

Who will win
Super Bowl XL?

See p. 10

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

UMSL will keep curator position

Blunt will require another selection process to fill seat

BY MELISSA S. HAYDEN

Staff Writer

St. Louis curator should have begun on Jan. 1, 2006 and would serve until Dec. 31, 2007.

Curtis said the memo indicated that the governor's office would have a reselection process sometime this year. According to Curtis, a UM-St. Louis student will hold the position of the next student representative to the Board of Curators from his or her appointment until January 2008.

"James Harris (director of boards and commissions for the state of Missouri) would ask that the Intercampus Student Council reconvene in the fall and the selection process will start over again," she said.

"The interview process is pretty long. It took about six months from filling out the application until the actual selection was made," Curtis said.

Curtis will continue to serve until a new representative is appointed. However, she is eligible to reapply for the position if she would like to continue to serve.

see CURATOR, page 3

Future of MOHELA, higher ed funding take the floor at SGA

BY PAUL HACKBARTH

News Editor

The Student Government Association leaders discussed the future of tuition increases and student loans at their meeting last Friday afternoon in the SGA chambers.

SGA President D'Andre Braddix discussed scenarios involving an increase in tuition for the next fiscal year as well as the outlook for the sale of the MOHELA loan authority.

Braddix spoke about tuition rate scenarios for next semester that UM President Elson Floyd discussed with the Board of Curators in Columbia last Thursday and Friday. The possibilities presented at the meeting translate to possible increases in the range of 5 percent to 7 percent, starting in the fall semester.

According to board documents from

the Curators' meeting, if tuition increases by 6 percent for example, undergraduate admission would increase from \$216.50 to \$229.50 per credit hour.

However, Joe Moore, director of media relations for the UM system, reminded students that Floyd and the curators are only discussing possibilities. Moore said the scenarios would be voted on at the next Board of Curators meeting at UM-Rolla in March.

According to Braddix, Floyd is no longer pursuing his proposed fixed tuition model from last year. The decision came after students and concerned parents from across the state of Missouri rejected the idea.

Instead, Floyd is proposing a tuition model that would keep tuition increases in line with inflation rates, and both the Consumer Price Index and Higher Education Price Index.

"It puts more pressure on the legislature to fund higher education,"

Braddix said. As an example, Braddix said true tuition might cost about \$10,000. While the student pays \$4,000, the state pays for the remaining amount.

Certain students are not only concerned with tuition increases, but Gov Matt Blunt's proposed sale of the loan agency MOHELA also has received mixed reactions from students and financial aid offices. MOHELA is currently owned by the state, however, the governor has proposed to sell MOHELA," Braddix said.

With the sale of MOHELA, Braddix explained the money that the loan agency owns would be given back to higher education institutions, like UM-St. Louis.

"We're actually the only University in the system that uses MOHELA," Braddix said.

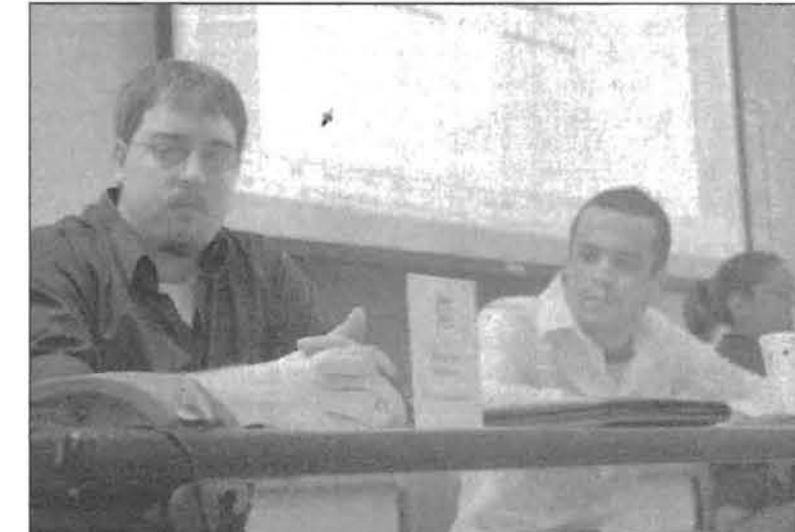
Braddix said he was anxious to see the effect that the sale would have on

UM-St. Louis since the other campuses do not rely on the loan authority as significantly as UM-St. Louis does.

While certain groups oppose the sale, Braddix said that the money from MOHELA that goes to universities would mean about \$80 million for maintenance costs of the Benton/Stadler/Research building complex, which Braddix named as the highest priority on campus.

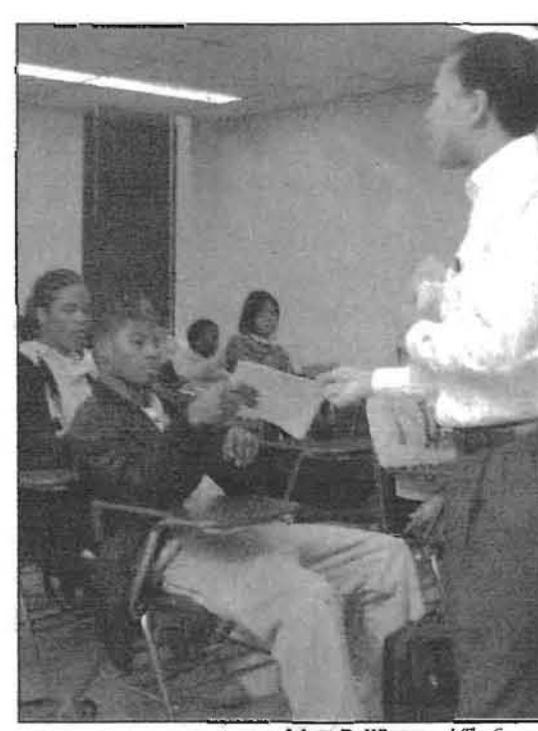
Also of note at the SGA meeting, Student Court will vote for a new justice at the next meeting on Friday, Feb. 17 at 1 p.m. Student Court will also no longer have alternate justices on the court.

Elections will also be held for two new board members for Associated Students of the University of Missouri, now known as Student Legislative Association. The elections will replace board members Thomas Helton and David Dodd.



SGA Parliamentarian Stephen Keener and President D'Andre Braddix keep student curator Maria Curtis informed about campus issues via telephone during Friday's Student Government meeting.

Carl Williams, the student development coordinator for the reform program, hands out paperwork to students from Vashon High School. Every Monday and Friday, the seniors will attend colloquiums presented by various UM-St. Louis representatives.



Behind the jersey: Meet UMSL's star players ►

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Vashon seniors get a jump start on collegiate success

BY BEN SWOFFORD

News Associate Editor

Early Friday afternoon, a group of about 65 high school seniors shuffled out of a classroom and into a quiet hallway in the Social Sciences and Business building. They were bound for buses to take them back to Vashon High School in the city of St. Louis.

While UM-St. Louis reports that 19.5 percent of area high school students take classes at the University for college credit, this time things are different.

That Friday marked the end of the second week of a teaching partnership intended to provide students with a jump-start on college and an attempt to lessen the stress of crowded, overfilled

classrooms at Vashon High School.

The program will take the Vashon students in their senior year off their high school campus and into classes at UM-St. Louis for four days a week in a one-semester college preparation program intended to increase high school graduation and college enrollment rates.

"Ultimately it gives to the students and provides them with all the things that are necessary for them to go on in education and in life," Vashon Principal Calvin Starks said. "They will understand and experience the rigors of what college life is all about."

The seniors are taking high school style classes in the morning with teachers from Vashon, who are bussed in along with the students. In the afternoon, the students take two college courses, anthropology and sociology.

The high school students will each receive six hours of college credit for the two courses.

During the first week, around 60 seniors start their day at Vashon High School at 7 a.m.

They are bused to UM-St. Louis to take advanced classes in a new environment with older students. Judging from the students' reactions, they seem to like the new environment and are adjusting to college life well.

"I've learned a lot, especially in my two college classes we have. Both are fun classes," Amanda Johnson, Vashon senior, said, referring to her sociology and anthropology classes. "Everything is more than I've expected," she said.

The Vashon seniors will also be taking classes at Ranken Technical College one day a week. Stark is optimistic about the program and the students'

reception at UM-St. Louis.

"The kids have absolutely loved it. The parents love it, and from all [that] I understand, the students have been very welcome on campus," he said.

The new learning environment for the Vashon seniors is part of a larger St. Louis Public School District plan to reform its major high schools. The freshmen class at Vashon has been moved to Williams School, one of the vacant school buildings owned by the SLPS. At Williams School, the freshmen students will take high school preparatory classes.

"It sends a message ultimately of support to the students and signifies a change and to those who, for various sundry reasons, feel they are not on a level playing field," Stark said.

Vashon High School is located at 3035 Cass Ave. in the city of St. Louis.

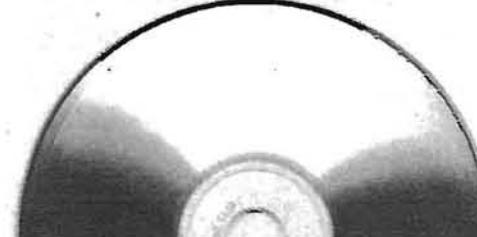
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What are the top 5 worst part-time jobs?

See page 6



Check out our staff's top picks for best albums of 2005

See page 8

Bulletin Board

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

Monday, Jan. 30

"Pipeline to local Office" workshop

The Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life will host "Pipeline to Local Office" from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. today and Jan. 31 in Century Room C in the MSC. "Pipeline" is designed for women interested in running for municipal offices and those interested in volunteering on a campaign. The program fee is \$45. Call 4727 for more information or to register for the program.

Monday Noon Series: The Geography of Drawing

St. Louis artist James M. Smith will discuss the origins of his work at 12:15 p.m. in Gallery 210. The lecture is free and open to the public and is part of the Monday Noon Series, sponsored by The Center for the Humanities. An exhibit of Smith's work will continue through March 11 in Exhibition Room B of Gallery 210. Call 5699 for more information.

Résumé Mania Week

Today and continuing through Feb. 3, education majors can get their résumés in shape for the UM-St. Louis Teacher Job Fair by sending their résumé to resumemania@umsl.edu. A career specialist will critique it and e-mail it back within 24 hours. Call 5111 for more information.

Tuesday, Jan. 31

Bosnian Student's photos on display

PPRC hosts "Point-of-View: From Bosnia To Buerkle Middle School," an exhibit of 25 photographic portraits taken by Bosnian immigrants who are students at Margaret Buerkle Middle School in St. Louis County. The display will open today and run through April 26 in the PPRC at 362 Social Sciences & Business Building. Center hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. An opening reception will begin today at noon. Call 5273 for more information.

Wednesday, Feb. 1

African-American studies conference

"Teaching African-American Studies in Our School Systems," will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. today and 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Feb. 2 in the Century Rooms at the MSC. The conference fee is \$25, and includes all conference activities. The conference is sponsored by the E. Desmond Lee Professorship in African/African American Studies and Center for International Studies. Call 4852 for more information.

"Billy the Kid in American Memory" lunch and lecture

Paul Hutton, professor of his-

tory at the University of New Mexico, will discuss "Dreamscape Desperado: Billy the Kid in American Memory" at noon in Century Room A at the MSC. The event is part of the Lunch & Lecture series sponsored by the St. Louis Mercantile Library. The lecture is free and lunch is \$15 for Mercantile members, and \$18 for nonmembers. Call 7242 for reservations or more information.

Open house at the Center for Trauma Recovery

The open house will be from 5 to 7 p.m. at the center, located in the lower level of the Kathy J. Weinman Advocacy Centre. It will feature a discussion by Steven Bruce, the center's new director. The event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. It is sponsored by the CTR and Department of Psychology. Call 6738 for more information.

Thursday, Feb. 2

New interfaith panel series

"Conversations and Controversy: An Interfaith Dialogue," a new series sponsored by Interfaith Campus Ministries, will be held at 12:45 p.m. in the Pilot House. Religious leaders of various faiths will present brief overviews of their religions. This will be the first of three discussions to be held on the

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

All listings use 516 prefixes unless otherwise indicated.

first Thursday of the month. Call (314) 385-3455 for more information.

Friday, Feb. 3

Lawrence Lithography Workshop exhibit

"The Lawrence Lithography Workshop: Twenty-six Years of Collaboration," begins today and runs through March 25. The exhibit will be displayed in Exhibition Room A at Gallery 210. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Call 5976 for more information.

"Making the Most of Oral and PowerPoint presentations"

A workshop will be held from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in 316 MSC. Participants will sharpen their oral presentation delivery skills and increase the effectiveness of PowerPoint presentations. This conversation about Teaching and Technology is sponsored by Information Technology Services and the Center for Teaching and Learning. Call 4508 for more information.

Safe Zone training

Jamie Linsin, counseling psychologist with University Counseling Services, and Lori Curtis, lecturer in the School of Social Welfare, will conduct Safe Zone training from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the conference room at the University Advising Center, 225 MSC. The

program is free and refreshments will be provided. Space is limited and reservations are required. Call 5711 or e-mail james@umsl.edu for more information.

"Outline for Equality" lecture

Julie Brueggemann, executive director of Personal Rights Of Missourians, the Missouri statewide organization advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality, will host "Outline for Equality: The Proactive Legislative Agenda for the LGBT Community in Missouri" at noon in 314 MSC. The program is free and open to students, faculty and staff. It is sponsored by the Safe Zone program. Call 5008 for more information.

Saturday, Feb. 4

Writers' workshops

The Write Stuff Chancellor's Certificate Program will hold a pair of workshops in the University Center today. "The Business of Writing" will be conducted from 10 a.m. to noon, and "Finding a Literary Agent" will be offered from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The fee for each workshop is \$39. Call 5974 for more information or to register.

Put your event on the Bulletin Board by emailing information to current@jinx.umsl.edu

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Students showcase academic programs, encourage legislators to invest in higher education

BY PAUL HACKBARTH
News Editor

When Missouri lawmakers decide whether to increase or decrease funding for higher education, they often want to know where that money goes.

Last Wednesday at the Capitol in Jefferson City, legislators found the answer to that question at the 20th annual Student Showcase event sponsored by the Associated Students of the University of Missouri.

"ASUM hosts the Student Showcase every year ... in order for unique academic programs in the UM

system to present their programs and their accomplishments to legislators," Meara Smith, programming director for ASUM, wrote in an e-mail interview.

This marked Smith's first year as coordinator of the event. She was hired in April on the UM-Columbia campus.

Smith wrote that this year's theme, "Higher Education: A Return on Your Investment," showcased students' organizations and involvement on their respective campuses.

"Legislators have a chance to walk around, look at the displays and talk to student and faculty members," Smith

wrote. She also noted that Showcase gives students the opportunity to meet with and talk to senators and representatives about their academic achievements.

Tanzeena Hossain, vice president for the UM-St. Louis Student Government Association, said, "They [Showcase organizers] try to show people where higher education funding is going, to show them that it's being put into good programs and to show them that students care and are doing things with the money they're getting."

Hossain attended the Student Showcase to represent the St. Louis area. Besides the SGA, the College of Nursing and School of Optometry from UM-St. Louis were also represented.

Hossain said certain legislators from St. Louis and the surrounding area came to the UM-St. Louis displays to see that their city was well represented.

"In the past, UMSL hasn't necessarily been the most active in a lot of things," Hossain said. "A couple of them seemed really excited that we were getting out there and doing more things along the lines of what the other big campuses are doing."

Smith wrote, "The turnout was fantastic, the best it has been in several years." According to Smith, 26 academic programs from the four UM campuses attended the event. She explained that holding the event earlier this year helped increase involvement.

"We held Student Showcase several months earlier than in previous years in order to increase participation from students and programs as well as increase attendance from legislators," Smith said.

Smith wrote that the legislators' reactions to the Student Showcase were well received.

"I heard extremely positive feedback from every legislator I spoke with as well as heard others were excited that we hosted this event again this year," she said.

Smith explained that showcasing what students are giving back to the legislators and showing them that their money is being well spent is important not only for ASUM but for the entire UM system student population.

"ASUM wants legislators to realize that by investing money into the University of Missouri, they are investing in a brighter future for the state of Missouri," Smith said.

CURATOR, from page 1

BY MELISSA S. HAYDEN
Staff Writer

In the Supreme Court's 216 years, only two justices have been women. What might this mean if a male justice replaces Sandy O'Connor?

"Women justices have had a major impact on some things that you don't usually associate with the Supreme Court," said Margo Schlanger, professor of law at Washington University in St. Louis.

Schlanger spoke about "Women and the new Supreme Court," a lecture sponsored by the Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life, the Institute for Women and Gender Studies, the Department of History, the Department of Political Science and UM-St. Louis' Student Legislative Association.

The lecture, which took place in Gallery 210 of the Telecommunity Center, also featured a second speaker,

Susan Appleton, professor of law at Washington University in St. Louis.

Appleton and Schlanger discussed the effect of President George W. Bush's decision to nominate Judge Samuel Alito to replace Sandy O'Connor, as Supreme Court Justice and what it might mean for the United States.

Both women used past court cases to highlight what they felt were important accomplishments in legal matters that were a result of women justices.

According to Schlanger, in 1996, the case, "The United States v. Virginia," the United States sued the state of Virginia for restricting the opportunity to attend the Virginia Military Institute to only men.

The court said the opportunity should be open to women, as well. Since it is a public school, it should be open to people regardless of gender, the justices claimed.

The United States won in the district court and the court of appeals

came up with a remedy, which was to create The Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership.

"It was supposed to be a very friendly, very self-esteem building environment for women. Compared to VMI, which is not at all friendly, it is basically a series of hazing, and it is all about challenge, all about challenge all the time," Schlanger said.

The lower state courts approved of the remedy, agreeing that women are more likely to want something that is friendlier when they want to be trained as leaders. The Supreme Court did not approve.

"It's not that most women want to go to VMI and from my perspective it sounds dreadful," Schlanger said. "The question is not whether or not most women want to go to VMI, most men don't want to go to VMI. The question is whether when a woman wants to go to VMI, is that going to be an opportunity that is available to her?"

Schlanger believes the Supreme Court's ruling that the approach taken by the lower courts was unlawful and was "a very significant opinion."

Appleton focused on cases involving abortion and reproductive rights. Mainly she put her attention on the case of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court case that ruled that abortion laws violate right to privacy.

"Almost since it was decided, it has been controversial," she said.

In her opinion, Roe v. Wade is "probably secure" for now. However, Appleton predicted a federal abortion legislation may be in the country's future.

"We're much closer to seeing abortion left to the political process. Legislation is no longer going to hide behind Roe v. Wade," she said.

"It's not clear to me that the big loss to women is the loss of a woman justice, it's the loss of a moderate voice to resist the authority," Schlanger said.

If the SGA and ISC approve her as a choice, she will be sent to Blunt's office to be chosen.

"What it boils down to is, are my fellow students satisfied or not?" Curtis said.

At the UM-St. Louis Faculty Senate meeting, Chancellor Thomas George said, "She is doing an outstanding job, and any student you will talk to who has gone to a meeting or anyone will vouch for her skills as being a member of the Board of Curators."

The Faculty Senate unanimously voted to support a resolution for the continued appointment of Maria Curtis for the full two-year term as stated in Missouri statutes.

According to D'Andre Braddix, the SGA is waiting to pass a resolution regarding Curtis's position.

Braddix would like to see the results of the Faculty Senate's resolution. In addition, SGA is waiting for more information to become available concerning Blunt's recent decision.

sions.

SGA Vice President Tanzeena Hossain, junior, psychology, represented the SGA at the Associated Students of the University of Missouri's Student Showcase in Jefferson City last Wednesday.

"There were some people who hadn't heard about the situation yet," Hossain said.

She felt that Curtis's situation was a topic of interest at the event.

"Many legislators stopped by to find the UM-St. Louis representatives to ask about their concerns about student curators," she said.

"It's pretty interesting to see how big of an impact it was making on the Capitol," Hossain said.

Curtis feels her position is still "up in the air."

"It's a very difficult situation for me to be in," she said. "With a position of this magnitude, you have to be able to plan for it; you have to know well in advance to be able to fulfill your responsibilities."

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Our Opinion

Vashon program benefits students, UMSL

For the past two weeks, 65 Vashon High School students have been attending classes on our campus. This new program is designed to help alleviate overcrowding at Vashon while giving the students an opportunity to earn college credit.

Across St. Louis and the nation, high schools have partnerships with universities allowing students to get a head start. The program between UMSL and Vashon takes the idea one step further by physically bringing the students to a college campus.

By earning college credit before heading off to the institution of their choice, students gain a better understanding of the college environment and their academic preferences.

This pioneering program brings to light new ideas about where high school should end and college should begin.

Many students have completed the entire required high school curriculum before they even reach the last semes-

ter of their senior year, thus having time to take classes for college credit. Most of us can relate to taking college-credit courses offered through our high schools, or we recall wasted time senior year taking unnecessary classes because we had to attend school full-time.

The new Vashon/UM-St. Louis program helps streamline the transition from high school to college by giving seniors full access to a college campus. Not only are they exposed to courses, but they also quickly learn about the real "college life."

High school students inevitably benefit from the exposure to numerous extracurricular activities and an environment different than the one to which they are accustomed.

For some, the experience can help reaffirm their desire to pursue a higher education degree. For those coming into the program unsure about life after high school, this program could give them the confidence needed to

make the decision to attend a university. Visiting college on a regular basis can eliminate the anxiety associated with "taking the plunge" and beginning the application process.

Through this program, Vashon students have the benefit of attending biweekly discussions with specialized UM-St. Louis representatives. These representatives discuss everything from admissions to student life.

Instead of competing with hundreds of other students in their high school to speak to a guidance counselor, the help students need is much more accessible. By providing these resources, UM-St. Louis develops a strong relationship with Vashon and other area high schools, paving the way for easier recruitment.

We believe this program benefits everyone involved and should be watched closely by both administrations. Both should foster this potential so it becomes the norm instead of the exception.

Staff Viewpoint

Nothing "super" about the Super Bowl



BENJAMIN ISRAEL
Columnist

I won't be watching the Super Bowl. Football is a game based on inflicting pain and injury on the opposing players, and I want no part of it.

I grew up following just about every sport there was, and if I find myself in front of a television set with a football game on, I find it riveting. Then I remember what is really going on and leave.

In a backhanded way, I have to thank Jack "The Assassin" Tatum for opening my eyes.

On Aug. 12, 1978, Tatum was a defensive back for the Oakland Raiders playing in an exhibition game against the New England Patriots. After the football bounced off the tips of Patriot receiver Darryl Stingley's fingers and the play was dead, Tatum slammed into Stingley fracturing two cervical vertebrae and damaging Stingley's spinal cord enough that he has been paralyzed from his neck down since.

Tatum, whose nickname was "The Assassin," was proud of what he did. In his autobiography, he wrote that teammates and fellow defensive backs—George Atkinson

and Skip "Dr. Death" Thomas—contributed to a kind of an office pool every week. Whoever knocked an opposing receiver out cold first got to collect.

After the tragedy, I heard Stingley's father talking on the radio. The elder Stingley said that his son's fate was the inevitable result of the way football had evolved. He said coaches encouraged their players to inflict pain on their opponents even at the junior high school level.

At the time, I had a friend whose kid brother played ninth-grade football. So asked him about it. He said that his coach told him to hit his opponents hard enough so that they

would think twice before coming near him again.

Years later, I was working as a clerk in a hospital emergency room. A high-school football coach was there observing as part of his training for his Emergency Medical Technician certificate. It was a slow night and he told me some football stories. In one, his team was playing for the conference championship. The opponent's star running back was running on a gimp ankle, so the coach told his defenders to stomp on it if they got the chance.

Tatum was not the only football player to tout the brutality of the game. Baltimore Colts lineman Bubba Smith titled his memoir "Kill, Bubba, Kill." Smith told this story about his teammate, quarterback Johnny Unitas.

"A guy broke through the line, hit him, pushed his head to ground. He called the same play, let the guy come thru and broke his nose with the football. I said 'That's my hero.'"

That's not heroic. That's the kind of behavior that creates a nasty, brutish society. We should not be cheering that kind of behavior.

Letter to the Editor

Reader asks Blunt not to sell MOHELA

Governor Blunt, I'd like to thank you for your push to increase funding. Thank you also for proposing \$400 million in additional education-related funding. But I ask that you not sell MOHELA to pursue this goal.

I disagree with your statement that students would enjoy the same or lower interest rates without MOHELA. MOHELA raises funds through tax-free bond issues, which cost less to service than corporate bonds. These savings must be passed on to the students because the U.S. Tax Code restricts MOHELA's spread to 2 percentage points. If MOHELA pays 4 percent, the most

it can charge students is 6 percent. I know of nothing in the Tax Code that restricts the spread of for-profit lenders.

MOHELA has several times offered partial loan forgiveness to borrowers, including \$550 to Pell Grant recipients in July 2005, \$500 to teachers in August 2003, and \$575 to military personnel in April 2003. The for-profit lenders do not offer such assistance. MOHELA is effective in assisting Missouri graduates with paying off debts, establishing good credit, and putting money to a more economically productive use than debt servicing.

Finally, please do not sell

MOHELA to Sallie Mae, should that lender enter the picture. Sallie Mae, stock symbol SLM, is the behemoth of student lending. SLM has been brought to answer for hidden fees, interest rates up to 28 percent, aggressive collection practices, and under-the-table attempts to purchase student loan authorities in Pennsylvania and Florida. Moreover, SLM operates call centers overseas, while MOHELA's 300 staff work in Chesterfield, Mo. To replace MOHELA with SLM or a for-profit lender would be a great disservice to Missouri students.

Jeremy Loscheider, graduate student, economics

Editor Viewpoints

Ballots akin to boogeymen

I'm pro-life, anti-death penalty, pro-environment, unsure about the war, emotionally supportive of the troops, mostly undereducated but still concerned about social security, Catholic, anti-censorship and terrified by my civic responsibility on Election Day.

Simply put, politics scare me.

I'm not talking about the kind of fear that occasionally wakes me up at night and, despite the fact that I'm an adult, instills a tiny seed of possibility that something sinister could be lurking under my bed.

I don't watch politics through my fingers like I do during horror movies.

Government doesn't have the same effect on me as oversized, multi-legged arachnids prowling in dusty corners of the closet.

Politics frighten me because they're much more important (and realistic) than the irrational fears I can talk myself out of. Moreover, I'm intimidated because while I know I do care, I'm not sure what exactly I care about in terms of party values.

I like to chew on issues, to roll them around my mouth and learn every groove and flavor. In my quest to find the perfect party, I've engaged in endless discussion with my very conservative parents, very liberal grandparents and friends with varying viewpoints. This confused me more than anything, since I always want to identify with the people I love without blindly conforming.

I could continue to dodge party affiliation until the next election, but I don't want to end up like I did in 2004. The ballot stared up at me, Bush and Kerry chads begging me to poke them out. I had managed to remain indecisive until that moment and felt so torn that I basically closed my eyes and stabbed at the paper, leaving my vote up to gravity and chance. I felt a bit ashamed later, like my vote had been wasted. That day I made it my personal mission to take a stance before the next election.

Recently, I took the "World's



KATE DROLEF
Managing Editor

Smallest Political Quiz (www.self-gov.org/quiz.html) hoping to determine my official stance. Eight questions later, it labeled me as a 'centrist.' Immensely helpful. A longer test with more detailed issue questions (www.okcupid.com/politics) rated me as a socially-moderate, economically-liberal Democrat.

A few more web quizzes seemed to reaffirm these results, confirming my status as a moderate liberal standing just a smidgen on the left side of the fence I've been straddling for so long.

I'm not sure I trust it though.

College is a breeding ground for trendy liberalism, which often accompanies my fear of politics. This highly contagious syndrome strikes numerous campuses, and UM-St. Louis hasn't escaped. Trendy liberalism usually afflicts young students who don't quite understand politics. Symptoms include an ignorant dedication to ripping apart conservatives without sufficient research or logic because it's the latest fad. I experience an overwhelming urge to throw heavy objects and pull out my hair when people claim a party without actually understanding its fundamental ideals.

Since the day I turned 18, I've worried about becoming one of these trendy liberals—someone who wears anti-Bush apparel like it's the new little black dress. If I despise the president, I want to have piles of research backing up my bitterness, not a crowd of the popular kids.

I stray between wanting to fit a category and spurning conformity. Keeping track of and responding to legislative action is just as important voting. Whether you're a staunch party supporter or wandering Democrat/Republican like myself, keep an eye on the capitol.

Jumping off the political fence is daunting, especially when social winds whip around us. I'm still scared of falling the wrong way, but I'll take the plunge before I let gravity and chance shove me off again.

Lab open late? Procrastinate!



PAUL HACKBARTH
News Editor

Attention procrastinators: did you know the UM-St. Louis campus used to have a 24-hour computer lab? Neither did I, until I received a survey at the SGA meeting on Friday about whether I would like a 24-hour computer lab available once again on campus.

If I had known such a place existed, I would not have rushed through my essay about the philosophical views of Confucius discussing whether or not to test lipstick on fetal pigs.

Okay, so I admit I never wrote an essay on that topic, but previous experiences with waiting until the last minute to write essays or reports for class have proven that I cannot write them at computer labs at the University after midnight.

A 24-hour computer lab would benefit students who do their best work at night. During the wee hour of 3 a.m., I have finished some of my best work for classes.

Students could use the computer lab in 227 SSB for every hour of the day last Spring semester. The lab has now cut back to normal hours comparable to the other computer lab hours.

The Student Senate is asking students if reopening the lab for a full 24 hours would be worth it. The

Student Senate started discussing this issue after *The Current* received several letters to the editor concerning longer library user hours. Extended hours may be beneficial to certain students, as would a 24-hour computer lab.

A computer lab open from midnight to midnight would be an advantage to those students who spend most of the daytime working. Since more

and more nontraditional students enroll at UM-St. Louis each semester, students commonly spend their days at work and nights in the library. Those who take night classes often find themselves listening to lectures as late as 10 p.m.

Currently, certain computer lab hours leave students with rigid schedules, little time to do research or use computer applications only available on campus.

The majority of other area colleges generally have traditional daytime lab hours. I only found one local university, (Southern Illinois University- Edwardsville) with a 24-hour computer lab. Two other universities, Washington University and Missouri State University, have 24-hour computer labs, but only in the residential halls.

see LAB HOURS, page 5

LETTERS

MAIL

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St. Louis, MO 63121

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314-516-6811

E-MAIL

current@jinx.umsln.edu

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

Under Current

by Adam Wiseman
Photo Director

If you had a radio show,
what would it be about?



Courtney DeSutter
Junior, Nursing

I would find tons of local artists from the area and give them the opportunity to be heard. I am a huge supporter of local rock music.



Mesha Foote
Junior, Marketing

I would try to make it as diverse as possible by playing soft rock, R&B, jazz and even country, to educate people that music comes in many different forms that can be appreciated.



Sara Smith
Senior, Biology

My show would be about environmental conservation.



Robert Engert
Junior, Criminology

I would play all oldies music with Billy Joel playing four songs at 4 o'clock.

Science Column

Where have all the snowflakes gone?



Groundhog Day is Feb. 2. According to the saying, if it is a sunny day and the groundhog emerges to see his shadow, we get six more weeks of winter. But if we get six more weeks of this winter, we will hardly notice.

Last summer and fall, there were predictions of a very cold and snowy winter. When energy prices spiked up, especially after Hurricane Katrina, many were bracing for both weather and financial onslaughts. But the winter has been remarkably mild in the U.S.

Except for a few cold snaps, temperatures have been averaging lows that resemble the usual highs, about 15 to 20 degrees above normal in many cases. It was not just here in the Midwest but in many other places across the country. While people enjoyed the break from expected extremely high heating bills, winter sports venues suffered business losses from lack of snow and cold. Northern locations that expect frozen lakes, or relish winter sports, had to cope with water that stayed liquid. Farmers and gardeners also had concerns about the impact of mild weather and lack of snowfall on crops and plants. Where did our cold winter go? Maybe it went to Moscow.

Well, not exactly. But while we have had a mild winter, Moscow has been gripped by a deep freeze, even by their standards, which has claimed several lives. In Moscow, a city that knows well how to cope with a winter deep freeze, it now has reached a winter weather related death toll of 18, as of Jan. 20. Moscow is enduring the coldest temperatures in 26 years. Last week, 1,200 people south of the city were left without heat after a heating pipe burst while outside temperatures dropped to 4 degrees Fahrenheit. Across Siberia, the death toll from the coldest winter in a decade has reached 119.

A recent prediction said that



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Letters From London

Quest for homestyle munchies leads to tasty discoveries



LAURA AYERS
London Correspondent

I have lived here for over two weeks now. The beginning glow that came from simply breathing London air has officially worn off. However, I do, on occasion, look about and think, "cool."

That may seem an inadequate phrase for a small town girl living in one of the biggest cities in the world. At times, though, it seems so unreal that a girl from Lake of the Ozarks is living in London. Does life get any cooler?

I mentioned earlier that the building in which I live is over 100 years old. Luckily, I do not live that far up; I am only on the second floor. With 16 flats arranged on five stories, housing three to four students in each, the place is literally crawling with American students.

Let me explain the typical London housing building before I go on. Tall and narrow buildings, only one or two flats fit on each floor. When I walk down a London street, I see these buildings pressed together as if the architects needed an enormous vice to get them to all fit.

No side alleys exist in these areas, and most times, it is impossible to find the seam between buildings. They were all obviously built at different times, as a red brick building stuffed in between two white brick buildings is nothing out of the ordinary.

I lived in the Villa dorms for one

year at UM-St. Louis. As normal for our University, I had a room to myself and shared a bathroom, just like so many other people. Actually sharing a bedroom with another person has been a bit of a shock to me. It is ... interesting ... to say the least. Thankfully we all share similar interests and have nearly the same living style. I have looked in other flats and seen weekend pizza boxes strewn about, so I am grateful for my flatmates.

The flat is clean and we really have nothing to complain about. We have wireless Internet and a computer in the living room for those who did not bring a laptop. We also have a television with six channels so that we can watch "British Celebrity Big Brother." I want to point out that since Dennis Rodman is on this show, the words 'British' and 'Celebrity' must be taken very loosely. I recently saw a Member of Parliament (MP) get evicted from the house, and I must say he went quite cheerfully, if not eagerly.

My first real adventure in the London life experience was of course, my trip to the local grocery store. Sainsbury's is a block down from the flat and is one of the major grocery

chains in London. I had been given full warning about the food over here, but no amount of warning could fully prepare me for the absence of my favorite foods. Namely my favorite snack foods. I think this is why so many people lose weight while studying abroad; the absence of their favorite snacks keeps them from snacking.

I have suffered and pined. No more Cheez-Its or Fruit Roll Ups. My flatmate, Jen, seems determined to sample every brand of cookie this side of the Thames River. I plan to join her in the search for a satisfactory snack food. So far, our quest for a satisfactory snack has led us to figured out the English names of Doritos. Tangy Cheese=Nacho Cheese and Cool Original=Cool Ranch. Chilli Heatwave remains a mystery.

Today I survived a new escapade. Before I came to London, I paid to do laundry. Still, the washer and dryer always sat in the same building often just across the hall. Today, for the first time, I had to cart my dirty clothes down the block to a "laundrette." My mental capacity at the time I packed for this trip prevented me from bringing a laundry bag, so I stuffed my pos-

sessions back into my suitcase and rolled it down the block, carrying my detergent in a grocery sack. Dressed in my grunge wear, I proceeded to translate the pictures on the front of the washing machine. After spilling detergent over myself completely, I figured out the machine and sat down on a bench with a book from class. Apparently the laundry gods took pity on me and my feelings of foreignness and proceeded to play both Nelly and Usher on the radio the small Indian woman manager was listening to.

In both St. Louis, and London laundry is expensive.

Being a poor college student intent on spending her money in a better establishment than a laundrette, I only semi-dried my clothes. I had the joy of lugging home a suitcase full of semi-wet clothes, which of course weighed much more than before.

Using the lines strung up by my flatmates, I draped my socks, undershirts, shirts and pants for all to see.

As I am typing I hope that my socks will dry in time so that tomorrow I can wear them. Wet socks or dry I will venture out once again to experience this city.

Laura Ayers is a junior history major who is studying in London for the Winter Semester. Her "Letters from London" column recount her experiences studying abroad.

LAB HOURS, from page 4

For most students living in the dorms, University labs may be the only access to a computer and the Internet. A 24-hour computer lab would benefit those students living on campus, since most have no other options available at midnight in

UM-St. Louis' surrounding neighborhoods.

One reservation about having a 24-hour computer lab includes hiring staff to work during late hours. While an extended lab schedule might place a burden on assistants

who have to work through the night, they can also benefit from getting paid for burning that midnight oil. I imagine that, given the chance, students would jump at the chance to make a few extra dollars in a safe location.

The benefits do outweigh the drawbacks of having a 24-hour computer lab on campus. After all, if the lab does extend its hours to after 3 a.m., it will give me a chance to come up with some better ideas for my next column.

What's your opinion?

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REVIEW

Class seeks submissions for next Litmag

BY MELISSA McCRARY
Features Editor

Students have the chance to present their creative writing and art talents by getting their work published and recognized within the community through Litmag, the annual literary publication at UM-St. Louis.

Litmag combines photography, drawings, poetry, prose works, fiction and non-fiction short stories to make a collective published magazine.

Solange Deschates, senior English and former editor of Litmag, said that more political discussions and debates were held at past Litmag meetings, and this semester the organization is becoming more solid and getting involved with organizing poetry readings.

Scott McKelvie, English lecturer,

is the current adviser for the Litmag II organization.

"The magazine is coordinated by the editing Litmag course taught by Professor John Dalton and the Litmag II organization," McKelvie said. "Everything is worked out between the two groups and by organization within the class."

Over the past couple years, the editing Litmag course was taught by Nanora Sweet, associate English professor, but this semester's course is being instructed by Dalton.

The Litmag organization has been in existence since 1984, but stopped publishing in 2000 and was not revived until Sweet helped re-establish the organization in 2004.

Although the organization has not held its first staff meeting this semester, the editing Litmag class is already making preparations for their upcom-

ing publication in April.

"This year we're building on the success of last year's Litmag. Once again we'll publish the best creative writing from the UMSL campus, but we also want to produce a better looking Litmag," Dalton said.

"It's the Litmag organization that deals with the complexities of getting funding and making a name for ourselves within the university and among the many campus organizations. The Litmag class does the actual hands-on work of producing the magazine," Dalton said.

Peggy Sue McCloskey, sophomore English, is serving as the SGA representative for Litmag and is also enrolled in the editing course.

McCloskey said this is her first semester working with Litmag. This year, it plans to do some things differently, and some things that were not

always done in the past.

"We are going to make a banner to promote Litmag, which will hang in the Millennium Student Center. We are also going to go to classes to encourage students to submit, post different fliers on campus and think of new innovative ways to publish," McCloskey said.

"In the past, much of Litmag's funding went towards the launch ceremony and the celebration lunch, but this year we want to put more funding in the production of the actual magazine."

McCloskey said that students can pick up a copy of submission guidelines and drop off their submissions in the green box, marked Litmag, outside of the English Department on the fourth floor of Lucas Hall, or students can email their works to her at psm2m5@umsl.edu. The deadline

for submissions is Wednesday, Feb. 15.

The editing Litmag course will start the editing process throughout the next month, while works are being submitted. After students edit every piece of work, they will then select which pieces will be in the final copy. All authors will be contacted and informed whether or not their works will be in the publication.

The objectives for the last part of the class include editing and meeting with each author, copy and proofreading and submitting the final copy to the press journal. The final magazine is expected to come out on April 17, and will be inserted in *The Current* as an additional literary supplement.

McCloskey said that Litmag is a great opportunity for students to get involved in and to show off all of their hard work.

Student jobs from hell

The top five worst jobs students can have

BY NAKENYA SHUMATE
Staff Writer

Unless you are the heir to a magnificent Greek shipping company or you are related to a hotel conglomerate, then you have most likely had a crummy part-time job. Whether you have worked one in the past, are currently working one or if your future has the impending doom of obtaining a part-time job, watch out for these Top 5 Worst Part-Time Jobs.

5. Retail. Any job that requires you to smile politely while responding to the often heinous requests of consumers gets this vote. Most common culprits are grocery, clothing and department stores.

4. Working for family. Older family members can pressure the next generation to work for them using family worth and honor as guilt-laden bait. Working for family usually means meager earnings and a new disrespect for the family business. The most common culprits are working in the family's restaurant and on the farm.

3. Work at home/mystery shopper/inventory specialist. Working from the comforts of your sofa or loveseat has an appeal, especially to couch potatoes. Yet assembling anything in an environment other than a factory assembly line is asking for trouble. Folding papers and stuffing them into envelopes can yield many paper cuts.

"I worked for RGIS as an inventory specialist and it was horrible," LaToya Williams said. "They said you could pick any job you wanted but your supervisor would call every week and pressure you into taking more than what you wanted. Eventually I quit when they had us inventory Sears."

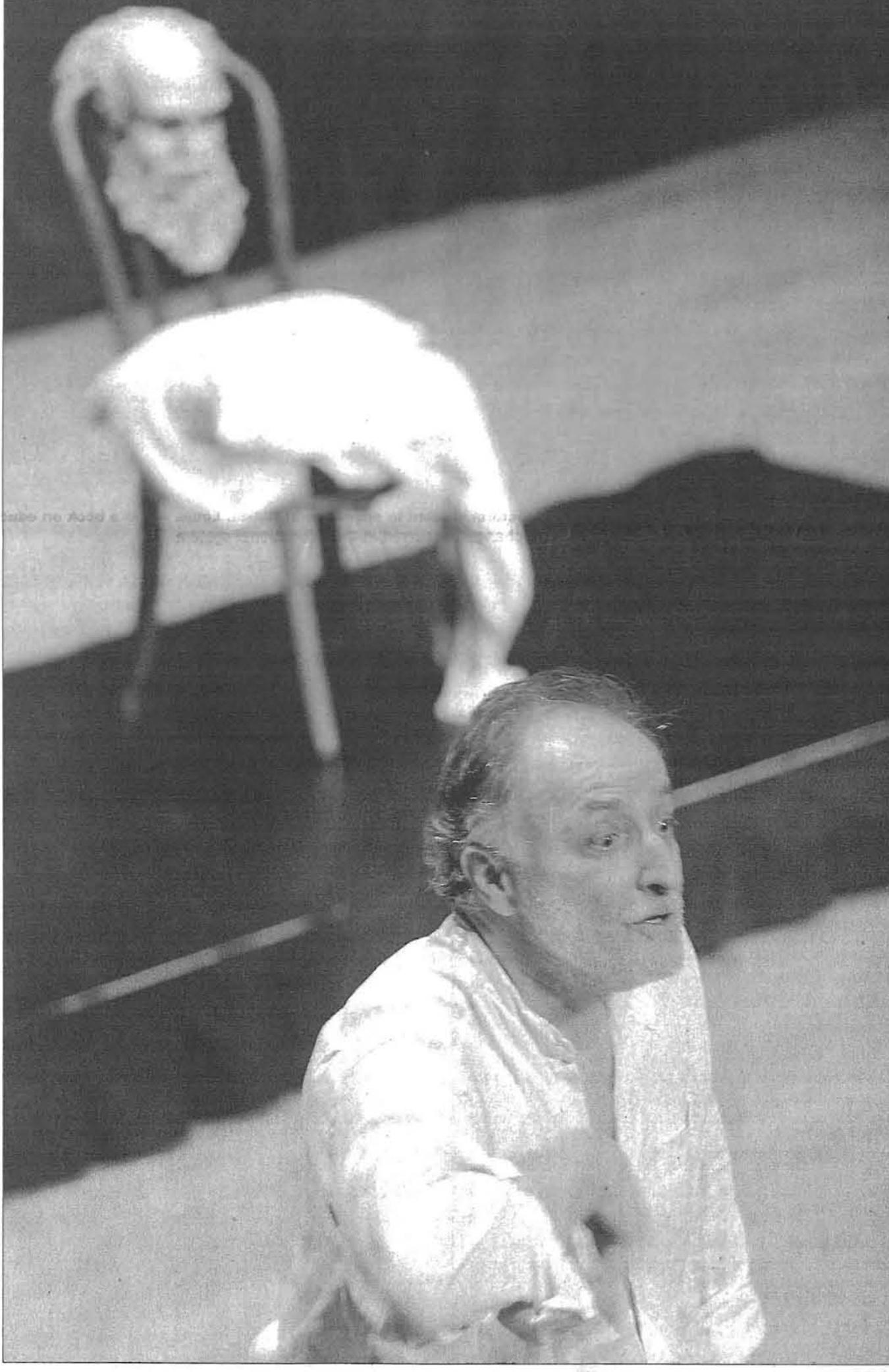
"They said the job would take five hours, it actually took eight and I had to leave at a certain time," Williams said. "They got mad if you left before the store was finished. Also, Sears stayed closed for the first two or three hours, then they opened while we were still there and we had customers asking us questions and pulling things off the shelves as we were counting."

2. Restaurant/foodservice. There is little gratitude found in the foodservice industry. The standing all day, bad tips and greasy floors all make for a bad job experience. Yet the biggest complaint is surprisingly not tips, but overcrowding. It is having too many tables and dealing with customers who are grumpy from waiting for a table and therefore do not tip well ... or at all.

1. Telemarketing. The number one most agreed upon worst part-time job is telemarketing. The bad scripts, horrible product or the knowledge that you could not be inspired to purchase the product with an assault rifle aimed at your head all make sales and telephone solicitation horrible. The pay is dependent on meeting the goal and there are often no benefits or training.

Alas, these jobs are not all bad. After all, there are worst jobs out there, right? Who knows, your very next interview could be for a porta-potty sanitation manager or a road kill removal specialist.

Going Greek at the PAC



Kevin Ottley/ *The Current*

The infamous philosopher Socrates vigorously addresses the Athenian jury in defense of his actions while on trial. Actor Yannis Simonides performed an incredible rendition of the Greek philosopher in his one man performance "The Apology of Socrates," which took place in the Lee Theatre last week.

NBS at UMSL ties students to media professionals

BY MELISSA McCRARY
Features Editor

The National Broadcasting Society at UM-St. Louis is an organization that connects and unites students with professionals from around the world who are involved in the field of media studies.

Jim Wilson, executive director of the NBS organization at the national office, said that NBS was originally founded at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo., in 1941.

"The organization functions on

1943 at a conference and shared their interests in establishing a broadcasting and multimedia society," Wilson said. "We are two organizations in one: NBS that is open to all students studying media and Alpha Epsilon Rho, the National Honor Society for students pursuing a degree in electronic media."

Wilson said that the organization originally started as just an honor society, but split into two groups, NBS-AERho in the early 1990s.

"The organization functions on three levels-national, regional and local. With the national level, stu-

Contact the UMSL National Broadcasting Society at 516-5496

dents have the option to attend a national convention. The regional level is divided into six regions with individual regional conferences and then the local levels are made of chapters with members from over 80 colleges around the country," Wilson said.

Guest speakers within the media

field attend both the national and regional conventions. The conventions also give a career opportunity for students to meet in small groups and take part in discussion sessions with professionals. Students who attend the conventions can network with other students and members.

"The conventions provide supplement learning activities that wouldn't normally be found in classrooms and speakers that wouldn't be found on local campuses," Wilson said. "This year there will be 17 to 18 panels with a broad range of topics like radio, television, web design

and advertising.

The national convention is set to take place in Washington, D.C. from March 15 to March 19. The regional convention will be in late October in Madison, Wis. and the final regional conference will be next March, in Chicago."

Wilson said that there are currently over 1,500 students within the local chapters, but there have been over 46,000 members since the organization was created.

EDITOR

MELISSA McCRARY

Features Editor

phone: 516-5174
fax: 516-6811

the week's best bets

Job Search

Strategies Workshop

Worried about getting a job? Unsure how to find a dream career? Most job openings are unadvertised. Career Services will discuss networking, Internet resources and other search techniques on Jan. 31 from 2 to 3 p.m. Workshop held in 278 MSC. Call 516-5111 for more info.

Trivia Night

Enter the competition, held Feb. 2 in the South Campus Provincial House from 7:30 to 10 p.m. Maximum 10 people per team. Open to students, faculty, staff and friends. Lots of prizes and refreshments. Register by Jan. 31 at 203 Mark Twain or call 516-5326. Sponsored by Rec Sports.

Ph.D. student promotes education in her new book

BY MELISSA McCRARY
Features Editor

As a Ph.D. student at UM-St. Louis, a school teacher, a mentor, a tutor, a youth program coordinator, a founder and CEO of a non-profit education outreach organization and a motivational speaker, Carletta Washington has many lifelong accomplishments, including becoming a recently published author.

After Washington received a bachelor's degree in secondary education with an emphasis English from UM-St. Louis in 1994 and a master's degree in education in 1997, she began to pursue a career teaching not only children, but also the community.

Washington has been teaching within the Ferguson-Florissant School District for 12 years. In addition to being a wife and a mother of a teenager, she is in the process of receiving her doctorate in education with an emphasis in educational leadership.

Washington said her time spent at UM-St. Louis has prepared her for all of her endeavors.

"My time at UMSL has been wonderful," she said. "The undergraduate communications courses have helped me because writing does involve communication and all of the education classes that I have taken have helped me to get a better and broader perspective in education. All of my professors helped me to understand that once you get an education, it is your job to go out and make a difference and persevere."

As an undergraduate student, she was involved in numerous African American student organizations on campus. She was a former leader and member in the Associated Black Collegians, African American Leadership Council and Helping Hands Mentoring Program. She said that being involved on campus gave her the chance to learn more about the school, make connections and friendships with others and organize various school programs and events.

Because of her passion and her

dedication to teaching, Washington established Education 4 All Incorporated, a non-profit organization, in 2002. The mission of this organization is to "inspire students, parents, educators and communities to begin working together for a better tomorrow." Their vision is "academic excellence for the entire educational community."

Education 4 All was created to provide an outlet for everyone to voice their concerns with education, to provide information and resources to the community through radio and television, to assist in academic development and to encourage community involvement.

Approximately 40,000 people have visited her organization's Web site at www.educationforall.com. People can contact her, read different forums and find out information about the organization by visiting this Web site.

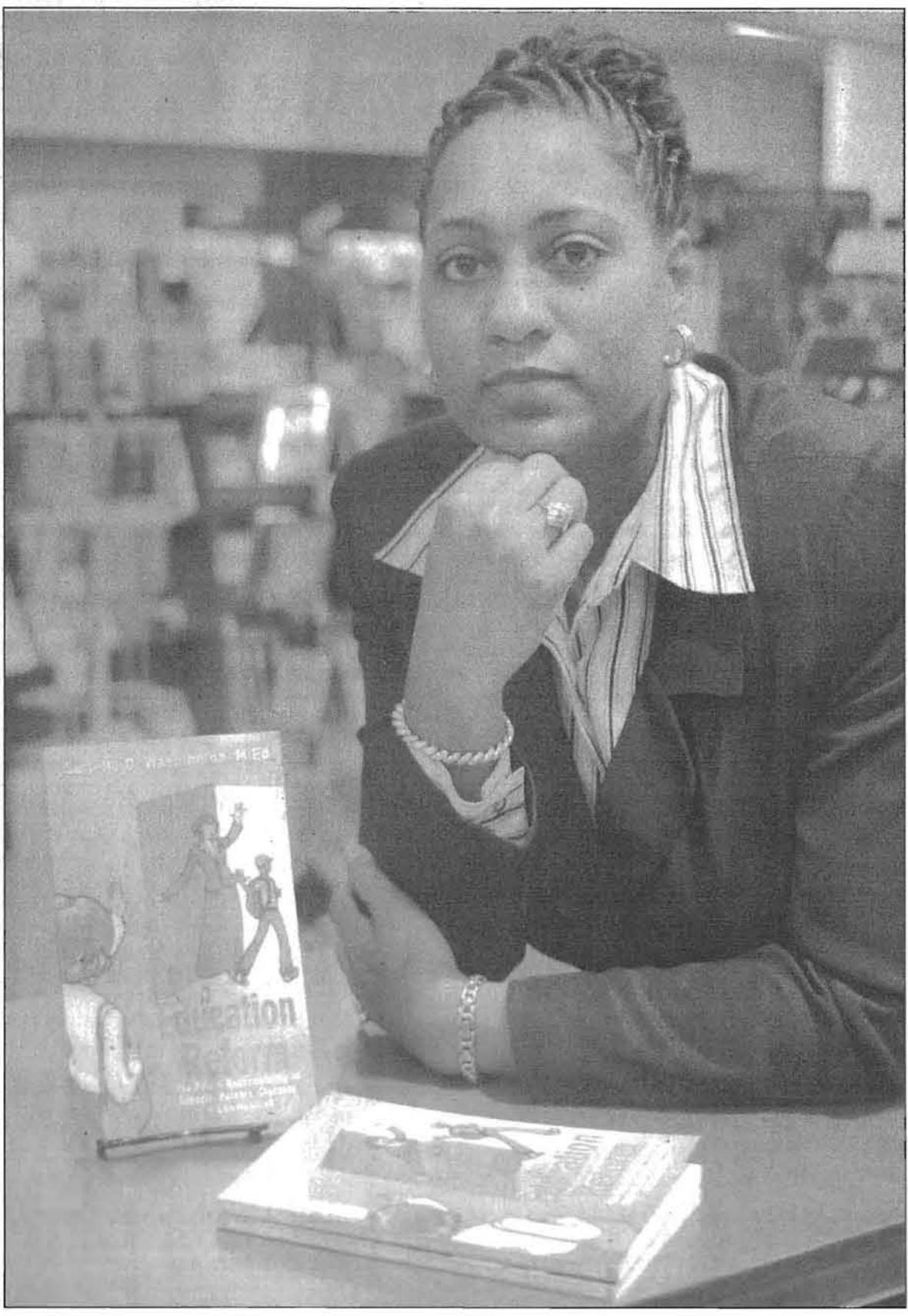
Besides establishing this organization, Washington is an educational columnist for the Spanish Lake Word Newspaper. To continue to get her voice heard, Washington recently published her book "Education Reform: The Role and Responsibility of Schools, Parents, Students and Communities" on Jan. 13, 2005.

Washington said she decided to write a book about education because there have been many changes within the educational system.

"I have seen so many different groups pointing fingers at each other and blaming others for education problems," she said. "I want people to realize that everybody has to work together in order to improve the quality of education. This book is designed to appeal to all groups of each individual level," she said.

Some of the various topics in her book include: schools responsibilities and roles, academic development and planning, building a relationship with teachers, respecting authority, receiving the highest quality of education, community voting and sponsoring school events and activities.

see BOOK, page 12



Adam D. Wiseman/The Current

Carletta Washington, doctoral student in education at UM-St. Louis, wrote a book on education reform after numerous changes occurred in the educational system.

Overseas campuses reflect global awareness

BY PATRICIA LEE
Features Associate Editor

Hundreds of miles away from St. Louis, many students are following the UM-St. Louis curriculum on the way to baccalaureate degrees—without leaving their homes in the Middle East. This is possible through partnerships UM-St. Louis has with two universities in Oman and Kuwait.

For the past decade, the University has been working closely with the Modern College of Business and Science in Oman and more recently with the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in Kuwait.

UM-St. Louis' partnership with Oman began in 1996 when its founding president approached his doctoral dissertation professor, Joel Glassman, the director of the Center for International Studies, for support and assistance with the upstart college.

Mike Costello, international coordinator, said it was natural for them to approach a university like UM-St. Louis instead of one of the more prestigious universities such as Harvard or Stanford.

"They [Harvard and Stanford] are so well endowed it's hard for them to remember when they had no classrooms no students and no resources," Costello said. "Whereas at UMSL, a 45-year-old institution, it has institutional memory of its beginning and how one goes about getting started, how one does it with meager resources when it's competing with other institutions for those resources."

Based on its success with the Modern College of Business and Science, GUST, which was founded in 2002, approached UM-St. Louis for administrative support.

In Oman and Kuwait, education is regulated by the government and while there are established national universities, Costello said that these universities only educate about 2 percent of the population, while another 2 percent study in international universities.

"At some point and time ... postsecondary education is going to be required in a global world," Costello said. "These universities are looking to serve the other 90 percent and looking to grow."

These universities often follow one of the four major western modes of education—the U.S., Central European, English or Australian models.

"They ask us to help monitor and evaluate the way their programs are comparable to ours as a validation to their governmental authority that they are doing it in a proper way," Costello said.

At these universities, the curriculum is similar to UM-St. Louis' and all the classes are taught in English. While those universities do not offer as many areas of study and consist mainly of general education courses, their students have the option of transferring to UM-St. Louis to complete their education or take more specialized classes unavailable in Oman or Kuwait.

Likewise, UM-St. Louis faculty can teach classes in Kuwait or Oman under a faculty exchange program and UM-St. Louis students can take classes there that would count towards their UM-St. Louis degree.

Thomas McPhail, professor of media studies and fellow at the Center for International Studies, traveled to Kuwait in October as an accreditation consultant. He is working with GUST on advising them on the university's goal of international accreditation. He said that the partnerships with overseas universities served a mutual benefit.

"It's very important to us because it enriches our classroom to have foreign students there," McPhail said. "It's a better environment because many of our students are from St. Louis and have not traveled extensively so this expands their global perspective."

"Secondly, their education is in English and the more we can educate people outside the U.S., the better they can understand us," McPhail said.

"The more integrated UMSL is into the globe, the more globally aware our campus community will be. If you're going out into the world and competing and participating in the global arena, this is necessary," Costello said.

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Ice-T shares his mistakes and lessons at PAC show

BY MYRON MCNEILL
Staff Writer

On Jan. 21, a much anticipated night at the Touhill Performing Arts Center began. Ice-T graced the stage in memorable fashion. Speaking in front of a packed house, Ice-T delved into topics ranging from sex, marriage, relationships and language to street life, politics, entertainment, race relations and corporate America.

Ice-T, whose real name is Tracy Morrow, is a musician, rock star, rapper, poet, philosopher, former street hustler, former Army Airborne ranger, ex-gang member, movie star, father and actor. Therefore, those who were in attendance were treated to a lengthy exposition of some of his philosophies and a multi-textured conversation that touched on a plethora of topics.



Ice-T

With 47 movies (some minor and major parts), 13 music albums (rap and rock), and 24 television appearances under his belt, Ice-T was well-equipped to speak about the entertainment industry.

His previous lifestyle as a former gang member, pimp and drug dealer gives him the keen ability to discuss mistakes made in life.

Fatherhood, the experience of marriage and the ability to change his lifestyle from a life of crime to lawful employment gives him the ability to discuss transition and everyday life circumstances. This transition is what he would call going from "street to square." He also feels transition is "one of his greatest accomplishments."

His multi-faceted entertainment career and his many life experiences lead him to believe "all of his fans know him for different reasons." This is why he was able to keep the attention of the audience. After two hours of speaking, he answered questions from long lines on both sides of the center aisle.

People are fond of Ice-T and his likability is consistent throughout his art, conversation and lifestyle. He informed the audience and made them feel appreciated. Although some of his conversation pricked the audience and some people seemed at times to be uncomfortable with his hardcore virile approach, his words were to be taken in with love because he ultimately believes "hardcore cats like love." It was evident that he came to spread this love.

David Alan Grier: Live & "In Living Color"

BY JASON WENDETON

Staff Writer

Have you seen David Alan Grier's ass? If you can honestly answer "yes" then you probably attended his Jan. 20 stand-up show at the Touhill Performing Arts Center.

Grier, who is best remembered as a cast member of the early 1990s urban comedy show "In Living Color," began his hour-long set by discussing his age. And then we got to see a good portion of his backside. Now I admit, I did not have the best seat in the house (try all the way in the back, second balcony) but from my vantage point it did not look too shabby. Despite complaining of old age (David has joined the over-50 crowd), Grier put on a funny and highly energetic show.

Prior to attending the show, I honestly did not know much about Grier. Other than his work on "In Living Color" and a few film roles like "Jumangi" I had not seen much of him. Grier's biography, however, is

more impressive than one might think.

Besides being a comedian, Grier spent several of his early years as a ... Shakespearian actor! Turns out he attended the prestigious Yale School of Drama and was even nominated for a Tony Award.

Grier's material ran the usual stand-up gambit: sex, drugs, family, and the war on terror. While I found Grier funny, I was a bit disappointed in that he did not really offer anything really unique.

It was slightly amusing to hear him discuss his drug use as a youth but as the set wore on, I think Grier over did it. Overall, however, I had a good time and laughed a lot during his set.

Not all was well in the Touhill, however. Opening for Grier was the much younger comedian, Kjell Bjorgen (I am not making it up ... that is his name).

The relatively new comedian has a much less impressive resume (basically he was in the movie "Teaching Mrs. Tingle," remember that one? I did not think so). Bjorgen's juvenile and over-

ly simplistic humor left me yawning and checking my watch.

A short man, Bjorgen spent half of his set complaining about his size and lack of personal achievement. This coming from a guy who is opening for David Alan Grier?

I admit I did laugh during his bit about working at a restaurant (and getting stiffed when it came to tips). But I could not help but wonder as he complained: maybe people did not tip him because his abilities as a waiter equaled his abilities as a comedian?

Most of the audience politely chuckled but, like me, probably wondered when the heck Grier was coming on.

This was the first time I had seen live comedy at the Touhill Performing Arts Center and from a purely technical standpoint, I was impressed. The acoustics that work so well for concerts really helped bring a level of intimacy to the show I was not expecting. Speaking as someone who was not front row, center, I discovered there are few "bad seats" at the Touhill.

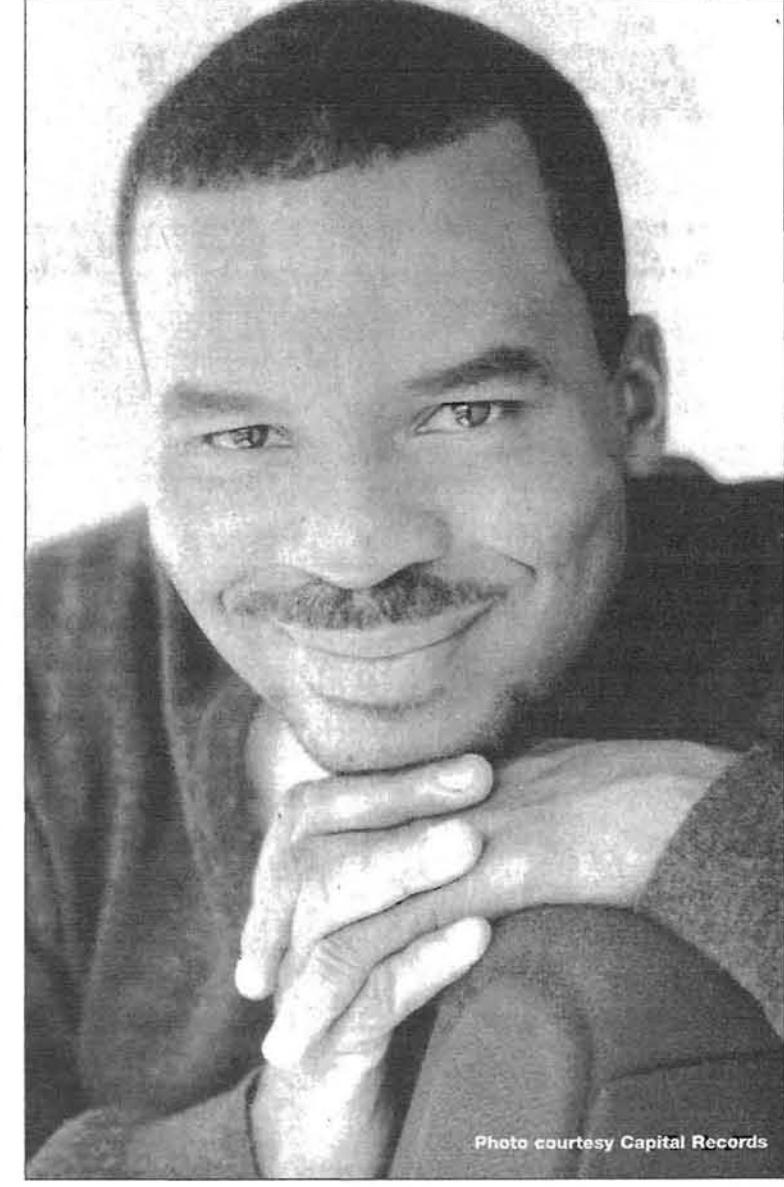


Photo courtesy Capital Records

Top Albums of 2005



In 2005, the music world threw far too many curve balls for fans to handle. Perhaps it was the fact that music magazines like "Rolling Stone" and "Spin" peppered readers with guarantees of some of the greatest music since 1969. Or maybe it was all of the hype on Green Day's "American Idiot," which promised a revolutionary rock opera which, by definition, failed with flying colors. Or perchance it was the suffocating political

atmosphere in 2005 that forced music fans to acknowledge the destruction and reconstruction in Iraq. Anyone from bands to pop singers made it a point to publicly take sides on issues such as who should be president or whether America has the right to act as world police.

However, amidst the chaotic world of press and politics were a precious few that stuck to their guns.

Okay, so it is an annual ritual. But top-of-the-year lists

are also the perfect time to get acquainted with the tastes of the music critics in publications you frequent. So, this one loved that Britney disc? You can love 'em, hate 'em, agree, disagree or even laugh. This one snubbed your favorite Franz Ferdinand disc? Forget them.

We unleashed our music critics so they could recount their favorite albums of 2005. Here's what they came up with:

BY ALBERTO PATINO
Music Critic

5) M.I.A. "Arular" (XL/Beggars)

Maya Arulmoooyakasha ... however you say her last name ... she is brilliant! A Sri Lankan political refugee who fled to London, M.I.A. has a photojournalist's eye and a cosmopolitan hip-hop junkie's heart. She tastefully fuses together elements of disparate dance music like UK grime, garage, reggae, and Brazilian baile funk, and mashes them into a fun electro-hodgepodge that is something all her own.

4) Mercury Radio Theatre "The Blue Eyed Model"

Jazz proficient, melodically perfect instrumental surf/math/punk rock accompanying a witty little illustrated horror story. On record, this Philly trio channels the energy of the Bad Brains, the catchiness of early Dead Milkmen, and the subtle complexities of Braid. Seeing them live will blast your armpit hair clear off. Be warned, this CD is that good. And depilatory.

3) Half Handled Cloud "Thy Is A Word and Feet Need Lamps"

John Ringhofer, the criminally underappreciated slide-trombone guy from Sufjan Stevens' mini orchestra, shines on his third full-length. "Thy Is A Word" is a delightfully insane montage of Elephant 6-esque psychedelic preschool songs, making good use of guitar, banjo, marimba, cello, found sounds, and sampled house appliances (!).

2) Abner Trio "Distant Thunder of the Sacred Force"

Jazz master Charles Mingus once said that true creativity is not found in overwrought complexity.

"What's hard is to be as simple as Bach," quoted the bassist. "Making the simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity." Considering this musing, I could not possibly describe Abner Trio's premier CD better.

This is Power Pop at its absolute finest, reminiscent of all the sweet and meaty qualities that made bands like Weezer and Queens of the Stone Age once so great.

1) Sufjan Stevens "Illinois"

Stevens is a true American folk gem, and one angel of a songwriter. He approaches storytelling like a little boy holding a dying mouse: cautious, curious, and with a lot of hopeful naïveté. The voice he narratively sings with is soothing and tender, proffering something far removed from the jaded elite, the ones who have given up hope. Conversely, his music is incredibly ambitious, mature and complete, rich with song craft erudition well beyond his age. Simply put, this is a gorgeous and emotive collection of stories with Illinois as the dramatic and historic background, set to piano, banjo, xylophone, keyboards, drums, epic choruses, and lush string arrangements. If there is a flaw in this record, I cannot find one for the life of me. As long as people like Sufjan are considerate enough to continue making heartfelt music of this caliber, the mouse in the boy's hands will live, if for a little bit longer.

BY MABEL SUEN
Nightlife Editor

5) Lojic, "The Manual"

St. Louis' Lojic has put together an excellent follow-up to their self-titled independent album.

"The Manual" is 12 tracks of rock riffs, hip-hop rhymes and reggae grooves fused together in an original style vaguely reminiscent of 311.

Produced with the help of Steve Ewing of The Urge, the album contains flowing guitar lines and thumping bass held together by the active pulse of drumming and accentuated with harmonious vocals, spine-chilling screams and added turntable effects.

4) Jack Johnson, "In Between Dreams"

Hawaiian native singer-songwriter Jack Johnson seemingly encapsulates the paradise of his hometown in his third album, a soundtrack to summer and sun. As a filmmaker and former professional surfer, his experiences shine through in his softly strummed acoustic guitar chords and sweetness saturated voice.

Accompanied by light percussion and bass harmonies, "In Between Dreams" is a peacefully pretty album that appeals to the senses in the most pleasant of ways.

3) Gym Class Heroes, "The Papercut Chronicles"

Creating a new breed of hip-hop that puts much of what is popular nowadays to shame, the four-piece ensemble from New York utilizes reality as its weapon of choice — real music with real instruments and messages. Witty pop culture references and intelligent ideas blow audiences' minds and force them to think twice.

Whether through humorous accounts such as ex-girlfriends in "The Makeout Club," or dramatic, personal storytelling like the tragic events depicted in "Faces in the Hall," all the catchy and cleverly engineered lyrical concoctions of front man "Schleprok" lead a skillful collaboration that triumphs man over machine's programmed beats.

2) Queens of the Stone Age, "Lullabies to Paralyze"

Listening to QOTSA's latest album is like driving a beat up car in a demolition derby. The experience is rough, brutal and exhilarating all at the same time. With a slightly altered lineup, the hard rock group's fourth album "Lullabies to Paralyze" is built tough.

Driven by the thick sounds of cryptic guitar riffs, the darkly keyed songs bleed together beautifully including "In My Head" and "Little Sister."

1) Foo Fighters, "In Your Honor"

Over this past summer, the highly renowned rock group put together its fifth album to mark a decade-long culmination since their founding by front man Dave Grohl. "In Your Honor" was created as a double disc set showcasing two very different sides of the group.

The first disc, containing perhaps some of the hardest rocking songs in their repertoire, includes chart topping hits "Best of You" and "DOA." The second takes a turn to their softer side with acoustic guitar and guest artists such as Norah Jones on ballads like "Virginia Moon." One of the most intriguing songs, "Friend of a Friend," is a solo acoustic track about his first impressions of his former Nirvana bandmates.

BY ZACH MEYER
Music Critic

5) Wolf Parade, "Apologies To The Queen Mary"

Wolf Parade shares plenty of similarities to the indie-rock group Modest Mouse. For instance, both bands have rolling, unfocused songs filled with angst/emotional-ridden riffs and lyrics, both bands rely heavily on crashing drums, and "Apologies To The Queen Mary" was produced by Isaac Brock, front man to Modest Mouse. However, "Apologies" is one step ahead of Modest Mouse in the mainstream world with more accessible tunes that are almost possible to hum to. Just entering the spotlight, watch for more from this band.

4) The Rolling Stones, "A Bigger Bang"

Sure, The Rolling Stones can not write songs nearly as fast as The Beatles could, but they do put on one hell of a better live show, just ask Mick Jagger. Tracks like "Rough Justice" and "Look What The Cat Dragged In" prove that even the old timers can still put out rowdy rock 'n' roll albums.

3) The White Stripes, "Get Behind Me Satan"

The highly anticipated fifth album by the White Stripes was not the heavy rock 'n' roll album that was expected. Instead, it turned out to be a piano and marimba based recording more similar to The Jackson Five than Black Sabbath, with the exception of their first single, "Blue Orchid." Although "Get Behind Me Satan" does not quite live up to "Elephant," it does add an interesting and extraordinarily fun album to the band's discography.

2) Beck, "Guero"

Hailed as the sequel to the immensely popular "Odelay," Beck gathered icons such as Jack White, The Dust Brothers and Money Mark from The Beastie Boys to record his eighth album, and coincidentally his highest charting album to date. Although "Guero" is simply a white-man romp in the Spanish music world, it proved to be an endearing, if not an addicting pop album.

1) Kings of Leon, "Aha Shake Heartbreak"

The follow-up to their debut album "Youth and Young Manhood," the three brothers Caleb, Jared and Nathan Followill, along with their cousin Matthew Followill, returned to the studio to record one of the most pure, honest, and intelligent rock 'n' roll albums of all time. Tracks such as "Soft" and "The Bucket" define rock 'n' roll's simplicity while incorporating themes such as drunken erectile dysfunction and fighting for the sake of boredom. Although it did not quite get the radio play or press coverage that it deserved, "Aha Shake Heartbreak" is one of the best albums in rock 'n' roll since The Beatles' "Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band."

BY ADAM WISEMAN
Photo Director

5) Billy Corgan, "The Future Embrace"

When the whiny drone of Billy Corgan's voice comes through the music, you realize that he has done it again. Whether it is Smashing Pumpkins, Zwan, or Solo, Billy Corgan has mastered his art. His new album stretches your mind into a new dimension. The track "Now(And Then)" sends stellar sounds through your head and Corgan's voice gives you a sense of comfort. Another track that makes this one of the top albums of 2005 is "DIA."

4) Sufjan Stevens "Illinois"

With a soothing voice and harmonic sounds, Sufjan Stevens has made a masterpiece that any music lover will enjoy. The melodies intertwine with his melancholic voice to put you in a dream-like state. Stevens makes sure that his listeners are entertained. His album is telling a story of a world that he has created, and through music he transports you there. The oddities begin with intricate track names. Track number eight is called "Out of Egypt, into the Great Laugh of Mankind, and I Shake the Dirt from my Sandals as I Run." This album is a strange journey through the dark recesses of Stevens' mind.

3) Common "Be"

After 13 years on the scene, Common has broken through with a hip-hop masterpiece. When listening to "Be," the music seems to flow like gold through your body. With so many hip-hop artists trying to get rich with a lame catch phrase, Common gives you a refreshing light at the end of the tunnel. "Love Is" is a smooth song with a beat that makes you need to hear it again and again. Common is from Chicago, and the track "Chi City" lets you into his reality.

2) Coldplay "X&Y"

Right before our eyes, Coldplay has become one of the world's most popular bands. Following in the footsteps of U2, they are selling out huge venues and millions of records worldwide. This year's album is no different. Coldplay had something to prove after their last album, "A Rush Of Blood To The Head".

The album has great listening power, and the track "Fix You" is a perfect reason to buy this album. With "X&Y," Coldplay has hit legendary status.

1) Nine Inch Nails, "With Teeth"

After six years in self-exile, Trent Reznor returns with his best album to date. Trent has shed the gothic attire, and the grueling lyrics that littered "The Downward Spiral," and has replaced it with an image of hope. In fact, Trent Reznor has been sober for four years, and this album obviously had his full attention. Radio stations have already been playing "The Hand That Feeds," a rock song with lyrics aimed at protesting the politics of today. The latest single "Only," has a bass line that gets you moving, and lyrics that reminiscent of early 80s synth rock.

A Season of Sizzling Cinema

BY CATE MARQUIS
Film Critic

Did you know there is a good movie season?

No matter what your taste in movies - entertainment, special effects, action, drama, history, family fare or comedy - the broadest selection of good films and often the best movies of the year appear on movie screens in December and January, or at least here in the Midwest (also known as the 'Big Flyover' on the East and West Coasts). A whole lot of good movies came out while the campus was on winter holiday break. The chance that you can find a really good film

to suit your tastes - and a variety of tastes - has gone way up. Now is the time to go to the movies because this will not last long.

Many of the best movies of last year are still in movie theaters. Excellent films, which opened in New York or Los Angeles at the end of 2005 to qualify for Oscars, are opening here now. If you are a movie fan, you probably spent some time during the semester break at the movies anyway but now is the time to see more movies - quickly - before they vanish and are replaced by movies that are less entertaining, less imaginative, less beautiful, less funny, less moving. In short, less worth your money.

Here are quick reviews of recommended movies in theaters now:

New in Theaters

The Matador - A terrific dark comedy about an assassin who loses his nerve. Full of plot twists and terrific comic banter between buddies Greg Kinnear, a nice guy befriended by Pierce Brosnan's anti-James Bond. Kinnear and Brosnan are just great together, and the film's candy colored art director adds its own comic touch. Worth watching if only for the scene where Brosnan strolls through a hotel lobby wearing only a Speedo and cowboy boots. Just plain entertaining, it boasts a great script and great performances but packs more depth than you would think. Another one that would have made the best of the year list if it had opened here sooner.

The New World - Terrence Malick's new visual masterpiece of the founding of Jamestown is a lyrically beautiful meditation on the clash of cultures, contrasts of the natural world and man's civilization, natural man and society. Stars Colin Farrell as Captain Smith, in a fine performance, but all the talk is about Q'Orianka Kilcher, who was 14 years old when the film was made. Her character is referred to as "The Princess," and the name Pocahontas is never used. Malick takes a topic that has been overdone, and turns it into a fresh and astonishing film that, while languid, works beautifully on all levels. Another one that would have made the best of the year list had opened sooner.

Match Point - An excellent mys-

tery/thriller that is Woody Allen's best film in years but is not a typical Woody Allen film. For one thing, it is a mystery without the comedy and is set in London, not New York. Even if you do not like Woody Allen's films, this one will grip you. A chilling tale about a tennis pro, played well by Jonathon Rhys-Meyers, trying to move beyond his poor background into the upper levels of society but distracted by American blond bombshell Scarlet Johansson. Less like "Annie Hall" and more like "The Talented Mr. Ripley" and even Allen's "Crimes and Misdemeanors."

Still Playing

Casanova - Not what you expect at all but a delightfully comic romantic farce in the style of "Shakespeare In Love," with good dose of "Three Musketeers." Rather than a tiresome litany of the lover's conquests, it is the great lover's comeuppance. "Casanova" is a fun and funny battle of the sexes that borrows from the romantic comedy side of "Merchant of Venice" (minus Shylock). Filled with colorful costumes and comedy, the great lover, played by Heath Ledger, has the tables turned on him when he falls in love. Worth it alone for a great comic supporting part by Oliver Platt. Pure swashbuckling, and romantic comedy fun.

Munich - The impulse behind the film is admirable although it may have tried to do too many things at

once. As a piece of cinema, it is still one of Spielberg's better films but it has stirred controversy. Steven Spielberg's multilayered film is about the Israeli squad of unofficial hit men who assassinated the Palestinian terrorists who planned the attack on the Israeli Olympic athletes in Munich. The film is part reminder of the tragic event, part action film for Jewish heroes, part meditation on the price that violence extracts from the soul and part examination of the cycle of revenge killings and a plea for peace. The action is thrilling and the intention worthy and sincere but some of Spielberg's historical speculations and his perhaps questionable source material have raised some controversy.

The Squid and the Whale - Those who prefer the low-key realism of indie films to the too pat or too theatrical average Hollywood family drama have embraced this small dramatic film. It is a semi-autobiographical tale about a middle-income, intellectual New York family that is falling apart. This type of film has been attempted often but seldom achieved in recent years, but this attempt is aided by subtle, highly polished acting. An art house favorite.

King Kong - Peter Jackson found the perfect follow-up to his Lord of the Rings trilogy with an exciting and eye-popping remake of King Kong. Like many others, I did not see much reason for a Kong remake but this film changed my mind. Surprisingly,

Ziyi Zhang stars in "Memoirs of a Geisha" directed by Rob Marshall. "Memoirs" follows the story of a young girl torn from her home in Japan and sent to work in a geisha house.

RIGHT: Robert (Mathieu Kassovitz) and Avner (Eric Bana) in a scene from "Munich" directed by Steven Spielberg. The film recounts the tragic story of Israeli hit men who assassinated terrorists planning to attack the Israeli team in the Munich Olympics.

the center of the story is the relationship between leading lady Naomi Watts and the giant ape, a kind of love story of sorts. It has the best special effects and best popcorn-munching entertainment of the season, even if it is a bit too scary for some younger film fans.

Chronicles of Narnia - More of a kid's film than the Lord of the Rings trilogy, this is the family-friendly pick film, fantasy film that is a colorful and heroic adaptation of C.S. Lewis' book. This very good, enjoyable film does not require you to be a fan of the book to follow along. It is highlighted by a marvelous performance by Tilda



ABOVE: Ziyi Zhang stars in "Memoirs of a Geisha" directed by Rob Marshall.

"Memoirs" follows the story of a young girl torn from her home in Japan and sent to work in a geisha house.

RIGHT: Robert (Mathieu Kassovitz) and Avner (Eric Bana) in a scene from "Munich" directed by Steven Spielberg. The film recounts the tragic story of Israeli hit men who assassinated terrorists planning to attack the Israeli team in the Munich Olympics.

Swinton as the evil White Witch. It handles the religious symbolism subtly, so it does not overpower the story. While it is less original and creative visually than the Lord of the Rings films, it is enjoyable anyway and suitable for younger viewers.

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire - The film versions of the Harry Potter books are still going strong and this is another good adaptation of the popular series. It is as good as or better than the last one, with yet another director but the same good cast. A best bet for pre-teens, teens or fans of the books.

Memoirs of a Geisha - It is pretty, has lush costumes and sets, a historical sweep and a great Asian cast. Fans of romance and costume dramas are more likely to enjoy the film version of the bestselling "Memoirs of a Geisha" than fans of the book because of a shift in focus. The film focuses much more on the romance and the intrigue aspects of the story and less on the historical insight, so it is a top pick for a romantic or date movie. A small drawback is the dialogue; while the film is in English, there are a few problems understanding the accents of the Asian cast, although they are all big stars and gifted actors.

Movie Review

Albert Brooks goes 'Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World'

BY CATE MARQUIS
Film Critic

In "Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World," writer/director/comedian Albert Brooks goes to Pakistan and India to look for what makes Muslims laugh.

Brooks plays a comedian named Albert Brooks who is down on his luck when he gets an unexpected call from a government commission formed to find out what makes people in the Muslim world laugh.

The head of the commission, Fred Dalton Thompson (the actor-turned-politician-turned-actor playing himself) tells Brooks that the President thinks that we might understand Muslims better if we can understand what makes them laugh. Thompson tells him there is no pay, although his expenses will be covered. However, after repeatedly emphasizing what a great service he would perform for his country, Thompson hints that Brooks might be up for a Medal of Freedom, which could do great things for his sagging career. Dazzled, Brooks agrees, even though he does have to submit a 500 page report on his findings.

"We'll assign someone to help you," Thompson reassures him. Brooks is assigned a pair of State Department assistants, Stuart (John Carroll Lynch) and Brody (Jon Tenney) and sets out for India and Pakistan to find comedy in the Muslim world.

Brooks finds himself in a cramped

office of a run-down New Delhi office building, sharing a floor with - what else - a call center. He starts out by interviewing a long list of applicants to find a secretary/research assistant. After talking to several unqualified candidates, he finds a qualified one, a woman in a Muslim head scarf, but then she pointedly asks if he is a Jew. Brooks stammers out "not right at this particular moment," before he thanks her for her time and rushes her out the door. Brooks finally finds a gem in an eager, intelligent young woman named Maya (Sheetal Sheth).

Brooks settles into his task of finding out what makes people here laugh, in one month's time. Of course, things go badly from the start, despite his resourceful, eager young assistant who speaks several languages and has extensive research experience. After interviewing people randomly on the street, he decides to give a comedy concert, which allows Brooks to revisit some of his early stand-up routines.

Albert Brooks is a smart funny man. He wrote, directed and stars in "Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World." Much of the dialog is clever and funny, many situations are as layered with satirical meaning and subtext humor as you could want, and the overall point about self-absorbed, clueless Americans is valid.

Likewise it makes great comments on the cultural context of humor and the kind of humor that crosses cultural lines, often slapstick and visual jokes, the kind found in silent films. The film



Albert Brooks plays a comedian looking for what makes people laugh during his trip to Pakistan and India with the help of Maya (Sheetal Sheth).

is full of satiric commentary and irony. I just wish it also had more laughs.

The film starts well and the first half has many comic gems but it loses steam midway and begins to meander. While the lead character remains clueless about what makes these people laugh, we never get beyond hints that they laugh at many of the same things we laugh at.

I was hoping we would get to see an

Indian or Pakistani comic or comedy bit. Even a trip to meet some budding Pakistani comics lets us down by never letting them do their comedy bits. A bit about inadvertently creating a misunderstanding between long-standing enemies India and Pakistan seems a bit tacked on. Despite the funny and clever first half, his comedy takes us only half way to the expectations that the title, and the preview, led me to expect.

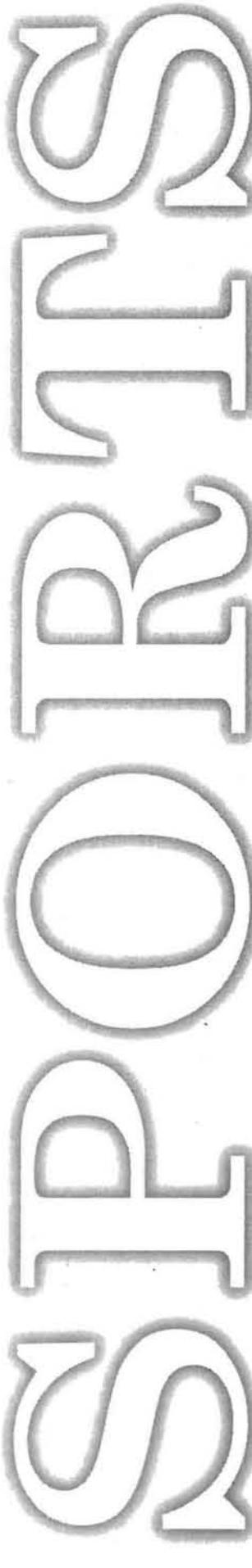
The character Brooks does not find comedy in the Muslim world, not because it is not there but because he does not know how to see it or where to look. This outcome works for the self-absorbed and egotistical character that director Albert Brooks plays but the filmmaker could have shown the audience some of the comedy that the central character misses. When he does his comedy concert, it bombs and

Brooks thinks it must be because they do not speak English. Even when he learns this is not the reason, he does not get it, although the filmmaker makes sure we understand that it was the cultural context that was missing. When he is a big hit with a group of Pakistani comics, he thinks he has crossed the cultural comedy divide, overlooking the role that all the hashish he and the Pakistanis were all smoking at the time might have played. However, a bit where Muslim news media Al-Jazeera approaches him about starring in a racist new comedy show they want to launch hits its point brilliantly.

"Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World" is an intelligent, biting satire, even if it flags a bit after setting its clueless hero down in the Muslim world. Sometimes, Brooks gets everything right and the audience laughs at the right spot.

But many of the film's comic situations are so layered, so subtle, and so complex that while they are clever when you reflect on them, they fail to have the comic timing they need to be funny right at the moment. Part of the problem is that while it is clever and subtle, he might over-think some of the comedy and lose that other essential element of comedy, timing, that is needed to be funny.

"Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World" cleverly and sardonically shows us how clueless Americans can be but it does not take the next step to give us some of that overlooked comedy in the Muslim world. It is still all about us.



UMSL point guard starts year off with a bang

LAGUAN FUSE
Staff Writer

Courtney Watts is a 5' 3" point guard playing in her sophomore season for the women's basketball team. She has played in every game this season and has started all except one. During her freshman season, Watts started her career at UM-St. Louis with a bang.

Watts started in 23 games in the 2004-05 season and saw playing time in all 27 games. In her freshman season, Watts led the Riverwomen with 31 three-pointers, 66 free-throws and 91 assists. Watts' stats made her name appear at the top of all-time leaders for freshmen. She is second in assists, third in three-pointers, tied for third in free-throws, tied for fifth in steals with 37 and is fifth in all-time freshman scorers with 253 points. Watts was also named a Great Lakes Valley Conference Academic All-Conference selection.

This season, Watts leads the Riverwomen with 50 assists and 31 steals. She is second in points with 205, second in free-throws with 80 and third in three-pointers with 13. Watts scored her career high 19 points against McKendree on Nov. 3. Her two free-throws at the end of the game

gave UM-St. Louis the win 68-66. Watts was also named Student Athlete of the Month for November.

Watts attributes her lifelong interest in basketball to the older brother, Casey.

"He was always playing basketball, he was always really good and I just wanted to be like him," Watts said. Watts does not have any pre-game superstitions like some players, because she said she is not a superstitious person. When asked about personal motivation for playing basketball, Watts said, "I always thank God for giving me the ability to play basketball. Everything I do, I just try to do it to glorify Him, because He is the only reason that I can play."

Watts said she feels that the team has improved since last year. Last year, the Riverwomen started the season losing eight of the first 10 games. This season, the Riverwomen won seven of the first 10 games.

"Everybody practiced over the summer and stepped up their game," said Watts. "I definitely see some improvement from last year and hopefully it will continue."

Watts, along with the other Riverwomen look for their 12th win this Thursday at St. Joseph's in a GLVC game.



File Photo: Mike Sherwin/The Current

Courtney Watts, point guard for the Riverwomen, leads the team in assists and steals this year. She is second in points and free throws and third in three pointers. Watts hopes to help lead the Riverwomen basketball team to its 12th win at St. Joseph's.

Pittsburgh

vs.

Seattle



Staff picks for Super Bowl XL

BY LAGUAN FUSE

Staff Writer

Why will the Seattle Seahawks win Super Bowl XL? That's simple; the Seahawks have become a better team. Seattle finished the season 13-3 and had home-field advantage throughout the playoffs. The Seahawks have finally shaken off the dust left from the implosion of the Kingdome in 2000 and are ready to win the big game.

Having the MVP Shaun Alexander healthy and ready to play will give the Seahawks the edge they need to fly past Pittsburgh's defense. During the NFC Conference Championship game, Alexander had 34 carries for 132 yards.

The Seahawks also have five starting players in the Pro Bowl and

two players who are injury replacements. The Steelers only have two starters and three injury replacements. All five of the Seahawks' Pro Bowl players are on offense.

Nine years ago, Mike Holmgren led the Green Bay Packers to a Super Bowl win. This Sunday, he will attempt to become the first coach in NFL history to win the Super Bowl with two different teams.

The Seahawks will have to put pressure on Ben Roethlisberger and not let him get into rhythm. Keeping Roethlisberger from being able to make a play will make the Steelers focus on keeping the ball on the ground. Jerome Bettis will be at home in Detroit, but the extra pressure may be too much for the veterans.

Look for the Seahawks to win Super Bowl XL.

Super Bowl XL Facts

Site: Ford Field - Detroit, Mich.

Date: Feb. 5, 2006

Game time: 6 p.m. EST

Halftime Entertainment:

Rolling Stones

Cost of the Vince Lombardi Trophy:

\$25,000

Cost of Super Bowl rings:

League pays for up to 150

rings at \$5,000 per ring.

League also pays for 150

pieces of jewelry for the

losing team.

TV/Radio coverage: ABC

will be televising its 7th

Super Bowl.

Super Bowl XXXIX TV audience: Last year's game was watched by

133.7 million viewers. The

10 most-watched pro-

grams in TV history are all

Super Bowls.

BY LINDSEY BARRINGER

Sports Editor

What will happen this Sunday in Detroit? Well, it will not be Seattle getting rings or new hats or shirts that say Super Bowl Champions. It will just be the team's first appearance in a Super Bowl and that will be the only thing the guys will be able to talk about after the Pittsburgh Steelers send them back to the West Coast.

Though the Seattle Seahawks lead the league in sacks and turnovers, they are still the underdogs going into Sunday's game. The talk is about their defense. Yes, it does consist of a high percentage of new players but what about the Steelers' unstoppable defense? Can they compare? No.

Pittsburgh posted a 14-5 overall record to make them the AFC champions. They dominated all three post-season games. In the AFC title game,

the only excitement in the game was in the last 15 minutes of the game. Denver scored which made it justifiable to watch the game.

Ben Roethlisberger has the ability to run the ball. Yes, the pressure will be on him Sunday but with veterans like Jerome Bettis and Hines Ward, the pressure will ease. Not to mention, Bettis will be at home and he wants nothing more to get the win in Detroit. Seattle might have a strong defense but Pittsburgh has proved to be unstoppable.

Sunday will be the sixth Super Bowl appearance for the Steelers. Bill Cowher will get the win for the Steelers. They will get their rings. Mike Holmgren will not be the first coach to win titles for two teams. He will only be the first coach to take the Seahawks to the Super Bowl. Then, he will just take them right back home.

Who is going to Rock Ford Field Stadium in Detroit, Mich. at the Super Bowl XL on Feb. 5? The Pittsburgh Steelers. They are going to Detroit to win the Super Bowl. They are the hardest playing team that I have seen this season. The Steelers met and lost against the New England Patriots last year but this year is different. They have shown what they can do when they played the Denver Broncos.

Who threw 275 yards in the Denver Broncos game? Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger. Who threw two touchdown passes to Jerome Bettis and Hines Ward that helped the Steelers win the game against the Denver Broncos? Roethlisberger. He is the second youngest quarterback in the NFL to start a Super Bowl. The Steelers have young talent and experience on their side. The Steelers came from a 7-5 record to a 14-5 season

end. The Steelers have won seven straight games in a row and the Super Bowl will make their eighth. The Steelers are the first team to knock off the first, second and third seed playoff teams in a conference to make their way to the Super Bowl. They have ended the season with a great finish and now they have the chance at the Super Bowl.

This Super Bowl game might be Jerome Bettis' last game. This could be his last chance to win his first Super Bowl and he is also playing in his home town Detroit. Could there be a better time? It is also time for Head Coach Bill Cowher to win a Super Bowl. Ten years have passed since his last Super Bowl victory. The Steelers have a lot to play for.

Ford Field is going to be filled with Pittsburgh Steelers fans from everywhere. The Steelers fans are dedicated and loyal fans. They will be wearing their black and gold as another victory goes under their belt.

Results

Men's Basketball

The Rivermen fell to Drury University on Saturday 74-68 but added two wins last week bringing their overall record to 12-7 and 5-6 in the GLVC.

Against Drury, Troy Slaten led UM-St. Louis with 21 points including four three pointers. Jonathan Griffin and Joey Paul each scored ten points for the Rivermen.

On Monday at home against Robert Morris, the Rivermen took the lead in the first half scoring 49 points. Griffin posted 29 points in 28 minutes of play. UMSL won 97-85.

UMSL also added another win on Thursday against Rockhurst 77-69. Griffin contributed 20 points and Slaten contributed 17.

The Rivermen play this Thursday against St. Joseph's then Saturday at Indianapolis.

Women's Basketball

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BY ADAM WISEMAN

Photo Director

Give the ball to Shaun Alexander.

The game plan for the Seahawks needs to be "by the legs of the NFL's offensive MVP". Offenses win games, but defenses win championships? This year's Super Bowl will be different than past years, mainly because the Patriots will not be in it, but also because the NFC is going to bring home the trophy.

The Seahawks play the leagues best West Coast offense and this is the game the Seahawks have been waiting for.

Seattle has been an underdog since the franchise hit the scene in 1976, and that fact is what will win them their first championship. Matt Hasselbeck is not the greatest quarterback, but he deserves it. Shaun Alexander has been waiting and he deserves it. Defenses don't win championships, Shaun Alexander wins championships. Shaun Alexander is the MVP of the Super Bowl. Seattle has been waiting, and they deserve it. Matt Hasselbeck has been waiting, and he deserves it. Shaun Alexander has been waiting and he deserves it. Defenses don't win championships, Shaun Alexander wins championships. Shaun Alexander is the MVP of the Super Bowl. 27, Steelers-10.

not ready for the big win, and he has plenty of things to improve. The Seahawks defense is going to blitz, and put Ben on the run. With the speed of the Seahawks' defense, I predict four turnovers made by Ben.

Also, let's not forget the last time Jerome Bettis carried the ball in a dome. Oh yes, he fumbled the ball on the one-yard line and almost cost the game for his team. He is an outdoor runner, and will have trouble all game long. But, let's go back to the man of the hour. The most underrated player in the history of the NFL and the player that rolled out 132 yards against a very good Carolina defense just a week ago.

Shaun Alexander will be the MVP of the Super Bowl. Seattle has been waiting, and they deserve it. Matt Hasselbeck has been waiting, and he deserves it. Shaun Alexander has been waiting and he deserves it. Defenses don't win championships, Shaun Alexander wins championships. Shaun Alexander is the MVP of the Super Bowl. 27, Steelers-10.

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BY KIMYATTA JARRETT

Staff Writer

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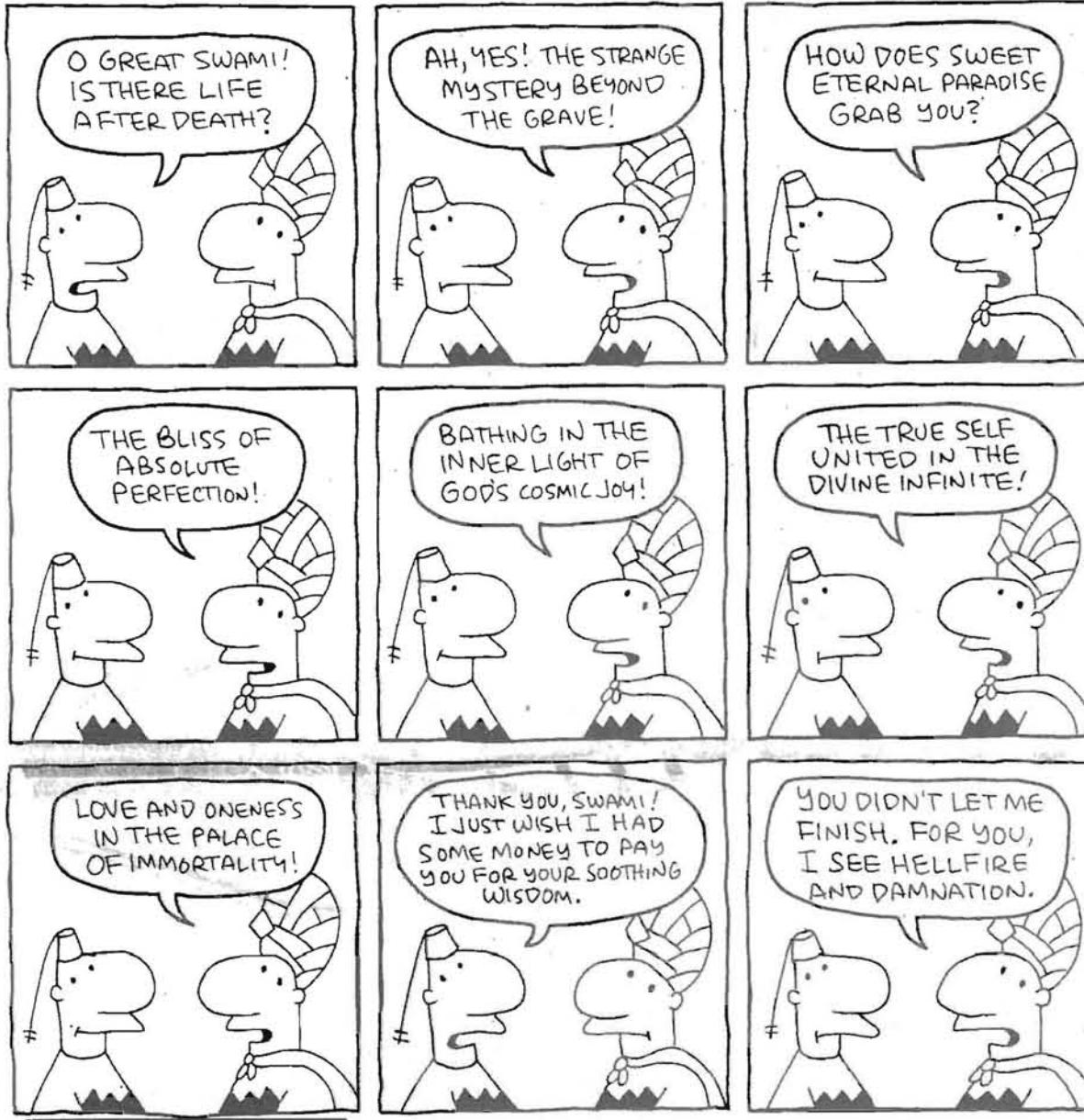
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NUTN BUT THE FUNK

"Single-Serving Friend"**LIFE IN HELL****Salome's Stars**

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) The week continues to encourage the forming of new personal relationships and the shoring up of those that might be weakening. New contacts also dominate the workday world.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) While the bold Bovine might want to move quickly to deal with sudden plan changes, it might be best to wait until you can come up with some solid facts behind the unexpected turn of events.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) It's a good week to consider how you'll move on matters both personal and professional. In either case, the more you know about them, the more likely it is that you'll make the right decisions.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Although you might find more colleagues ready to support your plans, some of them could ask for changes you don't approve of. Be ready to defend your position if necessary.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) This is a good time for Leos and Leonas to think about opportunities that might be outside your usual interests. You could be surprised to find something well worth your consideration.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) You can turn a troublesome workplace issue to your advantage by prompting that Virgo penchant for precision to take over where all else has failed. An old friend makes contact.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) A friend's unexpected work-related news could be a wake-up call to get you to reassess your position. See if you need to make changes to strengthen your position at this time.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) You might want to review a decision to work alone on a project. You might see it as efficient and prudent, but some might see it as unnecessary secretiveness, even for a Scorpio.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Don't be put off by a lukewarm response to a recent effort. Perhaps you didn't present a strong enough argument. Rebuild your case with more facts, and try again. Good luck.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) A surprise development in the early part of the week could be linked to an ongoing situation. Before you decide to take further action, consider calling for a group discussion.

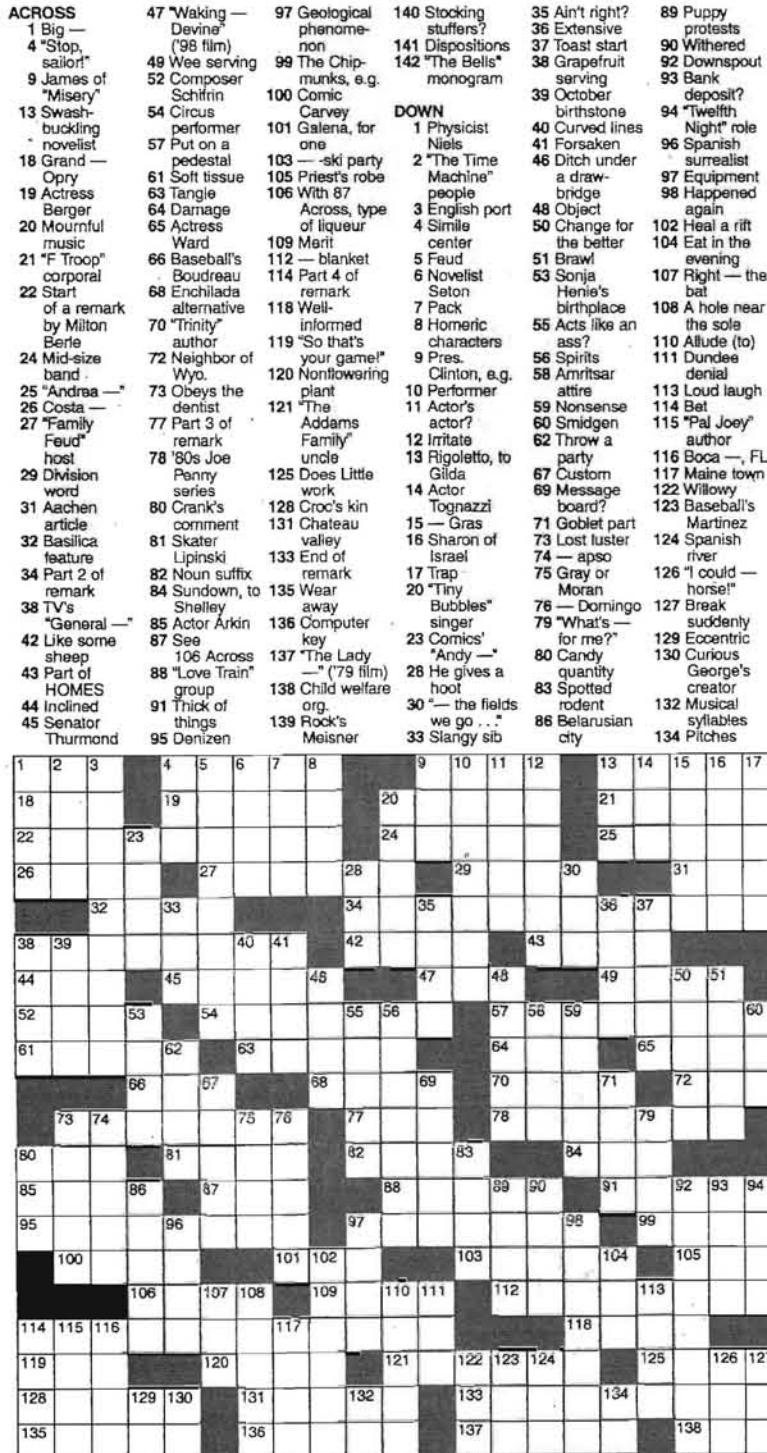
AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Your sensitive side helps you work through an emotionally difficult situation with a minimum of bruised feelings all around. A welcome change bows in by the week's end.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) While the week still favors new pursuits, some things from the past also make a claim for your attention. The weekend is open for good times with some of the people closest to you.

BORN THIS WEEK: You have a wonderful gift for seeing the best in people.

Super Crossword

SOUNDS TOUGH!



BOOK, from page 7

Washington said she believes that education reform benefits everyone.

"Education reform efforts need not be monumental. Small efforts that extend from great intentions, lots of collaboration, shared leadership, empowerment, professional leadership, personal evaluation and reflective dialogue can yield amazing results," Washington said.

Washington said that it took her about four months to complete her book.

"I plan to write other books in the future. All of them will focus on education," she said. "I would like to try and write another book by December 2006."

Chuck Fazzaro, associate professor of education leadership and policy studies, is one of Washington's instructors this semester. He said Washington has been doing extremely well in the pursuit of her doctorate degree.

"She has accomplished a lot in such a short amount of time," Fazzaro said. "I am always delighted when students do major writing accomplishments and get their writings published."

Washington's book "Education Reform: The Role and Responsibility of Schools, Parents, Students, and Communities," can be purchased at the University Bookstore in the MSC, is available online or can be found at Knowing Books and Café at the Jamestown Mall in Florissant.

LEFT: Kimberly McCoy, coordinator of special events for University Relations and Cindy Vantine, manager of University Relations, try out the eats at La Cantina Loca earlier this month. La Cantina Loca opened in the Pilot House, on the first floor of the MSC.

ABOVE: Roni Rutledge, cook at La Cantina Loca, waits for his next customer's order last Tuesday.

Livin' La Cantina Loca at UMSL

BY NAKENYA SHUMATE

Staff Writer

The new kid on the block is La Cantina Loca. No, it is not a new dance craze or Latino band. It is the new fresh-mex food venue that has arrived at UM-St. Louis. Festooned with sombreros, bright colors and an upbeat staff, La Cantina Loca offers a friendly restaurant type atmosphere for both students and faculty.

According to Carla Cassulo, food service director for Chartwells, the idea for La Cantina Loca began when the Student Government Association approached Chartwells and together they developed the new venue. Students chose the name La Cantina Loca, which is Spanish for "the crazy bar."

Richard Harris, freshman, pre-law, said he has eaten at La Cantina Loca six times.

"It's more personable and there is a good atmosphere. It is something different," Harris said. "Comparable to Qdoba."

Roni Rutledge, an employee at La Cantina Loca, said, "It's exotic; a dif-

ferent taste for your taste buds."

One hundred and seventy nine students and faculty members tickled their taste buds when they attended the grand opening on Tuesday, Jan. 24, where they experienced the music of a live Mariachi band, giveaways and samples of the cuisine.

"This is different," Amber Crumbley, a visiting student from Gateway College of Evangelism, said as she entered the Pilot House.

"The menu is simple and basic which is good because it's quick to read and understandable," she said. After trying a chicken burrito she said

it was, "Very filling, stuffed from top to bottom [and] you could taste all the ingredients." She is looking forward to coming back. "It's fun to come to another school and see what it's like," she said.

The prices are comparable to those in The Nosh. Students can use Visa or MasterCard with a new \$3 minimum purchase instead of the previous \$5 minimum. Students can also use cash or the Chartwells debit system with their student ID, which earns a percentage of additional money based on the amount deposited. For more information on the

Chartwells debit system and nutrition and health tips, visit www.dineoncampus.com/umsl/

"Check out your school. There is so much more variety here," said Crumbley.

If you are still on the fence, Ricky Thompson, an employee at "the crazy bar," said, "Just come down here and try it."

La Cantina Loca is located in the Pilot House on the first floor of MSC, down the hallway from The Nosh. Its hours of operations are Monday through Friday from 10:30 a.m until 2:30 p.m.

NBS, from page 6

According to the organization's web site, the NBS's mission is to aid in the transition from college student to electronic media professional through advanced media education programs, promotion of excellence, opportunities for ethical and responsible leadership, assistance in career development and job search skills, exposure to the electronic media industries and providing opportunities and encouragement to participate in community service activities.

Out of the local chapters from around the world, the chapter at UM-

St. Louis is in the process of being regenerated by the organization's president Cadence Rippeto.

Rippeto said that NBS gives students the opportunity to go to conventions where students from all over the world can get together and discuss what their chapters are doing and learn more from each other. NBS also offers scholarships and grants for students involved with the organization and the media profession.

"The organization on UMSL's campus was created, or re-established a number of years ago because a stu-

dent who came from a larger school wanted to be involved with NBS, but discovered that we did not have a running chapter at our school," Rippeto said.

Last year, NBS held an event with a panel of local sports media professionals who explained their career responsibilities and their type of job industry.

UM-St. Louis is just one university that is a part of the local chapter. The St. Louis NBS headquarters are located in Chesterfield.

There are currently about 13 students from UM-St. Louis who are

involved, but Rippeto hopes more students will become members and that the organization will become more active on campus.

"Once we get the ball rolling again, we will be able to hold more events like the ones held in years past," she said.

Rippeto said that NBS can be beneficial to anyone studying communications, English or media studies at UM-St. Louis.

"You do not have to go into broadcasting to be in this club. I look at it as a way for any student with a commun-

ications or media studies major to be able to share their ideas and get involved with a major-related organization," she said. "Many of the events that NBS has done or could do in the future may be beneficial to learning about the fields, more than just inside the classroom."

Interested students can find out more information about the organization by visiting www.nbs-aero.org, or those who would like to become members can contact Dr. Michael Murray at 516-5496 or email Rippeto at cerd3b@umsl.edu.

The Current

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