

The Current

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The Current

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ABOUT The Current

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AFFILIATIONS



News

Advanced credit program at UMSL receives national accreditation

National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships accredits advanced credit programs of UM-St. Louis

ASHLEY ATKINS
Features Editor

The Advanced Credit program at University of Missouri-St. Louis has received national accreditation from the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, a long time coming since its introduction to the university as a pilot program in 1986-1987. University of Missouri-St. Louis was one of the founding members of NACEP and helped create its original 15 standards.

The advantage of the program is that it allows students to get a jump on the college experience before they actually get into college. With this program, students are allowed to take college credit courses in the comfort of their own high school. It encourages the students to adjust to the demands of college work. Another option for qualified students is to enroll in a night or day calss at a nearby college, provided that they have fulfilled state requirements

talents.”

Associate Dean of Continuing Education, Deborah Baldini, has been associated with the Advanced Credit Program since its earlier days, as well. Earlier on, she was a faculty member of the Foreign Language department and acted as the first Spanish liaison to surrounding high schools.

“National accreditation speaks to the high quality of the Advanced Credit Program,” Dr. Baldini said. “Through the accreditation process, every aspect of our program was examined and evaluated, so in essence, high school students taking ACP classes and their parents can be certain that the program meets the highest national standards.”

As Director of UMSL’s Advanced Credit Program,

“The Advanced Credit Program provided a means for UMSL faculty to contribute [local high school students’] talents.”

- Terry Jones

for a particular course area.

Each department at UMSL has a system when it comes to evaluating potential students for the dual program. They look for students who they believe could have the self-discipline. The program would not choose a student who they believe would become overwhelmed by the course load.

Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, at that time, Dr. Terry Jones, chair and professor of political science, said that the accreditation validates the tremendous job of the UMSL faculty and their high school faculty colleagues have done with the Advanced Credit Program.

“A major share of UMSL undergraduates come from St. Louis area high schools so UMSL has a major stake in their quality,” Dr. Jones said. “The Advanced Credit Program provided a means for UMSL faculty to contribute their

Karhleen Burns acts as first contact for high schools when they want to add more courses for the program. She meets with high school administrators and counselors to discuss the possibility of growth in the program. She believes that the program has grown in recent years because of its sensibility. This national accreditation is expected to draw even more talented students to UMSL.

“It saves students both time and money. If they earn ten or more college credits in high school then it provides other opportunities,” Burns said. “The current tuition is only \$59 dollars per credit hour and they do not have to pay for their texts or any additional fees.”

In the future, Dr. Jones hopes that the program will be able to establish a bond between UMSL and the surrounding high schools, and by doing so, achieve their main mission: educating St. Louisans.

WEATHER

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UMSL Administrator to Participate in ACE Fellows Program

Gwendolyn Deloach-Packnett has been selected to participate in the prestigious ACE Fellows Program

MADDIE HARNED
Staff Writer

Dr. Gwendolyn Deloach-Packnett, founding director of the University of Missouri-Saint Louis' Office of Multicultural Relations, has been selected to participate in the prestigious American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows Program.

After being nominated by UMSL Chancellor Tom George and Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Glen Cope, Packnett was ultimately chosen by the American Council on Education to participate in the year-long program.

"Chancellor George and I nominated Dr. Packnett because we know that she would like to move into a higher level leadership position in a university," Cope said.

"We felt that this opportunity would help her prepare for that, and would also benefit UMSL by giving her a different perspective and experience in a different setting to bring back to her position here when she returns next summer," Cope said.

The ACE Fellows Program is currently in its 47th year of operation. The program is intended to give academic leaders the opportunity to prepare to move upward into higher level leadership positions in a university setting.

Many individuals who participate in the ACE Fellows Programs are in positions such as deans of colleges, vice provosts, assistant vice chancellors or faculty members who aspire to move up the administrative ladder to such positions.

"The program goals include developing leaders in universities to increase the numbers of individuals

who are ready and prepared to take on higher leadership positions and to help those individuals prepare themselves to fulfill those roles," Cope said.

An ACE Fellowship consists of an assignment lasting around one year at a different university. Packnett will spend the 2011-2012 academic year at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis working with and observing the university's president and administrators with the goal of becoming prepared to take on a leadership position at UMSL.

Upon completing her assignment at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Packnett will return to UMSL next summer.

"At the end of the year, the fellows return to their home universities better prepared to be leaders there, and eventually to move into higher leadership positions, often at other universities as those positions are open and advertised," Cope said. "This should be beneficial both to Dr. Packnett in her future career and to UMSL as we get the benefit of what she has learned when she returns."

The ACE Fellows Program was created with the goal of identifying and mentoring future university administrators. The program is highly esteemed and selective. Packnett will be the first UMSL staff member in years to participate in the program.

"This is the opportunity of a lifetime for her to take a year to learn and grow, which we know she will enjoy," Cope said. "We want to encourage her to learn and benefit all she can from this wonderful experience."

A sincere apology from the editorial staff

On the previous issue's cover, the name of Richard Schwartz was misspelled. His last name is meant to be spelled "Schwartz," but was instead spelled lacking the "r" at the end.

We apologize for any offense this may have caused to family, friends and/or associates of the deceased. *The Current* regrets this error and gives our wholehearted condolences to the bereaved.

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The UNDERCURRENT

by Nikki Vahle

"What do you think about the activities in the MSC during the first week of school?"



"I don't really participate, though it's great to have for students new to UMSL or who live on campus."

Jenn Mezzler
English
Senior



"I really enjoy all the first week of school events."

Kristal Coleman
Special Education
Junior



"I was involved in the fraternity recruitment, and I really enjoyed breaking the barriers between white and black fraternities."

Rodney Holmes
Criminology
Junior

SOMETIMES IT'S
OKAY TO LET
STRANGERS TALK
TO YOU.

READ
The
Current



Nicole White with her Mom on graduation day on Saturday, August 6 when she received a doctoral degree in criminology and criminal justice.

COURTESY OF NICHOLE WHITE

Determined UMSL graduate with incurable disease earns PhD in criminology and criminal justice program

ENDEA WILBERT
Staff Writer

Nicole White spent sleepless nights in 2004 studying while in the criminology and criminal justice doctoral program at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. A year into the program, she began noticing joint pain and fatigue. White, a 33-year old from Belleville, Ill., states that she initially thought that she was over extending herself with the long study hours. When her condition progressed to her not being able to sit down and get up with out being in pain, she decided to see a doctor. The doctor ran tests on White every three weeks, for six months, until she was finally diagnosed.

In January of 2005, just a week after her birthday, White was diagnosed with Scleroderma, an autoimmune disease of the connective tissue. Scleroderma is rapidly progressing and affects a large area of the skin and one or more internal organs, frequently the kidneys, esophagus, heart and lungs. White was told that the disease was incurable and possibly fatal. “I was scared. They told me right away there were no cures, no treatment and no medication, only experimental things. I didn’t know what would happen. Not knowing was difficult and I received no answers, although I saw several doctors,” White said.

After being diagnosed with Scleroderma, White was still determined to obtain her degree. White states, “I have never been the type to give up. Although it was hard and the pain was intense, I just had to keep going. I didn’t want to miss out on this opportunity.” Continuing her education was important to White; researching criminology had been a childhood dream.

Throughout the years, White’s disease progressed. As the pain increased, White could

not get around without assistance. She moved in with her mom, who also helped her tremendously by getting her to and from school. White states that relying on others was difficult because she was used to being independent. Later on White, having been hospitalized 30 times, had 11 blood transfusions, lost sight in her left eye and become completely immobile.

Still not wanting to give up, even while bed ridden, White continued to push forward and finished her dissertation titled “The Economy-Crime Relationship Revisited: The Significance of Recent Macroeconomic and Social Policy Changes for Poverty and Youth Violence Trends” from her laptop.

On August 6, 2011, Nicole White participated in commencement at the UMSL. “I was so shocked, I couldn’t believe that I was able to finish. It took a couple days to sink in. I just kept pushing and trying. At first, I really didn’t see the light at the end of the tunnel, but now I’m just happy,” White said, “When people call me Dr. Nicole White, I don’t realize who they’re talking to. It hasn’t registered yet.”

Now that White has obtained her doctoral degree she is looking forward to what is to come. She states, “Although I have limitations, I would love the chance to do independent research. I would welcome that opportunity from anyone.”

White is very appreciative to the faculty UMSL. “When I was diagnosed, the faculty and department supported me all the way. I couldn’t have finished if they were not so patient and understanding. My advisor Janet Lauritsen was good about emailing assignments and working with me. Being able to continue my education gave me purpose and made me feel useful. I didn’t want to feel like a full time patient and I am very grateful to the faculty for their support,” White said.

A&E



Paul Rudd as Ned, Elizabeth Banks as Miranda, Emily Mortimer as Liz and Zooey Deschanel as Natalie in Jesse Peretz's film *OUR IDIOT BROTHER*.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NICHOLE RIVELLI / THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

Paul Rudd is hilarious as 'Our Idiot Brother' in sly comedy

MOVIES

Every family has one: the relative who is a bit of an idiot. "Our Idiot Brother" explores that notion in tongue-in-cheek, satiric fashion with a plot that mixes Chechov's "Three Sisters," a bit of "Candide" and a comedic take on Dostoevsky's "The Idiot." Paul Rudd, Zooey Deschanel, Elizabeth Banks, Emily Mortimer, Hugh Dancy and Steve Coogan star in this oft-silly audience-pleasing comedy that debuted at Sundance as "My Idiot Brother."

Paul Rudd plays the sweet but clueless stoner Ned: an organic farmer who gets busted for giving, not selling, pot to a cop at a farmer's market. Released early from prison for good behavior, his dreadlocked girlfriend Janet (Kathryn Hahn) does not want him back, although she keeps his dog, Willie Nelson. Ned ends up staying at the family home on Long Island with mom, then couch-surfing at the homes of his three sisters in New York, where his sunny view of humanity and unfiltered honesty constantly cause problems.

There is a bit of the "Big Lebowski's" Dude in sweet Ned but he is more committed to his gentle life philosophy of assuming the best of everyone. While Ned has chosen the road less cynical and is the sibling with the least, there is plenty of idiocy of other kinds to go around among these East Coast trust-funders. Liz (Emily Mortimer) is the earth-mother wife of documentary filmmaker Dylan (Steve

Coogan). Artsy bi-sexual Natalie (Zooey Deschanel) lives a sociable bohemian life with lawyer girlfriend Cindy (Rashida Jones). Ruthlessly ambitious, always-connected magazine writer Miranda (Elizabeth Banks) is willing to whatever it takes to land a gig at Vanity Fair. Even their wine-loving Long Island suburban mother Ilene (Shirley Knight) is a bit loopy.

The sisters reluctantly help out by offering sofas and job leads. Dylan finds Ned work on his film shoot, a documentary about an abused, beautiful Russian ballerina. Youngest sister Natalie gets him a job modeling for artist friend Christian (Hugh Dancy). But well-meaning Ned's blunt honesty causes disruptions in every sister's life. He always seems to say or do the wrong thing at the worst moment.

Unlike so many comedies, this one is sweet rather than raunchy. The comedy is dry and straight-faced but situations are absurdly hilarious. The truth is that his sisters need a shake-up and there is a kind of Zen wisdom in Ned's life view.

The talented cast is this comedy's greatest strength. Rudd is utterly charming, as well as very funny, as a well-meaning, basically-happy innocent leaving disaster in his wake. Actually, the whole cast is wonderful in this satiric silliness, particularly Steve Coogan as the impatient, self-impressed director. Deschanel is delightfully ditzy and Banks is breathlessly driven. As an ensemble, they are hilarious.

Directed and co-written by a brother-sister team, this sparkling, cheeky film gets the sibling dynamics right. Jesse Peretz directed and the script was co-written by his sister Evgenia Peretz, a writer/editor at Vanity Fair, along her husband, documentary filmmaker David Schisgall.

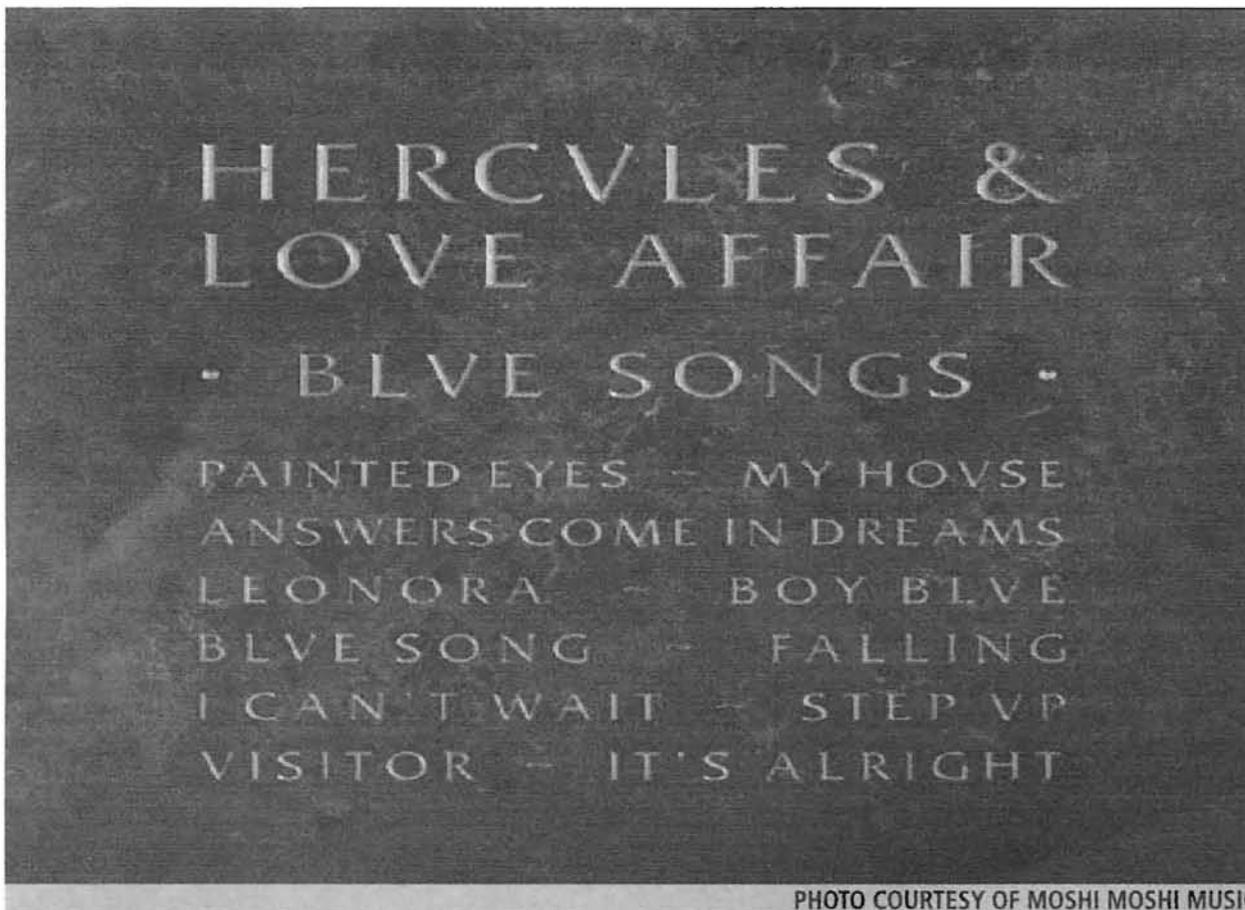
The film also hits the mark with characters, lampooning New York types - the artistic bohemian, the uber-mother, the pretentious filmmaker, the business woman grafted to her Blackberry, the affluent wine-drinking suburbanite - along with sincere organic farmer Ned. But the actors go far beyond those familiar stereotypes in crafting appealing characters.

The film's sunny, colorful visual style is the perfect tongue-in-cheek framing. The brother-sister writing/directing teams clearly know this territory well. While the film runs a tad long, it wraps up in perfect, silly fashion.

"Our Idiot Brother" is a refreshing comic change from the pervasive bathroom and teenage boy humor. A light and silly satire of modern manners and families, "Our Idiot Brother" is comedy for grown-ups. Packed with winning performances by a talented cast, this late summer comedy treat is just the thing to close out the season at the movies.

B- - Cate Marquis

'Blue Songs' offers the sincerest take on disco this side of the 21st Century



MUSIC

Although the very concept of a 1980s house throwback group seemed pretty contrived at the time of its 2008 release, Hercules and Love Affair's excellent self-titled debut was able to separate itself from the crowd of Daft Punk wannabes by virtue of its genuine appreciation of the club culture which inspired it. It is this very same heartfelt admiration of all things disco which propels their highly anticipated follow-up, "Blue Songs."

Although it does not expand on its predecessor's formula in any particularly groundbreaking way, "Blue Songs" remains an invigorating and compelling release through the group's unrivaled worship of the house music mythos. It is arguably the most ambitious post-millennial dance album since Hercules and Love Affair's own debut.

Like its title suggests, "Blue Songs" is a more somber affair than Hercules and Love Affair's previous outing. The amphetamine-fueled, diva-driven theatrics of their debut are largely subdued as the group opts for a mellower, more downbeat approach instead. This creative departure can occasionally become a minor drawback as many of "Blue Songs'" offerings are not quite as memorable as they were on the debut. With the exception of the fiendishly groovy "Falling," there is nothing here as immediately catchy as Hercules and Love Affair's "Blind" and "Hercules Theme." This is ultimately a minor gripe; however, as the group still has more than enough drive to keep the music from plodding, and other than the meandering final track "It's Alright," there is never a dull moment on the album.

Of course, much of the energy injected into "Blue Songs"

can be traced to its enormous stable of collaborators, who are just as inspired here as they were on the group's debut. Notable contributions from new member Mark Pistel, a veteran of the political house group Consolidated (although his political leanings do not overly convey themselves in the album) and Bloc Party's Kele Okereke, who seamlessly implants his signature croon into the disco balladry of "Step Up," provide the album with an irresistible variety that rewards the patient listener.

If there is truly one complaint to be made about the personnel, it is that Antony Hegarty (of Antony and the Johnsons fame) was not invited, as his contributions to their eponymous album were so utterly memorable that it is difficult to imagine the group without him. Fortunately, Hercules and Love Affair are more than capable of delivering the nu-disco goods even without the presence of the chamber pop maestro and, if anything, his absence allows groups to flesh out its identity even more.

"Blue Songs" is as rewarding a slice of electronic music as one can find circa 2011. Although it does not exactly reinvent the retro-house wheel, it emerges from the shadow of its brilliant predecessor as a vibrant, heartfelt and original album on its own merits. In an age where the top rung of the Billboard 100 is rehashing synthpop clichés that were contrived even back when Madonna was still like a virgin, Hercules and Love Affair provides a much-needed dose of authenticity.

B- - David Von Nordheim

LATEST + GREATEST

Movies Opening Calendar

Movies opening Friday, September 2
(Subject to change)



THE DEBT (everywhere)

- Helen Mirren, Sam Worthington and Jessica Chastain star in a thriller about Mossad spies hunting a Nazi doctor, a remake of a bang-up Israeli mystery/thriller, directed by John Madden ("Shakespeare In Love").

APOLLO 18 (everywhere)

- Horror/thriller about a long hidden footage of secret last mission to the moon, from producer Timur Bekmambetov ("Night Watch").

SHARK NIGHT 3D (everywhere)

- First there were Piranhas, now there are freshwater sharks. Late summer horror film entry.

A GOOD OLD FASHIONED ORGY (everywhere)

- Jason Sudeikis stars in an R-rated comedy (although maybe not as sexy as title implies) about a guy who has access to Dad's house in the Hamptons and talks his friends into trying to organize an orgy.

ATTACK THE BLOCK (everywhere)

- Nick Frost, Simon Pegg's sidekick from "Shaun of the Dead," stars in action/comedy about South London teens defending their neighborhood from space invaders.

CHASING MADOFF (Plaza Frontenac only)

- Documentary about the investigator who spent a decade building the case against investment-scammer Bernie Madoff

THE TREE (Plaza Frontenac only)

- Julie Bertuccelli directs Charlotte Gainsbourg and Marton Csokas in a romantic drama set in the Australian countryside.

SENNA (Tivoli only)

- Documentary about the legendary, controversial international race car driver.

Horoscopes

ARIES
(MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Facebook has made some high school friends into "Harry Potter" SOAP. Many speak the language of snakes ... This is soo scary! "Shaaysaysaaash!" lma's swish swish, cut. I have not slept in 70 days!

LIBRA
(SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)

Ignore the call. In fact, you can control weight. However, even if you think that a gray hair is the initial stage, the first pound is the difference, so it will not work..

GEMINI
(MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Thief, where are all the money they owe me? You owe me money, thief, what and where they are located? Please refer to what happens in order to deny me this right!

SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)

Do not stop now! What caught our teeth, balls! This kills, you need to know. Mom, you just kill people! I'll show you the needle. On another occasion, hit me, baby!

LEO
(JULY 23 - AUG. 21)

Meow meow cat is working. Meow, meow meow's meow mcmeow meow meow meow mix owner became a DJ? I want chicken I want liver! Yes, meow mix meow mix to achieve. Meowing bunch of punk ... end!

AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)

See Octopus Garden! There are no sharks, many trees, my magic box, not much. Moon Monkey Ladies Night, a number of wealthy clients. The whale in the ocean! Tickle the Whale!

CURRENT HOROSCOPES by The Inane Collective
in cooperation with:
Babelfish the Intern

TAURUS
(APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Do you want to store cattle in China. Destroy the connections. Honestly, you have to learn to control their children. No, more anger!

SCORPIO
(OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)

"I can not say that language is not such a damn, my office, so you should not dive." This is his creed next week. Small, remember this, Padawan.

CANCER
(JUNE 22 - JULY 22)

At night, after the family; Tiger, Tiger, burning bright Violet Blue! Now in the winter of our discontent, glorious summer Duke of New York. As to my tastes, I'd like to do this for people like you, hold the fire.

CAPRICORN
(DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)

I hate people, never forget. Go, go. It requires a lot less, or more than necessary. Therefore, I do not exist. Do you know the name of the cheese in France, or 4.1 pounds, this is not?

VIRGO
(AUG. 22 - SEPT. 23)

Hamster mother said, "I was so overwhelmed?" See the violence in the system; let's go! Teacher is a dead parrot? The activation of all saints is the cry of an explosion? Darling escape, Sarobin! This is all because there is no parrot!?

PISCES
(FEB. 20 - MARCH 20)

I am the master. You're ahead of me; if there is no other god, I have a little snow. Name of this Lord: Perjury, rake the neighbors house. What is your wife, neighbor, we encourage you to commit adultery.

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Gilles Lellouche in POINT BLANK, a Magnolia Pictures release.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA PICTURES

'Point Blank' is a non-stop action, in crime thriller

MOVIE

"Point Blank" is a crime thriller that runs full bore right out of the gate. A wild-ride of chase and thrills with a Hitchcock-like everyman resides at its center, a male nurse who happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and gets caught between warring crime figures.

How much talking do you need in a heart-stopping, kick-butt action thriller? Be honest - not much. Which is why the fact that the non-stop crime thriller "Point Blank" is French should not really matter to fans of the genre.

Those who are not afraid of subtitles already know the French know how to do edgy, breathless crime thrillers, having given us "La Femme Nikita" and countless other great thrillers.

Nurse Samuel (Gilles Lellouche) is assigned to care for an injured safe-cracker named Sartet (Roschdy Zem) who is in

police custody. What the nurse does not know is that there are two sets of criminals who want the injured man and will do whatever it takes to get him.

Samuel's very pregnant wife (Elena Anaya) is kidnapped right out of their apartment and held hostage to force the nurse to deliver his patient to Sartet's associates. But they are not the only ones who want to get their hands on the criminal.

This ordinary man finds himself in a race against time, rival criminals and trigger-happy police to save the lives of his wife and unborn child.

Directed by Fred Cavaye with producers Cyril Colbeau-Justin and Jean-Baptiste Dupont, this terrific race strips the genre down to basics and kicks up the thrill factor. The fact that they eschew the over-the-top effects and go with more human and therefore more visceral action makes the film fresh and highly entertaining.

The driving force of the film is pared down but the restless camera work and heart-stopping near-misses are amped up

by great editing and a driving score. The visuals are always perfect, which makes watching this film an extra treat.

Instead of the usual superhero fighting the baddies, there is something more tense and also refreshing about having an ordinary man forced to do extraordinary things, in the manner of classic Hitchcock thrillers.

This thriller runs like a train out of control, with hardly a pause in its twisting, turning path. If you like thriller action of the twisty, turning crime world type, where no one is what they seem and you never know when you are going over the next ledge, "Point Blank" is the film for you.

"Point Blank" is easily the most breathless and pulse-pounding fun of any action thriller in theaters now, which is worth reading a few subtitles. The film, in French with English subtitles, is now playing at the Plaza Frontenac Cinema.

A - Cate Marquis

Kanye and Jay-Z collaborate successfully on 'Watch the Throne'

MUSIC

Super groups are, almost without fail, something less than the sum of their parts and the new Jay-Z and Kanye West collaboration is no exception to the rule. But the resulting album "Watch the Throne" is still pretty darn good.

The album's success is due in large part to both rappers being dedicated to make the album a true collaboration. West and Jay-Z were in studio together for the duration of the album's recording and it shows. They trade lines wildly and finish each other's rhymes in a way that, even after doubtless hours of post-production, still retains an air of spontaneity, though the most spontaneous moment in the album comes from none other than Will Ferrill's Chaz Michael Michaels. After West lets loose one of his more vulgar lines, the music stops and an enthusiastic Ferrill can be heard saying, "no one knows what it means, it's provocative...it gets the people going."

"Watch the Throne" should be appreciated by any fan of either West or Jay-Z. Standouts include "Why I Love You," a track that samples heavily from Cassius's "I Love U So," and "Gotta Have It," produced by The Neptunes.

Because of the album's

unpredictability, not one of the twelve tracks feels like it was Jay-Z song featuring Kanye or a Kanye track featuring Jay-Z. An artist supplying a verse to someone else's song is a ubiquitous practice in the world of hip-hop but that is not exactly the same as true collaboration. "Watch the Throne" is true collaboration.

And in this collaboration there is definitely a third party in the roster of top-of-the-line producers that form the backbone of this album. Certainly the two men at the album's forefront have deep wells of talent but they benefit greatly from the layered beats that often verge on progressive trance in a way that makes the first minute of any given song completely different than second, third or fourth minute.

And aside from the album's producers, other contributors include Beyonce and Kid Cudi as well as the late greats Otis Redding and Curtis Mayfield.

Even though Jay-Z and West are probably the two biggest names in hip-hop and two of the biggest in all of pop music currently, the new album is largely a response to what other, newer artists have been doing for some time now.

A - Ryan Krull

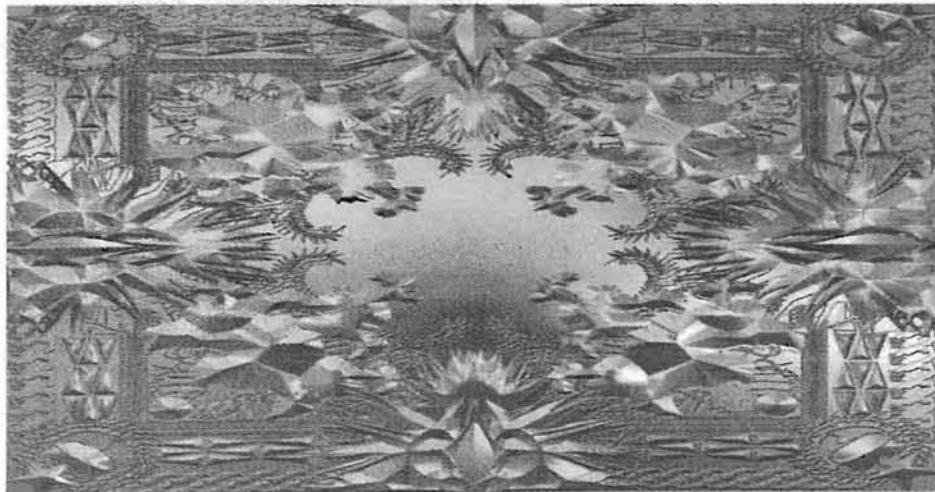


PHOTO COURTESY OF DEF JAM

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 Craig Owen, City Manager for the City of Clayton
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 & more!

Application Deadline

Monday September 12, 2011 @ 5pm

For more information or to apply, visit us in the Office of Student Life MSC 366 or email Leonard Johnson at stulifega4@umsl.edu

Features



McVicar The Trickster performs street magic with cards in the Nosh on Thursday.

JENNIFER MEAHAN / THE CURRENT

McVicar brings magic, fun hypnotics to UMSL's Nosh

ASHLEY ATKINS
Features Editor

Last Thursday, Josh McVicar the Trickster, had the audience roaring with laughter in the JC Penney building auditorium at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The University Program Board were the organizers of the event. McVicar has been at the game since the tender age of fifteen when he would put on magic and hypnotism shows for his fellow classmates. From then on, he has been professionally trained at his craft.

"I was Google search-

ence pointed and laughed at their friends on stage. A few pulled out their phones to savor the moment.

When McVicar was confident that the participants had reached their greatest point of relaxation, he started talking about a rise and decrease in temperature in the auditorium. Those on stage went from shivering to nearing removing their clothing. What followed was the impression that their own lookers were sitting in the crowd naked. So, in reverse, they pointed to their friends in the audi-

thing."

Hypnotist participant, Lauren Peebles, spent the next hour, after the show, wondering why people were talking about her.

"I wish I could say I knew what experience exactly you are talking about, all I know is I feel like I have been asleep for a good six to eight hours and I feel refreshed," Peebles said. "I feel like going to go run and I suddenly am absolutely in love with the color red, everything red makes me feel inspired." She also felt as if she gained courage

"All I know is I feel like I have been sleep for a good six to eight hours and I feel refreshed."

-Lauren Peebles

ing hypnotist and Youtube searching hypnotist and he seemed to be one of the best one's in the area," UPB member, Scott Morrissey, junior, Spanish, said.

After a brief introduction and rule declaration by McVicar, people in the crowd waited in anticipation as those chosen to be hypnotized were placed in position. When the music started to play, different emotion took over the bunch on stage. Guys, determined to keep their dominance and dignity, smirked in disbelief. Two women sitting upstage were blushing in excitement; they had clearly committed themselves to the possibility of magic.

As his minions shut their eyes, he started to lull them to sleep with the dragging of his voice. They clung on to every word, some barely avoiding falling out of their chairs. Half of the audi-

ence. They were disgusted.

Next, McVicar asked those on stage to help him save Tinker bell by running out into the crowd and clapping at the audience. The scene resembled a pep rally minus the cheerleading outfits. But, the climax of the night happened when the participants were asked to be on the Jerry Springer Show.

Students were accusing each other of infidelity. One student accused another of sleeping with her father. The crowd nearly died. Things were wrapped up in a pop dance party.

Audience member, Iffie Ehovuon, junior, criminology, enjoyed her friend's almost striptease during the fabricated heat wave on stage, as well as the physical reaction with the audience.

"My favorite part was the dancing, it was so hilarious," she said. "It was just amazing; I loved every-

and love, all the way down to her red belt, red cuffs, and her red hair clips.

McVicar had nothing, but praise for the UMSL crowd, complimenting them on their courteous behavior with the show. "You do not always get audiences that are that respective, but at the same time, willing to have fun," he said.

Following his program, students stayed behind to inquire about his secret technique. Obviously, McVicar did not fail his unsuspecting audience with his subtle tricks of the mind. Is magic real, or simply an illusion? While this may remain a questionable debate amongst the masses for generations to come, there is no questioning one simple fact: people remain fascinated by the tricks magic can play upon the mind, and will continue seeking it out as long as no consistent answer exists.

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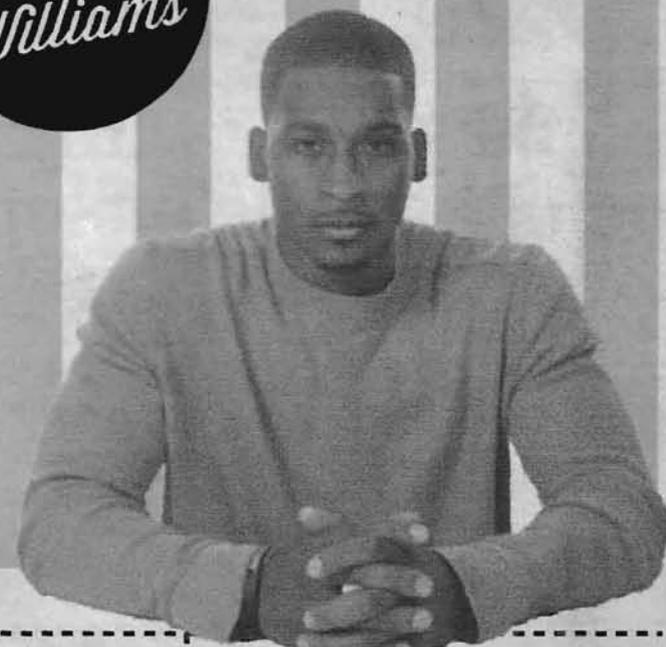
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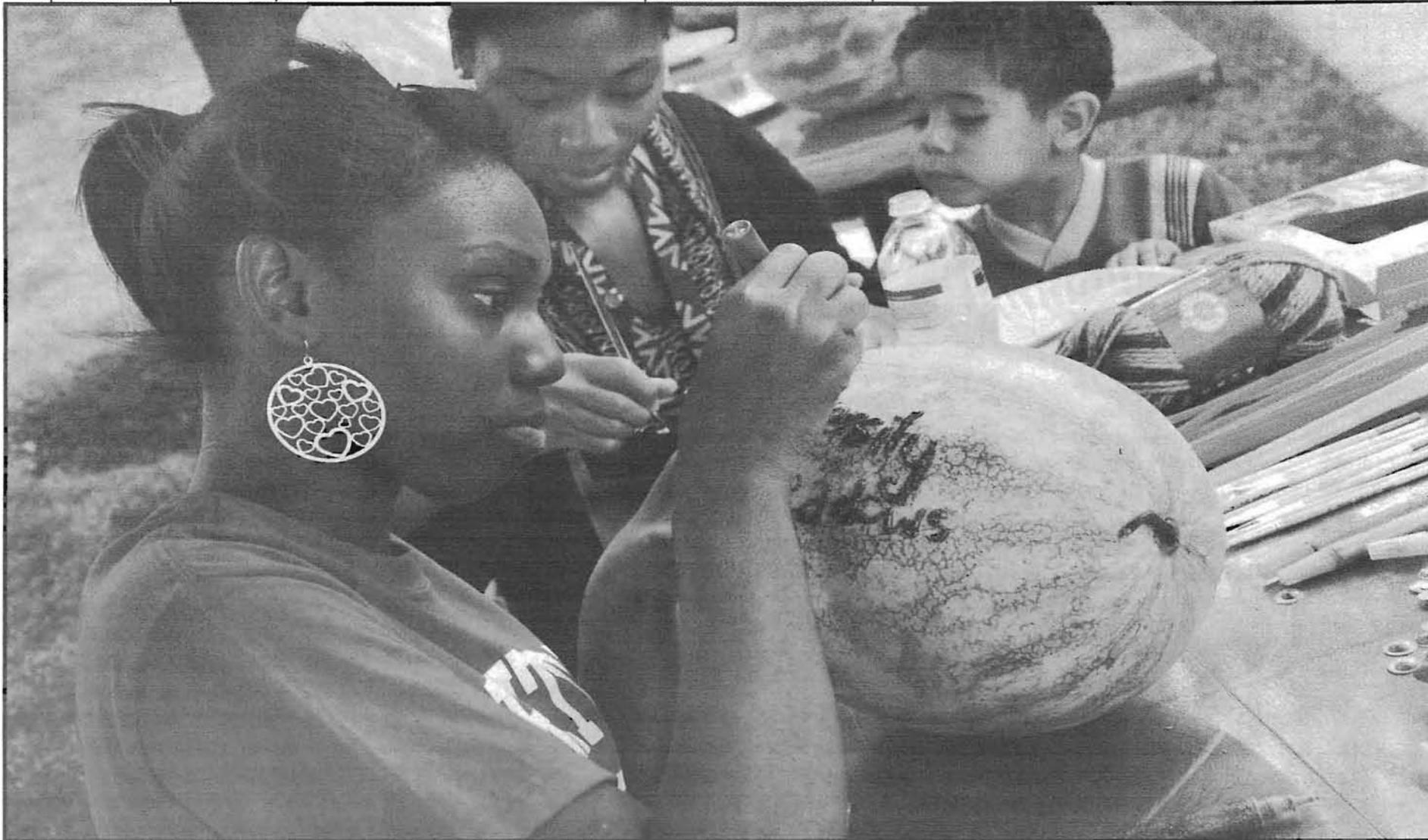
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Students decorate a watermelon during the Watermelon Feast on Wednesday in the University Meadows.

NIKKI VAHLE / THE CURRENT

People gather with community spirit for a good cause and eat a little melon; proceeds benefit Pagedale City

ANGIE O'DELL
Staff Writer

On the evening of August 24, the staff at the University Meadows, on the south campus of the University of Missouri-St. Louis created and put on an awesome event known as The Watermelon Feast for its new, returning and International residents. People had to bring a canned good to donate to the Pagedale Community Center, or in lieu of a canned good, they could bring a dollar.

According to Arron Winter, night and weekend programming graduate assistant, this is one of two events that the Meadows

puts on annually in order to benefit the Pagedale Community Center, as well as local farmers. "I know all the watermelon came from Global Farmer's Market here in Normandy," Winter said.

The event offered a live band while students walked about, eating the succulent fruit. Guests entertained themselves by taking part in a volleyball tournament, and a watermelon face painting and decorating contest. "I am excited for the music," Erica Preiss, senior, criminal justice, said.

The watermelon

decorating table drew in students by the number, some expressing their artistic skill through rainbows. By the end of the day, there was a whole table of fancy fruit, best in show going to a melon with headphones made from pipe cleaners. Other materials included, but were not limited to paints, stick on eyeballs and glitter.

The volleyball tournament started after increasing numbers of well-fed students began looking for a way to increase their energy. Not one to sit around, Meadows Leasing Assistant, Ashley

Aubuchon, junior, nursing, got the game going.

What started as a few players warming up turned into a tournament of healthy competition. Both team and community spirit seemed to run rampant, and everyone was having a great time. Players were having fun while promoting a good cause.

The band, comprised of members of the on-campus Mu Alpha, performed as a cover band, covering tunes made famous by popular rock bands. "I like the live band, I know the drummer, and I like to eat watermelon too, so it is pretty cool,"

Nikki Wiltshire, junior, communications, said.

Lead singer, Dave Jackson, senior, liberal studies, paired with the rest of the band, to give a superb performance, belting out popular tunes such as "Welcome to the Jungle," "Seven Nation Army," "Sweet Child of Mine," and "Free bird." People sat by the pool listening to guitar riffs of classic rock songs.

Students were clapping and dancing around the pool, causing more people to flood out of their apartments and join the festivities. There was a colorful, light-hearted

mood in the air.

Student, Yazeed Abohaimed, sophomore, business administration, came out for the band's guitarist, Cesar Molina. "I am glad I am supporting my friend's band," Abohaimed said.

As the event began to wind down, people were carrying leftover melon slices and whole melons back to their apartments.

Attendees left with a spirit of comraderie and excitement, ready to return to their studies and extracurriculars, refreshed and invigorated for the coming challenges.

Welcome Picnic brings joy and excitement to Millennium Student Center to help kick off a new UMSL school year

MINHO JUNG

News Editor

The University of Missouri-St. Louis Welcome Picnic, which is sponsored by the Office of Student Life, was held at the Millennium Student Center on August 21, creating a friendly vibe for students who came back to school after the long summer break.

"This whole event is about welcoming our new students, current students and our staff, trying to bring everybody together to have a big fun day before classes start tomorrow. I do believe this is the largest turnout we have had [since the event began]" Yolanda Wethersby, manager of the Welcome Center, said. "Hopefully,

we can make a huge connection and stay connected throughout the school year."

Student Life lined up this welcoming picnic, collaborating with many organizations inside and outside of the school to make it successful. A variety of games and events, which were mostly run by student organizations, were arranged outside of Millennium Student Center, capturing many people's attention. Those in attendance enjoyed the free food and t-shirt hand-outs.

Student Life, an organization that has become a staple at UMSL, has been planning this spirited event since May. They

always strive to offer their students options. "There are a lot of things to do on campus," Jessica Long-Pease, assistant director of Student Life, said. "As a freshman, I think it is really important to find out

at Oak Hall. Some students who came to the event showed their anticipation about the new semester. But the student organization members did not hesitate to give incoming freshman advice about col-

lege life. "I guess my goal for this semester is to balance work and school. I'd like to meet more people on campus, getting more involved," Megan Powell, senior, communications, said. "[For

those who are just starting new college life], try to get as involved as possible because it will make your experience a whole lot better." The Welcome Picnic in 2011 successfully ended, opening many

the start of the new fall semester, students from other universities in the same area paid a visit to UMSL that day in order to celebrate the fresh beginning of their own semester.

"Get connected. Get to

"Student Life lined up this welcoming picnic, collaborating with many organizations."

what area you are interested and seek out ways to get involved on campus."

The Welcome Picnic is one of the biggest, traditional annual events at UMSL, along with the Welcome Back beach party

lege life.

"I guess my goal for this semester is to balance work and school. I'd like to meet more people on campus, getting more involved," Megan Powell, senior, communications, said. "[For

opportunities for students to get connected with various student organizations within the campus.

The Millennium Student Center stayed packed with students up until the late evening. Hours before

know different people from different offices. Hang out as much as you can. Go talk to your professors. Just stay connected. The more connected you are, the more successful you will be," Wethersby said.

UMSL welcomes students back with 2011 Fall Expo at the Millennium Student Center/the Quad; Student Organizations prepare to open doors

ASHLEY ATKINS

Features Editor

Last Wednesday, in the quad between the Social Science Building and Clark Hall, student organizations at the University of Missouri-St. Louis came together on mutual ground to show students on campus what the university has to offer.

As students streamed into the quad, rushing to their next destination, they were greeted by a sea of red and white carnival tents.

A student was sure to find a club that would satisfy their need for a social life in a world of academia. The U student radio station was present, along with Black Leadership Organizing Counsel, Psychology Club, Student Government Association, etc.

Every tent offered something different, popcorn: sno-cones,

buttons, etc. The humidity outside caused the sno-cones to be a crowd favorite. Aside from the humidity, all was right with the weather until the wind threatened to tear down the carnival tents.

Planted directly in front of the Clark Hall entrance was Pre-Med Society member Dorian West, junior, biology, who, without hesitation, relied on his presence alone to convince students of the benefit of joining Pre-Med Society. According to West, the main purpose of the society is to help students get into medical school whether that involves the paperwork side of the application or vigorously studying for the MCAT's, depending on one another for any unanswered questions.

"We focus on campus visits, not from just any med school,

but med schools our members typically want to go to," West said. "We are in St. Louis and a lot of our students aspire to go to Washington University, or they want to Harvard, or they want to go to Northwestern. So, we try to get those dream schools to come."

The University Singers and Sigma Tau Gamma were found smack dab in the center of the social event, vying for the attention of the student body. University Singers tried to charm their way through the event with their pleasant harmonies. When they caught a fish (a student) they would pitch their group.

"University Singers offers our students the opportunity for a life-changing, musical experience and that is really our goal, because when you are just singing words and notes, that is all

it is," vice president of University Singers Bryan Ziegler, senior, music, said.

"It is just paper; ink and paper; black and white."

Ziegler credits his experiences with the choir and his conductor, Dr. Jim Henry who makes the music jump off of the page and come to life.

Sigma Tau Gamma, a military-based fraternity, was founded by veterans from World War I in 1920.

"Our fraternity is like a home away from home," Sigma Tau Gamma member Patrick Barry, sophomore, criminology, said. "What sets us apart is the fact that we are all there to lean on each other, help each other out."

Walking back to the Millennium Student Center, one could not help but run into the tent of Office and Student Life. They were promoting Leadership

and Training which provides leadership opportunities for all students on campus.

"We have a program for first-year students called Emerging Leaders; it basically takes place in the spring," Coordinator of Leadership and Training, Nick Messing, said.

"Each freshman gets paired with an upperclassman mentor and it goes from January to April and they attend different leadership workshops throughout that." Leadership and Training has an advanced leaders program in the fall for upper-classman.

Towards the end of the three hour event, St. Louis Rams mascot Rampage graced the campus with his presence. He shimmied about with bowls of candy in each hand. A woman was so caught off guard that she tripped over a rock.

UMSL Tritons look forward to an exciting and competitive 2011 season

ELI DAINS
Staff Writer

With Labor Day weekend approaching, the wait is nearly over for the Fall 2011 Tritons' athletic season to begin. Throughout the semester, there will be a plethora of opportunities to take in your favorite sports, but some of the season's hottest match-ups across the board will be taking place early in the season, so be prepared to come out and cheer on your Tritons'. Following is on tap for the beginning of the semester:

The 2011 Tritons' athletics season starts off with a bang on Friday, September 2 when the Volleyball program kicks off the season hosting the second annual "Triton Classic" tournament. Of the five teams competing in the event, three made the NCAA tournament in 2010, so we should be treated to a weekend of highly competitive volleyball.

On Friday, the Tritons will play Wayne State University-Michigan at 10 a.m., and Gannon University at 5:30 p.m. Saturday sees them matched up against the University of North Alabama at 11:30 a.m. and Lindenwood University at 7 p.m.

The following weekend, on Saturday, September 10, the Tritons will play host to Rockhurst University in what promises to be a very

high energy match-up between two teams picked to finish at the top of the western division of the Great Lakes Valley Conference.

Rounding out Labor Day weekend, the women's soccer team hosts Lindenwood University on Sunday, September 4. The team enters

when the women's team hosts Lindenwood University.

The men's team plays in two tournaments, the Art Peterson Invitational September 9 and 10 at Western Illinois and the Wash U Tournament September 16 and 17, before hosting Lin-

, considering their 6-0-2 road record in 2010, the 2011 men's soccer team has their home opener on Sunday, September 11 at 2:30 p.m. versus Illinois-Springfield. Coach Dan King, brings to the field a squad that is "team oriented" and very balanced offensively. According to

"The 2011 Tritons athletics season starts off with a bang on Friday, September 2..."

the season ranked 11th in the GLVC Coaches Poll, but looks to improve on that ranking and secure a berth in the GLVC Tournament.

The women's soccer program is celebrating its 30th anniversary this season, and will commemorate the founding members of the team during a ceremony at their game against Kentucky Wesleyan College on Friday, October 14.

Also part of the Labor Day weekend festivities at UMSL, are the men's and women's tennis program's "Alumni Matches," which are being held on September 3. After that, your next opportunity to catch Tritons Tennis on their newly resurfaced home court will be September 14

denwood University on September 21.

While they do not play in any St. Louis tournaments this season, there are several semi-local opportunities to catch Tritons women's golf in action in 2011. Although they begin tournament play in Wisconsin on September 12 for the Green Bay Phoenix Invite, they will be much closer to home September 25 for the Midwest Shootout at the Annbriar Golf Course in Waterloo, Illinois. Also, on October 10 the team will host the UMSL Triton Invite at Gateway Golf Links in Madison, Illinois.

After playing their first three games on the road, which may not be quite so bad as it sounds

Coach King the 2011 team is "very hungry this year, and ready to make a statement about the level of play that we're bringing to the field."

Friday, September 16, the team plays host to St. Joseph's for Labor Union Night/Pat Hogan Memorial Night. Hogan was part of the UMSL 1973 Division II National Championship Team and received inductions into the STL Soccer Hall of Fame in 2007 and the UMSL Athletic Hall of Fame in 2010 before passing away last year. During the game, the first recipient of the Pat Hogan Memorial Scholarship will be honored. Keep an eye out for further sports news in upcoming issues.

Previewing Campus Recreation opportunities and improvements

YUSEF ROACH
Web Editor

Big things are happening this year at the University of Missouri- St. Louis Campus Recreation department. With renovations being made to the Mark Twain Recreational Center and exciting excursions and activities being planned by Campus Rec, this year is certain to be as exciting as possible.

The department is the largest student employer on campus, staffing over 40 students during the year supervised by the three full-time administrative employees. They offer intramural team sports, wellness classes to accommodate students' personal fitness needs and special events such as bingo, poker and trivia nights; activities specifically catering to the UMSL crowd.

"The most popular Campus Rec activities are the team sport leagues such as coed volleyball, flag football and indoor soccer. Also very popular are our wellness classes, special events, and off-campus Rec Treks," Pamela Steinmetz, manager of Intramurals and Recreation, said.

"We stay abreast of the newest recreation trends and evaluate our offerings on an on-going basis so that we can continue to implement responsive changes and new activities for our diverse campus community."

Rec Treks are thrilling off-campus student excursions sponsored by Campus Recreation designed to be inexpensive, but yield an extremely high fun factor.

"Our goal is to reach out to students and provide low-cost, fun and relaxing adventures away from campus." Mrs. Steinmetz continues, "We hope to enhance student life by providing rewarding opportunities to try new things, see new places and meet new people. Rec Treks include such activities as rock climbing, canoeing, skiing, snowboarding, horseback riding, paintball, laser tag and more."

Among the changes being made to recreational facilities and equipment this year, is an elaborate upgrade to the university's fitness center, one ultimately resulting in a stimulant

setting, one more conducive to being active.

"What we have planned [is to] add treadmills, ellipticals, the newest Adaptive Motion Trainers, bikes and steppers complete with 'Personal Viewing Screens' for an exciting entertainment package while you work out," Larry Coffin, assistant athletic director of Recreational Services and Facilities, said. "Additional free weight and selected equipment will be modernized and upgraded as well. I think you are going to see a transformation of our fitness center into a snazzy club-type atmosphere."

The Campus Recreation department, located in the Mark Twain building on North Campus, is dedicated to providing recreational, physical opportunities for students at UMSL. They strive to promote the fitness and social well-being of the student body here at UMSL, particularly with regard to newer students.

"I speak from personal experience," Coffin said, "When you make the transition to

the college atmosphere you're usually lost at first. Campus Recreation offers the students a chance to get to know others who have similar interests. Our intramurals, wellness, martial arts and workout facilities naturally bring people and create a social atmosphere that makes making friends easy."

The recreational season kicks off this semester on Monday, September 5 with Rae Mohrman, a retired teacher, marathon runner and certified fitness instructor offering his "Silver Moves" aerobics class, a well-balanced program dedicated to improving mobility, muscular strength, endurance, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. First up for intramurals is a tennis tournament being offered Saturday, September 10 at 9:30 a.m. on the Mark Twain Tennis Courts; the entry deadline is September 8.

"Our Motto is 'We have something for everyone'" Larry Coffin said, "and, in fact, we do." Intrigued? Visit umsl.edu to learn more about upcoming Campus Recreation events!

Sports

UMSL Student continues legacy of golf excellence in St. Louis

JANACA SCHERER

Managing Editor

Ryan Penfield, senior, business administration, has been making waves ever since he picked up a golf club. But this time he has hit the number one spot in a big way.

Originally from Oklahoma, Penfield eventually made his way to University of Missouri-St. Louis. During his four years on the team, Penfield has been winning tournaments, helping players and lowering his average.

Outside of school, he is just as big a star, having just won at the Metropolitan Amateur Golf Association (MAGA) Tournament, beating over 200 other players for the championship title. His win will get his name placed on the Tom Blair Trophy, right beside other golf-

Penfield has plenty on his plate to keep him busy and help him perfect his game.

Currently playing in the Oklahoma open, Penfield will soon be heading back to Missouri for the Jim Jackson Invitational, the Missouri Commerce Bank Open and the Hieronymus Cup Matches.

"Honestly, I do not have any expectations [for the tournaments] at this time. I like to start out each tournament with a pretty calm mindset. I feel when you have a lot of expectations, it adds pressure on to what is already a difficult game," Penfield says.

Penfield is still enrolled at UMSL cur-

"Outside of school, he is just as big a star, having just won at the Metropolitan Amateur Golf Association."

ing greats who have also won the tournament.

In the tournament, held on August 11 to 13, Penfield fought through the pack of players to the top. "It was fun playing in the final group on the last day with a bunch of really good players in the field trying to chase me down for the top spot," Penfield said.

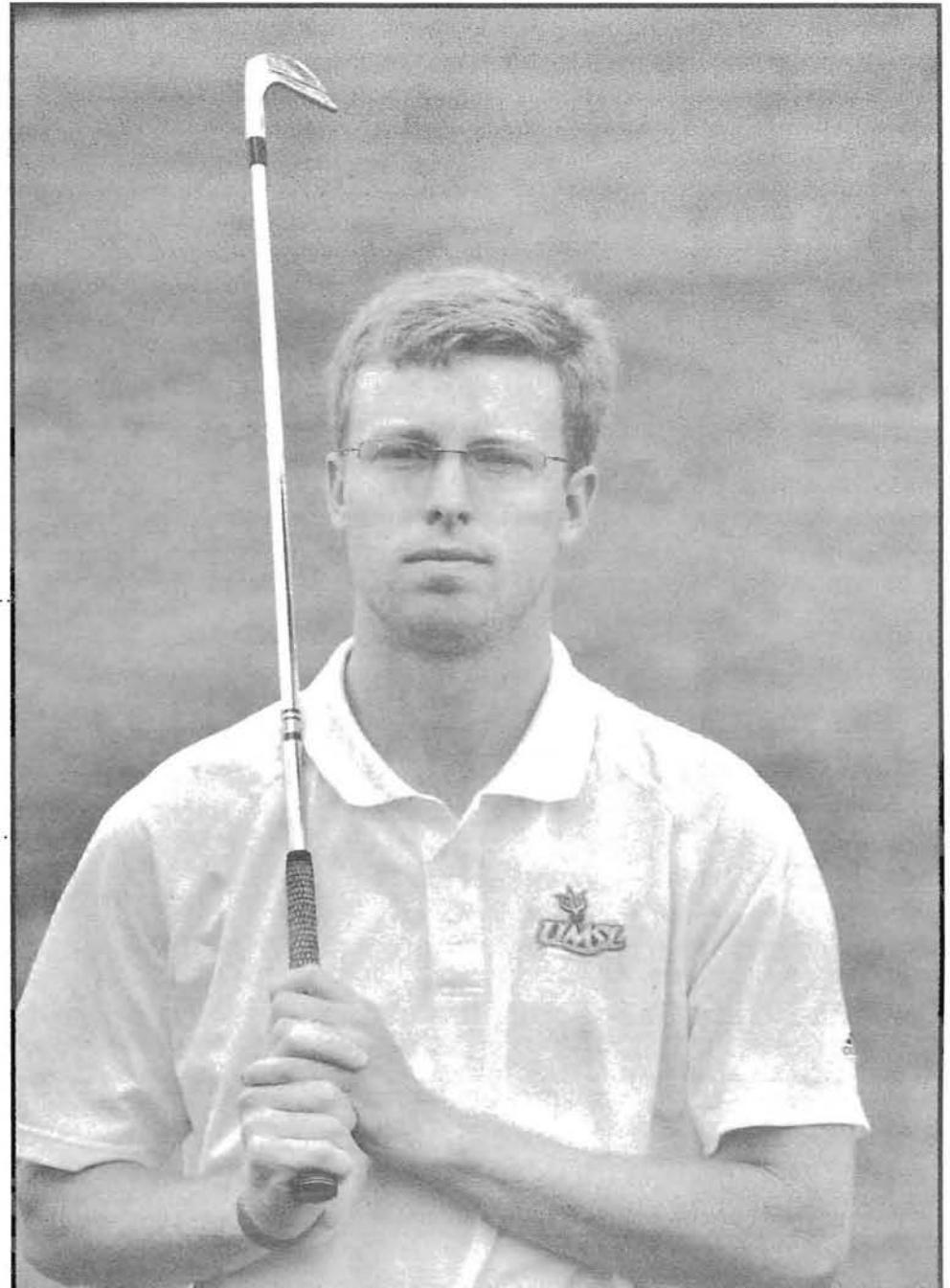
Among the competitors in the tournament were a few UMSL classmates and other students from local colleges. Penfield enjoys the challenge of playing fellow students, saying, "We all have a friendly rivalry and we are all extremely happy and proud when one of us gets to taste success."

In the future, Penfield has high hopes for his golf career. With several tournaments coming up and his graduation from UMSL,

Penfield says, "I have one semester left and plan on enjoying it." Along with his studies, Penfield is also working on his golf game for many upcoming events.

Playing numerous tournaments for the Tritons, Penfield has led his team to victory while perfecting his game the entire time. Named the Great Lakes Valley Conference Golfer of the Month and winning multiple medals, Penfield's name is sure to continue being mentioned as long as he has a club in his hand.

For more information about the Men's Golf team and Penfield, visit www.umsltritons.com. With a champion like Penfield having come from the Triton forge, great things can be seen for the Men's Golf team.



Ryan Penfield, graduate from UMSL, wins the Metropolitan Annual Golf Championships at the St. Louis Country Club. **JENNIFER MEAHAN / THE CURRENT**

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Opinions

OUR OPINION

Boehner's bill worsens debt load for middle class students

Children are our future – but apparently, only the rich ones, according to Speaker of the House John Boehner.

Boehner's latest deficit reduction plan would, among other things, essentially eliminate future subsidized federal loans to graduate students. In addition, a number of existing loans would be shifted from the subsidized program to the unsubsidized one over a period of ten years.

Yes, the savings would be used to fund the Pell Grant program, which is another important program for students. But that isn't the crux of the problem. The problem is that Boehner is proposing this change even in the face of the results of a recently-released study from the Department of Education, which suggests that both the cost of graduate school and graduate students' reliance on financial aid is increasing.

Thankfully, the Republicans aren't trying to completely dismantle the federal student financial aid apparatus. As mentioned, the Pell Grant program will continue to be fully funded, and economically disadvantaged students will continue to receive repayment assistance thanks to IBR, or Income-Based Repayment, a program created under President Obama's 2009 student aid reform package.

In fact, the whole thing doesn't really look like that

bad of a deal at first glance. After all, low-income students will continue to receive badly-needed loans and repayment assistance, and unsubsidized loans will continue to be available for all students. What's the problem here, then? Well, one has to read between the lines.

First of all, how much money will this really save the country? Boehner's bill suggests that the elimination of federal interest subsidies on student loans would save the country roughly \$18 billion between 2012 and 2021. We spend \$300 million per day in Afghanistan. Congratulations, Mr. Boehner, you've just managed to fund two more months of George Bush's decade-long war.

This is a perfect example of the right's war on the middle class. Going by modern trends, the more educated one is, the more likely one is to vote Democrat. That dichotomy has only become more pronounced in recent years; the Republican Party's anti-education and anti-intellectual stance is clear. All one has to do is look at the current front-runners in the race for the Republican presidential nomination to see that.

The Republicans don't want educated voters; they want loyal and obedient voters, and they don't have too many of those among the "elitist intellectual" crowd.

For the moment, yes, it's only graduate students feeling the (supposedly) austerity-driven ire of the Republican party. However, when it comes to people like those leading the modern Republican party and the American conservative movement as a whole, history teaches us that if one gives them an inch, they'll try to take a mile.

The United States is the only industrialized country that does not subsidize the education of its citizens, and the Republicans seem to believe this is something to be proud of. America's wealth disparity is already among the worst in the developed world, and given that income is generally tied to education level (and vice versa, in many cases), the Republicans are making things even worse by slowly placing higher education out of reach of those who cannot afford it on their own. When coupled with the ever-increasing costs of tuition, this seems like nothing but a recipe for ultimate, long-term disaster. Apparently, the Republicans never learned the lesson that society is only as strong as its weakest member.

Unsigned editorials reflect the majority viewpoint of The Current's Editorial Board: Matthew Poposky, Minh Jung, Ashley Atkins, Cate Marquis, Jennifer Meahan, Jeremy Zschau and Janaca Scherer.

OUT OF LEFT FIELD

Bachmann's recent gaffes show her lack of credibility

The Tea Party likes to paint themselves as a grassroots organization, proudly telling anyone who will still listen that they are by the people and for the people. Tea Party politicians dress themselves up as populists, spouting empty nothings about "the real America" and couching their us-versus-them diatribes in as much patriotic, populist rhetoric as they can muster. Don't be fooled.

The Tea Party began as an expression of irrational partisan anger, and has only devolved from there. They have turned into a collection of extremist political hacks who will say anything if they believe it will further their political aims and increase their support among their rabidly devoted base. Take the current crop of Tea Party leaders; one need look no further than their current standard bearer, Michele Bachmann, to see proof in action.

Bachmann seems to have taken the place of Sarah Palin - who now seems content in her role as kingmaker for the far right - as the Tea Party's standard bearer. She certainly displays Palin's gift for distorting facts and mangling language, at the very least. Her list of gaffes is nearly as impressive as that of the Mama Grizzly herself; in the past, Bachmann's confused the movie star John Wayne with the serial killer John Wayne Gacy, wished Elvis Presley a happy birthday on the anniversary of his death, called John Quincy Adams a

Founding Father and stated that the Revolutionary War battles of Lexington and Concord took place in New Hampshire. (For the record, John Quincy Adams was eight when the republic was formed, and Lexington and Concord are both in Massachusetts.)

The Tea Party has always demonstrated a staggering ignorance of the history and Constitution of the country they claim to cherish above all else. But Bachmann's most recent gaffe is a perfect example of why the teabaggers would be just as much of a disaster at foreign policy as they would be when it comes to domestic policy.

In a recent radio interview, Michele Bachmann said that many people she had spoken to were afraid of "the rise of the Soviet Union." It's impossible to know exactly what she meant by that statement; in any case, whether she either committed yet another gaffe by confusing the Russian Federation with its communist predecessor or was voicing the opinion that people fear the rise of another Soviet Union is immaterial.

What is relevant is the insight that comments like hers and those of her teabagger compatriots give into the Tea Party's mindset. Their vision is locked not on today's America, but on America as it was during the Cold War. From Sarah Palin's jumbled yet ominous comments about Russia during the 2008 presidential election to Bachmann's Soviet Union comment,



Jeremy Zschau

the Tea Party has repeatedly appealed to the fear of the American people in an attempt to move the country backward, not forward. They have repeatedly shown a willingness to invent a bogeyman to further their aims if no true threat exists – which the Soviet Union does not, having collapsed in 1991.

History tells us that quite literally any government, be it democratic or autocratic, that rules on a platform of fear and xenophobia can not and will not endure through true hardship. Before they continue to embarrass themselves into eventual oblivion, Michele Bachmann and her Tea Party compatriots might want to take lessons from the same Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, the 18th century's absolutist France or any other number of oppressive, fear-mongering governments that have vanished onto the trash heap of history.

On second thought, perhaps everyone might be better off if Bachmann and her ilk went the same way.

Jeremy Zschau is the Opinions Editor and a columnist for The Current.

What do you think?
www.thecurrent-online.com.

SCIENCE MATTERS

Washington shaken up, but not by an election, for once

There was a big shake-up in Washington, D.C., but neither Congress nor an election are at fault this time. The fault lies with good old Mother Earth.

Earthquakes are a common experience in California, Hawaii and Alaska. Here is Missouri, we are used to living with the specter of the "big one" from the New Madrid Fault Zone, located in southeastern Missouri. But an earthquake is a new feeling for most people on the East Coast.

On August 23, Washington D.C., New York and other East Coast residents were rattled by an earthquake measured at 5.8 magnitude on the Richter scale. The epicenter was near the small town of Mineral, Virginia, 135 miles southwest of Washington, D.C. The quake was a shallow one, but the area is rocky and the tremor transmitted to areas unused to earthquakes.

Actually, there was a magnitude 5.3 earthquake in Colorado earlier that same day, one that actually caused more damage, although damage from both quakes seems minor. But what happens on the East Coast always seems to be bigger news, probably because so many large media outlets are based in the East, along with the majority of their audience. It always magnifies coverage all of their weather and natural events.

According to the United States Geological Survey, the top three U.S. states for earthquakes are Alaska, California and Hawaii, in descending order. In the continental 48 states, earthquakes tend to occur more often in the west, which has both more quakes and more

stronger ones, 3.5 or above. States in the western and northwestern U.S. are in the top ten for earthquakes. Missouri ranks 16th, in the next ten along with Colorado and some other southwestern and central states. Maine is also in that group but other East Coast states, including Virginia, have had relatively few quakes. The same is true of most Southern states and upper Midwestern states, although all have had at least one in the past 30 years. Eight states, ranging from Wisconsin to Florida, have had none.

Virginia's August 23 earthquake occurred in the Central Virginia Seismic Zone. The most notable earthquake in that zone was in 1875, believed to be about a magnitude 4.5. The strong earthquake ever recorded in Virginia was a magnitude 5.9 in May 1897, centered in Giles County, VA. The strongest to hit the East Coast was in 1886, a magnitude 7.3, centered near Charleston, South Carolina.

Virginia is about in the center of the North American tectonic plate, which extends out into the mid-Atlantic. The area does not receive many significant earthquakes, ones that can be felt by people. However, Virginia did feel some of the 1811-1812 New Madrid earthquakes.

Whether a quake is shallow or deep, and the geologic conditions around it, effect how widely the shaking is felt. The Virginia quake was felt across a wide range because it was a shallow earthquake and because of the geology of the eastern U.S. The rock in the eastern part of the country is much older than in the west,



Cate Marquis

where the far-younger rock absorbs some of the shaking. That means the earthquake is more intense at the epicenter, but is prevented from traveling as far. In the east, with older rock, earthquakes have a more widespread effect.

Although damage from the August 23 Virginia earthquake appears minor, there was one event that is significant for earthquake preparedness. A nuclear power plant in Virginia shut down, as a precaution but the event reveals our continued complacency about nuclear power plant safety and unexpected natural disasters. It is a subject that leaped to international attention after Japan's tsunami and nuclear disaster. Germany heeded that wake-up call by planning to phase-out nuclear power. Making a nuclear power plant completely safe from all natural disasters is near-impossible and the price of failure is far higher than for conventional fossil fuel or renewable-energy power plants, as the Japanese disaster attests.

Mother Nature has reminded us on several occasions recently that she often does the unexpected. Shouldn't we play it safe and plan ahead?

Cate Marquis is Arts and Entertainment Editor and a columnist for The Current.

POP CULTURE WITH POPOSKY

Life is full of experiences: get out there and push the boundaries

Life is short, people. This is a fact of life: get over it. The problem with this is not so much that people refuse to accept that life is short, but rather that some seem to forget how to deal with a short life.

There are many solutions to this scientific fact. Some devote the entirety of their time to a singular task or objective, hoping to improve one aspect of the world as thoroughly as possible. Others may retire to the simplicity and elasticity inherent to the lives of drug-addicts.

Yet others will commit themselves to working overly-much (not to be confused with being "muchier," in the words of *The Hatter*), forgetting what it is like to enjoy a moment of relaxation.

None of these lifestyles, however, is truly conducive to the expansion of the human condition. Human beings are creatures of diversity and acquisition. We do not expand our experiences and self-worth by simply confining ourselves to a single path of enrichment.

Rather, our lives are improved through the experience of new, changing things, and through the balance of a wide variety of activities. This is not to say that one should never have a down moment, but rather, be sure that activities which take the time between "down time" are varied.

The problem which arises from containing oneself to a

singular aspect is thus: boredom (often denied), 'patriotism' to one's course through life and, eventually, a near hatred of those who refuse to conform to the prescribed method of living.

Case in point: an overly-committed philanthropist for a specific cause may find any who does not agree with said philanthropic course to be "lacking in concern for their world." However, that other individual may simply believe that other concerns deserve a greater deal of attention.

Case two relates a stoner who believes that caring for anything in the world is simply a waste of time. These extremists will often describe the world as nothing more than a conspiracy-ridden mess, in which any action is taken with the distinct understanding that a greedy reaction will follow. Simply put, these individuals need good reason to justify a life lacking any direction, and thus insult those who attempt to move through the world at any pace.

Finally, we have those who have forgotten the concept of "fun" and now pump their entire being into nothing more than work. While it is entirely true that work is a necessity in order to allow advancement (not only of the self, but of society as a whole: nothing is accomplished without effort), a life devoted to naught but work does nobody any good. Rest



Matthew B. Poposky

and relaxation are still necessary for human beings to prosper, and those who do not recognize this fact are often spiteful towards others who find a great deal of enjoyment in their lives.

Balance is a point this column pushes quite often. Be it balance of work ethics, balance of personal life activities or any sort of balancing for that matter. Just please do not attempt to balance on top of a building. That is dangerous.

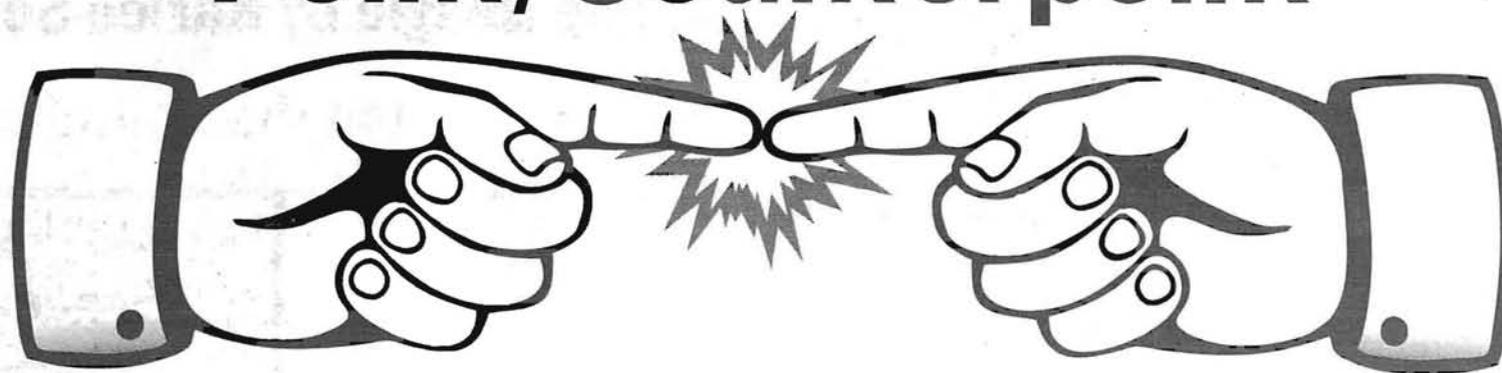
But seriously, find a balance in life, dear readers. This column does not rant simply to rant: it rants in the hopes of improving the human condition in this world.

Do not sit in a dark room, hating the rest of the world for enjoying some aspect of life that is alien in nature: rather, attempt to learn about it, embrace new experiences, and love life a bit more each day. Growth, be it personal or otherwise, requires diversity.

Matthew B. Poposky is Editor-in-Chief and a columnist for The Current.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Let us know at www.thecurrent-online.com

Point/Counterpoint



Is BART's denial of cell phone service a violation of free speech?

The platforms belong to BART, they are within their rights to control service

The First Amendment promises us the freedom of speech. As we know, it allows us to be able to say and promote anything we want to say. Groups can assemble, protest and dispute any matter they want to in public. However, free speech is not always protected everywhere; in this case, in California, the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) incident where BART officials shut off cell phone towers to purposely disrupt the use of text messaging and social media use for protestors against previous police actions.

Protestors were starting to gather in and around BART facilities because of a previous incident with a homeless man who was apparently wielding a knife in public. The police believed he was a threat and shot him to death when he failed to submit, which was the initial spark that caused the protests.

The idea for shutting off cell towers to stop protests is not without precedent. It is an issue that has been dealt with in the past by First Amendment activists

on several occasions. One of the first instances of this happening was in 2007 when Verizon Wireless shut off their customers' ability to text for a certain period of time to stop a deliberate text spamming, as well as other related protests that were spreading throughout their network. Even though people were not able to text for a certain period of time, it was not infringing on their rights to freedom of speech because they were trying to stop a possible crisis on what was essentially their property. They were simply acting in the best interest of their customers as well as their company.

From the reports thus far, the cell phone towers were off for about three hours in the areas and transit stations in which BART has jurisdiction. It seems that there will always be a group of people who won't follow directions from the police, even though the police are sworn to protect and serve the people in their jurisdiction the best they can. The best way that they sought to protect citizens using the BART system

were to stop possible ways people could send information to populate these gatherings, and due to increasing levels of interest and public outcry, stop a possible riot that the protests could have formed.

There seems to be no stronger evidence that suggests any infringement on the freedom of speech in any case. At first glance it might, but looking through the BART officials' reactions on the protests, protecting the people of California seems to be top priority compared to having groups rallying against the shooting of the knife wielding homeless man, because he was a possible threat, it had to be dealt with in the most professional manner and with the people's best interests in mind.

With the retaliation of the hacker collective called Anonymous, who claimed responsibility for the subsequent hacking of the BART website and systems, things seem to be escalating beyond simple protests and moving towards a full-blown clash over the extent of free speech rights.

BART's denial of service is a definite violation of the First Amendment

When it comes to placing limitations on individuals' First Amendment rights, what may seem like a small tactic of control can easily lead to a slippery slope of unconstitutional censorship. If limitations on the right to free speech and assembly become a legitimate method of controlling the masses, it will completely jeopardize the fundamental belief that individuals' freedoms hold greater weight than a bureaucratic blanket of central principles.

A prime example of a First Amendment censorship tactic can be found in the actions of California's Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) officials. In response to the police shooting of a knife-wielding homeless man on a BART platform, several protests of the police shooting were arranged through the use of social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Now this is where everything gets complicated. After several citizen protests on BART platforms, BART officials decided to handle the situation swiftly and domineeringly. In an attempt to

make the organization of such protests more difficult, they shut off cell phone service on their platforms, citing the disturbance and agitation of commuters.

Under the guise of being "business savvy," BART officials have illegally violated peoples' First Amendment right to free speech. If the founding fathers were alive today, their Twitter accounts and Facebook profiles would most likely be inundated with ferocious objections to the BART officials' actions.

But this goes far beyond a merely illegal act. Statutes are in place for many reasons, a major one being to deter certain behaviors that compromise the fundamental beliefs this country relies on. In this case, the actions of BART officials could have far reaching consequences on how the right to free speech is interpreted. In the interest of freedom, the First Amendment must not be toyed with.

By shutting off peoples' access to cell phone service on BART platforms in an attempt to shut down citizen protests, the First Amend-

ment is being completely discarded by BART officials and they should be reprimanded or punished. Businesses simply should not have the right to place limitations on individuals' constitutional rights.

It is a shame that such a tragic and unfortunate event has become a catalyst for the clichéd age-old fight against "the man," in this case the big business that is BART.

Nonetheless, it is vital to the survival of free speech in this country to promptly act to put an end to BART officials' unconstitutional censorship. If people let this unlawful act slide the only question left is what's next?

If big businesses are allowed at will to place limitations on individuals' fundamental rights in order to save face, make a quick buck or control the masses, where would we draw the line? Point blank, BART officials are guilty of violating the First Amendment. If unconstitutional censorship this blatant is allowed, it could lead to a slippery slope that ends in the loss of the rights of the individual.

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