State Representative Sharon Pace visits UMSL for informal Q&A lunch

HEATHER WELBORN
FEATURES EDITOR

State Representative Sharon Pace met with University of Missouri-St. Louis students and faculty on January 18 at the Fireside Lounge of the Millennium Student Center. The informal meeting was organized by the Associated Students of the University of Missouri (ASUM). Attendees were invited to ask Representative Pace questions over a light lunch.

State Representative Pace spent the hour answering questions and outlining her legislative goals for this year’s session. The congressional issues she mentioned ranged from Right to Work and gun laws to raising textbook prices, to marijuana decriminalization and Medicaid expansion. It was a comprehensive list.

The process involves dozens of steps that a bill must sequentially satisfy to become policy. To avoid rejection, a bill must be approved by committees in both the house and senate, where it is amended by Democrat or Republican members. Only a fraction of these bills survive this legislative gauntlet.

“Someone once said, ‘If we’re going to have a political process, we need to have a government that represents the people.’” Pace said. “And the people of Missouri had the right to have hearings on particular bills.”

She also recommended sending emails and calling your district representatives to become more involved. “Keep going. You can’t let up.”

ASUM invites students and faculty to attend their next event with House Representative Clem Smith on January 27 at 11 a.m. in Century Room A of the MSC. (Turn to Page 4 for more on Representative Pace’s visit to UMSL)
Homecoming celebrations to take place in February

KARLYNE KILLEBREW
STAFF WRITER

For the first time since the early 2000s, University of Missouri-St. Louis' Homecoming is being held in the spring from February 3 through February 8. There's been a bit of buzz about the break in tradition as well as unofficial speculation about why the change was made.

Traditionally, homecoming is held during the first week in October and centered around a storied soccer game. However, there were no home games in the 2013 men's soccer season, leading to an assumption that homecoming was moved to accommodate the sports schedule.

Jessica Long-Prase, Director of Student Life, clarified some details about the change.

"Homecoming is about bringing alumni back to the institution, creating networks between current students and alumni, and facilitating the idea of UMSL pride," Long-Prase said. "We wanted to make sure that the connections we had with Homecoming made sense, so we decided in conversations with athletics and alumni relations that potentially moving homecoming back to February in conjunction with basketball would enable us to do more to promote UMSL athletics and pull our alumni back in...In addition we already have (a) signature athletic event-Pack the Stands—that enables us to take something already in existence where we're seeing about 10,000 people at each game and tie that in at Homecoming."

Student opinion on the matter varies across campus.

"It's utterly ridiculous," Robert Mason, junior, criminology and criminal justice, said. "It's being held in February, so we just get off break January 20. No one's really thinking about homecoming as we would have been in October. We get back in August (so) we have a whole month in the fall semester to think about homecoming, get things ready, and get our tickets and such. That [change] could [contribute] to low ticket sales."

Long-Prase assures that the marketing issues have been accounted for and accommodated.

"We've put information out starting in November. One of the things we're doing to make easier access is putting the homecoming ticket sales online. Enabling the student to [purchase] electronically will keep sales up because there's not an obligation to come to campus," Long-Prase said.

According to Long-Prase, 11 applications for Homecoming Court have been submitted so far. There is also a meeting committee of 15 people, the largest Long-Prase has seen at UMSL.

Many students are embracing the change. Frederica McGowan, a graduate student studying communications, is one such student.

"It's a good thing to be held in the spring, especially revolving the event around Pack the Stands. I think that will increase attendance at Homecoming...[and] help us develop a better relationship between the students and the alumni. It gives us the opportunity to be different from the rest of the universities, where students don't necessarily have to worry about conflicts between homecomings at different institutions. It sets us apart," McGowan said.

Homecoming 2014 will still feature some of the traditional events students can look forward to. The big dance will be held at the end of homecoming week as usual. A number of popular spirit activities like "Big Man On Campus" will also be returning. Additionally, a "Sink My Battleship" event will be held on Tuesday, as well as a 5K run on Saturday morning.

For the full schedule of 2014 Homecoming events and activities, visit umsl.edu/wow.

Groundbreaking of the Science Learning Building a major step forward for campus science community

KARLYNE KILLEBREW
STAFF WRITER

On Monday, December 9, 2013, the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Science Learning Building was held in front of Benton Hall.

Chancellor Tom George and Alumni Association President Michael Finkes addressed the audience, after which the first shovel was taken to the mound of dirt representing the space for the new building. People then filed into the lobby to a buffet and mini-bar in preparation for the many contributions it has made to the University of Missouri-St. Louis. They were even more delighted to celebrate seeing the plans for an updated complex finally come to life.

According to Lawrence Barton, PhD, professor emeritus of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, the new edifice is 25 years in the making.

"There were three building committees who were paid to design buildings...in the 90s the money was diverted to the Toudhill," Barton said.

Chancellor Tom George had previously revealed that despite years of lobbying and compromise, there is no state aid to help the university pay for the much needed upgrade. The center is being financed through bonding over a 30-year payment plan of about $2 million dollars per year.

Despite the delays and costs, the new Science Learning Building is still considered by many to be a very necessary change.

"I couldn't be happier. Benton Hall has served us well, but it's time for a renovation of Benton and Stadler, plus a new building for the next generation of science students," Finkes said.

Chancellor George believes it will provide a "better teaching atmosphere," stating, "You've got to invest money to create the best type of environment for students.

Joseph O'Sullivan, dean of the UMSL-Washington University Joint Engineering Program, referred to the new infrastructure as a "great expansion [that] will provide new labs for engineers...[and] attract new students for their freshman and sophomore years."

Many students have been anxiously waiting and hoping for this upgrade as well.

Lisa Gowens, graduate biochemistry, called the new addition "desperately needed."

"I hope with the labs they update course material," Jordan Raves, graduate, chemistry, said.

The new Science Learning Building is expected to be completed in 2015.

NEWS BRIEF

As construction continues on the new Science Learning Building, portions of Lot Q will be closed until the end of January, weather permitting, to create 30 new parking spaces east of Stadler Hall.

Lot Q and Benton Drive will still be accessible from West Drive, with new bidirectional traffic lanes. Those needing to access University Boulevard and the Main Circle, however, will need to use Natural Bridge Road, as Benton Drive will be blocked off directly west of the south Stadler door.

Do you have a nose for news? Become a Staff Writer at The Current! Contact us at thecurrentjobs@umsl.edu for more information.
ASUM hosts discussion with state representative

HEATHER WELBORN
FEATURES EDITOR

Dozens of students and faculty gathered together at the Fireside Lounge in the Millennium Student Center on January 17 for a light lunch and open conversation with Democratic State Representative Sharon Pace. The event was organized by The Associated Students of University of Missouri (ASUM), a University of Missouri—St. Louis organization who hosts events like these in an effort to increase student awareness of state political happenings.

State Representative Pace opened the meeting by addressing legislative issues of interest to her, starting with gun laws.

“We have the gun bill coming back, which is important,” Pace said. The legislative effort, which Pace supported, was stopped by a little over a dozen Republicans last session. “They saw the need in doing that,” Pace said. “We do work together at times. We will have bills we’re not going to agree upon and we agree to disagree.”

She does not take it personally how it works in a daycare a crime. The bill did not make it through the Senate. After her bill had been amended and passed on to the senate, the Governor vetoed it because of the wording of one amendment. The addition came on the last day of the session, and called for renaming a section of I-70 “Graham’s Picnic Rock Highway,” notoriously known as “Slave Rock.”

“I couldn’t even vote for my own bill!” Pace said.

Other bills Pace sponsored included banning employers from using an applicant’s credit history as a hiring criteria for jobs unaffected by credit history. She also passed a bill in the House last session that made drug sales near daycare a crime. The bill did not understand the daily duties of a state representative, Pace recommends taking advantage of internship opportunities at the state capitol in Jefferson City.

“We have internships a day or two a week.” Pace said. Students are paired with a legislator of similar background and attend meetings, hearings, and other daily duties. “Get on the list! [...] before we’re out of session in May.” Pace said, noting that a certificate is usually issued to interns upon completion of their job shadowing.

In a pamphlet she distributed at the meeting, Pace urges her constituents to contact her to voice their opinion on local and state concerns. She reminds readers that copies of additional legislative, government, and tourist resources are available upon request through her office, free of charge. State Representative Pace points residents online to house.mo.gov for an up-to-date listing of Proposed bills and hearings, as well as lawmakers contact information. For more information, email State Representative Pace directly at sharon.pace@house.mo.gov.

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*preview*

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 23**

**Hypnotist Josh McVicar**

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Millennium Student Center Pilot House

Watch in wonder as McVicar captivates attendees with his magic and hypnosis performance. Students are encouraged to volunteer as participants at the show.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 24**

**Be a Kid Night**

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Oak Hall Game Room

Get your nostalgia fix with an evening of film, fun and free food, courtesy of the University Program Board.
Paul Peanick
Staff Writer

Martin Scorsese’s “The Wolf of Wall Street” is the true story of Jordan Belfort, who rose to power as a wealthy stockbroker in the 1980s. Starting as a penny stock trader, he used his charlatan, salesmanship, and charisma in wealth and power. Belfort quickly reestablishes himself as a money-maker and realizes the potential of such an endeavor.

Bringing together a band of men to his aid, Belfort writes a sales script to entice the richest one percent of Americans into buying his high commission penny stocks. He chairs himself in a new firm “Straten Oaksmon.” The firm is an immediate success but is essentially a “pump and dump” scheme. The success of Straten Oaksmon propels Belfort and his cohorts from anonymity into the Wall Street limelight.

The rest of the film is in the exuberance of debauchery that has few equals. DiCaprio’s charm, wit and humor quickly disarm the audience. His victims are never seen on screen. They are the nameless, faceless inventors whose firm defrauds on their way to riches.

Belfort divorces his first wife Teresa (Christian Millet) after she catches him scoring coke off the breast of his lover Naomi (Margot Robbie) in the back of a limousine. Belfort remarks on how guilty he feels before moving Naomi into his apartment three days later. Belfort’s bachelor party costs two million dollars, and involves over fifty of his coworkers, one hundred hookers (fifty on the plane and fifty waiting at the hotel upon landing), enough drugs to sedate a small nation, and, in the aftermath, the refurbishment of the entire 28th floor of the hotel where the party was held. The wedding thereafter, needless to say, is a storybook affair.

Belfort exploits catch the attention of the FBI and the SEC after his right-hand man, Danny Auvil (Joseph Gil), gives Belfort expired Quaaludes. Thinking them less potent, they consume huge doses, but it later turns out that the pills have a delayed fuse. In the ensuing chaos, Belfort crashes his Ferrari into everything save a human being, though he somehow gets off scot-free.

Belfort’s drug abuse and excess do catch up to him, and as the FBI closes in, he turns strict on his former coworkers. In the end, Belfort only serves two years in federal prison, and today is a motivational speaker.

Critics have argued that DiCaprio has too much fun as Belfort, breaking the fourth wall and addressing the audience throughout the film, with and without consequence. DiCaprio’s Belfort does not so much turn to the dark side as stumble into it and accelerate, full speed ahead.

Scorsese’s movie is quite entertaining, the work of a master. One is so mesmerized by the comedy of the rise to power and subsequent train wreck of Belfort’s life that one barely has time to consider the gravity of the crimes he and his cohorts commit. Belfort and Scorsese are like heroes to the men and women they employ. The real Belfort even garners a cameo at the end of the film.

Scorsese executes this deprived act the way one would a jazz piece at full blast, and the raunchy affair is so entertaining we scarcely comprehend the genius villainy of the crimes the protagonists (if they may be called so) carry out.

Campus Art Preview

Art exhibits, jazz-classical fusion, and ‘Wizard of Oz’ ballet show wide range of cultural events taking place on campus

Albert Nall
Staff Writer

There is a wide variety of arts offerings on campus this month and next, ranging from works by an artist from Yugoslavia, the “Wizard of Oz” as a ballet, a quartet of musicians who fuse jazz and symphonic music. The student-run Gallery Vito opens its semester with a reception for “All That Ends Death,” art works by St. Louis artist Peter Scay, on January 23, from noon to 3 p.m. In the exhibit, which runs through February 19, Scay “visually interprets his own stream of consciousness through various mediums and installations,” according to the gallery.

At the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center, a ballet rendition of the “Wizard of Oz,” performed by Ballet Memphis on January 24 at 8 p.m. and on January 25 at 2 and 8 p.m. Presented by Dance St. Louis for its 24th season, the “Wizard of Oz” is choreographed by Ballet Memphis’s Steven McMalton.

Another art exhibit, “Still Adjusting” by Zlatko Cosic, opens at Gallery 210 with a reception on January 25 from 4 to 7 p.m. Cosic is a graphical artist born in Yugoslavia who now resides in St. Louis. “Still Adjusting” surveys the war experience in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s and its aftermath. The exhibition runs through April 5. The Monday Noon Series will kick off on February 3 in the JC Penney Building’s Room 402 from 12:15 to 1:15 PM with a lecture by the artist. Cosic will discuss his exhibit at Gallery 210, featuring the reconvening of one’s identity after a war and “Ochron”, his pictorial narrative focusing on themes of dislocation, along with the effects of having to adjust to the transition to a new social atmosphere.

Artistic director Stacy West of MADCO will present a sequel to a work done in 2011 called “The Pulse” at the Touhill PAC in partnership with the UMSL music department. Students will once again produce an original work in which they will accompany live dancers during the performance. The performance of the “Pulse 2: The Rhythms Continues” will take place on January 31 and February 1 at 8 p.m. and on February 2 at 2 p.m.

In February, music and romance rule. So Percussion will enchant audiences with their white-knuckle, exciting blend of chaos and bedlam at the Touhill PAC on February 7 at 8 p.m. The St. Louis Jazz Orchestra presents a “Night at the Movies,” under the direction of Jim Weidner, on February 11 at 8 p.m.

St. Louis’s own Improv Shop will perform its first show of the spring at the Touhill on February 12 at 7:30 p.m.

“Love is in the Air” will be presented by the St. Louis Ballet on February 14 at the Touhill at 8 p.m. and on February 15 at 7 p.m.

Events sponsored by the University Program Board at the Millennium Student Center include hypnotist Josh McYear on January 23 and a spoken-word port to appear on February 13. Both events will be held at the Pilot House at 7 p.m.

The CoffeeHouse Series will start up again on February 19 from noon to 1 p.m. at the Fireside Lounge, with a performer to be announced.

The Monday Noon Series, which takes place at the JC Penney Building’s Room 402 from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., will feature a musical performance on February 10 by the 642%, a new quartet that is a merger of musicians from jazz groups and a local symphony orchestra.

Other events of the Monday Noon Series include an author’s talk and book signing on February 17 for “Historic St. Louis: 250 Years Exploring New Frontiers,” by UMSL History Professor Fred Fouser. Finally on February 24, U.S. Veterans from St. Louis will recite poems and short stories about their war experiences, collected in the national anthology “Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors.”
UMSL men’s and women’s swimming and diving teams finally afloat again

JOHN "SammY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

For the first time since terminating after the 1995/1996 season, the University of Missouri-St. Louis will reinstate the men’s and women’s swimming and diving program for 2014/2015. No longer will the UMSL Tritons and our dedicated amphibious mascot, Louie, go without a fitting seaworthy sport.

The new program gives students another highly competitive program to look forward to and support. The teams will join six terminating after the program 2014/2015.

For the first time since 1994, the Triton men’s basketball team has also fallen into a funk, as of late. After winning their first three games of the break, Maryville started their first season’s swimming and diving season, adding in-town friendly competition.

The reinstallation timing also bodes well with the opening of the Student Recreation and Wellness Center, slated to be open for use by Fall 2015. The new facility will feature a fitness and recreation pool with lap lanes, as well as a weight center and stretching areas. How the facility will be used by the swimming and diving teams is not specifically known, but the timing coincides nicely with the addition of the new programs.

As for who will coach these teams in their inaugural season, students will have to wait for an answer. UMSL is currently searching for the right applicant to fill the vacancy. More details, including a schedule for the upcoming season, are yet to be released.

The news of the new Triton teams is definitely exciting, particularly because it provides a new opportunity for fans to become involved in UMSL Athletics. Not only is the swimming and diving program an additional sport that will cater to more students’ sport preferences, but it will also be a high-quality program, competing against high caliber opponents in a respected swimming town. In fact, this year St. Louis was named one of 6 finalists to host the 2016 Olympic Trials by USA Swimming. Let the swimming begin!

UMSL basketball looks to home play for wins

JOHN "SammY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

While the University of Missouri-St. Louis student body went home to spend the holidays with family, the UMSL Triton basketball teams were left with work to do on the court. During the break from mid December to mid-January, the women performed in eight contests while the men had six.

The Triton men’s basketball team has also fallen into a funk, as of late. After winning their first three games of the break, they walked away from all three of their final games with losses. The Tritons were defeated on January 9 by Wisconsin-Parkside and, like the women, fell to Lewis and Truman State on January 11 and 16, respectively. The men, 9-5 overall, currently sit in fourth place in the GLVC West with a 3-3 conference record behind Drury, Truman State, and Maryville.

Fortunately for the Tritons, starting January 30, both the men and women will have a four conference home game stretch in the Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center. With backing from fans and the comfort home, the stretch is a perfect opportunity for the Tritons to get some solid wins and carry positive momentum into post-season play.

If any students have been thinking about going to a game but have not made it out yet, this is a golden opportunity. Classes will still be in the syllabus stage, just starting to warm up, but not yet fully in gear or overly serious. The days will still be a tad too cold to really be able to enjoy being outside, and most importantly, we are at a pivotal point in the basketball season where the support will be greatly beneficial. Games are free for students, so grab a blanket, a friend, and maybe some hot cocoa, and I’ll see you at Mark Twain.

BASKETBALL SCHEDULES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WOMEN’S</th>
<th>MENS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1/23 Drury</td>
<td>Springfield, Mo.</td>
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<td>1/30 Missouri St. &amp; T</td>
<td>Rolla, Mo.</td>
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<td>1/30 William Jewell</td>
<td>Mark Twain Building</td>
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<td>2/1 Rockhurst</td>
<td>Mark Twain Building</td>
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<td>2/1 Saint Joseph’s</td>
<td>Mark Twain Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/8 Indianapolis</td>
<td>Mark Twain Building</td>
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<td>2/10 Bellarmine</td>
<td>Louisville, Ky.</td>
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<td>2/15 Southern Indiana</td>
<td>Evansville, In.</td>
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<td>2/20 Quincy</td>
<td>Quincy, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/22 Truman State</td>
<td>Mark Twain Building</td>
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<td>2/22 Maryville</td>
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<td>3/8 GLVC Semifinals</td>
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<td>3/9 GLVC Championship</td>
<td>Evansville, In.</td>
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MEN’S

| 1/23 Drury          | Springfield, Mo.   |
| 1/25 Missouri St. & T | Rolla, Mo.         |
| 1/30 William Jewell | Mark Twain Building |
| 2/1 Rockhurst       | Mark Twain Building |
| 2/6 Saint Joseph’s  | Mark Twain Building |
| 2/8 Indianapolis    | Mark Twain Building |
| 2/13 Bellarmine     | Louisville, Ky.    |
| 2/15 Southern Indiana | Evansville, Ind.  |
| 3/5 Quincy          | Quincy, Ill.       |
| 2/22 Truman State   | Mark Twain Building |
| 2/22 Maryville      | St. Louis, Mo.     |
| 3/2 GLVC First Round | TB4 |
| 3/6 GLVC Quarterfinals | Evansville, Ind. |
| 3/8 GLVC Semifinals  | Evansville, Ind.   |
| 3/9 GLVC Championship | Evansville, Ind.   |

Just starting to warm up, but not yet fully in gear or overly serious. The days will still be a tad too cold to really be able to enjoy being outside, and most importantly, we are at a pivotal point in the basketball season where the support will be greatly beneficial. Games are free for students, so grab a blanket, a friend, and maybe some hot cocoa, and I’ll see you at Mark Twain.
Social Networking Websites:
Useful Tools for Hi-Tech Connections or Distractions from Genuine Human Interaction?

POINT: Technology brings us together

Though snail mail and other traditional means of communication have their merits, many people now turn to social networking websites in order to stay connected. This shift in communication styles is not only unavoidable, but something to be celebrated.

Many popular websites like Facebook allow people to communicate with family members that live far away and you can play games with someone doing. Not only do sites like these provide a fast and easy way to keep in touch, but they also bring people from all walks of life together.

Social networking sites growing and growing throughout the years, there are ways to contact people around the world, making it easier to build relationships and make new friends. In recent years, we’ve found ways to communicate through these websites using face-to-face video interaction. For those who are socially isolated or shy, social networking sites provide a way to interact and connect with others in a stress-free, controlled environment. For those with disabilities that makes in-person interaction a strain, online interactions can be a life-saver.

Change isn’t something to be feared or fought against. What’s important are the ways in which we use the new technology that we create. Social networking websites bring people from all walks of life closer together, giving people who may not have otherwise met the opportunity to learn more about someone different from them. Hopefully in the future, we will think of even more incredible ways to enhance communication and promote connection between one another.

COUNTER: Put your phone down already

It is important that we, as a society, advance with the world around us by thinking of new and better ways to do things while making everyday life easier for us all. However, when it comes to things like social networking websites, advancement can be a double-edged sword.

Human interaction is all about being close to one another, interacting face-to-face. While it’s great that we can now use social networking websites to interact with almost anyone around the world, “screen to screen,” the way we connect with others online has become merely a shallow imitation of something meaningful. For those who want to use social networking sites to meet new friends and create relationships, social networking sites are a problem disguised as a solution. The bite-sized bits of interaction that social media sites like Twitter offer make it harder to form deeper connections than what can be expressed in 140 characters. Echo chambers – sites where most of the action comes from “liking,” “reblogging” or commenting on something that’s already been said – serve as a distraction from coming up with an original thought and engaging in meaningful debates that just may change your original viewpoints.

Social networking sites can also leave users feeling disconnected from the real world. The weight of what’s happening on a global scale can be overwhelming. The constant stream of news can be a lot to take in, especially when you’re constantly scrolling down your feed.

While the advancement of technology will help us in a variety of ways in the future, that technology should not become a means for individuals to distance themselves from one another. With the onslaught of affordable smartphones, it’s easier than ever to stay connected to everyone but the people physically around us.

Next time you’re in line at the grocery store or waiting for class to start, consider this challenge: log off of Facebook, put down the phone, and strike up a conversation with the person next to you. Chances are, it just may change the course of your day more than ‘liking’ yet another status update ever could.
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“News at Noon” is a monthly forum for faculty and student discussions about current events, co-sponsored by The Current and the New York Times, with support from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Student Life at UMSL. For information on our upcoming spring events, visit us online at thecurrent-online.com.