," Mushaben said.

In addition to learning about women's history, people can also nominate a woman for an award. The Office of Equal Opportunity will hold its tenth annual Women Trailblazer Ceremony at the end of the month. Students, faculty, staff and alumnae are eligible for and can nominate people for the Trailblazer award. Those interested in nominating someone or learning more about the award can contact the Office of Equal Opportunity at 516-5695.

Bullerdieck said it was important to celebrate Women's History Month because of how the status of women has changed over the years.

"Now women are the majority on campus so it's important to consider what women have gone through and contributed," she said.

"The idea is... to commemorate

having found women in history who really made a difference and changed the contours of American society and to change the conditions we're still facing on a daily basis," Mushaben said.

Some of the issues Mushaben was concerned with were salary inequity and the lack of paid maternity leave at the University. "Change has to start with women on this campus," she said.

Public celebration of women's history in the United States began in 1978 as a week-long event. Congress eventually set aside March as Women's History Month in 1987, but some people hope that Women's History Month would eventually no longer be needed.

"Hopefully, we would come to a point where our history would be celebrated year-round so we wouldn't need a specific month," Bullerdieck said. "I think we'll come to that point some day but for now it's important to dedicate some time looking into it and being exposed to information that people traditionally aren't exposed to."

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Rivermen earn spot at GLVC

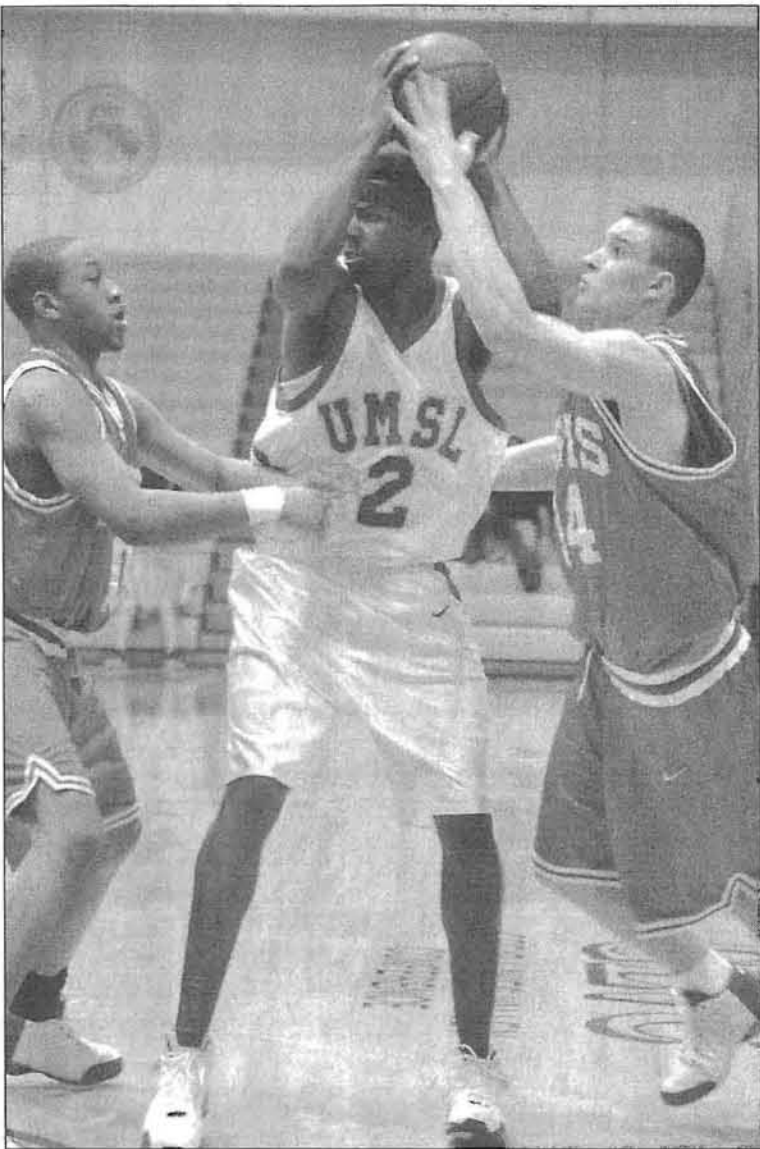
Despite defeat at NKU, team gets spot as 8th seed in GLVC tournament

BY JAMES DAUGHERTY
Sports Editor

The UM-St. Louis men's basketball team qualified for the Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament for the first time in five years. In a combination of last minute heroics and good luck, the Rivermen grabbed the eighth and final seed. A 62-59 victory on Feb. 24 put the Rivermen in position, and although they lost their next game 91-78 to Northern Kentucky University, the other contender for the seed, Lewis University, lost their final game to Wisconsin-Parkside 79-77. It couldn't have been any closer. The team looked out of it from the beginning of February, but a three-pointer in double overtime against Lewis University on Feb. 10 kept the team's hopes alive. At times it seems that the Rivermen live and die by the three-pointer, and on Feb. 24 against Bellarmine, they lived. In the first half of the game the lead see-sawed between the two teams. The Knights grabbed an early 16-10 lead after eight minutes of play, but the Rivermen responded with a 14-2 run to take a 24-18 lead. The Knights

chipped away at the lead and by half-time the Rivermen were only up by two, 29-27. The Knights continued to outplay the Rivermen in the second half and grabbed a 46-40 lead with 11 minutes left in the game. They held the six point lead until just under three minutes, and were still up by five with 1:40 left to play. The Rivermen closed the gap with defense. Aaron Green went one and one from the free-throw line to cut the lead to four, then Joey Paul got a steal and took a three-pointer, which he missed. Darrell Minner grabbed the offensive rebound, however, and gave it back to Paul, who then drained the second opportunity and cut the score to 59-58. On the very next possession Jonathan Griffin stole the ball and took it down court for a dunk, giving the Rivermen a 60-59 lead. He was fouled on the last possession of the night and knocked down his free-throws to give the Rivermen the 62-59 victory. The win kept the team in contention for the tournament, but to be in control of their own destiny they had to defeat Northern Kentucky University on Feb. 26. A win against the Norse would assure their conference birth, but a loss would leave Lewis University, the other contender for the final spot, in control. Unfortunately the Rivermen were defeated by the Norse; fortunately Lewis choked. Against Northern Kentucky University the Rivermen had a poor

showing. They stayed with the Norse for the first 14 minutes of the game, and only trailed 31-27 with six minutes to play in the first half. The Norse then went on a huge run, outscoring the Rivermen 26-10 to take a 22 point lead going into halftime. In the second half the Rivermen did manage to cut the deficit to five at 76-71 with 5:37 left in the game, but then completely bungled their opportunity to get any closer: the team got a steal and three offensive rebounds for a total of four field-goal attempts, but could not convert any of them. The Norse took advantage of the Rivermen's lack of consistency and rebuilt their lead to take the 91-79 victory. Fortunately for the Rivermen the loss did not ruin their chances at the conference tournament. Lewis University had to defeat Wisconsin-Parkside to enter ahead of the Rivermen, but fell in a tightly contested game, 79-77. The loss knocked Lewis out of the rankings and set the stage for the Rivermen to go for the first time in five years. The team will play Thursday, March 3 against Southern Indiana University, the number one seed.



RIGHT: Forward Aaron Green fights his way out from between two Lewis players during a game Feb. 10. Green scored 8 points in the Rivermen's 82-79 win.

Mike Sherwin/The Current

TOURNAMENT TIME ■ Here's what to expect from the key Rivermen players heading to the GLVC

The UM-St. Louis men's basketball team finished out their home schedule recently with a convincing loss to GLVC opponent N. Kentucky. While a team chock full of newcomers was not expected to compete for the GLVC championship this year, the team squeaked out a spot as the #8 seed. However, those who expected the team to improve on last year's record as a stepping stone to eventual success will be disappointed with the

team's 9-18 record this year. The good news is that the team is headed to the tournament, and beyond that, 11 players will return next year. Hopefully, as the team's chemistry and comfort level improve, it will affect next year's record. Here is a breakdown of the key contributors from this year's team to examine what they did well this year and what areas they may need to improve upon before the tournament and before next season.

By Bryan Boedeker
Photos by Mike Sherwin



Chris Mroz

- 5'11" Guard
- Junior
- 7.8 ppg; 45% 3PG (6th in GLVC)

Gritty, hard-nosed player who rarely makes mistakes. A very good outside shooter, but has not shown the ability to create his own shot. Is too unselfish at times on the offensive end and always seems to settle for the safest possible pass. Has the ability to penetrate but uses it sparingly.

Jonathan Griffin

- 6'2" Guard
- Junior
- 18.7 ppg; 5.8 rpg; 3.6 apg

The team's leader in almost every major statistical category is a dynamic scorer and shooter with an incredible ability to get to the free throw line (led the GLVC in both free throws made and attempted). The only knock on his game may be that he should be able to improve on his assist numbers considering how much he has the ball in his hands and the attention he draws.



Aaron Green

- 6'5" Guard/Forward
- Junior
- 13.4 ppg; 4.4 rpg

A great athlete with the ability to score inside and out, a good penetrator. Has been known to disappear on offense at times and has the potential to be a more consistent scorer.



Derrell Minner

- 6'7" Forward
- Junior
- 6.2 ppg; 5.4 rpg

An exceptional athlete with great leaping ability. Showed flashes of dominance this year (led the team in both points, 18, and rebounds, 13, in a win over Lewis). Good shot blocker. Needs to be more aggressive and involved on the offensive end.



David Ward

- 6'6 Forward/Center
- Freshman
- 6.7 ppg; 4.6 rpg

A strong and tough low post presence that has shown nice touch around the basket. Footwork around the basket makes him sometimes seem impossible to guard. Undersized for his position, but he still has the ability to grab 7 or 8 rebounds a game which may come with more playing time.

Sherome Cole

- 5'9" Guard
- Junior
- 7.1 ppg

Great sparkplug off the bench. His quickness is his best attribute. Shot too poorly from the floor this year (37%) and needs to improve on that.



Joey Paul

- 6'3" Guard/Forward
- Junior
- 6.9 ppg; 83% FT

Good athlete and a very good defensive player. Is a much better shooter than his numbers (35% from the field) indicate. He forces too many tough shots.



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EDITOR

JAMES DAUGHERTY
Sports Editor

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Upcoming

Men's Basketball

March 3
♦ vs Southern Indiana in Evansville, Ind.
6 p.m.

Men's Baseball ***** UMSL BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

March 4
♦ vs. UM-Rolla
4 p.m.*

March 5
♦ vs Grand Valley
12:30 p.m.*

March 6
♦ vs. Hillsdale
2:00 p.m.

* Baseball games March 4 and 5 will be at GMC Stadium in Sauget, Ill. The March 6 game is at UM-St Louis baseball field.

Baseball opens season at Central Arkansas

BY DAVE SECKMAN
Staff Writer

The Rivermen baseball team is looking to continue their dominance as they head to the University of Central Arkansas to take on both the Missouri Western Griffins and the University of Central Arkansas Bears in the opening weekend of regular season play.

Over the past 19 seasons the Rivermen have compiled a dominant 560-319-6 record and have not once finished with a losing record. The Rivermen have also had 30 or more wins in 11 of the last 13 seasons, including a school-record of 39-15 record in 2003.

This year looks to be much of the same as the Rivermen bring back a good core of players from last year's team and also have an experienced pitching staff to go along with it. The

Rivermen have had trouble in the last few season openers, as they have only managed to come away with a win once in the past four years. As we all know, bad starts do not necessarily mean a bad season as the Rivermen have proven so time and time again.

Senior pitcher Blake Burnside commented on the opening weekend. "We have all been ready to get rolling for a while now. I think the only way we can really know how good we are is to start playing against teams other than ourselves, and I think starting off against these two teams is going to be good for us no matter the outcome," he said.

Last season the Rivermen only managed a 1-2 record against the Bears of UCA who are becoming a perennial rival for the Rivermen now, as they have now played against them three out of the past five seasons. They will look to reverse the tide as they will play the Bears in a double

header the first part of the weekend.

After the Rivermen are finished with the Bears they will then match up against the Griffins of Missouri Western University, a team that the Rivermen have not faced in the last two seasons. However, the Rivermen have not lost to the Griffins in the last four meetings and they will look to continue the streak as the weekend goes on.

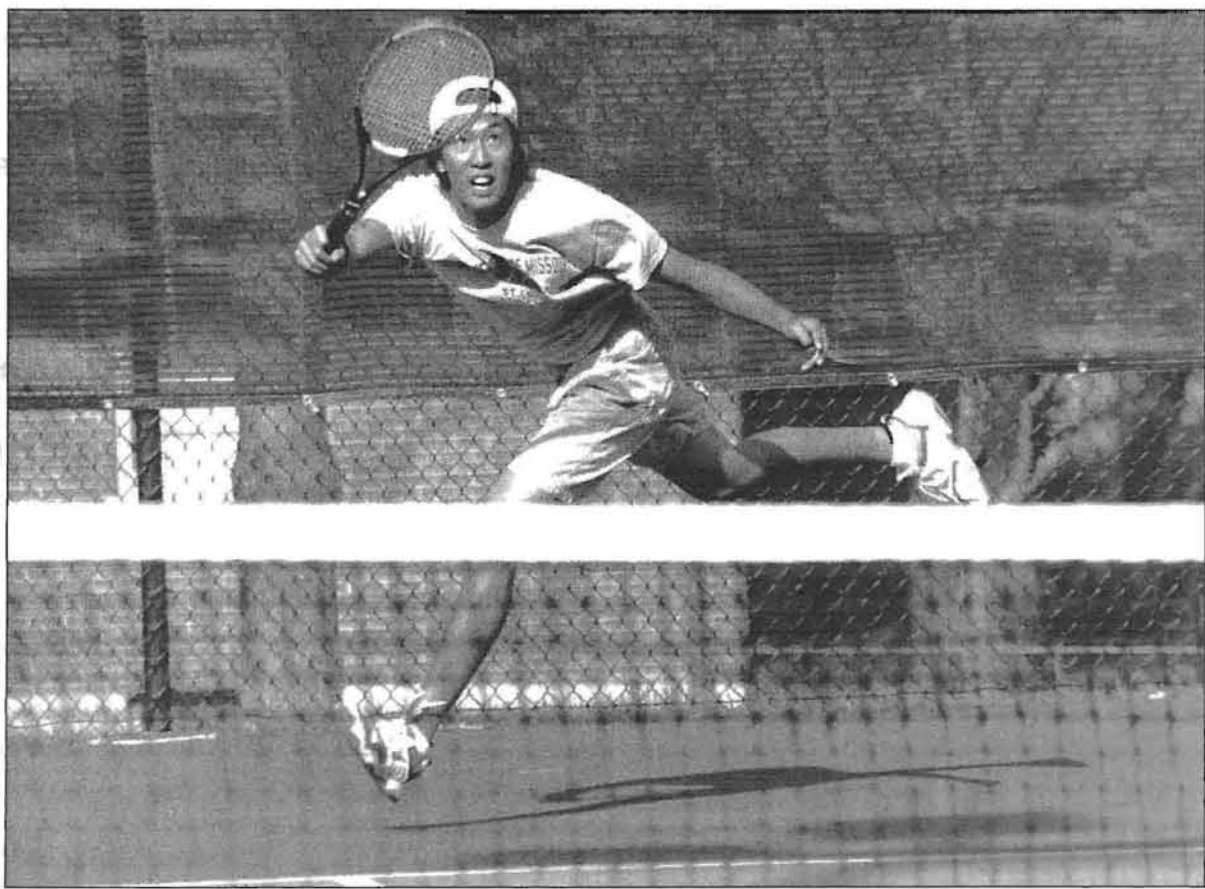
Senior outfielder Colby Hughes spoke on the importance of a good start. "I think it is important for us to come out strong. We have had a bulls-eye on our backs since the end of the 2003 season. Every team is going to give us their best so we need to do the same if we want to do as well we think we can this year," Hughes said.

The Rivermen will come home for their own home opener next weekend as they host the UM-St. Louis baseball tournament and look to beat up on some team to start the season.



Mike Sherwin/The Current

Infielder Josh Thomas waits for his turn to bat during the spring 2004 season. The Rivermen play at the UMSL Baseball Tournament March 4-6. The games on March 4-5 are at GMC Stadium in Sauget, Ill. The games on March 6 are at UMSL.



Francis Lam, sophomore, leaps after the tennis ball to ensure himself a win against Lindenwood University last spring.

Amanda Schniedermeyer/The Current

Lam, Saini, perfect in tennis opener

BY JAMES DAUGHERTY
Sports Editor

This season was supposed to start out very difficult for the UM-St. Louis Men's Tennis Team. The team started the season out by losing three players, two who played for the team in the fall and one who was being recruited to play the top position. To make matters worse the Rivermen were not opening the season against cakewalk teams, but rather big names like Truman State, SLU and Wash U.

Doubts about this year's tennis team might just fade away. On Feb. 23 the team defeated Truman State - the same Truman State that qualified for Regionals last year and just finished crushing Quincy University 9-0 - by a score of 7-2. The win was a bit of a surprise, but the margin was even more so. Coach Rick Gyllenberg felt that the off-season work really played a hand in the dominant win. "I thought that the team played extremely well. Truman State is a very good team, but it

seemed to me that we came out and were more prepared than they were. Our talent level might not be that much higher than theirs, if it is higher at all, but our physical conditioning and preparation were much better," Gyllenberg said.

The match started out on a down note for the Rivermen. Juniors Mike Schaaf and Stephen Pobst lost at the top doubles spot 8-5, despite fighting all the way back from 7-1. Sophomore Max Bugner and Freshman Ryan Burgdorfer also lost their doubles match, squandering a 5-3, 40-love lead. The only doubles win came from Sophomore Francis Lam and Junior Raj Saini, who dominated their opponents in an 8-3 victory.

Down 2-1 after doubles, things did not look so good for the Rivermen, but they played remarkable singles matches to get a 6-0 sweep. Lam, playing the top spot for the Rivermen, broke his opponents serve at 4-4 in the first set and then did not lose another game in a 6-4, 6-0 victory. Schaaf, at the number two

spot, came back from being down 0-4 in the first set to defeat his opponent 7-5, 6-1. The third and fourth matches were by far the most difficult, with Pobst and Saini winning the "iron man" award for perseverance. Pobst won the first set in a tie-breaker, lost the second set 7-5, then won the deciding super-breaker 11-9. Saini actually started his match up 6-2, 5-3, but began cramping in his hand late in the second set. His opponent managed to take advantage of the situation and won the second set 7-5, then grabbed 9-7 lead in the super-breaker, but Saini overcame the cramps and won four straight points for the 11-9 victory. Bugner and Burgdorfer both won easy matches at the bottom, 6-1, 6-3 and 6-1, 6-1, respectively.

Lam credited the win to hard work. "It was tough losing two out of three doubles but all the hard work from the off-season paid off in our singles matches," Lam said.

The Rivermen's next match will be against Quincy University on March 12.

Rivermen roller hockey to compete in regional championships in St. Peters

BY KATIE DOLL
Staff Writer

Attention hockey fans: Need a fix for your NHL withdrawal? The defending National Champion Rivermen roller hockey team wants your support at their regional tournament, Mar. 5-6.

For those of you thinking, "We have a roller hockey team?" you are not alone.

Ironically, UM-St. Louis' most successful sports team is virtually unknown around campus. The team, which plays all of its games at the Matteson Square Gardens Tri-plex in St. Peters, beat out more than 120 other teams across the country to bring home the national title last spring.

Interestingly, the National Champions in all four divisions came from the St. Louis area, with Lindenwood University taking the D I and B titles and St. Charles Community College winning D III.

Roller hockey became officially recognized as a club sport at UM-St. Louis in 2000 and currently has two teams. The top team competes in Division II and the second team competes in the B Division.

This year's D II team boasts a record of 9-2-1 in league play and is currently ranked fourth in the nation. The B division team has struggled somewhat this season, posting a league record of 4-7-1. Both teams will compete Mar. 5-6 in the hopes of capturing a spot in April's national tournament in

Fort Collins, Colo.

The Rivermen's top team, led in scoring by Will Roestel and in points and assists by James Wetton, expects to fair well in this weekend's regionals. Senior defenseman Kevin Wesner commented on the team's outlook. "The team looks good going into regionals, but unfortunately we lost our top scorer to a knee injury last week, so the rest of the team will really need to step it up this weekend," Wesner said.

The upcoming Great Plains regional tournament begins on Saturday, Mar. 5, with the Rivermen D II team playing at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and the B team playing at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. For directions to the games, visit mattessonsquaregarden.com or call (636) 241-7177.

Riverwomen softball team opens season at Evangel Tournament

BY DAVE SECKMAN
Staff Writer

After a long and dreary pre-season the Riverwomen softball team will finally get the chance to show off the skills they have been fine tuning for the past four months. The team has been practicing mostly indoors for the majority of the winter months and this will be the first chance that the team has had to be on an actual game field for more than an hour at a time.

The Riverwomen softball team will travel to play at the Evangel Early Bird Tournament in Springfield. The Riverwomen look to start strong and ride the experience of the seven returning players from last season's team

that went 27-27 and also hope to show that the pre-season conference picks were no fluke as they were picked to finish sixth out of twelve.

Sophomore Emily Wagoner eagerly commented on the upcoming games. "It will be the first time this season we have a chance to go out and show what we have been working on. After being inside for so long, we are all ready to start playing and to get into the pressures of game situations," she said.

The team will get very little time to get in the swing of things as they will play up to six possible games in two days. With so little time the team must get quickly if they hope to show what they are all about from the start.

At the tournament the Riverwomen

start in bracket play, where they will play each team just once to see who will advance onto the knockout rounds of the tournament. The Riverwomen will face up against three teams that they haven't faced in a few years. Their first game pairs them up with Columbia College, followed by a second game versus Trinity Christian College and a third and final first day game against Midland Lutheran.

In previous meetings, the Riverwomen have a winning record against these three opponents, having only lost one of the previous five meetings. The team hopes to continue the success that they have had against these teams and looks to run through the tables of the tournament to start the season strong.

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CD REVIEW

DiFranco's 'Knuckle Down' is palette of emotion



Photo by Danny Clinch, courtesy Righteous Babe Records

BY MIKE SHERWIN
Staff Writer

Sweet and slow. Sparse and incisive. Frantic and harrowing.

Ani DiFranco paints with a wide set of emotional brushes in her latest release "Knuckle Down," released Jan. 25.

The album marks a pointed departure from 2004's "Educated Guess," which featured DiFranco exclusively — she wrote, performed, recorded and engineered the album.

This time around, DiFranco brings in eight performers, and for the first time a co-producer, musician Joe Henry.

Fans of DiFranco may wonder if the album will simply reconstitute her previous full-band recordings, like 2003's jazz-infused "Evolve" or the funky double live set "So Much Shouting, So Much Laughter," which was notable for its prominent use of a brass section.

"Knuckle Down" brings back some familiar names to her musical retinue, with Todd Sickafoose on bass, Julie Wolf on melodica.

However, it is the addition of fellow Righteous Babe Records artist Andrew Bird on violin and glockenspiel and Patrick Warren on piano and chamberlin that gives "Knuckle Down" a fresh take on DiFranco's trademark frenetic guitar style and intelligent lyricism.

The album's second track, "Studying Stones," is a gem, sweetly incorporating the violin into a gentle, slightly sad meditation, with an upbeat chorus. The violin careens from broad bowing to softly plucked notes, engaging in entrancing conversation with the DiFranco's slightly subdued acoustic fingerpicking.

The best tracks on the album follow the example of "Studying

Stones," by leaving the strings and instrumentation to simply accent the melody laid down by DiFranco. However, the violin is not alone. On "Sunday Morning," Tony Scherr's fuzzy, distorted electric guitar provides a surprisingly fitting solo over its acoustic cousin, lending an extra emotional layer to the sweet but sad dirge to a relationship past.

The upbeat "Modulation" benefits well from Warren's understated piano, percussively ringing out single notes in concert with the hypnotic, undulating bass. Most notable, though, is Warren's use of the chamberlin, a precursor to the Mellotron keyboard instrument, which assigned tape-recorded samples to its keys. The chamberlin subtly colors the tune, exerting a slightly eerie, though enthralling, base of ambient noise. The effect is oddly reminiscent of tracks from Beck's 1998 album "Mutations," which combined traditional instrumentation with analog synthesizers.

Despite the additional instrumentation, DiFranco doesn't leave her lyrics backstage. Rather, she follows her tradition of smart, challenging lyrics that are often deeply personal — "Paradigm" is a reflection on growing up with her immigrant parents — and often with a leftist political bent.

"Parameters" puts DiFranco's voice on center-stage, for a six-minute spoken-word piece about encountering an intruder. Only the softly creeping acoustic guitar, with ringing harmonics and the bass accompanies DiFranco's lyrics.

"Knuckle Down" effectively combines unexpected instrumentation to provide a multi-faceted, intricate and intelligent layering sound, providing intriguing accents to the core folk elements that DiFranco fans have come to expect.

CLUB REVIEW

Pin Up Bowl strikes the Loop with cocktails, entertainment

BY TANA ROGERS
Staff Writer

It's Tuesday, and a bright, young college student, much like you, looks for something to do on a dull weeknight. She and her friend decide to go to the Loop, and find themselves entering Pin Up Bowl on Delmar. The college student peruses the menu, feels like Crown Royal and orders a "Baked Apple" cocktail. Her friend has one too.

The Pin Up Bowl menu boasts ten "Signature Cocktails," ten "Modern Cocktails" and ten "Classic Cocktails," in addition to the standard gin and vodka martinis. Each of the specialty cocktail drinks averages \$10, including a nice tip for the bartender.

They also serve cheap food items ranging from Campbell's soup to Pop

Tarts. All of the appetizers, sandwiches and desserts are under \$5, except the Angus and veggie burgers and the Buffalo chicken sandwich. Those run about a buck more. A cheese pizza is about \$10.

Said college student springs for the hummus, considering the strength of the cocktail and the fact she had not eaten since lunch. The pair waits for a lane because even on a Tuesday, Pin Up Bowl is fairly packed. The friendly, fresh-faced attendant had placed the woman and her friend on the waiting list for a lane.

Before writing down the name of the party, the girl asked the college student and her friend if they are 21. At Pin Up Bowl, after 6 p.m., patrons must be 18 years old or with a "responsible adult." After 9 p.m., all patrons must be 21, period. The girl issuing lanes had told the college student that someone

would come around at 9 p.m. to card them, but 9 p.m. comes and goes without such an incident.

While waiting, the college student sits at the bar eating the hummus, or chickpea spread. She likes the flavor because it has a lemony bite and tastes fresh. She talks and laughs with her friend. All of the other patrons not bowling seem to be doing the same.

As each respective group around the lush, red lounge area of Pin Up Bowl enjoys one another's company, current and recent pop and rock hits fill the space. In front of the bathrooms, curtains hang, giving the lounge a luxurious feel. The menu items such as the Campbell's soup fit well with the 50s decor. People in the lounge can gaze at the bowlers or the big screens while relaxing and socializing.

After finishing her first, the college student chooses another cocktail. A

large list of the various cocktails hangs on the right end of the bar near where she sits. She refers to it, and this time, she feels more daring and orders a "Goldrush."

The gold in the clear drink sparkles each time she tips the martini glass. The college student sips this intense mixture of Absolut vodka and Goldschlager, a cinnamon flavored liqueur with 24 karat flecks of gold, while continuing to wait for the lane.

Pin Up Bowl is home to six bowling lanes. On a weeknight, a lane is \$4 per person, per lane, and \$3 for shoe rental. On weekends, though, the price is only two quarters more but the wait may be a little longer. Instead of perching at the bar like the college student has, patrons can also play pool while waiting for their lane. Some may prefer pool to bowling for their nightly outing, and the price for pool is \$8 per hour.

Next, the college student orders a Bud light in a bottle. She knows that another one of the mighty Pin Up cocktails will not be a good idea. She finishes her beer and the time at Pin Up Bowl comes to an end for the college student.

Shortly before the beer, or shortly after, the girl taking lane reservations had informed the pair that their lane was up. The college student's friend asked her if she still wanted to bowl. The college student answered, "No," because she was no longer in the mood to bowl.

She either wanted to go to an establishment where there would be dancing or be responsible and get some sleep before early classes. Either way, the start of the night and the first two tasty cocktails were unforgettable and unmistakably enjoyable. The college student had decided: Pin Up Bowl was a fun place to hang out.

CD REVIEW

Cici's has inexpensive alternative to delivery pizza

BY MONICA MARTIN
Staff Writer

If you are in the mood for pizza but are tired of the same old Pizza Hut and Domino's, and are on a budget, stop in at Cici's Pizza for some delicious pizza at great prices.

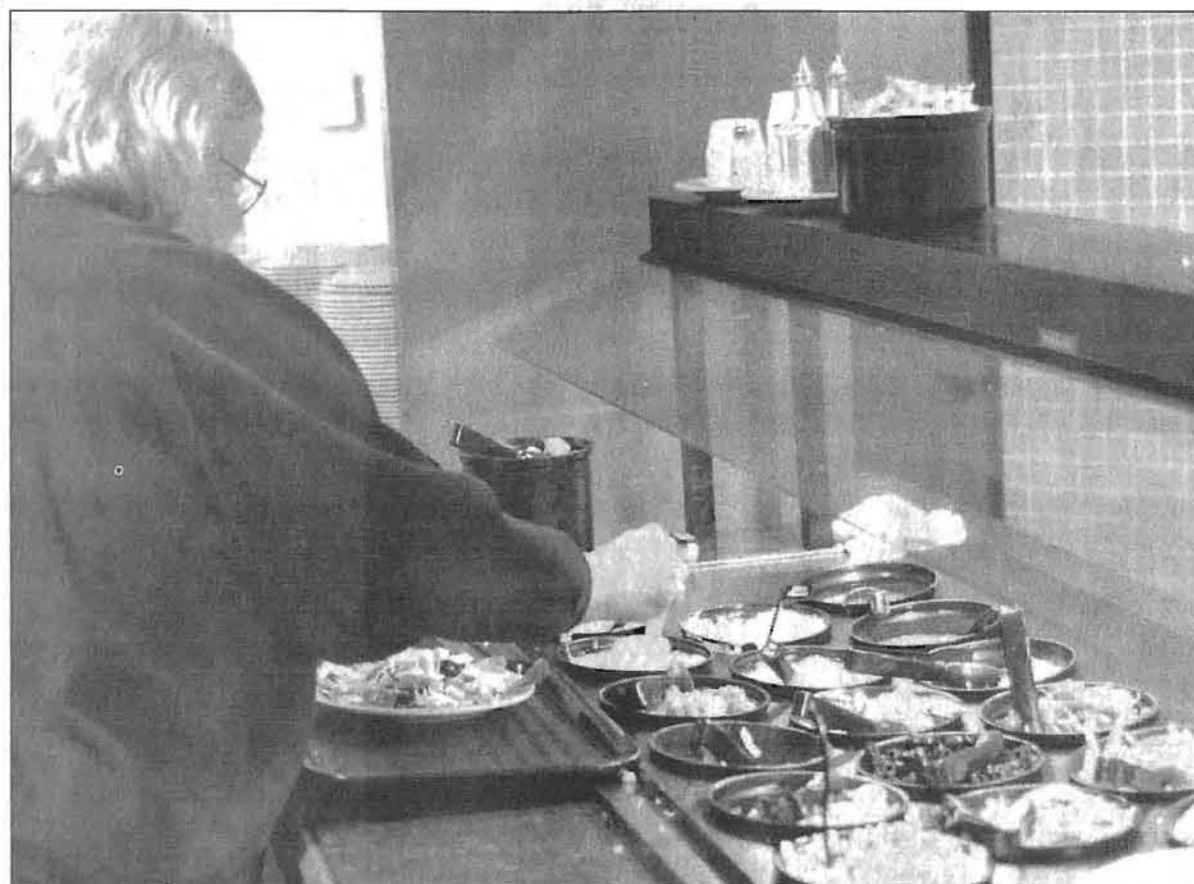
My friend and I arrived at the Rock Hill Cici's Pizza on Friday evening at 7 p.m. It was obviously dinnertime, and the restaurant was packed. Cici's is not the usual pizza restaurant. Servers do not wait on customers because the restaurant is a buffet. When patrons first walk in, they join the line up to the register. Once at the register, most patrons order the \$3.99 buffet. The buffet includes drinks, pizza, the salad bar and dessert. There is no hostess to seat patrons. Customers are just given their drink glasses, and are on their own after that. My friend and I sat down at a table in the middle of the restaurant. As my friend went up to the buffet to get her food, I took in my surroundings. The walls were white, as was the tile floor. One television hung in each corner across from the buffet. One played a sports channel, the other played CNN news. The drink machine is near the buffet. In the back of the restaurant is a small game room. Tables and booths are scattered

around the floor.

When my friend came back with her food, I headed up to the buffet to load up my own plate. I started off with a small salad, and then went back for my pizza. My friend went for the pizza first, and then had dessert, cinnamon rolls. The food was good for the price. The salad was fresh, and the pizza was hot and fresh despite sitting under heat lamps.

Cici's Pizza also offers carry out for those who would prefer to eat in the comfort of their own homes. The pizzas are cheese with one topping. Regular round pizzas are \$4.99 for a 12-inch medium, and \$5.99 for a 15-inch large. Deep dish pizzas are \$5.99 for a medium and \$6.99 for a large. Specialty pizzas are \$4.99 for a 12-inch medium and \$5.99 for a 15-inch large. Specialty pizzas are Bacon Cheddar, Alfredo, BBQ, Pizza Ole, and Spinach Alfredo. Extra toppings are 75 cents each and include extra cheese, pepperoni, ham, beef, Italian style sausage, mushrooms, onions, green peppers, black olives, jalapenos, pineapple and anchovies. According to fliers that can be picked up at the register, Cici's Pizza uses 100% real Mozzarella, freshly prepared sauce, freshly made dough and garden fresh vegetable toppings.

Cici's Pizza currently has four locations in St. Louis. One is west



Erica Burruss/The Current

Healthy eaters and veggie lovers can build their own salads at Cici's Pizza. Those searching for cheap pizza can find Cici's at several St. Louis locations, including Manchester, near Grand Ave., on South Lindbergh and on Old Halls Ferry. Carry out is available, as well as a buffet, dessert and salad.

of McKnight at 9745 Manchester; one is south of Grand Ave at 3562 Gustine Ave; one is across from Home Depot at 10835 Old Halls Ferry Rd; and one is south of

LeMay Ferry at 7425 S. Lindbergh. Buffet hours are Sunday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Buffet prices vary at each location.

Cici's Pizza is a good place to go for pizza when you are tired of the same old pizza. Stop in at one of their four locations and see for yourself.

A&E

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March at the
Touhill

March 1

Dr. Pamela
Ruiter-Feenstra

"The Art of
Improvisation"

Lee Theater

3:30 p.m.

Free

March 5, 6

Cedar Lake II
Dance
performance

8 p.m., 2 p.m.

\$20, \$25

March 10

UMSL Jazz Band

Lee Theater

7:30 p.m.

Free

March 12, 13

Alexandra Ballet
"20th Anniversary
Celebration"

7:30 p.m.

\$22 - \$40

March 18

Lunasa
Irish Band
Lee Theater

7:30 p.m.

\$7 - \$15

For show information, visit
www.touhill.org

MOVIE REVIEW

Pacino gives riveting performance in ‘Merchant of Venice’

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
A&E Editor

Al Pacino is breathtakingly powerful as Shylock in the new film version of William Shakespeare’s “The Merchant of Venice.” Pacino’s performance is so good that he is almost the whole show. But not quite, for this is a well staged and original take on one of the Bard’s most difficult plays. “The Merchant of Venice” is a beautifully mounted production, a lush and exotic period costume film that transports you to the romance of old Venice. But it also gives us the unexpected look at the lives of those shut out of the beautiful dream. This new version of Shakespeare’s sublimely classic turns Shylock, the Jewish moneylender, into the central character and re-tells the story primarily from his point of view. The film begins with a bit of history about the position of Jews in the Venetian society. In a prolog, the film tells us about the ghettos where Jewish people are forced to live, their restriction to only businesses considered too unsavory for Christians, like money-lending, and the requirements of special dress to identify them as Jews when they travel outside the ghetto, as well as the open prejudice. The prolog puts us in mind of the life of Jews under the Nazis, sets a somber tone for the story, and gives us some context for Shylock’s deep anger, seething under a veneer of discrimination. “Merchant of Venice” is a troubling play because it is actually one of Shakespeare’s comedies, and the



Allen Corduner (left) appears as Tubal and Al Pacino (right) appears as Shylock in the Sony Pictures Classics version of Shakespeare’s ‘Merchant of Venice.’

twisted, resentful Shylock is the play’s villain. Despite the restrictions on his life, Shylock (Al Pacino) has prospered but he is filled with anger. When the young poor Bassanio (Joseph Fiennes) goes to his friend Antonio (Jeremy Irons) to ask for money to win the hand of wealthy and beautiful heiress Portia (Lynn Collins), he catches Antonio in a tight financial spot. Antonio is awaiting the arrival of three merchant ships but in the short term, he is cash strapped. Thinking that, with three ships set to arrive soon, a loan is no real risk, Antonio goes to the moneylender Shylock for a loan on

Bassanio’s behalf. Shylock harbors a resentment of Antonio from a past wrong, and sets an unusual condition to secure the loan, the payment of a pound of flesh. The bizarre condition puzzles Antonio yet he accepts the condition. The historical context and switch to Shylock’s point of view creates a fresh look at his motivations and inner feelings but the emphasis also skews the whole in a way that does not always work for the play. After we see the horror of Shylock’s situation, there is no shrugging it off in a happy ending for the lovers. Still, overall the film works beautifully. Al Pacino is a whirlwind, a force of nature, in the role of Shylock and his screen presence is so bright that he overshadows all the actors around him. The only challenge is from Jeremy Irons in the difficult role of Antonio, in which he handles the character’s inability to see the wrong in his prejudice with style. Another highlight is the role of the wealthy Portia, who in her disguise as the wise judge, goes head to head in arguing the case against Shylock. Once Shylock is banished, the story’s march to its romantic happy ending is strangely somber, as we cannot quite let go of what has gone before. The play’s end becomes disquieting rather than satisfying. Despite that, this new “Merchant of Venice” is worthwhile for Shakespeare and Pacino fans alike, both for the skillful effort to tackle the problems the play presents and for Pacino’s luminous performance. It is the best thing he has done in recent years, and for an acclaimed actor like Pacino, that is saying something.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Two Gentlemen of Verona’ brings Shakespeare’s humor to Touhill

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
A&E Editor

My motto is you can never have too much Shakespeare. But if you don’t have a delightful production like the one that the Acting Company presented on the Touhill stage on Saturday, Feb. 26, the enjoyment is that much sweeter. The Acting Company presented William Shakespeare’s comedy “Two Gentlemen of Verona” on the Touhill main stage on Saturday, Feb. 26 to a full house. The evening was a gem from start to finish. When the play opens, Proteus (Justin Adams) is saying farewell to his close friend Valentine (J.D. Goldblatt) in rural Verona, as Valentine is sent by his father to serve the court of the Duke (Glenn Peters) in the big city of Milan. Proteus is supposed to go too but is fusing to leave because he has fallen in love with Julia (Christina Pathy). When Proteus finally agrees to join his friend Valentine in Milan, the two and Julia exchange rings and edge their love. When Proteus returns to Milan, he finds that Valentine has fallen in love too, with the Duke’s daughter Silvia (Lisa McCormick). But the Duke plans to marry off Silvia to his friend Thurio (Henry Vick), a wealthy but awkward and odd courtier. Silvia finds the awkward, cowardly, strangely dressed Thurio repulsive and is much more interested in the honorable Valentine, but cannot reveal her feelings to her

father. When Proteus arrives in Milan and sees Silvia, he falls in love with her too. Forsaking his friendship with Valentine and his pledge to Julia, Proteus plots to betray them both and win Silvia for himself. Meanwhile, Julia disguises herself as a young boy, a page, to travel to Milan to find her beloved Proteus. The main cast is rounded out by a variety of colorfully comic characters. Julia’s bawdy maid Lucetta (Aysan Celik), Valentine’s clever servant Speed and Proteus’s dog-toting servant Launce provide plenty of witty, lightning-fast verbal humor, both in their exchanges with other characters and in soliloquies where they complain about their work. The cast is filled out by Proteus’ father Antonio (Jacob Ming-Trent) and his servant Pantino (another role for Glenn Peters), Eglamour, a knight who helps Silvia and Julia’s lodging host (both Jacob Ming-Trent again), and outlaws, musicians and other servants (played by the cast). As is typical for Shakespeare’s comedies, disguises, mistaken identity and plot twists play a central role in the farcical goings-on before all is set right. In addition to the main characters, there is a lot of fun with the supporting players. Valentine, Proteus, and Julia all have quick-witted, sharp tongued verbal exchanges that are a delight of rapid-fire wordplay, in both the comic and dramatic aspects of the play. Primarily the comic weight falls to the supporting characters and the drama that underlies it all to the principles. One of the extra players in this

version is the servant Launce’s dog. Using a real dog instead of an inanimate prop is a brave choice, as the production risks upstaging the actors, but the scenes played beautifully and the audience loved it. The Acting Company is a Tony Award winning touring group that gives rising young actors a chance to hone their crafts in front of a variety of audiences. Past cast members include Kevin Kline, Patti LuPone, David Ogden Stiers, and Jeffrey Wright. The Acting Company was founded in 1972 by John Houseman and its current producing director Margot Harley with the first graduating class in drama from the Juilliard School. The company is touring this year with this play and “Turn of the Screw.” The company also offers schools a teaching opportunity to expand appreciation of classic theater, particularly in underserved communities. One of the best strengths of Shakespeare’s works is that they are so flexible. This production used a clever bit of staging in which the only set is a large screen with scenes on a roll that are changed by being cranked up and down to provide the different backdrops. This clever approach eliminates set changes by integrating them in a humorous way into the story. The rural Verona was represented by a painted backdrop of a cow, in front of which is the only prop, a bale of hay. When the characters travel by ship, the journey is conveyed by a screen of a sailing ship on the sea, and embellished by the tiny



Photo courtesy The Acting Company

boat prop bobbing across the top of the screen. Actors exited or entered by ducking behind or emerging from around the large screen. Not surprisingly for this troupe, the acting was fabulous, in both more comic and dramatic roles. All were excellent but some standouts were J.D. Goldblatt, as noble Valentine, and Matt Bradford Sullivan, who had the challenge of doing his part while

sharing the stage with that cute little dog. Justin Adams is also good as Proteus, who plots to betray both his friend Valentine and his love Julia. Another striking performance was the comically awkward Thurio, played by the tall newcomer Henry Vick. In this production, the director chose to emphasize the betrayals of Proteus by transforming the character

into a very Machiavellian conniver, who adopts fancy court dress as he apparently drops his morals. When his betrayals all come out in the end, he has been so evil that we are less inclined to forgive him than his friend Valentine, giving the play a little chill it does not usually have. The Acting Company’s “Two Gentlemen of Verona” is simply a winning evening of great theater.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Retreat from Moscow’ has retreat but no Moscow

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER
A&E Editor

The title of the new play at the Rep, “Retreat from Moscow,” refers to the end of Napoleon’s disastrous campaign to conquer Moscow. Napoleon arrives to find an empty city and is forced to retrace his steps over his depleted supply lines. Eyewitness accounts of this winter march, in which some many lives were lost, has so captured the imagination of the one of the play’s characters, Edward (Anderson Mathews), that he reads them aloud, much to the irritation of his wife Alice (Darrie Lawrence), in the first act of the play. Edward obsessively focuses on the situations where soldiers delib-

erately abandoned the wounded or weak to die, a “survival of the fittest” choice that he embraces and justifies as needed to save the survivors’ own lives. His wife is horrified by her husband’s support of this rationalization of what she sees as a selfish and immoral act. In fact, the play has nothing to do with Moscow or Napoleon but instead focuses on the end of a thirty-year marriage. “Retreat from Moscow” is the play currently running on the main stage at the Repertory Company of St. Louis, on the Webster University campus. Besides Anderson Mathews as Edward and Darrie Lawrence as Alice, the play stars Erik Steele as their grown son Jamie. William Nicholson’s play is set in contemporary England. Steven Woolf directs

the play, which runs through March 11. In the world of theater, there are many plays about couples splitting up. Usually a play about the ending of a long marriage, like the classic “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf,” focuses on the unraveling of the marriage through a series of verbal confrontations between husband and wife. As reasonable as it may seem on stage, this verbal exploration is more a creature of theater than of real life. “Retreat from Moscow” covers a more common and realistic situation: a middle-aged man abruptly dumping his wife for a younger woman. No discussion, no negotiating, no fine sentiments. How often have you heard about a man tossing out his wife of twenty

plus years, trading her in for a younger woman, a “newer model,” like trading in a used car? It happens all the time, and is likely the most common way that long-term marriages end. Often the wife, like the woman in this play, thinks her marriage has a few problems but nothing serious, until her husband suddenly dumps her in favor of someone new. She has no chance to fight for her marriage because her husband never mentioned that he had emotionally opted out long ago. Sadly, this cold blooded, selfish action is excused by saying that he fell in love with someone else “by accident.” It is this much less romantic and far more realistic dissolution of a marriage that “Retreat from Moscow” explores. Yet much is left unexplored by

this play. Edward, the husband, is a dull character, a mealy mouthed, unimaginative plodder who teaches history, while Alice, his wife is a brilliant poet who is full of life and energy. You would expect that she would leave him. Yet it is the colorless husband who holds all the cards when he decides to get rid of the wife who loves him. “Retreat from Moscow” is different from other “death of a marriage” plays in another way; the couple’s only child, their son Jamie, is pressed into service as a go-between his parents as his father relentlessly sets out to end the marriage. He loves both his parents and strives to avoid taking sides in a situation he would rather not be a part of anyway. You would think that the go-

between son would explore the issues of the marriage and feelings, and of responsibilities and love that the couple themselves don’t discuss. This golden opportunity to explore the issues around the central topic is left entirely unused by the playwright. Instead, the son remains strangely mute and neutral, except about wanting the whole thing to be over. His biggest complaint is that his father has timed his exit to coincide with a visit home, so the newly-dumped wife has someone to console her. Rather than being the pivotal role, the son is a bland and almost pointless character. Instead of an exploration of morals and marriage, we get an extended rationalization of the actions of the husband.

Weekly Cartoon - by Rudy Scoggins



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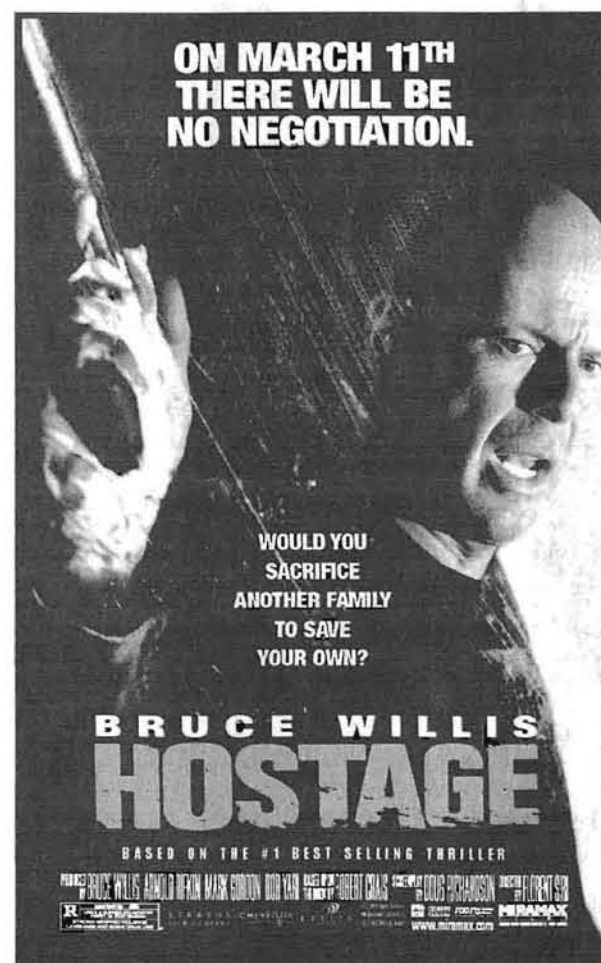
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IN THEATRES, FRIDAY, MARCH 11TH

FERGUSON, from page 6

Etling said Ferguson became involved because of the opportunities that the city provides. "We did this because we know Ferguson is a good place to live and students can get a lot of house for their dollar if they buy it in Ferguson," he said.

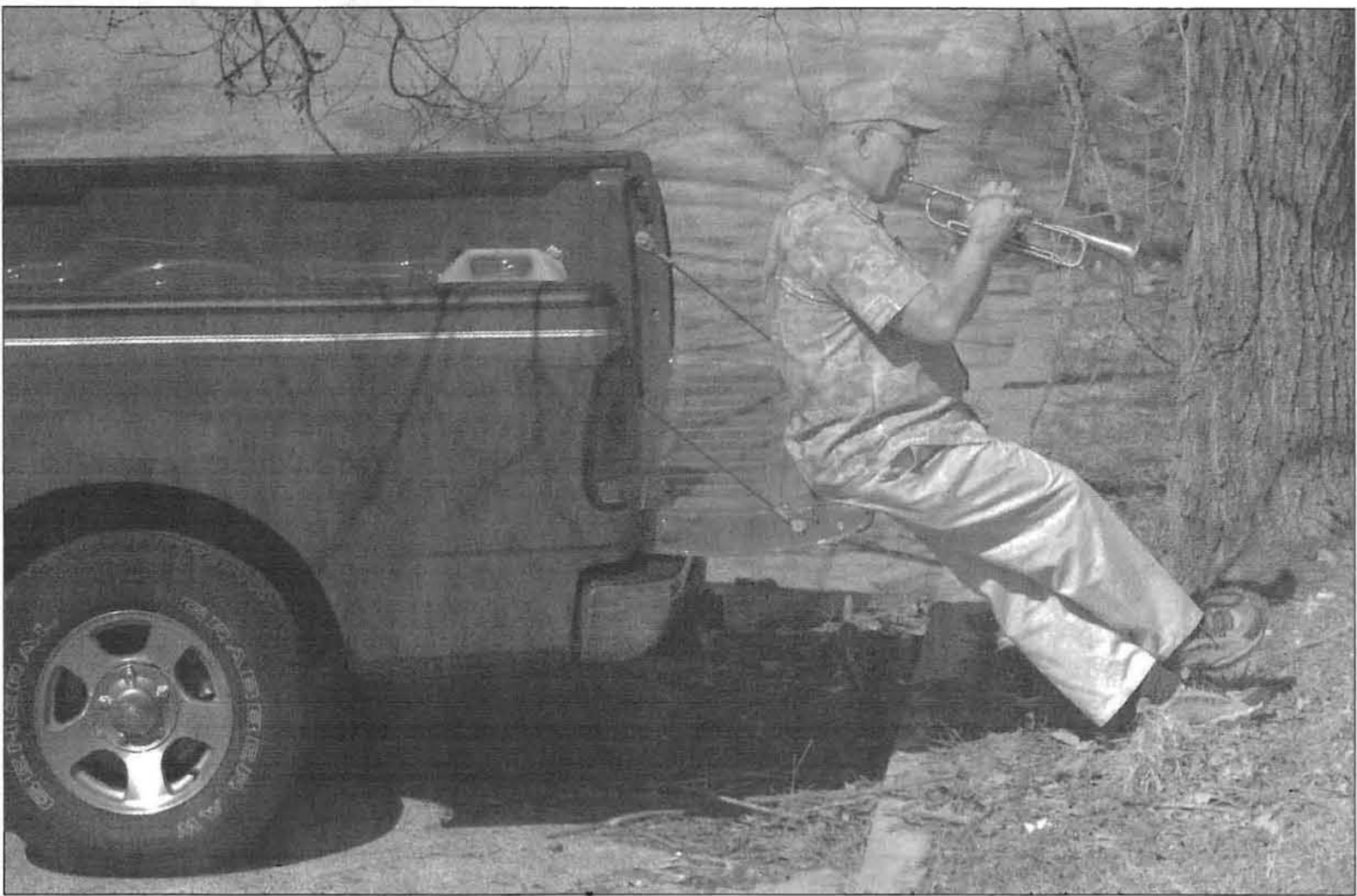
Montague compared the Ferguson graduation gift program to similar programs, but Etling's program differs in that it provides students with free money. "It's truly a gift," Montague said.

Other programs provide homebuyers with down payment assistance, but the homebuyers are expected to take a training class, she explained.

Montague said the partnership with Ferguson has been positive. "Ferguson is always willing to partner with us, and they're very open to the University, not just the students, but the faculty and staff living and working in the community," she said. "It's a nice place to live."

Montague also shared her own reasons for why students should get involved. "When you graduate and if you lived in an apartment during your college experience, it's nice to be a home owner," she said.

Montague said most graduates of UM-St. Louis stay in the area, and she believes Ferguson provides ample outlets to alumni. "We're helping them beyond just getting a degree here. We're partnering with people to give them additional living benefits."



Killing time...

Bob Witt, of Sullivan, Mo., plays the trumpet Friday on a parking lot just northwest of the Millennium Student Center. Witt said he was relearning to play the trumpet, which he used to play in college. "It's been over 30 years, so I try to play whenever I can," Witt said. "I'm an old beginner again."

Witt was passing the time waiting for his son, Brian, who was at the UM-St. Louis Teacher Job Fair at the Mark Twain Building.

Mike Sherwin/The Current

BLACK HISTORY ENCASED IN WAX, from page 6

This particular exhibit contains many of the earliest products of Duke, Posner and Raveen, marking a turning point in black hair styling that is still prevalent today.

Aside from the permanent exhibits, the museum has hosted numerous traveling art exhibits, including "Middle Passage," The African

Legacy in Mexico, Central and South America," "The Golden Age of Jazz" and "Let Us March On." Currently, there is an exhibit sponsored by the U.S. Army that tells the story of black soldiers through pictures.

Neal said that she would like to see funding for the museum increase. The museum is funded through admis-

sions, gift shop sales, memberships, donations and program funding from the Regional Arts Commission, Missouri Arts Council and Missouri Humanities Council.

The Black World History Museum is located at 2505 St. Louis Ave. For more information about the museum call (314) 241-7057.

PIN UP BOWL, from page 9

The gold in the clear drink sparkles each time she tips the martini glass. The college student sips this intense mixture of Absolut vodka and Goldschlager, a cinnamon flavored liqueur with 24 karat flecks of gold, while continuing to wait for the lane.

Pin Up Bowl is home to six bowling lanes. On a weeknight, a lane is \$4 per person, per lane, and \$3 for shoe rental. On weekends, though, the price is only two quarters more but the wait may be a little longer. Instead of perching at the bar like the

college student has, patrons can also play pool while waiting for their lane. Some may prefer pool to bowling for their nightly outing, and the price for pool is \$8 per hour.

Next, the college student orders a Bud light in a bottle. She knows that another one of the mighty Pin Up cocktails will not be a good idea. She finishes her beer and the time at Pin Up Bowl comes to an end for the college student.

Shortly before the beer, or shortly after, the girl taking lane reservations had informed the pair that their lane

was up. The college student's friend asked her if she still wanted to bowl. The college student answered, "No," because she was no longer in the mood to bowl.

She either wanted to go to an establishment where there would be dancing or be responsible and get some sleep before early classes. Either way, the start of the night and the first two tasty cocktails were unforgettable and unmistakably enjoyable. The college student had decided: Pin Up Bowl was a fun place to hang out.

RETREAT FROM MOSCOW AT THE REP, from page 10

Instead, the author leaves this gold on the floor and pursues a line of reasoning that justifies the husband's actions, with just a twinge of guilt that he could have, maybe, mentioned that the marriage was not working out a bit earlier, just out of politeness.

That he regretted marrying her and had not loved her for a long time were not things he needed to mention, since it was much more important to "avoid a scene" than to be honest. Tragically, this woman loves her husband dearly, a love he regards as an imposition.

The play may be morally bankrupt but the staging and performance are good, as is generally the case for the Rep. From a production stand point, the spare and simple stage works well and making us focus on the characters. Too bad the characters have less to say than they might. The acting is fine, with Anderson Mathews fine as the rationalizing philanderer. The

actor playing the son is colorless but it is a colorless role. The stand out acting performance is the heartbroken deserted wife, a spunky and intelligent person, who breaks our hearts with her pointless pleas to her icy husband. The play is supposed to leave us with the feeling that this lively woman is a survivor who eventually accepts her fate as "the best thing." Except for that last false note, her character and performance are the only reason to see this one-sided argument.

Earlier generations of playwrights understood the issues around this choice between selfish impulses and a commitment. There is so much good red meat here for theater but none of it is used, making the above description of the moral and ethical issues mostly unspoken and only inferred, not part of the action of the play. According to the play's characters,

the "accidental" nature of his falling for someone new excuses any pain his choice makes and the wife is just being contrary and mean by not just "getting over" the end of her 30 year marriage. Obviously, no woman was anywhere near this playwright when he was crafting this rationale for the long suffering husband.

This is one of the most misogynist theater pieces I have ever seen and the one-sided viewpoint makes it something I cannot recommend for anyone. No doubt, men who ditched the old wife for a trophy wife will enjoy this and leave feeling newly convinced they did the right thing and need feel no guilt, but from the viewpoint of the common good of society, reinforcing that line of thinking is hardly a good idea. For women, you might want to see this play only to get a sense of what kind of man to stay away from. Far, far away.

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