

**Stepping up:** The cast-members of "Pirates of Penzance" hope to build on the success of last year's production "Man of La Mancha."

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UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

## What's Inside



**Not quite enough:** The Riverwomen came heart-breakingly close advancing to the GLVC championship finals, but lost 70-69 to Indianapolis last Friday afternoon.

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## U-Wire News

**U. North Dakota bans access to MP3 napster.com site**

BY KRIS KERZMAN  
Dakota Student

(U-WIRE) GRAND FORKS, N.D.—University of North Dakota joined other campuses in the nation this week by banning the web service Napster, an Internet tool used to search for and download MP3 audio files, from its servers. The ban comes after network administrators on campus discovered that much of its bandwidth capacity was being eaten up by users downloading audio files from the site.

"It was overwhelming our network," said Dorette Kerian, interim director of the UND Computer Center on the decision to ban the service.

"It was filling up our capacity to the point where important things were being compromised," Kerian added.

Napster uses a comprehensive system which is a boon to MP3 downloaders, but a headache to systems like the one at UND. Napster allows anyone to receive MP3's from multiple hard drives and searches for the quickest and easiest ones to receive them from. According to Kerian, the Napster system didn't require its own server, it merely accessed indexes from these other hard drives and downloaded from them.

The amount of data transmitted was clogging network arteries so much that UND decided to ban access to it on all campus terminals and to anyone accessing the Internet via the university, according to Kerian. The ban will simply make it impossible to access the website napster.com.

The ban is not a unique one. Universities across the country, from Boston University to Oregon State University, have also taken measures to keep students from accessing the Napster system, citing similarly choked bandwidths.

The question of copyright infringement and the fact that Napster is facing a lawsuit from the Recording Industry Association of America made the choice to ban Napster easier, said Kerian. She added that this ban may be a sign of times to come.

"There's going to be more of this over time, especially with more data being available to download [from the Internet]," she said. "With the ban, we're buying time until it can be managed."

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# Sixty-four opt for early retirement

BY JOE HARRIS  
senior editor

*Administration denies program is response to fiscal crisis*

Sixty-four employees, both staff and faculty at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, will be retiring through the University of Missouri system's Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program at the end of this school year.

The UM Board of Curators implemented VERIP to reallocate money on all of its campuses. Any faculty or staff member older than 55 with 10 or more years of service to the UM system is eligible.

VERIP takes away penalties for retiring early. The normal retirement age in the UM system is 65, or 62 if that individual has worked for UM for 25 years or more. Without VERIP, a discount of 3.33 percent for each year would be applied to the faculty or staff member's retirement benefits. VERIP gives these individuals full retirement benefits.

For eligible faculty or staff who already meet normal retirement age, three years of service will be added to their retirement benefits. That equates to an additional 2.2 percent added on to these individuals' retirement benefits.

Dennis Judd, a political science professor at UM-St. Louis, is taking the early retirement. Judd said VERIP came at the right time for him.

"My case is actually very different than many other people," Judd said. "I am moving to another university, the University of Illinois at Chicago, this fall. So this early retirement plan just came along at a good time for me to have the benefit of a better retirement plan even though I am leaving the institution."

Although VERIP works for Judd, he said he has concerns about the policy.

"These kinds of plans always indicate deep fiscal problems, otherwise, they would not be offered," Judd said. "It's a poor way to try to solve the fiscal problems because it leaves to complete accident the entire question as to who leaves, and then how this affects programs."

Judd said VERIP could decimate some programs and not affect others because of its voluntary nature.

Judd also said that losing senior faculty could have other implications for the UM system.

"Senior faculty by definition are the ones who qualify and many of those people are very accomplished," Judd said. "They have become, in some cases, well-known in their profession. They are also seasoned; they have been involved with the campus for a long time; they have been loyal and so you lose a lot of institutional memory and, most of all, institutional wisdom."

Judd said he is also concerned with how the money raised from VERIP is being allocated. Judd said 80 percent will go directly back to the departments to allow the hiring of replacements, but the other 20 percent goes to the Chancellor.

"It's already been a big issue—the amounts of money [Chancellor Blanche Touhill] takes for her own accounts out of departments and units on this campus," Judd said. "So it's another way for her to enhance her own pool of money."

Judd said that what VERIP is doing is just replacing accomplished faculty with less experienced faculty and is asking them to do more for less. Judd said that he can't think of any single benefit VERIP has for students.

Donald Driemeier, deputy to the Chancellor, said VERIP is being implemented in the students' best interests, and that it isn't in response to a fiscal crisis.

"There are no widespread fiscal problems in the University of Missouri and there's certainly no widespread problems on this campus," Driemeier said. "That's just a misimpression."

Driemeier said that having faculty and staff leave voluntarily is more pleasant than forced layoffs or making faculty and staff retire. Driemeier also said that due to the low number of staff and faculty taking VERIP compared to the number that qualified, the institutional memory will not be drastically affected.

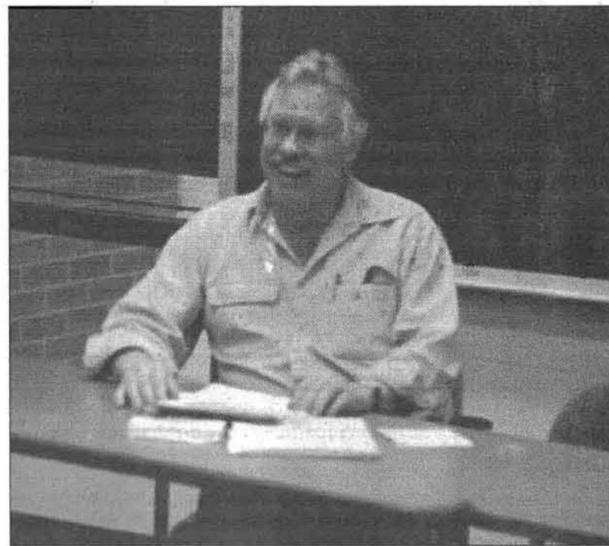
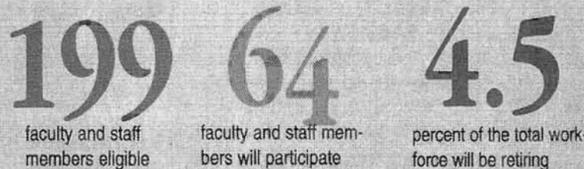
"I think you certainly want to promote the institutional memory, and if everybody who was eligible to retire had taken it, then I think it might be a concern," Driemeier said. "But here at UMStL you are only taking 21 or 22 percent of those who were eligible."

Driemeier also said that the 20 percent that Touhill gets cannot be spent at her discretion.

"The 20 percent goes to the Chancellor, who has promised to return the 20 percent to the type of unit from which it came," Driemeier said. "That

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## BY THE NUMBERS...



Darren Brunel/The Current

Dennis Judd laughs while teaching one of his classes last Tuesday. Judd is one of 64 UM—St. Louis faculty and staff members who have chosen to participate in the Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program.

# High-tech reference area will combine resources of library, Campus Computing

BY BENJAMIN ISRAEL  
staff editor

of Campus Computing.

The Campus Computing Lab in Thomas Jefferson Library closes May 11, and workers will begin installing new wiring and shelving in the reference area of the library at the same time. That's because the library and Campus Computing plan to open a combined reference area and computer lab by fall that would include 50 computers hooked up to the World Wide Web and to more than 100 databases, said Sandy Snell, acting director of libraries at UM-St. Louis.

"Students more and more are using the web for research," Snell said. "We're going to have computer people working with software and technical stuff and librarians for getting good sources of information and finding out where things are."

In computer labs, students search for information on the World Wide Web. "Currently, we are getting a lot of questions that are library questions," said Jerrold Siegel, coordinator

To make room for the new facility, plans call for moving the tables out of the north side and shelves out of the east side of the reference area and installing small, powerful PCs on spacious tables so users will be able to spread out books and papers there, Siegel said.

"A lot of the work that will be done [in the reference area] is presently being done in the SSB lab," Siegel said. "The people with the books in the lab will come" there.

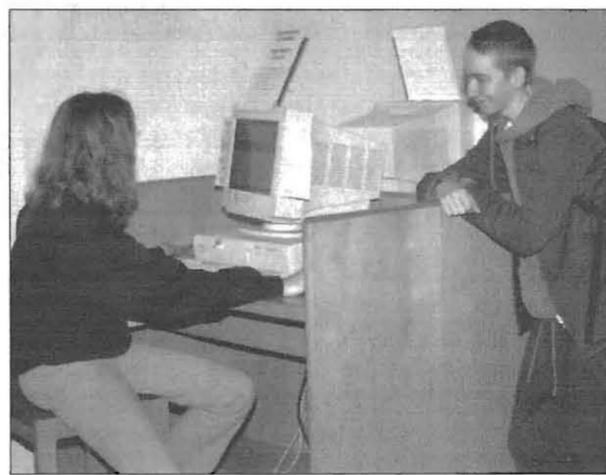
Snell said some spaces will be designed for more than one person working together.

Other universities call similar spaces "information commons," Siegel said, but he and Snell agree that they want to use a different name.

The new reference area will be the first of its kind in Missouri, Snell said.

The computer lab has 22 PCs and the reference area 20, so when the new set-up is finished, students will have

see LIBRARY, page 8



Michelle Van Iseghem/The Current

Molly Simmons, a junior in the sociology program, and Sean Price, a freshman whose major is undecided, work in the computer reference area of the Thomas Jefferson Library. Plans call for replacing the current computer labs and stations in the library with a new high-tech computer reference area this fall.

# In new bill, Missouri legislators take aim at professionals who default on student loans

BY BENJAMIN ISRAEL  
staff editor

A bill before the Missouri General Assembly would crack down on former students who default on their student loans by taking away their ability to obtain or renew professional licenses.

"We've heard stories about doctors, lawyers, cosmetologists, people who are earning a good livelihood, defaulting on their student loans," said Rep. Craig Hosmer, D-Springfield, who sponsored the bill. "When someone's a professional, we're not trying to target people who can't pay."

If the bill passes, physicians, attorneys, teachers, insurance brokers, optometrists, nurses, accountants, real estate agents, psychologists, engineers and other professionals won't be able

to take exams for licenses or get their licenses renewed if they are in default on student loans guaranteed by the Missouri Department of Higher Education.

That does not include the loans students obtain through the Student Financial Aid Office at UM-St. Louis which are guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Education. But it does include loans obtained through the financial aid offices at St. Louis Community College, St. Charles County Community College, St. Louis University, Jefferson College, Truman State University, Washington University, Harris-Stowe College and Fontbonne College. Nearly 1,000 students transfer to UM-St. Louis every year from those schools, according to figures posted on the Internet by the registrar's office here.

The default rate for the affected student loans is rising, said Carianne Cutshall, student assistance associate with the state Department of Higher Education. The rate for federal fiscal year 1997, the last year for which figures are available, was 10.1 percent, up from 9.5 percent the previous year, Cutshall said.

To be in default, a former student must go 270 days, nearly nine months, without making a payment, she said. The state then buys the loan from the bank and the federal government then buys the loan from the state at 95 cents on the dollar, she said.

"State taxpayers are losing 5 percent on every loan that defaults," Cutshall said.

Tony Georges, director of Student Financial Aid at UM-St. Louis, said he has little sympathy for those who

default on their student loans.

"We're not talking about missing one payment," Georges said. "You are literally sending a message, 'I'm not interested in paying my loan.'"

Hosmer said that each person who defaults on a student loan costs the state money and constricts its ability to guarantee other student loans. Plus, he said, the state "bends over backwards" to keep debtors from defaulting.

Cutshall said that unemployed alumni and others experiencing hardships are eligible for deferments, but they must apply to get them.

Currently, the state law gives the Department of Higher Education the power to seize state tax refunds and lottery winnings and to garnish up to 10 percent of wages from people who default on student loans.

# University gears up for visit from candidate Gore tonight

BY BENJAMIN ISRAEL  
staff editor

The presidential campaign hits the UM-St. Louis campus at 8:30 p.m. Monday when vice president Al Gore speaks at the gymnasium in the Mark Twain Building.

Gore will be trying to pick up votes in Tuesday's Missouri presidential primary.

Secret Service agents, members of the Gore campaign's advance staff and local politicians were on campus Thursday to prepare for the visit.

Darlene Green, comptroller of the city of St. Louis and a Gore supporter, also came Thursday as part of Gore's advance team. "We'll be happy to welcome him to UM-St. Louis," Green said. "He wants to show his support for a large urban university. The connection between him and education is very clear."

Anyone can attend the event, but they must first get a ticket, said Betty Van Uum, a former Democratic St. Louis County Councilwoman and assistant to the Chancellor at UM-St. Louis who accompanied the advance team on campus. She said tickets will be available at Boilermaker's Union Hall at 1547 South Broadway in St. Louis on Monday afternoon, and from 5 to 8 p.m. in front of Mark Twain Building. No one will be admitted who shows up for tickets after 8 p.m., Van Uum said.

The Gore campaign will not allow anyone to carry signs into the gym, said a campaign aide who would not give his name.

Campus Police will allow vehicles without permits to park on campus that night.

The Secret Service has been on campus before, said Capt. James Smalley of the University Police. Jimmy Carter came here when he was president, Jesse Jackson came when he was a candidate, and Gore's wife Tipper came here during the 1992 campaign.

# Bulletin Board

## Monday, March 6

• **Noon Cultural Series** presents "Beach Boys and Brothels: The Sex Industry in Sri Lanka." Jody Miller, assistant professor, and Dheeshama Jayasundera, master's degree candidate, criminology and criminal justice, present their research findings on prostitution in Sri Lanka in 229 J. C. Penney.

• **Interviewing Techniques Workshop**, sponsored by Career Services, will be from 9:30 to 10 a.m. in Room 308 Woods Hall. Polish your interviewing skills. Advanced registration is required. Call 5111 to register or enroll in person at Career Services.

• **Israel at 52: Educating for a Technological Age**, sponsored by the Center for International Studies and featuring Yehudit (Judy) Dori and Dov Dori, will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Southwestern Bell Telecommunity Center. A reception will follow and admission is free. For more information call 7299.

• **March Madness Badminton** is something fun and active to do over your lunch hour. Drop by the Mark Twain Gym from 12 to 1 p.m. No advance registration necessary.

## Tuesday, March 7

• **Free Testing for Sickle Cell Anemia** will be held on the third floor of Lucas Hall, from 4 to 7 p.m. For more info contact Amy Schoenberger at 5671.

• **Prayer Group** at Newman Center (8200 Natural Bridge Rd.) will meet at 7:30 p.m.

• **Jazz Ensemble Concert**, with Geoff Haydon and the Jazz Combo, will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Villa Lounge, Marillac Provincial House. This is a free event

## Wednesday, March 8

• **Tim Page**, artistic advisor, St. Louis Symphony and winner of the 1997 Pulitzer Prize, will discuss his work as a

### Put it on the Board:

The Current Events Bulletin Board is a service provided free of charge to all student organizations and 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-served basis. We suggest all submissions be posted at least two weeks prior to the event. Send submissions to: Erin Stremmel, 7940 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis MO 63121 or fax 516-6811.

All listings use 516 prefixes unless otherwise indicated.

critic, biographer and editor at 2 p.m. in the McDonnell Conference Room, 331 SSB. For more information call 5541.

• **Soup and Soul Food** will from 12 to 12:50 p.m. at the Normandy United Methodist Church.

• **Rec Sports Registration Deadline** is today for the Team Trivia Tournament. Rec Sports and the UMSL Staff Association are co-sponsoring a trivia contest, Sat., March 18, from 7 to 11 p.m. in Richmond Heights. This is a fun team trivia competition with 8 players per team (students, fac/staff and/or community members). Bring your own food and drink and make a party of it. Lots of prizes! For more info contact the Rec Sports Office at 5326.

• **Guest Lecture-Recital: Geoff Haydon**, from Georgia State University, will play

piano starting at 12 p.m. in Room 205 Music Building. This is a free event.

## Thursday, March 9

• **Free Testing for Sickle Cell Anemia** will be held in the University Center Lobby, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more info contact Amy Schoenberger at 5671.

• **How to Utilize Career Services Workshop**, sponsored by Career Services, will be from 2 to 2:30 p.m. in Room 308 Woods Hall. Learn about the job search resources available. Advance registration required. Call 5111 or enroll in person at Career Services.

## Sunday, March 12

• **RCIA**, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults will begin at 4 and run until 5:30 p.m. at Newman House (8200 Natural Bridge Rd.).

## THE CAMPUS CRIMELINE

### February 24, 2000

At 3:05 a.m. University Police investigated a loud music complaint at University Meadows Building #2. On the officers' arrival, the music had been silenced.

A student reported that on Feb. 23, between 5:30 and 8:10 p.m., her parking permit was stolen while her vehicle was parked on Lot "V" on South Campus.

A faculty member reported that between 3:30 and 4:15 p.m. her purse was stolen from 463 Marillac Hall. The purse contained cash, credit cards, ID and personal papers. The office door had been left ajar while the faculty member was out.

A student reported that the right rear taillight lens on her vehicle was damaged between 2 a.m. and 5 p.m. The vehicle was parked at University Meadows.

A staff person reported losing his wallet on the Normandy Hospital parking lot. An unidentified person found the wallet and used the ATM/Debit card inside.

### February 25, 2000

Delayed report on Feb. 24: A student reported that between 8 a.m. and noon, her parking permit was stolen while her vehicle was parked on Lot "V."

### February 27, 2000

A student reported that the student left

an astronomy textbook in a lounge in the Social Science Building at 6:45 p.m., and it was missing when the student returned three hours later.

### February 28, 2000

A student reported that between 9 and 9:50 a.m. her purse was stolen from 315 Clark Hall. The purse contained cash, credit cards, keys and ID. The purse had been left unattended.

### February 29, 2000

A student reported that on Feb. 24, between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., his winter semester parking permit was stolen while his vehicle was parked on the third level of Parking Garage "N". The windows on

the vehicle had been left open.

A staff person reported that between Feb. 24, and Feb. 25, her parking permit was stolen while her vehicle was parked on the first floor of the new West Drive Garage. The windows had been left open.

A student's vehicle with 13 outstanding parking violations was immobilized while parked on the third level of Garage "C". The student removed the immobilizer and left the campus. On Mar. 1 the student was located and arrested for the boot theft and the immobilizer recovered at the student's residence near the campus. Police applied for an arrest warrant with the St. Louis County Prosecutor.

The Campus CrimeLine is a free service provided by the UM-St. Louis Police Department to promote safety through awareness.

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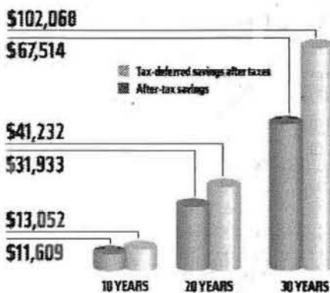
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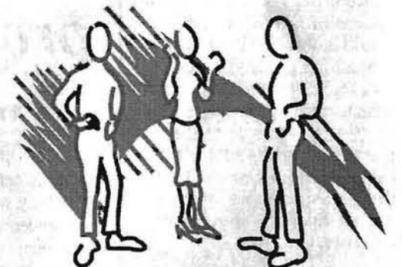


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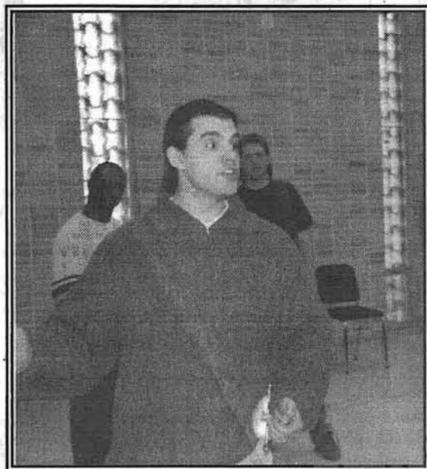
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# PIRATES

Building on last year's hit, the Opera Workshop puts on another performance



BY DAVID BAUGHER  
of the Current staff

UM-St. Louis is proving once again that there is no business like show business. After last year's hit success "The Man of La Mancha" the campus is again taking on the world of theater with its production of Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance," a part of the Spring 2000 Opera Workshop.

"It's going to be a lot of fun," said senior music major Sandy Vandaveer. "We sold out [Man of La Mancha] every night last year."

Vandaveer, who plays Kate, the sister of main character Mabel, said she has enjoyed working with the actors, noting "a lot of chemistry" in the group.

"It's a blast," she said. "The cast gets along really well."

She had kudos for director Milton Zoth, who also directed "La Mancha" last year.

"He is just amazing," she said.

Kathryn Haggans, director of the Opera Workshop, describes the workshop as a class where students can "learn the basics of stage movement." Students even receive a credit for taking part in the play. They receive one credit hour for what Haggans describes as "many, many, many hours of work."

"The students are on their feet rehearsing, singing, acting about 12 hours a week," she said.

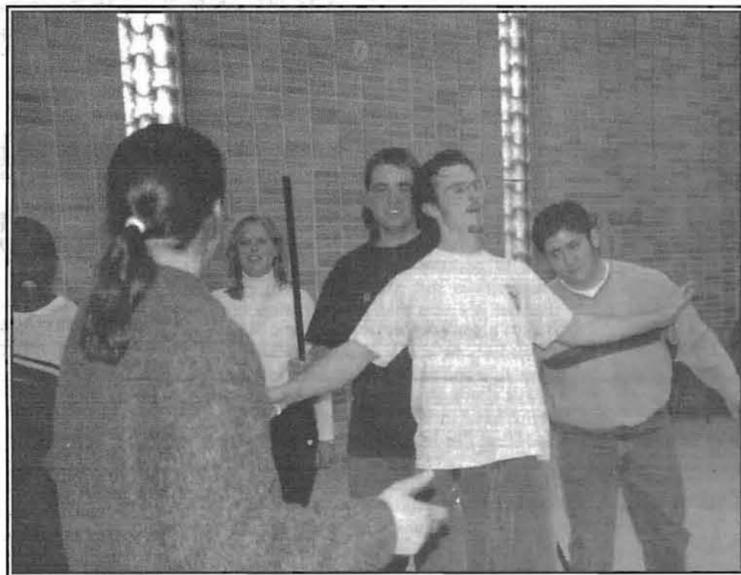
Vandaveer said that the workshop, a class that meets every spring, really took a step forward with "La Mancha."

"We always had an Opera Workshop class," said Vandaveer, "but we're only just now doing full shows."

The production finally did its first complete run-through last week but Haggans said that scheduling rehearsals have presented a problem since the J.C. Penney auditorium is such a "heavily-used venue."

"Under the current circumstances we are sort of camped out in several different areas," she

## of Penzance



photos by Rafael Macias/ The Current

said.

She also noted other problems with the Penney stage, including its lack of a backstage, which restricts the workshop to doing "unit set" productions which allow only cosmetic changes to the setting.

"We are also limited this year as last year by the size of the J.C. Penney stage," Haggans said. "It is quite small."

But despite the problems, Haggans said the 21-person cast, of which 17 are students, had accomplished a lot.

"They're working hard and they're doing a wonderful job," she said.

She said she hopes the workshop will continue its performances in the future, with a play every spring or every other spring.

Haggans and Vandaveer both noted that this

TOP RIGHT: Jennifer Waters (top) rehearses her role in "The Pirates of Penzance" being put on by the Spring 2000 Opera Workshop.

TOP LEFT: Keith Boyer rehearses his lead role in the play.

LEFT: Josh Gorski prepares for his part.

play, an operetta, differs somewhat from "La Mancha" with an expanded role for the chorus. "There's not a lot of main parts but there is a lot of chorus parts," Vandaveer said. "There's very few speaking parts."

Haggans said the choruses, of which there are several, are "characters in and of themselves."

She said the play would be well-publicized this year just as it was last year with bulk mailings, flyers and posters set to go up this week. There will even be a radio interview with Haggans, Zoth and conductor James Richards on KFYO Saturday morning.

Haggans said she is excited and is very proud of the performance.

"Even someone who doesn't love Gilbert and Sullivan will enjoy it," she said.

"The Pirates of Penzance" runs Mar. 23-25 at the J.C. Penney Auditorium. Tickets are \$4 for students and \$7 for non-students. Call the box office at (314) 516-5818 for more information.

"It's a delightful show," Haggans said. "I hope it will be well-attended because I think it will be worth it."

### Turning the page

## Pulitzer winner to discuss his work

BY RHASHAD PITTMAN  
staff assistant

All those who enjoy writing about the sounds of music, or who may even have an interest in becoming a music critic might just want to listen up.

Tim Page, a classical music critic, artistic advisor for the St. Louis Symphony and winner of the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for Distinguished Criticism, will be discussing his work as a critic, biographer, and editor at 2 p.m. Wednesday in the McDonnell Conference Room in 331 Social Science Building.

The Connecticut native and

Columbia University graduate has critiqued music for numerous publications, including *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, since "1978 or 1979," he recalled.

Page says that the most enjoyable aspect of being a music critic is "when you can really go out and hear something great and tell people about it. That's a pretty nice feeling."

Yet, the downside is "when you don't like something and you have to do your duty and say it," he says.

"I don't think many critics like hurting people's feelings," Page said.

There were many people that inspired Page to become a music critic,

but one in particular was music critic and composer Virgil Thompson, who coincidentally is from Missouri, noted Page.

"He's a great critic," Page recalled. "I also read a lot of early *Rolling Stone* magazines."

It was Page's love for music and enjoyment of writing that initiated his career.

"I just started doing it," Page said via telephone. "Gradually one newspaper started to print me, then another, and eventually it became my job."

Before his career as a critic took off, Page studied music at the Tanglewood Music Center and the

Mannes College of Music. From there, Page went on to play keyboard and compose for his own rock band, after a brief stint as a cocktail pianist.

Later on, Page would become the host of the daily program, "New, Old and Unexpected," on radio station WNYC-FM.

Throughout his career, Page has written or edited 10 books, including a biography of the novelist Dawn Powell and a collection of her work, "Selected Letters of Dawn Powell," which Henry Holt & Co. published last year. Even though Powell died when Page was 10 years old, he felt a connection while writing her biogra-

phy. Page said he was "getting to feel like she was a friend of mine."

Page plans to return to *The Washington Post* as a cultural reporter, where he says he'll be covering novels, books and records, among other things.

When asked why, Page simply stated "I just miss journalism. When you're in it for a while, it grows on you."

For young, aspiring writers, Page suggested some basic steps.

"Just keep writing," he said. "Write as much as you can. Eventually the money will get better, and find something that you're interested in."

## A moving experience: My belongings for a van



AND THE POINT IS...  
ANNE PORTER

Whoever created those charming, happy families in moving-van commercials has never left their parents' homes.

If they didn't show smiling, waving children in a station wagon with a slobbering dog in the back seat between the brats and showed the reality of what packing really is, over half the populace would still be mooching off mom and dad. Everything about packing makes it a miserable experience: transporting multiple items, carrying boxes up many flights of stairs, moving furniture and arranging it, separating items, and the list continues.

Yesterday, I finally escaped my parent's house. I had been attempting to

for about two years, but every roommate I was going to get a place with canceled that plan.

Then this friend of a friend, who later became mi amiga, asked if I was interested in finding a place with her. About six months from that day, Lorrie and I were driving around and calling on places.

The apartment we found has a lot of character, and looks very 1920s. Even better, the rent covers not just a closet and a kitchen, but also an expansive area.

I thought at the time locating an apartment was an ordeal. Now I know that's the easiest part about it.

For my new home, since I only

possessed sparse bedroom furniture and no other household items at all, I had to purchase a basic house full of collections.

It was quite a reality wake-up call, to just walk from room to room and list all the simple, given things that make a home. For example, my kitchen currently has no trash can. In fact, in the whole flat, there is only one trash can. That decrepit item does not even have the proper liner. The bag covers about half the basket. So I guess I really only have half a trash bin.

Once I thought I had bought all the stuff I needed, I asked my friends, relatives, Gandhi, the Easter Bunny for help in moving. What I didn't realize

at the time was that all the furnishings had to be hauled up three flights of stairs that double as a fire escape.

Someone must love me though, because my grandmother offered to pay for a professional moving company to carry an armoire, chest, bed (which they disassembled and reassembled), mattresses, a television, all that you can imagine.

The moving company worked tremendously well. I only had to place all the items in boxes. I looked through the house about 10 times to make certain I had everything I needed.

Today I remembered what I forgot—all my toiletries. Fortunately for some fluke, I brought a bottle of sham-

# FEATURES

ANNE PORTER  
features editor

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### Thoughts for Today

"Being a philosopher, I have a problem for every solution."

-Robert Zend

Credit: Peter's Quotations: Ideas for Our Time

"Talk of revolution is one way of avoiding reality."

-John Kenneth Galbraith

Credit: Peter's Quotations: Ideas for Our Time

"Statistics are like a bikini. What they reveal is suggestive, but what they conceal is vital."

-Aaron Levenstein

Credit: Peter's Quotations: Ideas for Our Time

"Do not needlessly endanger your lives until I give you the signal."

-Dwight D. Eisenhower

Credit: Peter's Quotations: Ideas for Our Time

poo and some soap. Let me tell you, I have never missed a razor so much in my life.

My razor, and everything else that I didn't write on a list, only begins the process. I still have yet to inform my bank, credit cards, car financier and every other party I owe money to of my new residence. On second thought, maybe I shouldn't inform them.

I had other things to do: get the phone, electric and gas all installed. Most important, if there is an earthquake in St. Louis, I will be covered because I bought renter's insurance.

Now all I have to do is unpack and organize. Give me until my next lease for that one.

# OPINIONS

## Editorial Board

- JOE HARRIS
- MARY LINDSLEY
- BENJAMIN ISRAEL
- CHARMARE MALONE
- BRIAN DOUGLAS

"Our Opinion" reflects the majority opinion of the editorial board

## How to Respond

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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, length and grammar. All letters must be signed and include a daytime phone number.

## OUR OPINION

# Early retirement likely to bring problems to classrooms

### The issue:

The new early retirement program is supposed to make things easier on faculty members by giving them the option to retire early rather than laying them off later. But by doing this, a couple of problems may arise. Class sizes could dramatically increase and some classes may not even be offered any more.

### We suggest:

This is going to save the University some money but in the long run it will probably end up hurting the students. Alternative solutions should be explored as to how to save the money.

### So what do you think?

Write a letter to the editor about this issue or anything else on your mind.

Several consecutive years of budget reallocations aside, there really are no widespread fiscal problems on our campus. Of course not. The University is just implementing this early retirement policy to bring in some new, energetic young faculty, yeah, that's it. And if you believe that, I've got this nice bridge downtown I've been trying to get rid of. I'll let it go really cheap.

Let's face it, if you take the fiscal motivations out of the picture, this early retirement program wouldn't make sense. Donald Driemeier, Deputy to the Chancellor, describes the idea that this campus is in fiscal trouble as a "misimpression." The UM System guys came to a similar conclusion. That was after they more or less audited us, wrote an extensive report, and said that if UM-St. Louis couldn't handle setting its own goals, they'd be happy to do that for us. The whole situation around here has been frankly ridiculous.

But Driemeier tells us that there are certainly no widespread fiscal problems on this campus. Of course he also justifies the early retirement program in part by saying that voluntary retirement is more pleasant than forced layoffs. Forced layoffs?

But no, really, everything's fine.

Now lucky for us, only a little over 20 percent of those who are eligible for taking early retirement are taking it this year. That says nothing about what might happen if the rest of them decided to wait a bit and retire next year.

Speaking of 20 percent, 20 percent of the money freed up by early retirements will go to the Chancellor's discretionary funds. That's one fifth, one dollar out of every five. The Chancellor has promised to return this money to the type of unit from which it came, but that's still a huge sum being redirected.

The real problem here is that this policy seems likely to have a detrimental effect on the missions of this campus. Students could be left with larger classes, fewer classes, or both. UM-St. Louis also has a number of faculty who have been awarded for their research work. If they should decide to retire early and seek more profitable employment elsewhere, that aspect of the university could suffer too.

Bringing new talent to the faculty is certainly a worthy goal, but if it costs us the experience of the senior members, that cost is too high.

## GUEST COMMENTARY

# Center is being taken from students

This year the new University Center will be opened up for student use. Every organization that was in the old U. Center will move into the new one. Any other organizations that did not have a place in the old U. Center will finally have a base for their activities. But in all this great excitement, I think one thing is being overlooked: the old University Center.

Sure it's old and small, but we paid for it. Thus we should be allowed to use it. We paid for its construction, and we paid for its maintenance. We lived in it day in and day out. Students not only have a financial link to that building but an emotional bond. I would not like it to become a building for administrators. Sure, I am happy that we will have a bigger and better building to move into, but why should I settle for something less than what we deserve?

I have heard rumors that the old University Center will be changed into administrative offices.

Why? Do all the student organizations have the office space that they so dearly deserve? Why should the Greeks go to Mansion Hill? Why not into the old U. Center? Why should organizations be confined to a tiny cubicle in the new U. Center? Why can't we use the space we paid for in the past too?



Owais Karamat  
guest commentator

It is because of students that this University is still running and will ever run, but it seems that administrators are always given priority over students. Why do students have to suffer for the administrators' comfort? They sit in their huge offices with top quality furniture, and students have to deal with small cubicles and share file cabinets for their activities. I know we have had weak leaders in the past, but every leadership has its ups and downs. It's the University's responsibility not to screw us over just because we did not have a strong leader sitting in front of us making sure that student's interests are not jeopardized.

## LETTERS

# Senate candidate promises changes

STUDENTS! DEFEND YOURSELVES! ONLY FIVE STUDENTS IN THE SENATE! SUGGESTION: SUPPORT THE FORMATION OF THE TRIBUNATE!

It seems that only five people are running for the student seats of the Senate as of Feb. 28. I know that you will not see this letter until the first week of March and a week after the extension, therefore I do not urge you to apply for candidacy. Rather - assuming that we still have

only five people running for the Senate - I know that I speak for the other four in saying that the teachers will soon find things altered.

I urge that me and my soon-to-be compatriots put aside any political differences that we may have and form a united front. And this united front will demand a "Tribunate" and not the proposed University Assembly. That we (the students) will have total executive veto power over the Second Estate - the teachers.

Also, we will seek political assistance from the SGA, state politicians, and most importantly you the students.

Finally, I say to the Faculty Senate, we, the tetrarchs of the Tribunate, will speak at Senate meetings and we will participate in the subcommittees, and in the spirit of the Paris Commune, we will not stop until we are victorious!

-Senator Candidate  
Robert C. Montague II

## What's your opinion?

1. How do you feel about the topics we've written about in the Opinions section this week?

- Administration moving into the old U. Center
- Early retirement for faculty
- Student voice in next year's University Senate

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

- Submit a Letter to the Editor
- Write a Guest Commentary
- Participate in the Student Forum on The Current Online

# Time for students to stand up to faculty

As the University Senate has extended the deadline for student senate applications. The reason? Only five applications have been submitted for the 13 or 25 student seats available.

The last two years saw a new trend on this campus—more student applicants than available senate seats.

Student attendance greatly increased, and a new student senate committee was formed to give student senators a stronger voice.

What was the faculty senators' response to this? At the beginning of this school year, the faculty railroaded a measure through to give themselves parking privileges in student spots while not reciprocating the gesture to the students.

That was followed by the restructuring of the University Senate, dividing it into two parts. One part, composed of faculty only, decides on the important matters. The part that includes students decides on frivolous matters like what color to paint the new University Center.

That wasn't all. The faculty cut the number of student senators from 25 to 13. Though the percentage of student senators remains the same, their token power has been further diminished.

It's no wonder that this campus' infamous student apathy plague has struck again and this time the faculty senators have no one to blame but themselves.

For students, the existing University Senate is nothing but a waste of time. Whatever points students make are dismissed automatically by an uncaring faculty.

Last year I was covering a University Senate meeting and a debate had been

raging for 30 minutes over what day the week begins on. The faculty had been arguing back and forth when a student senator leaned over and asked if I wanted the discussion to stop immediately.

I asked this senator how that could be done and the senator told me it was easy. This senator promptly asked a question about the issue at hand and immediately the faculty senators moved to vote.

I told the senator that it was a fluke. Then the senator asked a question on the next issue and the same thing happened.

The senator explained to me that the faculty do not want students asking questions or even taking a general interest in the senate's decision-making. This would explain the faculty's sudden power grab when it appeared that student representation had gained momentum.

It's time for students to refocus their efforts in ways that will get the faculty's and administration's attention. Finding parking at other places and taking MetroLink to school comes to mind. It's an inexpensive way to protest parking fees that are rising exponentially. In fact, why should students have to pay for parking when their designated spaces are fair game for faculty?

It's also time for the Student Government Association to draw a line in the sand and to start standing up for students' rights on this campus. The SGA must either move forward or cease functioning and let an organization with the students' interests in mind take over.

It will not be easy for whoever takes up the challenge. Overcoming 35 years of being considered second-class citizens will not happen overnight.



JOE HARRIS  
editor-in-chief

# Bad apples don't fall far from the tree

Every once in awhile, my boyfriend and I go bowling on Saturday nights (no, we don't have lives). We do this even though we know bowling alleys are magnets for rowdy high school students, especially on Saturdays. Although the kids are pretty boisterous, they're usually not so bad that they're completely unbearable to be around.

Last Saturday night was different. We were assigned a lane near a group of kids who looked to be about 15 years old. To say these kids were obnoxious would be as much of an understatement as calling the Titanic a nice little boat.

The kids were screaming at one another, shoving each other into the paths of other bowlers, throwing balls down the lane before the pinsetter had finished setting up the pins, kicking the computer, spilling anything and everything that wasn't bolted down (like sodas and ashtrays), and neglecting to clean up their mess. All this happened in the 15 minutes between the time we arrived and they left.

For a moment, I caught myself thinking the same thing my grandparents say whenever they're confronted with teenagers. "Kids today," I thought. "Where are their manners? Back in my day..."

Before I could lapse too far into grandma mode, I spotted a group in a nearby booth who appeared to be in their fifties. At first, I was glad to see some adults amidst the swarm of teenagers who'd invaded the bowling alley that night. Minutes later, I had second thoughts. Although this group wasn't quite as appalling as the kids had been, their behavior wasn't much better. Their conversation was so loud that those around them had to struggle to talk

over them. When they left, I noticed an ashtray and a cup of beer had been spilled all over the table and seats. And, for reasons I couldn't imagine, nacho cheese had been smeared all over the tabletop.

I often hear older generations of people criticize those of younger generations. They criticize our morals, our manners, our taste in music, the way we drive—you name it. Occasionally, I find myself agreeing with them, just as I had with the obnoxious kids. But Saturday I realized how hypocritical this criticism is.

I thought back to a few years ago when I had one of those god-awful customer service jobs. Occasionally we had customers who were so irate that they'd begin screaming obscenities at the clerk. Sometimes they did this in front of their children.

I thought about how most people (mainly baby boomer types) ignore the 25 mph speed limit posted by two grade schools near my subdivision, even at times when kids are walking home from school.

I thought about a baseball game I once attended at which a father was joking with his young son about how one of the stadium vendors was a "faggot." And still, the country was shocked when a group of young men baited and murdered a gay college student in Wyoming.

Maybe younger generations are screwed up. Maybe we have faulty morals, poor manners, lousy taste in music and we drive like maniacs. I'm not excusing anyone's behavior, but I think that before someone older attempts to criticize us, they should remember one thing: they taught us everything we know.



MARY LINDSLEY  
managing editor

# Under Current

by Darren Brune  
staff photographer



Sean Dwyer  
Freshman/Studio Art • Graphic Design

Invest, give some money to immediate family, then travel the world.



Rebecca Maxson  
Sophomore/Secondary Math Ed.

Retire early.



Jill Weiler  
Sophomore/Nursing

Pay off college debt

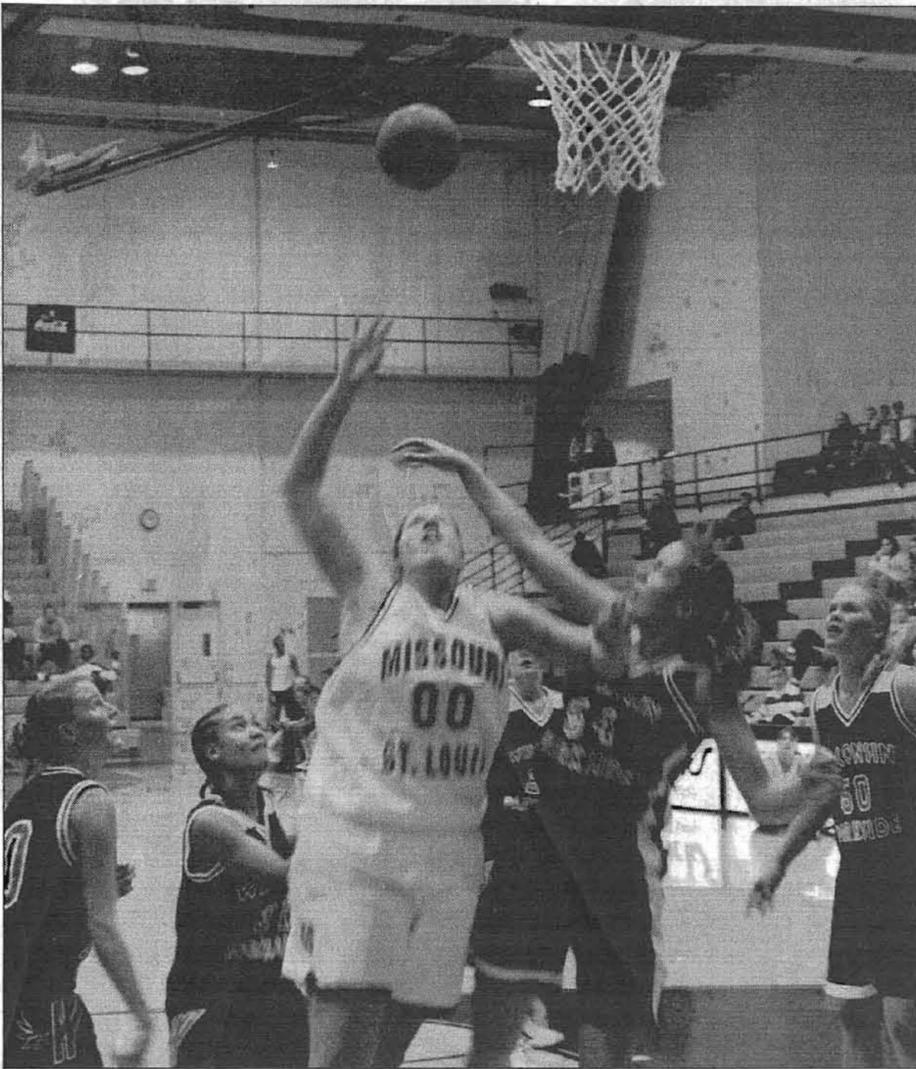


Christine Klomp  
not available

Invest, pay off family bills, travel the world

If you won a million dollars, what would you do with it?

# Indy upsets Riverwomen



Rafael Macias/The Current

Riverwoman Jennifer Littleton (00) goes up strong for the rebound despite the efforts of the entire Wisconsin-Parkside team.

## UM-St. Louis sees 20 point lead slip away along with title hopes

BY NICK BOWMAN  
staff associate

The Riverwomen basketball team blew a 20 point lead at halftime, losing 70-69 to Indianapolis in the second round of the Great Lakes Valley Tournament.

"We feel comfortable playing Indy," Shelly Ethridge, Riverwomen head coach, said before the game. "We've seen them play, and know that if we can hit our shots, we can beat them."

Unfortunately, the Riverwomen shot only 35 percent from the field against Indianapolis.

The game was a tale of two halves. In the first half Indianapolis was held to a season-low 14 total points, and the Riverwomen cruised to a 34-14 lead. Amanda Wentzel went 3-9 from beyond the arc, and UM-St. Louis appeared to be heading to the finals.

Things began to fall apart in the second half, as Indianapolis rallied for 42 points. Elizabeth Ramsey scored 20 points and Laura Scmalstig added 12 in Indianapolis' comeback.

UM-St. Louis' first round game against Southern Indiana wasn't pretty either. But that time the Riverwomen got the job done. In its 62-57 victory over the Screaming Eagles, both teams shot less than 30 percent from the court.

"We came out with a rush of adrenaline in the beginning, and it hurt our focus," said Ethridge. "But we knew that we could beat this team, and once we regained our composure, our game took over."

Southern Indiana would score the first points of the game, but would have to wait six minutes for its next

bucket. However, the Riverwomen could not find the net either, hitting only one bucket from the field.

"We played solid defense and had a body on every one of their players," Kevin Tuckson, Riverwomen assistant coach said. "Our expectations were very high for this game, and once we settled down, our system began to work."

Seven minutes into the contest, the score was 6-2, favoring the Riverwomen. This would spark Tawanda Daniel for an offensive tear down the stretch, hitting 5-10 overall.

Daniel would account for 41 percent of the Riverwomen's first-half offense, scoring 11 of the team total of 27. Southern Indiana would cash in for 25 points and head into halftime down by two.

The Riverwomen increased their offensive output in the second half, with Daniel and Pauline Harris adding 10 points each.

Although the Riverwomen enjoyed the lead throughout the contest, Southern Indiana continued to battle back.

With 2:00 left in the contest, UM-St. Louis found their season in jeopardy. Southern Indiana had come to within one point, mainly due to stellar free-throw shooting as they shot 90 percent from the line.

But Pauline Harris would take over the game, swatting away a potentially fatal Southern Indiana layup, and hitting a jumper of her own to widen the victory margin. She would be fouled with 27 seconds left in the contest, and hit one of two shots to increase the UM-St. Louis lead to four as the Riverwomen won 62-54.

# SPORTS

DAVE KINWORTHY

sports editor

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## Upcoming Games

### Baseball

at UM-Rolla  
2:30 p.m., Tue. Mar. 7

at MO South. Tourney  
Iba, Mar. 9-12

### Softball

at UM-Rolla  
2:30 p.m., Tue. Mar. 7

### Men's Tennis

at UM-Rolla  
4 p.m., Tue. Mar. 7

vs Jefferson College  
3 p.m. Thur. Mar. 9

at NW Missouri State  
3 p.m., Fri. Mar. 10

at Rockhurst  
9 a.m., Mar. 11

## Next Issue In Sports

- Jim Brady Profile
- Softball and Tennis Updates
- Latest Scoop

## Baseball team off to hot start

BY DAVE KINWORTHY  
staff editor

The UM-St. Louis men's baseball team has jumped off to a 2-0 start this season.

The Rivermen defeated William Woods 12-0 as senior Bob Kavran earned his first victory of the season.

"We probably could have played anybody on that day and won the ballgame," Jim Brady, Rivermen head coach, said. "It was just one of those days where we were just on top of our game. For that early in the season, it speaks well for what could possibly happen down the road."

Brady also praised his pitching staff for allowing four hits the entire game while posting the shutout.

"Our pitchers were just outstand-

ing," Brady said. "We threw 27 of 31 first pitch strikes. That alone just tells you that we were basically ahead in every count. They could set up the hitters anyway they wanted."

The home run count was on the side of the Rivermen as well with home runs coming from second baseman Tyler Bates and outfielder Norman Mann in the third inning.

UM-St. Louis then defeated Maryville University as Kavran got his second victory of the year.

Brady focused more of his attention on this game with the pitchers and their control as they settled in.

"We have to stay away from the walks," Brady said. "We can't give anybody the opportunity. Make them earn it and make them hit the ball."

## Riverwomen softball begins season 4-1

BY DAVE KINWORTHY  
staff editor

The Riverwomen's softball team has jumped out to a quick 4-1 record to start the season.

UM-St. Louis traveled to Central Arkansas for a tournament where the women went 2-1.

"It was good that we got some non-conference games to get our feet wet," Lesa Bonce', Riverwomen head coach, said. "When we hit conference, they won't be as shaky."

In the first game, the Riverwomen defeated Missouri Southern 2-1. They then lost the second game 4-2 to Southeast Oklahoma State University, a pre-

season top 25 ranked team.

The Riverwomen then bounced back to handily defeat Henderson State 12-1.

The first home games of the year featured UM-St. Louis hosting McKendree College. The Riverwomen swept the doubleheader 5-0 and 7-6.

With a successful start to the season for UM-St. Louis, Bonce' said she sees improvement, especially with the base running.

"After each game, we get a little more confidence in each area," Bonce' said. "I have been really pleased with the base running. We have turned a lot of singles into doubles already. I see them getting more confident on the bases."

## Rivermen lose in first round

Foul trouble, Kentucky Wesleyan too much to overcome in GLVC tourney

BY NICK BOWMAN  
staff associate

A valiant effort was not enough for the Rivermen as they lost 65-70 to Kentucky Wesleyan in the first round of the Great Lakes Valley Conference tournament.

UM-St. Louis, despite a six-game losing streak, clinched the eighth and final spot in the brackets. The Rivermen were then paired with Kentucky Wesleyan, the defending national champions, who had a 24-2

regular season record and gained the first seed in the GLVC Tournament.

This did not discourage the Rivermen. To the tune of "Eye of the Tiger," the Rivermen took the court for their first GLVC tournament game in school history.

Five minutes later, though, the Rivermen would find themselves looking at a 14 point deficit. The Kentucky Wesleyan offense was hot from beyond the arc, hitting four 3-pointers in the first five minutes, and their defense was stopping Rivermen

Jim Schelich and Brian Markus from finding the mark.

With the first round of subs due, Head Coach Mark Bernsen handed Luke Harms the reins. But without Terrence Herbert's presence under the boards, they could only manage to come within nine points.

The loss of Herbert, who was averaging a double-double per game, to injury forced the team to adjust their game plan in mid-season.

"I'm not sure if we ever got over the vacancy left by [Terrence]," Bernsen said. "He was a huge inside presence, and when he went down, we had to adjust our whole game plan."

With three minutes left in the first half, UM-St. Louis faced a 17 point gap, again due to the Kentucky Wesleyan shooting range. Schelich would counter with a 3-pointer of his own, as would Anthony Love, who hit his at the buzzer to round out the first half as the Rivermen trailed 30-39.

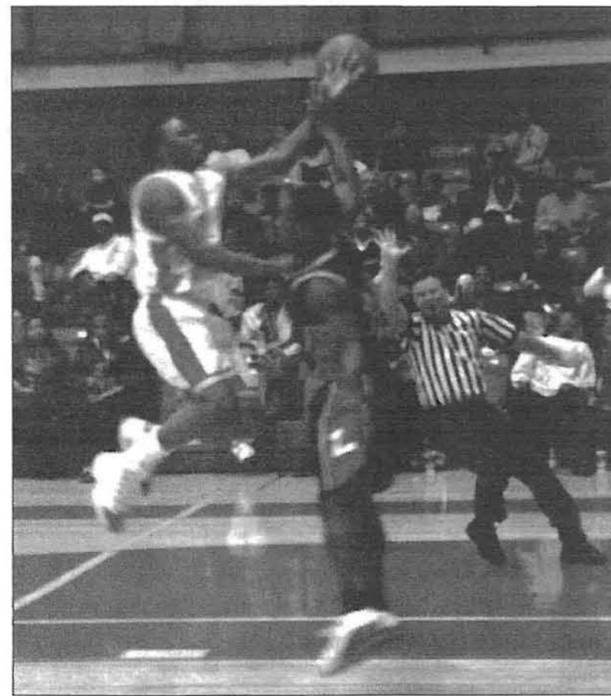
In the second half, the fouls began to take their toll, and with Schelich drawing his fourth in the half's opening minutes, Bernsen had no choice but to sit him.

UM-St. Louis did not get discouraged as the team came back with something they worked on all season.

"We started the game in a match zone set, but down the stretch, we had to adjust to a man-to-man," Bernsen said. "That's when the energy took over."

With nine points from Markus and solid defense from Harms, Brian Massa and Michael Hamilton, the Rivermen would close the gap to 65-67 with just under three minutes left in the game.

Despite the loss, the Rivermen end their season in high spirits, and with good reason. In his first year, Bernsen has taken a team that has not enjoyed post-season play in five years to the GLVC tournament.



Rafael Macias/The Current

Riverman Greg Ross (14) gets fouled on his way for an easy layup against Lewis.

## Loss should not dampen Rivermen's accomplishments



LATEST SCOOP

DAVE KINWORTHY

The Rivermen's basketball season came to an abrupt end Wednesday as Kentucky Wesleyan continued to shine as the No. 4 ranked team in Division II basketball.

Although the loss was devastating, the season as a whole was nothing but spectacular for those who have covered men's basketball for the past four years.

UM-St. Louis has proven to be one of the emerging up-and-coming teams in the Great Lakes Valley Conference. If they can close a gap to only a two-point lead with 2:59 left in a game against the No. 4 ranked team in the nation, then it speaks volumes above

the rest. Head coach Mark Bernsen has revived a program that was headed toward the sewers and turned it completely around.

Although Bernsen only kept a small portion of last year's squad, he seemed to have the incoming transfers and freshmen work cohesively toward a winning season as the Rivermen finished 12-15 overall.

The record does not reflect all of the time and endurance these men have spent on the court this season. The hustle, heart, determination and enthusiasm that they brought to the court day in and day out was remarkable.

Who could forget when the Rivermen defeated Northern Kentucky? A nationally-ranked team came to UM-St. Louis' gym and walked out sulking and wondering what had happened. Bernsen consistently kept the crowd in the game at all times by his enthusiastic approach to the game. Fans came out in great numbers and UM-St. Louis benefitted.

This is the way that every team hosts their opponents—with a lack of respect and courtesy and above all, by jeering the opponents until they get so flustered that they never want to come back to "Our House" ever again.

No team should ever want to set foot in the Mark Twain Building.

When they do, they should be intimidated because of the previous year's loss. The Rivermen basketball team has begun a new wave with this attitude: nobody should ever walk out of our gym a winner unless it is the home team.

Things have looked sky-bound with Bernsen at the helm. He has brought his Southwest Missouri State attitude with him, and UM-St. Louis will benefit from it. He has resurrected a team from the slums to the light. There just aren't enough adjectives in the English dictionary that could be used to describe Bernsen's revival of the basketball program.

This year's men's basketball team

has been a joy to watch as not only a reporter, but also as a spectator. People love winning teams and the bandwagon-jumpers better be ready for the next few years.

Students will be pouring into the Mark Twain Building in bundles next year and on into the future. They now know that the Rivermen are no joke when it comes to basketball. The general attitude of "they are going to lose" is no longer in their minds. The loud noise, the band playing and interaction between UM-St. Louis students is only the tip of the iceberg. The winning tradition is upon us UM-St. Louis, so don't let it pass you.

# A&E

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## Upcoming Concerts

### March

10

E.M. Grueve  
The Firehouse

Big Blue Monkey CD  
Release Party  
Galaxy

14

V For Vendetta  
Hi Pointe

16

Flaming Lips  
The Firehouse

17

G Love & Special Sauce  
Mississippi Nights

18

Matthew Sweet  
Blueberry Hill

Filter w/ Chevelle  
American Theatre

22

H2O  
Galaxy

24

Mix MasterMike w/  
Rahzel  
The Firehouse

28

Guster  
Mississippi Nights

30

Yo La Tengo  
The Firehouse

## FILM REVIEW

# 'MONA'

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER  
staff editor

Yugos. Yugos everywhere. Yugos in every form and color. I didn't even know there were so many Yugos.

"Drowning Mona" is a comedy about a murder investigation to discover who murdered Mona Dearly. Or who didn't murder Mona Dearly.

At the beginning of the film, Mona Dearly drives her Yugo off a curving road into a river, where she drowns. Her demise is greeted more with relief than grief by both family and neighbors. For Mona Dearly (does anybody else hear "Mommy Dearest" in that name?) is hardly a dear person, as we get to know her through people's recollections of her.

This quirky film is an off-beat, "dumb" comedy (in the manner of "There's Something About Mary"), in which no opportunity for a dumb remark passes by, but the film is funny nonetheless due to its quirky set of characters and weird small town setting. The story could clearly have been done as a dark comedy or even in the manner of the Coen brothers (whose work includes "Raising Arizona" and "Fargo"), but the director did not choose that path. Still, it's funny with odd, even bizarre characters and that strange town.

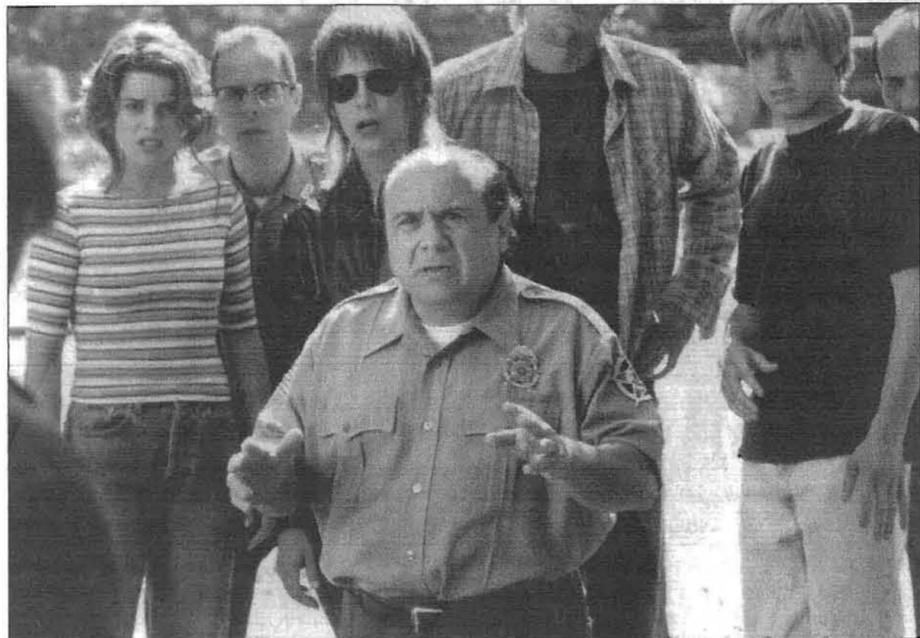
### 'Drowning Mona'

Length: 95 min.  
Rated: PG-13  
Our opinion: ★★★

The story is set in a small town that appears to be a rundown resort of many years ago, a backwash forgotten in time, with old, rusting signs advertising "fishing cabins," slightly dilapidated cheap houses, all those Yugos (but all sporting vanity plates), and, mysteriously, a lot of well-cared-for lawns.

The film has an interesting cast. Bette Midler plays the outspoken and crude Mona, Danny DeVito plays the sincere police chief Wyatt Rash, who seems plainly out of place in this weird town and who is in charge of the investigation. Neve Campbell plays his doted-upon daughter Ellie who is engaged to the sweet but not too bright Bobby (Casey Affleck). Bobby's partner in his lawn care service is Jeff (Marcus Thomas) the unsavory son of Mona, who apparently has an interest in the business as well. Mona's meek husband Phil (William Fichtner), Rona (Jamie Lee Curtis), a brassy waitress at the diner having an affair with Mona's husband, and other townspeople are among the potential suspects. With this group in the murder investigation and

## Cast swims along humorously for a while, but story gurgles in the end



Most of the cast looks on as Police Chief Rash (Danny DeVito) tries to talk Jeff Dearly out of shooting himself at his mother's grave, in a scene from "Drowning Mona."

the tales of Mona's many outrages, there are plenty of opportunities for humor.

Most of the film is funny, but it eventually fizzles out before the end. The audience is tipped off to the solution to the mystery far too early, even if

it isn't all spelled out until the end, when clearly the answer could have been made more complex and held back longer. The film ends rather weakly with the wedding of the police chief's daughter and the landscaper. Still, the film is mostly entertaining, and the per-

formances are good. Bette Midler and Neve Campbell were the comic stand-outs, but the whole cast works extremely well with their characters, which are the real source of the humor of the film.

(Now playing at Creve Coeur, Galleria, and other theaters)

## FILM REVIEW

# Photography, characters make this sci-fi thriller worth the ride

BY CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER  
staff editor

Are you afraid of the dark? This common childhood fear is the starting point for the sci-fi thriller "Pitch Black." The film is a sci-fi tale in the manner of "Alien" and with quite a bit of the look of "Road Warrior," but which successfully recombines elements from other films with really interesting character development to create an entertaining film. Combining elements from various films, including "Alien," "Road Warrior," and even Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds," the film stylishly reworks them into a fresh presentation that exceeds the expectations of its action film genre.

The movie starts out with a spaceship carrying a number of passengers to various destinations which is suddenly forced to crash land on an apparently barren desert planet. The landing destroys most of the ship and kills some of the passengers and most of the crew. Among the survivors are the ship's pilot Fry (Radha Mitchell) and a recaptured murderous convict Riddick (Vin Diesel, who played a supporting part in "Saving Private Ryan") along with the guard Johns (Cole Hauser) transporting him back to prison. The group that is left has their own difficulties, especially with the murderous prisoner. While they struggle to

### 'Pitch Black'

Length: 107 min.  
Rated: R  
Our opinion: ★★★

survive and find an escape from the planet, they discover that the planet is not unoccupied as it first appeared, but is inhabited by vicious flying creatures that hide in the dark.

What primarily sets this partly Australian, partly American project apart from the ordinary is its surprising level of character development and well-paced suspense. This is not to say that the film is great art, it's still well within the entertainment-only arena. But the story is effectively taut and suspenseful, with interesting characters who are not always what they seem and who undergo real change from their experiences, rather than being cardboard-cutouts, as is often the case in action films. Since this is a sci-fi thriller, these characters evolve through the action of the film, not through sophisticated intellectual discussion. Additionally, while the film is not a big-budget effort, the filmmakers did not skimp on the photography or special effects, which are both very well done, and its stylish approach to the photography is one of the things that make this film worthwhile. The cast of

lesser-known actors, some American and some Australian, all do an excellent job with their roles.

The film is shot in a washed out tone that bleeds out the color or replaces it with a blue or red tone, creating a rather surreal effect. While this washed-out tone in a desert environment was also effectively used in last fall's film "Three Kings," the addition of false color here adds even more to the effect, which is especially good in this sci-fi setting. The film has quite a bit of the look of "Mad Max," since it was shot on the same location as that film, with the same cinematographer and the same art director (costumes and sets) as "Road Warrior." Although it's familiar, that same look works very well in this movie.

The film isn't entirely original in its material (at least one scene is clearly a restaging of a scene from Hitchcock's "The Birds"), but the classic elements are so creatively recombined that they appear fresh. While it doesn't quite transcend its genre like last summer's "Sixth Sense," the film is a solidly entertaining sci-fi tale with great pacing and more visual style than you would expect.

(Now playing at Esquire, Kenrick, and other area theaters)



Visit thecurrentonline.com to view the trailer for "Pitch Black." To see it, you will need Macromedia Flash.

## ALBUM REVIEW

# In this case, it might be best to judge an album by its cover (art, that is)

BY CORY BLACKWOOD  
staff editor

So the Gin Blossoms broke up, and no one really knew about it. Like many bands, people slowly stopped buying their solitary album until there was no interest, and they simply faded into oblivion.

The Gin Blossoms attempted a last swan song of sorts, a greatest hits album. Why a greatest hits album, no one knows. It contains the 12 songs that appeared on "New Miserable Experience" and two songs from different soundtracks. One can only guess how much money was wasted in that enterprise.

After such a failed career, many musicians turn toward accounting or something equally exciting. Ex-Gin Blossoms singer Robin Wilson and drummer Philip Rhodes still have the music bug, however, and formed a band called Gas Giants in a second attempt at success.

The Gas Giants are a similar band to the Gin Blossoms, a pop band with a little bit of rock in their sound, not much more, not much less.

There was hope in the song "I Hope My Kids Like Marilyn Manson," but that left as soon as Robin's vocals kick in. What could have been a pretty funny satire of rock's biggest freak turns out to be no more than another cheesy pop song with a cool catch phrase.

Gas Giants is like the Gin

### 'From Beyond the Back Burner'

Artist: Gas Giants  
Label: Atomic Pop  
Our opinion: ★

Blossoms in many respects. One is that all of their songs sound pretty much the same. If a listener were to leave the room for a couple of minutes and return, they would have no way of knowing if they were listening to the same song or a new one.



Very rarely does a disc cross my desk that has no redeeming values. This one has one at least, and that comes in the form of the amazing cover art and inside art by renowned comic book artist Geoff Darrow. Darrow is responsible for the extremely detailed and disturbing art in "Hard Boiled," a cult classic in the independent comic book world.

Sadly, the music itself has no redeeming value. It is uncommon to find a disc that is actually difficult to listen to at least once through, but "From Beyond the Back Burner" fulfilled that somewhat depressing privilege.

# Gone are good ole days of bands with social consciences

I think I may have become a sort of old fogey too early for my time. At the young age of 21, I am already thinking about the good old days of music.

I'm not talking about Billie Holiday, or even The Beach Boys, but just a few years ago, the early to mid '90s. During that mini-era of musical explosion, there were no "boy bands," and most musicians actually stood for something, or had messages in their music. In the early '90s, grunge blew up; it was like our own version of punk. Grunge and Nirvana were the biggest middle fingers a youth generation had thrown the system since the near revolution of the '60s. Rap did the same thing (maybe to a larger degree), with N.W.A and Ice-T's

lyrics becoming prophetic concerning the Rodney King beating and the riots that followed.

Generation X was collectively involved in a Rage Against the Machine, from rebelling against Chinese control of Tibet to protesting the injustice of Ticketmaster. A major force in our awareness on the enslavement of Tibet was the previously underage-drinking, gun-toting Beastie Boys. My, how times had changed.

The government feared our music, too. Conservative C. Delores Tucker claimed rap caused "the social genocide of an entire generation," while Tipper Gore fought to get albums censored outright. In the midst of this onslaught, music fought back. When

Bill Clinton accused Sista Souljah's lyrics of advocating that blacks should "go out and kill people," Souljah retaliated, pointing out that she had specifically stated in her album that "the gun is not the way." Souljah also accused Clinton for making a scapegoat out of her to raise interest, to which Clinton had no response.

Lollapalooza was a success, and stood for something other than money. Nirvana graced the cover of "Rolling Stone" with Kurt Cobain proudly displaying a shirt that had "Corporate Magazines Still Suck" scrawled on the front. We were fighting a battle, and we were winning.

Then the record companies caught up to the trend. Every group of four

guys out of Seattle that could pick up a guitar got signed, and "alternative" became an official section in the mall CD stores. The axis tipped back in favor of the corporations so quickly that even the suicide of one of our flag-bearers wasn't enough to rekindle the fire.

What have we been left with? What do The Backstreet Boys and Britney Spears have to say for our generation? Limp Bizkit's rallying cry involves sticking a sweet and tasty treat up one's rear end. Wow, that says a lot, Fred, thanks.

This is not to say that we don't have bands making headway for us. Rage Against the Machine is still raging. The Beastie Boys are still trying to free Tibet, and newcomers System

of a Down have emerged as a major threat to conspiracies everywhere. These bands are simply not in the limelight like socially conscious bands used to be, though. They have been replaced with the likes of Limp Bizkit inciting riots at Woodstock '99 for the sake of... testosterone. What an embarrassment.

Even with all of this junk clogging the arteries of good music, there is still hope. I am not saying that music cannot be fun; I am listening to The Chemical Brothers as I type this. At the same time, we need to be aware of the things around us, and with music being possibly the most powerful (and first) form of communication around, we should use it to our advantage.



RANT & ROLL

CORY BLACKWOOD

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**RETIREMENT, from page 1**

is, to return the 20 percent that came from academic units to academic units and the 20 percent that came from non-academic units to non-academic units."

Driemeier said that Touhill will disperse this money with the advice of the University Senate's budget and planning committee, along with other academic officers.

Driemeier said VERIP also allows universities to hire back retired faculty and staff part time for a maximum of three years. This, Driemeier said, will help ease the transition from older faculty and staff to younger faculty and staff.

"I think what VERIP will do is add some flexibility with deans and vice chancellors," Driemeier said. "It will ultimately allow older faculty to be replaced by new faculty which is always a healthy side as new ideas come into a department. So it is a matter of change."

David Young, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said 13 faculty will be leaving from the college in

the VERIP program. It is less than ten percent of arts and sciences' total staff.

Young said that most of them will be hired back part time. The number retiring "is almost exactly what I was expecting," Young said. "I don't think the students will perceive any difference, particularly in the first year."

Young said arts and sciences is in the process of identifying areas to replace faculty once the part-timers are phased out.

Douglas Durand, dean of the School of Business Administration, said just four people are leaving the school. Of those four, he said two had already announced their retirements at the end of this year.

"I had people who qualified for [VERIP] who decided not to retire," Durand said. "They wanted to stay on and stay with the school."

Durand said that money has been already allocated to finding replacements, and that business students will be in good shape.

**After extended deadline, only 13 students file for Senate candidacy**

BY BRIAN DOUGLAS  
of The Current staff

With fewer candidates than seats, there will be no contested election for student members of the University Senate.

According to Sue English, senate assistant, only 13 applications were filed for the 25 student seats in the Senate. This means that all of the candidates who applied and who satisfy the qualifications for the office will automatically take office.

To qualify, students must be in good standing, have completed at least nine credit hours and have a minimum GPA of 2.0.

English said the applications

will be reviewed to ensure eligibility, and that the candidates would be notified this week of their status with regard to the senate.

This year's election had already experienced problems with getting enough candidates. The deadline to file an application for candidacy was to have been on Thursday Feb. 24, but the election committee had received only three applications at that time. The committee decided to extend the deadline to last Friday in hopes of getting more candidates. Lack of candidates has been a chronic problem for student senate elections at UM-St. Louis, though recent years have seen a flurry of participation.

**CANDIDATES**

- D. Mike Bauer
- Richard Derhake
- Marcus Early
- Joseph Wayne Flees II
- Angie Heppermann
- James Larrew
- Joshua D. Miller
- Robert Montague II
- Kevin P. Robinson
- Andy Schloss
- Abby C. Schuff
- Joshua Stegeman
- Mathew Wilkins

The above is a list of students who filed applications for candidacy. These applications had not been verified at press time to ensure the eligibility of the applicants.

**LIBRARY, from page 1**

access to more terminals in the library than they do now, Siegel said.

Funds for the installation come from campus computing fees, Siegel said, as part of the normal upgrading and replacing of existing facilities.

"The computers in the lab on the second floor were getting a bit long in the tooth," Siegel said.

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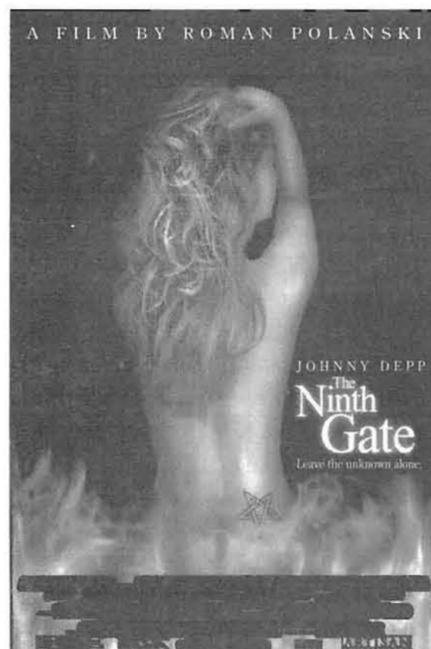
**CORRECTION**

In Issue 982, an article appeared stating that University Health Services offers STD testing; it does not. Amy Schoenberger is a registered nurse. The Current regrets any confusion this may have caused.

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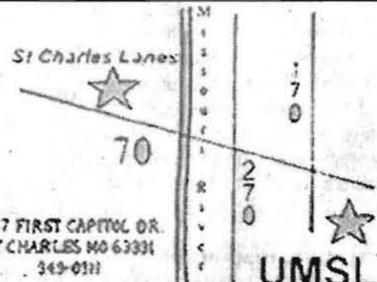
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**CORRECTION**

Four Board Members will be elected to the

**ASUM Board of Directors**

two for one year terms to expire in March 2001

and two for terms to expire in September 2000

at the SGA Meeting on Thursday, March 16 at 2:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Steven Wolfe, acting SGA vice president, at 516-5105, or stop by the SGA office located in 262 University Center.



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