

The Current

WWW.THECURRENT-ONLINE.COM

March 5, 2012

VOL. 45;
ISSUE 1371

MISSING PHOENIX:

DISAPPEARANCE OF

UNIVERSITY

STUDENT LEAVES QUESTIONS

FOR
FRIENDS,
FAMILY.

COURTESY OF COLDON FAMILY

MATTHEW B. POPOSKY
Editor-in-Chief

A University of Missouri – St. Louis student, Phoenix Coldon, junior, undeclared, disappeared from her home on Sunday, December 18, 2011. Since then, searches have occurred, flyers have been posted and lines have been tied up with inquiries regarding the young student's condition, whether she has been heard from or seen, etc. What follows is the account of Phoenix's disappearance and the process followed since that day by her parents, Goldia and Lawrence Coldon.

"Sunday, December 18, 2011 was a beautiful day," Goldia Coldon, mother, said. It was sunshiny and warm. Phoenix and I attended worship together at our church, Westminster Presbyterian Church. She played in the Hand Bell Choir that day"

"We stopped at Aldi's between Belfontane and 270 on the way home. She went in her room to change and went down to the garage to get a basketball and shoot hoops."

"I was in my room and watched her play for awhile, because I heard the ball hitting the side of the house. I always pray she doesn't break the bedroom window when she does that – she shoots it so hard. She's just like a little girl with the basketball."

"I didn't see her come inside, but Lawrence said she put the basketball back in the garage and went to sit

in her truck in the driveway. We thought she was on the phone, and I remember stepping out on the porch, seeing her silhouette in the truck. You can see past the front windows to the end of the truck from our house. I remember peeping off the porch and seeing her. I came back inside, and Lawrence saw her leave."

Lawrence continued the day's transcription at this point.

"I saw Phoenix back out of the driveway and pull off. That was the last time we saw her, at about 3 p.m. that Sunday. She didn't come back home. We thought she had gone to the store or a friend's house, something like that. When she didn't come back home that night, my wife was worried, saying something was wrong, since Phoenix was not home. Phoenix isn't the type to stay out all night and not inform us."

"We later found out that the same day, at 6:23 p.m., her truck was towed from a location in East St. Louis at 9th Street and St. Claire Avenue. It was found with the key still in the ignition and the door open. We didn't know the truck had been towed at that time, though."

"The next day we called friends and hospitals, and that night we called the St. Louis County Police Department. The officer came to take a report and basically lectured us on how, given Phoenix's age, she didn't have to tell us where she was, etc. She was grown

and would be home when she wanted," Lawrence Coldon Sr., father, said.

The police, it turns out, were not helpful to the Coldons. The officer taking the report offered to run the plates of Phoenix's truck, but reported turning up no responses. He also did not file a missing person's report, citing his earlier mention of Phoenix's age. The next day, another officer did come out and say she would file a report, although her check of the truck's tags also came up empty. According to Lawrence, it was later discovered that the police in East St. Louis received a 911 call about the abandoned truck in the previously stated condition, but did not file a tow sheet report on it.

"It took two weeks for us to find her truck in East St. Louis because the people over there did not do their jobs. We did not find that truck until January 1, two weeks after she went missing. We had made flyers, called people all around the country – we found the truck through a family friend, who had his friend run the tags. It took them 15 minutes to find the truck. There was a two-week lag in which we could not search for our daughter because we did not know where her truck had gone missing, or that it had been found the very same day," Lawrence said.

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The Current

VOL. 45, ISSUE 1371
WWW.THECURRENT-ONLINE.COM

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ABOUT The Current

The Current is the student newspaper at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, printing weekly through the fall and spring semesters on Mondays. Advertising rates are available upon request; terms, conditions and restrictions apply. The Current, financed in part by student activities fees, is not an official publication of UM-St. Louis.

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The Current accepts letters to the editor. All letters should be brief, and those not exceeding 250 words will be given preference. The Current edits letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number and, where applicable, student number. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to respond to and to deny any letters.

AFFILIATIONS



What's Current

Your weekly calendar of campus events. "What's Current" is a free service for student organizations. Submissions must be turned in by 5 p.m. the Thursday before publication; first-come, first-served. Listings may be edited for length and style. E-mail event listings to thecurrenttips@umsl.edu, with the subject "What's Current." No phone or written submissions.

Tuesday, March 6

Executive fellows mentoring project

From 2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. Located in 427 SSB and open to all. Gary Lee, executive fellow, will be facilitating a mentoring project. The purpose of this mentoring project is to help students meet their career goals after graduation. Executive fellows facilitate three sessions per program with small groups of three to five students. Prior registration is required. For more information, call Dr. Malaika Horne at 314-516-4749.

Thursday, March 8

Faculty colloquium: writing teaching philosophy and research

From 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Located in 589 Lucas Hall and open to faculty. Begin working on documents for third year, promotion, tenure review and award nominations. Learn to craft these statements with structure, guidance, resources and examples provided by faculty colleagues. Laptops helpful, but not essential. Reserve a seat from the Technology Support Center at 314-516-6034. For more information, contact Peggy Cohen at 314-516-4508.

Wednesday, March 7

Creating online tests

From 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Located in 104 ESH and open to all. There are two methods for creating online tests, and this session will cover both methods. MyGateway has its own test-generating function within the content areas, and the free test-generating software Respondus allows you to upload a pre-existing exam into MyGateway. Topics to be covered include: creating/selecting test questions in MyGateway, Respondus download and usage, differences between "deploying tests" and setting "test options" and scheduling exams in the Online Testing Center. For more information, call the Faculty Resource Center at 314-516-6704.

Friday, March 9

Capstone course – Financial Plan Development Course

From 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Located in the JC Penney Conference Center and open to all. Beginning in 2012, the education requirements for CFP® certification will include completion of a financial plan development course registered with CFP Board. This capstone course requirement has been designed to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of individuals seeking to attain CFP® certification and implement an assessment of their ability to deliver professional and competent financial planning services to the public. Fee: \$995. For more information, call Erica Candela at 314-516-5908.

Monday, March 12

Statehouse Sisters

From 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Located in MSC Century Room A and open to all. For only the second time, the top prosecutors in Missouri's two largest metropolitan areas are women. Join us as St. Louis Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce and Jackson County Prosecutor Jean Peters-Baker talk about their roles and experiences in the real world of law and order. Federal Magistrate and former Court of Appeals Judge Nannette Baker will moderate. For more information, call Dayna Stock 314-516-6623.

Crimeline

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| February 22, 2012 – 3:45pm Report # 12-73 – Theft – Oak Hall. An UMSL Student reported that an unattended I-pod was stolen from a lounge. Value \$ 330.00. Disposition: Report taken. | February 23, 2012 – 12:30pm Report # 12-75 – Auto Accident – Lot K. Minor accident, two vehicles involved. Disposition: Report taken. | February 26, 2012 – 1:48pm Report # 12-77 – Domestic Assault – University Meadows Apartments. An UMSL student was assaulted by her non-student boyfriend who was arrested for Assault and Property Damage. Disposition: Pending. | For further details, visit http://safety.umsl.edu/police/campus-crime-info/daily-log.html , or check out UMSL Campus Police on Facebook and Twitter. |
|---|---|--|---|

A Simple Addendum

The Current regrets that sometimes in our making of this publication, we make mistakes. What we do not regret is correcting our mistakes. Please let us know of any corrections that need to be made. In last week's issue, the upcoming production of "Sleeping

Beauty" was cited as being by the Alexandra Ballet. However, the St. Louis Ballet will actually be producing "Sleeping Beauty." The actual information is: "Swan Lake" ballet, performed by Saint Louis Ballet April 27 to 29 at 8 p.m. in the Touhill Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall.

WEATHER

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News

Students, community unite in solidarity to protest peace for Syria

RACHELLE BRANDEL
Staff Writer

On Thursday March 1, the University of Missouri – St. Louis' Muslim Student Association - working with the American Civil Liberties Union, the Council of American Islamic Associations, Veterans for Peace and Occupy St. Louis - held a protest for peace to raise awareness for the bloodshed taking place in Syria.

Syria, a country residing above Israel and Jordan, has had civil unrest for quite some time. It started in March 2011 with the Tunisian Revolution, in which protesters took to the streets to protest the torture of students who had put up anti-government graffiti. Protestors had to withstand direct assaults from the government as President Bashar al-Assad sent tanks into restive cities and ordered his military to fire on demonstrators in April.

"President Bashar [al-Assad] is an oppressive dictator... his purpose is not to rule the country but to keep himself in power," Faizan Syed, protest host, said.

According to The New

York Times, in the summer and fall thousands of soldiers defected and attacked the government, bringing the country to the edge of civil war.

On February 23, 2012 the United Nations reported that "gross human rights violations" had been ordered by the Syrian government as state policy at "the highest levels of the armed forces and the government," which amounted to crimes against humanity. The panel of investigators who put together the report said it was based on 369 interviews with victims, witnesses, defectors and others with "inside knowledge." Photographs, video recordings and satellite imagery was also used to corroborate witness accounts, but the investigators were not allowed to enter Syria.

A spokesman for the U.N. said that "well over 7,500" people had died so far in the conflict.

With this information at the forefront of their minds, a group of about 50 people met to raise awareness for the plight of the Syrian people.

"[We] are standing in solidarity with the people in Syr-

ia...with the hope that there will be peace and justice in Syria," Syed said. The group raised Syrian flags over their heads and draped scarves in the Syrian colors of black, white and green with red stars over their shoulders. Many made signs and had shirts and hoodies with sayings and slogans demanding peace and requesting help for Syria. The chants and speeches were led by the hosts and representatives from each sponsoring organization.

Many students felt that the events in Syria hit close to home.

"Syria has Muslims," Adeela Langrial, junior, psychology, said. "I am a Muslim from Pakistan. I'm here to support my own community."

"If there's something going on in another part of the world that affects UMSL students directly, it's really important for us to talk about that," Ashley Hinman, junior, environmental studies, said.

But what many UMSL students did not know is that many of the people present were protesting at a risk to their own lives. "It's a direct threat to

Syrian families here in America," said a protestor. "That's why many of us are wearing [large] sunglasses to hide our faces. Many of the people you see on T.V. don't normally hide their faces; they cover their faces out of fear [for their lives]."

One protestor brought her children to experience the event, including a small baby boy who loved to grab at the flags. "My kids watch the news and see everything we see," said the protesting mother. "When I lay down with my baby at night after just having watched ten, 15 babies who had just been shot in the head or maimed or tortured from this brutal oppression...the least I can do is bring [my baby] to one of these protests and let [my baby] know what's going on and try to let others know. It's the least we can do in this country."

Syed ended his chants with:

"Syria, Syria, do not you fear. Tell your people we are here. Syria, Syria, do not you cry. Liberty will never die."

One-on-one Interview

On Thursday afternoon, while the protest for peace blazed on, one protestor sat apart from the others. She sat on a bench by the ponds, wrapped in her burka, watching the protest unfold in all its glory. She watched the flags unfold and listened to the chants echo off Clark Hall, and in spirit she was raising the highest flag and issuing the loudest cry.

This protestor lives in Syria. While visiting family in America, she cannot forget the fight raging on in her country. She is so afraid that word will get back to her country that she is against President Bashar al-Assad and his tyranny that she must hide her face underneath her hijab and cannot take part in the protest. She is so afraid that she could not obtain her name.

Students at University of Missouri – St. Louis can only read about the atrocities happening in Syria, but this woman has directly ex-

perienced the oppression in Syria. As is relayed by her granddaughter, this woman's son was taken unlawfully to prison by the Syrian military.

Her son was on his way to the Mosque when the militant enforcers took him and other men right off the street. "There was no reason for it. Some people got to leave and some people didn't. My father wasn't one who got to leave," the protestor's granddaughter said. He was taken to prison, where he was held for two years by the Syrian police.

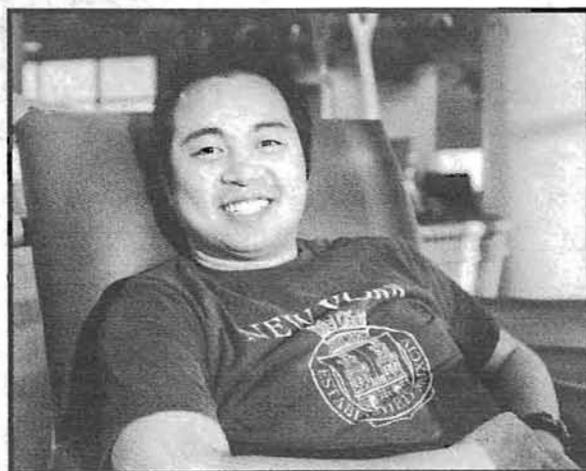
When she was finally able to visit her son in jail, this mother walked in and was met with a scrawny, old-looking man with red blood-shot eyes, whose face was black and blue and who could hardly hear out of his left ear. She began to cry and could not stop; the guards of the jail happened to notice and asked her, "Why are you crying?" "That is my son," she said.

Continued on page 4.

The UNDERCURRENT

by Jarred Gastreich

"What are your thoughts on the rising gas prices?"



"I've got decent gas mileage, it doesn't affect me as much."

Rian Flamenco
Senior
Computer Science



"It's pretty bad, especially for the international student. They will spend lots of money on their gas and car."

Xichen Liu
Senior
Information Systems



"I think it's wrong, because our jobs are not paying more. If gas prices are going to go up maybe people should get a pay raise to make up the difference."

Ebony McClure
Junior
Criminal Justice

Tuition hike okay for students - may hurt UMSL's operations

HALI FLINTROP
News Editor

A tuition increase of three-percent has been approved for the University of Missouri - St. Louis. This is a significantly smaller amount than the previously proposed 7.7 percent and the five percent that was actually approved by the UM Board of Curators in January, according to a UM system document titled "FY 2012 Tuition and Other Related Enrollment Fees."

The now-proposed three-percent tuition increase is in place to offset the seven-percent cut to UMSL's budget that was the result of Governor Nixon's smaller 2012 public higher education budget. Some students balked at the larger tuition increases, and the three-percent increase will be easier for them to take.

Still, the three-percent increase does not cover UMSL's budget loss after the state cuts, and there is concern for how the university will make up the difference. The math shows students and university administrators alike that UMSL is set to experience significant duress, caught between funding cuts and the negative effects of overburdening students with high tuition.

Many students were disturbed by the earlier proposed larger cuts, saying that UMSL is supposed to be a cheaper option among local elite and private universities. "I know that private colleges around the state have their specialties and are for some people, but I see no point in paying \$40,000 [plus] a year for a degree when you can most likely obtain a degree in the same field for so much less [at UMSL]. So seriously, come to UMSL; it's cheap," Renee Cisar, freshman,

special education said.

A tuition increase that is too high could take away a lot of UMSL's marketability to students who make their college decisions based on tuition cost and affordability.

"Well, obviously the tuition increase will affect [students'] pocket books. Entering the colligate world, we as students knew college wouldn't be cheap and that prices were only rising. It's aggravating to hear that UMSL's tuition is going up," Cisar said in response to the proposed seven-percent increase.

After the decision to increase tuition only three-percent, Cisar said she understands the necessity of the increase and believes students can still find a way to afford a higher education.

"Since it was clear that a tuition hike was going to happen, I'll take a three-percent raise over seven any day. It's not ideal, but unfortunately these days it's to be expected. I could complain that [a] hike happened at all, but it's just not worth it. This is my advice: start applying for scholarships if you haven't already. You'd be amazed at how ready companies and organizations are to assist you through school."

The smaller increase may mean fewer problems for students, but it exacerbates the funding problem for UMSL. "If the current proposal holds, state funding to UMSL will have decreased \$11.5 million from fall 2010 to fall 2012, and costs to continue operations will have increased several million dollars as well," Thomas George, chancellor, UMSL, said. "Tuition increases over the same period would have produced

only about \$6.5 million - reflective of our collective desire to keep tuition as affordable as possible. But low tuition increases, continuing state funding cuts and increased costs to continue operations have put a tremendous strain on UMSL - necessitating the elimination of open faculty positions and more than 60 filled staff positions."

These necessary changes will negatively affect the UMSL community, which is forced to continue cutting positions and saving money, despite its already high standards of efficiency in response to past cuts. "We have strived to be more efficient and make past budget cuts as painless to students as possible. We will continue to look for ways in which to be more efficient, but it will be difficult to continue making cuts of this magnitude without [the cuts] affecting our academic core and becoming noticeable to students," George said.

"We will be meeting over the next several weeks with members of the Provost's Council, the University Assembly Budget and Planning Committee and colleagues from other UM campuses to discuss possible solutions and strategies to move forward," George said.

Though UMSL cannot continue to maintain relatively low tuition in the face of state budget cuts without suffering either a financial deficit, failing quality of programs and facilities, or some combination thereof, the current situation will be managed as effectively as possible to maintain standards of quality.

Unnamed protestor speaks on oppression and dangers in Syria

RACHELLE BRANDEL
Staff Writer

Continued from page 3.

"Do not worry about him," they told her. "We feed him and cloth him. You shouldn't cry. There's no reason for you to cry."

This woman had had to worry about her child's wellbeing for two years, and her first glimpse of him had shown her all the pain and damage that had been done to him, yet they told her she had no reason to cry.

"They do not understand why a mother would cry for her son who's in jail for no reason. He was only about 18 years old," said the granddaughter.

According to her granddaughter, a person is not safe from the Syrian mili-

tary even if they go into hiding; a person's family is in as much danger as the person being sought out. "If they couldn't find you, they would take one of your children and give you five days to show up before they would torture your family," the granddaughter said. "The only reason they don't kill them in jail is so they can tell others about what happened to them in jail to make others less likely to speak out."

This woman's son was able to leave after two years and later had a family of his own. He was also present at the protest for peace along with his daughter, the protestor's granddaughter, who related this story.

Neither the protestor nor her son would speak of the event, and her granddaughter says they never will. The fear of the event is ingrained into both of them, but the spirit of justice is ingrained deeper.

Though their faces will never be present on a newspaper, nor their names printed in the pages of history, they will continue to fight against the tyrannical dictatorship holding Syria hostage. They will continue to believe that Syria will one day be free and they will be able to speak freely once more.

"I want them [the children] to be able to visit [Syria] again one summer," said the granddaughter.

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St. Louis red-light cameras to be removed by recent consideration

ANGELA ACTON
Staff Writer

St. Louis Circuit Court Judge Mark Neill has officially banned the city's red-light camera ordinance.

Throughout the cameras' five-year run, almost 270,000 notices have been issued at the standard rate of 100 dollars for camera-captured vehicles driving through one of the city's 51 equipped intersections. The city is pending appeal.

City Counselor Patricia Hageman advocates the use of red-light cameras. "Throughout the pending appeal we will continue to operate our red-light cameras and people will be expected to pay their violations," said Hageman.

Judge Neill stated that the ordinance has always been voluntary and is now void. People may be threatened with having the charge put on their credit, but it will not happen. Even before this ruling, it was up to the perpetrators whether they wanted to pay or not.

Neill's decision was a progression from a 2009 lawsuit filed by three automobilists who challenged the constitutionality of the law.

On February 17, 2012, Neill stated in his final ruling that the law was improper because it did not offer a way for someone to contest the infringement apart from cases in which defendants claimed they were not the driver or that the vehicle was stolen.

"[The cameras do] nothing to regulate and control the streets or traffic... and the city presented no evidence to the contrary," Neill said.

St. Louis Director of Operations Captain Sam Dotson begs to differ. "Red light camera systems,

photo enforcement systems, are designed to change behavior," Dotson said. "And 98 percent of the time, it looks like we're changing behavior."

Dotson thinks of it in terms of basic psychology conditioning skills: if a person got a fine at a particular intersection, they would remember it every time they passed that light, and if they did

camera and a photo we take at a crime scene? In court, it still takes an officer to testify that the photo is accurate and explain what it depicts. I feel outlawing this type of technology is a step back for law enforcement. They threw the baby out with the bath water."

Hageman agrees with Sherriff Boyer. "We believe Missouri law is

"[Red-light cameras] are not very accurate."

---Trevor Nathanson

not want any fines, they would avoid running the red lights at other camera-equipped intersections as well. This does not account for the camera-free intersections, though.

Arnold in Jefferson County was the first city to adopt red-light cameras in the state in 2005. Although Jefferson County is not affected by the St. Louis ordinance(which applies only within the actual city limits), Sheriff Boyer worries they may be soon.

"The Jefferson County Council voted approximately three months ago to make the use of red-light or speed cameras illegal in the rural areas of Jefferson County," Boyer said. "My personal opinion is that there are areas that these tools should be used by law enforcement, but certainly never to simply generate funds for the local government. I could discuss for hours why the uses of these cameras are not illegal. For example, what is the difference between the use of a speed

clear that Missouri cities, including St. Louis, have the right to enact red-light safety ordinances such as this one, and we look forward to bringing this case to the appellate courts," Hageman said.

University of Missouri - St. Louis students understandably have mixed feelings about red-light cameras. Many said that it was the best thing St. Louis has done in a long time, and stated bluntly that the cameras "suck."

"They are not very accurate," said Trevor Nathanson, junior, business administration.

Certain areas may have more sensitive cameras, depending on the volume of traffic that passes through those areas. Natural Bridge Road, for instance, has a reputation for very unforgiving cameras.

"I like it for people that are good at driving because then they won't get tickets, but then people that are bad at driving will get away," said Charlie Faron, sophomore, business.

NEWS @ NOON PRESENTS:

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DOES PLACE MATTER, AND...SHOULD IT?

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Amazon's pulls over 4,000 e-books - future for the Kindle?

Students worry about the future of their Kindles after Amazon's pull

RACHELLE BRANDEL
 Staff Writer

Recently Amazon removed over 4,000 e-books from its site when it could not get the Independent Publisher's Group to sell the e-books more cheaply. Amazon, which attempts to sell e-books at the lowest possible prices in an effort to increase interest in their Kindle devices, would not yield to the prices the IPG requested when their Kindle contract came up for renewal.

According to The New York Times, the IPG asserted that the prices were too low, and neither side could come to an agreement. This stalemate resulted in Amazon pulling all of IPG's e-books off its market. IPG's print versions of such books are still for sale.

This disagreement ignited fears concerning the power Amazon holds over the physical and digital book markets, since it is the dominant seller.

Andy Ross, who is an agent and former bookseller, warns smaller presses about what this could mean for their contracts. "They are being offered a Hobson's choice of accepting Amazon's terms, which are unsustainable, or losing the ability to sell Kindle editions of their books, the format that constitutes about 60 percent of all e-books," said Ross.

On the IPG website they assure customers that the electronic formats of their books are available with other booksellers nationwide. This could cause Amazon to lose potential Kindle

customers if it cannot make future agreements with IPG and other publishers. The company could also end up losing even more e-books in its online catalogue.

Curt Matthews, the CEO of IPG/Chicago Review Press, Inc., recently posted an article on the IPG website ipgbook.com in an effort to explain why IPG could not agree to Amazon's terms. He broke down the cost of a printed book: an author's royalty rate is commonly 7.5-10 percent depending on whether the book is paperback or hardback as well as on the levels of sales that are achieved. The publisher sells the book to booksellers and wholesalers at half of the cover price (so if a book is 14.95, the bookseller will buy the book for 7.48). Printing the book runs about 10 percent per copy, and warehouse storage and transport will run around 10 percent for each book, leaving 20 percent for the publisher to pay their bills and make a profit.

The difference in price between an e-book and a printed book is that the e-book is about 20% cheaper to produce, with no need for warehouse storage, transport or printing. This does not include the amount of money that booksellers like Amazon would save by not having storage or transport to pay for.

But Matthews makes it especially clear that "an e-book still needs all of the expensive editorial services... and if it is going to sell, it

has to be marketed, distributed and publicized, just as a print edition must be."

According to Matthews, publishers can only work with Amazon in two ways: the Agency model, which gives publishers 70 percent of the e-book list price, and the wholesale model, which gives 50 percent of the e-book list price. He asserts that Amazon is "insisting on terms for both print books and e-books that are even less favorable for independent presses."

For University of Missouri - St. Louis students, this outcome could mean that certain e-books used in classes may no longer be available for their Kindles. When the contracts of other publishers come up for renewal, Amazon must come to an agreement or even essential e-textbooks may disappear from the market.

"I already don't have many choices [for textbooks] but to close the market even further defeats the purpose of having a Kindle," said Kristina Bohler, senior, English. "The whole purpose of e-readers is to have the same books on the digital market as the printed market. It defeats the purpose of the Kindle to not have the same access."

Many consumers hope that this stalemate will end like the disagreement Amazon had with Macmillan two years ago. Amazon initially removed e-books and even printed copies from its market, but eventually relented and sold Macmillan books at the publisher's set price.

A&E



Oscar winner 'A Separation' compels with tale of family breakup in Iran

Leila Hatami as Simin, in "A Separation."

COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

CATE MARQUIS
A&E Editor

One of the best films of 2011, "A Separation" has a near-perfect script and is brilliantly edited and acted. It is a drama that resonates everywhere - the breakup of a marriage. It won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, was nominated for Best Original Screenplay and previously won four awards at the Berlin International Film Festival, including the Golden Bear for Best Film.

This Iranian drama has a story that is both universal and specific to modern Iran. A well-educated middle-class couple struggles with the breakup of their marriage. Things are further complicated by the conflicted feelings of their

young teen daughter, the challenges of caring for the husband's confused, elderly father, and the problems of dealing with the Iranian legal system. The family issues and heartbreak are universal, but the film gives a remarkable glimpse specifically into life in modern Iran.

Those who are familiar with Iranian films are aware of their high quality. In addition to having top-rate production values, strong acting and polished and accessible Western style filmmaking, Iranian films frequently display amazing fearlessness in tackling the difficult topics facing their nation.

"A Separation" begins and ends with a couple going before a judge. The well-educated wife, Simin (Leila

Hatami), is frustrated by the lack of opportunity for women in her country. She wants a divorce because her husband won't emigrate, and she is hoping to take her daughter Terman (Sarina Farhadi) with her. Her husband Nader (Peyman Moadi) is a responsible, educated man who is angry about his wife's decision to leave him and fears losing his daughter. He refuses to leave their apartment - where they have been caring for his partially-disabled father - which complicates the divorce under Iranian law. In a culture where wives care for elderly relatives at home, hiring someone, particularly a woman, to care for an older man in a home where there is no wife is fraught with dangers under Islamic

law.

Meanwhile, the couple's daughter is torn between loyalties to both her parents, and does not fully comprehend what leaving the country could mean for her.

The script pulls all of these elements together and places them in a dramatic framework that is both personally dramatic and socially insightful; it can only be described as genius.

The story is not only absorbing, but also filled with appealing characters the audience will care about. Thanks to these characters, the personal emotional context is never lost, yet the story still manages to make hard-hitting observations about the challenges of living under the Iranian legal

system. Many challenges are universal to modern life, but not all; some are unique to Iran's Islamic style of government.

None of this would work without excellent acting. Leila Hatami is wonderful as Simin, who seems wistful about leaving her husband but focused on her daughter's future. Likewise, Peyman Moadi's Nader seems like a man who is just trying to make his family life work but is angry at what he sees as his wife's selfishness. There are no good guys or bad guys, just people trying to live their lives.

If there is a villain, it is the inflexible Iranian system, which complicates the characters' personal lives on many levels. Even the young woman Nader hires to help

with his father, who lies to him about her situation and puts him in danger, lies out of desperation over the circumstances that are due in part to her country's laws towards women.

The film offers up no pat answers and ends with an open-ended situation that forces the audience to make up their own minds about which way the characters are going to go.

Simply put, this is an excellent drama with a heartbreaking, tension-filled story and appealing characters that make it well worth the effort to read the subtitles.

"A Separation," in Farsi with English subtitles, is now playing at the Plaza Frontenac Cinema.

Grade: A

'The Lorax' is best kind of kids' film

CATE MARQUIS
A&E Editor

What makes a great kids' film? A good story with a message and values parents can embrace? A good story that engages and enchants kids while entertaining adults with lots of laughs? Wonderful, entertaining animation? Appealing characters voiced by talented, well-cast voice actors? A classic children's story as the basis? How about all of the above?

The audience-pleasing "The Lorax" is the whole package, the perfect combination of affectionate adaptation of Dr. Seuss' beloved children's classic and a truly entertaining, fun film with a positive message built in, not grafted on. That the 3-D film debuted on Dr. Seuss' birthday - the day chosen for a national reading event focused on his beloved book - makes it all the sweeter.

A sassy Danny DeVito is the perfect choice for the Lorax, the grumpy magical creature that "speaks for the trees." Zac Efron plays Ted, a 13-year-old boy who wants to impress the tree-loving Audrey (Taylor Swift), by getting her a real tree. But there are no real trees in their all-plastic town ("and they like it that way") of Thneedville. To find a real tree, Ted's Grandma Norma (Betty White) tells him he

must seek out the reclusive Once-Ler (Ed Helms), who knows what happened to all the trees because he is responsible for their loss. The story ends on a hopeful note, with a seed and a message favoring sustainable use of natural resources over mindless greed.

"The Lorax" is funny and entertaining, capturing the appeal of the book and adding some of director Chris Renaud's playfulness as well, while also expanding on the book's environmental message. Zac Efron's character builds on the boy in the book who goes to hear the Once-Ler's tale of the Lorax and the trees. This new character allows the story to be more fully told, and the framing of the tale in his suburbanite town of Thneedville helps bring it home for a young audience.

The 3-D animated film adaptation includes songs and a little of Dr. Seuss' rhyming but just enough to evoke the classic book. The animation captures the book's drawings best in the Lorax and the forest animals, especially the book's cutely funny-looking humming fish. The golden fish are particularly humorous, providing a harmonizing, falsetto chorus to comically back up the tale.

One of the film's two best songs is its first one, in which the people of the all-plastic town of Thneedville

sing about their artificial, all-electric trees and how they solved the air pollution problem by buying "bottled air."

But the film's strongest song is sung by the Once-Ler, the likeable and ambitious young man who makes his invention, the multi-purpose Thneed, from the trees he cuts down, never noticing that they are disappearing. As he sings the chorus "what's wrong with that," its meaning changes from an innocent plea for making a living to justifying making a fortune, and then turning ironic when it comes to cutting down the last trees.

Mr. O'Hare (Rob Riggle), a little guy with a funny-looking haircut, is Thneedville's fabulous wealthy purveyor of bottled air, and serves as the film's villain. Since trees make fresh air for free, a tree is the last thing O'Hare wants to see in Thneedville.

The book's story is mixed with this whole new cast of characters surrounding Ted's lively adventure evading the greedy O'Hare to win the girl and bring back a tree.

"The Lorax" is pure delight and the kind of movie parents can feel good about taking their kids to see, a pretty rare commodity these days - almost as scarce as trees in Thneedville.

Grade: A

LATEST + GREATEST

Movie Calendar

Movies opening Friday, March 9
(subject to change)

JOHN CARTER (everywhere)

Inspired by the science fiction adventure novels by Edgar Rice Burroughs, this live-action film is directed by Pixar's Andrew Stanton (*WALL-E*, *Finding Nemo*, *Toy Story*). A Civil War veteran (Taylor Kitsch) finds himself on Mars, which turns out to be a lush planet with 12-foot tall inhabitants. Impressive supporting cast includes Willem Dafoe, Samantha Morton, Mark Strong, Thomas Haden Church, Ciaran Hinds, Dominic West, James Purefoy and Bryan Cranston.

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT KEVIN (Plaza Frontenac)

Scary stuff, a powerfully-acted, terrifying family-drama-as-horror-film about the worst possible mother raising the worst possible son. Stars Tilda Swinton, John C. Reilly. Lynne Ramsay (*Morven Callar*) directs.

SILENT HOUSE (everywhere)

Elizabeth Olsen, who played a woman who escapes a scary cult in "Martha Marcy May Marlene," finds herself trapped in her family's lakeside vacation home, cut-off from the outside world as ominous things begin to happen. This horror film is directed by Chris Kentis and Laura Lau.

FRIENDS WITH KIDS (everywhere)

A comedy about two platonic friends who decide to have a child together without becoming romantically involved. Directed by and starring Jennifer West, along with Maya Rudolph, Adam Scott and Chris Dowd.

A THOUSAND WORDS (everywhere)

Eddie Murphy stars in a comedy about a literary agent who stretches the truth with a spiritual guru and finds himself learning a lesson about watching his words. Directed by Brian Robbins (*Norbit*), co-stars Kerry Washington.

HAVE A LOT TO SAY?

The Current

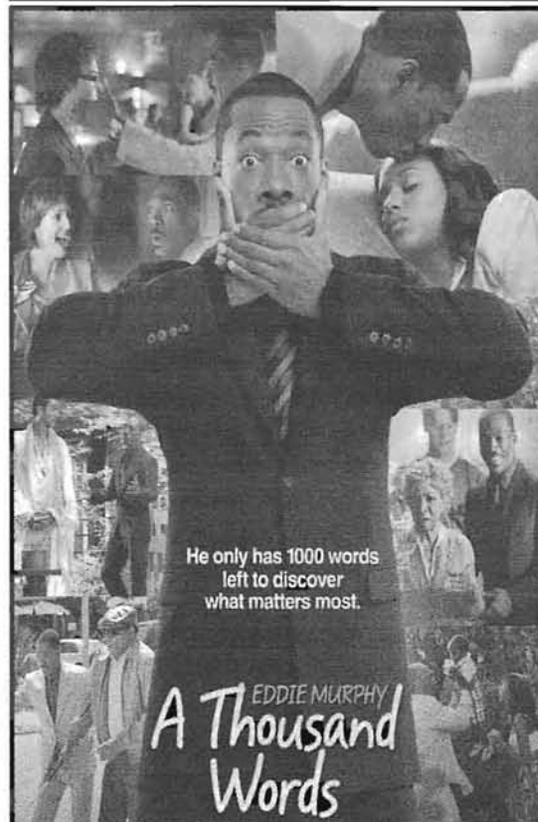
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Indestructible Machine wears cowboy boots in the mosh-pit

DAVID VON NORDHEIM
Staff Writer

"Indestructible Machine," alt-country agitator Lydia Loveless' first release for independent label Bloodshot, has one foot planted firmly in tradition and the other in rebellion.

The album is a true delight, an engaging mixture of honky-tonk sensibilities and diesel-chugging punk attitude. The chunky, distorted guitar riffs juxtapose against Loveless' twangy harmonics, and the combination melts into an appetizingly southern-fried concoction which can be best described as "garage country."

Although purists may bristle at the album's irreverent, visceral energy, Loveless demonstrates a genuine appreciation for and knowledge of country's forefathers, making for an album that is just as likely to appeal to fans of Hank Williams as to fans of Hank Williams III.

Loveless herself appeared in concert recently in St. Louis, opening for The Hackensaw Boys at Blueberry Hill on March 3.

Although a bipolar album like "Indestructible Machine" could easily become disorienting with lesser musicians, the versatile electric/acoustic sextet supporting Loveless quickly puts this concern to rest. Album standouts like "Bad Way to Go" feature manic flurries of

electric guitar, banjo, fiddle and drums competing for dominance. The group is as comfortable careening through rockabilly stomps-alongs with breakneck abandon as they are restraining themselves for a smoky ballad.

As impressive as her fleet-fingered cohorts are, the true highlight of the album is Loveless herself. Her bold, throaty delivery recalls the histrionics of alt-country darling Neko Case. However, Loveless' delivery is rooted in traditional country. She demonstrates these competing sides of her musical pedigree throughout the album. "How Many Women," a Loretta Lynn-style pro-feminist ballad, is a particularly notable showcase of her reverence for straight-faced honky-tonk.

Rather than trip up the album's pace, Loveless' detours into more reserved territory make the gut-bucket dramatics all the more rousing. The blue-collar sensibilities of its greasy fusion of garage rock and primal country bring the southern rockers Drive-By Truckers to mind.

Many of the album's best tracks probe the absurdity of rural culture. One such example is the fifth song on the album, "Jesus Was a Wino," in which the Messiah's empathy for the human race turns to self-destruction ("Nobody asked what would Jesus do / Because everybody

knew that Jesus was a wino too"), giving Ohio the same affectionate send-up the Truckers reserve for Alabama.

Loveless' songwriting is strong throughout, and all the more impressive considering that the album was recorded when she was barely out of her teens. Her gritty reflections on adultery, alcoholism and spirituality are tempered with a cynical wit and maturity one would expect from a performer twice her age. Her lyrics capture the desperate aimlessness of life in the rural Midwest—a region that, much like "Indestructible Machine," is conflicted between grimy modernity and rampant traditionalism.

Although her sound pays clear homage to a number of punk and country touchstones, "Indestructible Machine" readily demonstrates that Lydia Loveless is much more than the sum of her influences. Loveless has obviously done her research, and she delves much further into country's past than the average alt-country group is willing to go for fear of losing crossover appeal (i.e. Wilco). It is clear that the country elements are not simply southern-fried frosting on a slimy punk cake, but rather an expression of her love and admiration for the music.

Grade: B+

Daniel Kuehler does Rachmaninov justice in junior recital at Touhill

ASHLEY ATKINS
Features Editor

20-year-old Daniel Kuehler is a musical force to be reckoned with. As an aspiring concert pianist and sophomore in the Department of Music at the University of Missouri—St. Louis, he has recently had the honor of not only winning the 2011 UMSL Concerto competition, but showcasing his own private piano recital to friends and guests at the Blanche Touhill Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, February 29.

Before the start of his performance, Kuehler walked onto the stage sporting a red-and-navy bow tie and greeted his guest. He made his way to his bench and began to place his fingers on the keys; he bowed his head almost as if he were searching for the perfect note. With a sudden flick in his wrist he began work on his first piece for the night which was entitled "Prelude and Fugue in D minor" by J.S. Bach. The piece was chosen for him by his instructor because of its technical and musical challenge. It started off strong and passionate and worked its way down to a somber tune with the incorporation of Fugue.

The next piece was entitled "32 Variations on an Original Theme in C minor" by Ludwig van Beethoven. While performing this piece, Kuehler gave off a sense of determination. He had personally described it as a rainbow of emotion,

a song that takes on the persona of 32 different character traits such as serious, timid, calm, playful, sweet, tempestuous, angry, longing, eerie, nostalgic, grand, royal and solemn. Alla

Voskoboynikova, director of keyboard studies, UMSL, chose the piece for him because it is believed to be difficult to force such characteristics out of a piano. Kuehler's last piece before intermission was "Rachmaninov's Etude Tableaux Op. 39 No. 6," also known as "Little Red Riding Hood." The lively piece, which starts in the bass of the piano and works its way up into fluttering notes, has been analyzed as the chase between the big bad wolf and Little Red Riding Hood that leads up to her inevitable death.

Following intermission, the crowd had noticed there were now two nine-foot Steinway and Sons model D grand pianos on the front stage. For the closing of the show, Kuehler played Rachmaninov's "Second Piano Concerto" with accompanist Alla Voskoboynikova on a second piano. Rachmaninov constructed the piece after falling into a deep depression over the failure of his First Symphony, and as a result the piece gives off a sense of longing and a melancholic Russian nostalgia in its first and second movements. Kuehler stayed focused on his piano the entire time, except for the visual exchanges he gave Voskoboynikova to stay on time.

In its third movement, the piece picks up in speed and has almost a dance-like quality in it. The performance between student and teacher could have been described as a friendly race between the two to see who could gain the crowd's satisfaction first. Kuehler and Voskoboynikova agreed on this piece because it is considered one of the most beautiful concertos ever written.

As his final piece came to a close, one could tell that Kuehler was getting into the music. His achievement was just as rewarding for him as it was for his audience of admiring supporters.

As he wrapped up his performance, the crowd applauded in appreciation. Kuehler returned to the stage three separate times to collect their approval, bowing humbly. When the house lights went up the audience did not go home. They bolted towards the empty lobby, where they waited for the appearance of the budding star. As he walked toward the crowd, shocked by the numbers of people that had waited, he hesitated. Voskoboynikova, his instructor, encouraged him to continue forward and greet his fans. There was a lot of love in the room.

Kuehler is set to make his next appearance at the Touhill on March 5, when he will be the featured pianist for the University Orchestra's Spring 2012 concert.

Grade: A

If you saw this ad.....

imagine who else will.

New band WZRD breaks ground with self-titled, experimental album

OWEN SHROYER
Sports Editor

Kid-Cudi fans, it is time to get excited. Hip-hop artist Kid Cudi and producer Dot Da Genius have teamed up to form a new band, WZRD. WZRD, whose style of music is somewhat exploratory, psychedelic rock, has just released their first self-titled album. However, the artists' hip-hop backgrounds and experiences have influenced the music greatly.

Kid Cudi and Dot Da Genius have worked together successfully before. Dot Da Genius produced several of Kid Cudi's previous songs ("Marijuana," "Day 'N' Night"). Kid Cudi's willingness to drop his title for this record in the same year he is releasing the follow-up to his first album (entitled "Man on the Moon III") says a lot.

WZRD is by far the most experimental thing Kid Cudi has done in his musical career. The pair is trying to perfect a new style of music, a style that even Lil' Wayne experimented with on his album "Rebirth."

Kid Cudi picks up an electric guitar and gets out his drum set, while Dot Da Genius gets his bass guitar and keyboard, with drumsticks in his pocket and soundboard on deck. Kid Cudi takes his role as a vocalist very seriously on

this album, really testing his range and experimenting with different pitches.

For a first attempt, this album is impressive. The chemistry is apparent. However, a very refined ear is needed for this album, since the production of psychedelic rock under the influence of hip-hop can be misleading.

"The Arrival" is a three-minute intro. There are absolutely no vocals, but the duo plays about ten different instruments. The next song on the album is "High Off Life," a song that is impossible to stop listening to. It features a hard guitar riff, with drums in the background, yet Kid Cudi's voice and Dot Da Genius's production still give it value in the eyes of hip-hop fans.

Although the majority of the album is made up of hard rock and psychedelic beats, Kid Cudi strums an acoustic riff and Dot Da Genius plays the piano for "Efflictim." This is a poignant song, as Kid Cudi sings about life and death. The first half of the song is just Kid Cudi and his guitar, until the piano kicks in and really expresses the emotional goal.

Remember Curt Cobain and Nirvana? When WZRD does their rendition of "Where Did You Sleep

Last Night?" imagine Nirvana's version with a darker tone. This song really speaks volumes about where WZRD is as far as musical value. It is a great redemption of a classic song. Although WZRD's rock is extremely experimental, this song shows that rock is their ultimate genre.

WZRD closes out its first album with "Upper Room." With strings, symbols and snares, this album finishes the way it started, throwing all sorts of different sounds into the production. It seems these two are having some fun. The album earns four stars because the production is as respectable as it is enjoyable.

Because of the rock aspect, some hip-hop fans might not enjoy this album. Because of the hip-hop influence, some rock fans might be turned off as well. Also because of the novelty of the style, some eardrums might be uninterested.

For those that do enjoy it, WZRD may become one of your favorite bands. Kid Cudi and Dot Da Genius are having some fun right now; just listen to the song "High Off Life" to see that for yourself.

Grade: B

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Features



Daniel Kuehler: the promise of a young man and his piano

Daniel Kuehler on the Touhill Lee Theatre stage on Friday.

JENNY MEAHAN / THE CURRENT

ASHLEY ATKINS
Features Editor

Wednesday, February 29, the audience in the Lee Theater of the Touhill Performing Arts center at the University of Missouri – St. Louis was dazzled by the musical styling of Daniel Kuehler, sophomore, music fac, in his junior piano recital. Winner of the 2011 UMSL Concerto Competition and St. Louis recognition, the aspiring concert pianist shows no sign of slowing down.

The Current: First off, The Current would like to congratulate you on the success of your concert! How does it feel to be the main subject of a recital? Is this unfamiliar territory?

Daniel Kuehler: Now that I am getting used to performing

more, I like the idea of solo performances. I look at it more as an opportunity for me to share with people music that I love. I am just simply bringing to life the music that existed in the composer's mind while adding my own interpretation.

When I was younger, I used to give solo recitals quite frequently all over the St. Louis area for different occasions. At age nine, I performed for the first time at the Sheldon Concert Hall with other professional St. Louis pianists. And when I was 11, I returned to give my own solo concert. Also when I was young, I competed in three national competitions and placed second in my age

category in two of the three competitions. So, throughout my life, I have had many performances, but recently the stakes are getting higher and the level of playing that is required is more demanding than ever.

TC: When did you begin to look at music as a career choice?

DK: When I entered high school, the stress and time commitment of academics overshadowed my music. I thought I wanted to become a doctor. So when I came to UMSL, I first started out as a biology / pre-med major. However, after I had my audition with Alla and started taking lessons from her, within the second week of school I decided that I could not leave

music by the wayside. I knew that biology would require much time in the labs, which would therefore inhibit me from practicing and growing musically, and since piano had been with me for most of my life, I decided to switch my major to piano performance and see how far it takes me.

TC: Where do you aspire to take your music?

DK: From here, I want to go on to graduate school and earn my doctorate in piano performance. My primary goal is to become a concert pianist. If that does not work out, I will have my doctorate to fall back on so I can get a teaching position at a university or conservatory.

I do enjoy composing

classical and liturgical music in my spare time, so I plan on continuing to compose in the future. I am also keeping the possibility open of starting a duo piano performing career with my colleague Daniel Dickson.

TC: How did you prepare for this recital? What is your routine?

DK: To prepare for this recital, I literally practiced every day and I performed every one of these pieces many times before performing them at my junior recital. In the summer, I usually practice for most of the day, but during the school year, I go to school and then come home and practice for about three hours, then do homework. It is necessary that

I have that structure in my life because it keeps me disciplined to practice day after day.

TC: Did you have any anxieties about this performance?

DK: I admit I worry before concerts, but once I start playing, the music takes over and I am focused on giving a great performance.

TC: Where do you want to be in ten years?

DK: Hopefully in ten years, I will be touring the country giving concerts and playing with symphonies in the major cities. If that does not work out, then hopefully I will be a piano teacher at a conservatory. No matter what life brings me, music will always be a central part of my life.



The Arianna String Quartet performs at the Touhill in the Lee Theatre on Friday, March 2 at 8pm.

JENNY MEAHAN/THE CURRENT

Arianna String Quartet 'World Premiere' show thrills Touhill audience

CATE MARQUIS
A&E Editor

The Arianna String Quartet, University of Missouri's artists-in-residence, delighted an audience that nearly filled the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center's Lee Theater on Friday, March 2 with a concert offering a combination of the music of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky with the world premiere of a new work by contemporary composer David Stock.

The concert, titled "World Premiere," was the third in a season-long series focusing on Beethoven's middle quartets. The concert presented three pieces in total, opening with Beethoven's Quartet in F minor, Op.95, "Serioso," and concluding with Tchaikovsky's Quartet No.3

in E-flat minor. In between was the world premiere of David Stock's Quartet No.9, which was written for the Arianna String Quartet.

"It was a nice contrast to the Beethoven with a lot going on," Phil Brotherton, master's in secondary education, said of the new composition. Brotherton was an undergraduate music major at the University of Missouri and was attending the concert with his friend Darren LeCour, a music composition student at Washington University.

"This guy had a couple of free tickets," Brotherton said, pointing to LeCour.

"We saw something about this concert when we were here for the flamenco and Spanish dance concert," LeCour said, referring to Dance St. Louis' presentation

of Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater at the Touhill PAC on January 27-28 this year. Brotherton said they both were interested right away and planned to attend.

"Then I saw that someone had donated tickets for students. I immediately walked over and snagged them," LeCour said.

LeCour also liked the modern piece. "I really enjoyed it. I thought there were a lot of interesting things going on," LeCour said, speaking on Stock's new composition. "There was a nice balance, a lot of lyrical moments along with the dissonance."

David Stock's new composition was performed right after the Beethoven selections and before intermission. Stock is an award-winning composer

whose works have been performed by the New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Seattle Symphony and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. He is professor emeritus at Duquesne University and founded the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble.

Kurt Baldwin, who plays cello with the quartet, spoke before the concert, introducing the quartet's members and giving a brief bio on the composer of the new work being premiered.

Other musicians in the quartet are John McGrosso, violin, and Joanna Mendoza, viola. The quartet's second violinist has left the group and was replaced for the performance by Mathias Tacke, formerly with the acclaimed Vermeer Quartet. Tacke will perform

with Arianna String Quartet through April and the quartet plans to announce a permanent replacement in the fall.

Arianna String Quartet has been hailed as one of the country's finest chamber ensembles. The members of this award-winning group are on the faculty at University of Missouri - St. Louis.

The composer attended the concert and even joined the musicians on stage for a bow after his composition was played.

Stock said he was "thrilled" by his composition's reception by the audience. "The performance was incredible," Stock said. "You couldn't ask for a better premiere."

The composer described how his collaboration with the Arianna String Quartet began. "We met in Brazil,

at a festival where one of my pieces premiered," Stock said. "We became friendly and here we are." The quartet asked Stock to compose a musical piece for them, and the piece is dedicated to them.

The evening's performance represented music from three musical periods, providing a pleasing musical balance. The Beethoven, as its title suggests, was a serious, somber piece. The new Stock composition was lively and energetic, with a modern mix of dissonance and lyrical elements. The most emotionally moving piece was the Tchaikovsky, a touching piece composed as a tribute to a dead friend.

The three pieces combined for an evening that delighted the audience, who rewarded the musicians and composer with a standing ovation and curtain calls.

Searching for Phoenix Coldon - her disappearance and who she is

Continued from page 1.

According to Lawrence, three or four days after Phoenix went missing, he and Goldia called local TV outlets but were refused coverage due to police department guidelines, which said that the police would have to notify the TV outlets in order for a story to be run.

"The major case squad was assigned to search for Phoenix about five days after her disappearance, since they have more resources and people to work with. Even at this time, the TV stations did not get involved. One station even said the production manager had said the story was not interesting enough to cover," Goldia said.

"I have sent flyers to my friends, put it on my Facebook page, and asked for it to be passed on. Down the line, the Black and Missing Foundation got ahold of the flyer, and the founder and CEO, Derrica Wilson, called me herself. She offered any help she could give, even though I had never heard of them before. Derrica is an ex-police officer and told me that a young

black lady went missing in her hometown in South Carolina."

"She saw how that family was impacted due to the lack of attention their missing daughter was given - their anguish and disappointment. This was around the same time as Natalie Holloway, mind you, whose face was everywhere. Derrica was touched by this family's dedication to their daughter and started the Black and Missing Foundation. Her site has people of all colors and races, not just African Americans."

Derrica was able to potentially link Phoenix's disappearance and that of a young lady named Stacy English, who disappeared from Atlanta, due to several coincidental similarities. There is no absolute connection at this moment. Derrica also helped to redesign the Coldons' flyer for Phoenix, and Goldia cites that Derrica is available to help them with anything they ask.

"I saw Derrica was on The View with this family in New York whose daughter is missing. An hour after that episode aired, an anonymous call came in and they found that young lady. I'm going to see if Der-

rica can get Phoenix's story on The View as well. She has connections," Goldia said.

Phoenix's parents still have a great deal of faith that Phoenix will turn up. Lawrence also cited that the Student Government Association has invited them to come to UMSL this Thursday to talk further about Phoenix. The meeting will be Thursday, March 8 in the Pilot House of the MSC at 4 p.m.. A discussion will take place concerning Phoenix's disappearance and how the UMSL community can help. Those looking to learn a bit more about Phoenix can turn to page 14 for further details from her parents concerning who Phoenix is.

Who is Phoenix Coldon?

Phoenix's parents have the highest opinion of their daughter. Goldia cites Phoenix's name to mean a beautiful person of distinction.

"She has a very keen sense of fairness. She's very intelligent," Goldia Coldon, mother, said.

Phoenix's family moved here from California. At 12, upon arriving in St. Louis, Phoe-

nix took up foil fencing. She has competed locally, regionally and even nationally, reaching a national level on three or four separate occasions.

"She was also in the Chancel Choir at our church, as well as the Hand Bell Choir. The Chancel in a church is the area behind the pulpit and she performed every week in both at Westminster Presbyterian Church," Goldia said. "She also plays piano. She started out playing classical and later acquired a taste for jazz piano."

Phoenix loves many varieties of music but especially favors those of the 1970s, such as Earth, Wind, and Fire and The Beatles.

Phoenix is also a huge fan of the St. Louis Art Museum. She loves spending time there.

"She loves being around children, too. Children are attracted to her like a magnet - she is very good with them. One day we were out and a little kid who was being held by his mother just ran away from his mother and hugged Phoenix," Goldia said.

Phoenix has yet to decide on a major for her education.

"Originally, when I homeschooled her, she had some classes at the Pillar Foundation and she took a class in Constitutional law. She fell in love with that," Goldia said. "Then she did some research and realized she likes the studies about the body and the mind. Psychology was always on the plate: whatever she wanted to delve into, psychology was always there."

Phoenix considered biology and nursing after having come to UMSL. Even through these changes she continued to mention psychology as an interest, according to Goldia.

Goldia then discussed a recent situation to help elaborate on Phoenix's personality.

"A month or two before she left the driveway, she was saying that she felt that God was leading her in another direction. My response was to tell her to make absolutely sure that it was God who was leading her. She didn't say what that direction was, but she said it might require being in school a little longer and I told her that was ok," Goldia said.

"When Phoenix received her high school diploma, her plans were to attend Dallas Baptist

University. She wanted to major in business music or music business. It's a special degree in which you study the business in music. That was her plan - music, business and psychology. We did shopping, visited several universities in Texas and she decided on Dallas Baptist University," Goldia said.

Goldia then had heart attacks in both July and August. She asked Phoenix to go to school at Dallas Baptist anyway, but Phoenix refused.

"I wanted her to be in a good, relatively safe place. She wouldn't go. I asked her to please go. I wanted her to enjoy herself, to go to Dallas Baptist University. I was very upset and have been ever since. I love her so much. I just wish she had listened and gone where she had wanted," Goldia said. "Since she is considered an adult, she made her own choice. I wish she had listened at times. I would like to say that nobody has your best interests at heart more than your parents. Parents only want what is best for their children - that is why we say what we say. We love Phoenix very much. I would give my life for Phoenix."

Read, Right and Run celebrates Dr. Seuss' birthday at local schools

ANGELA ACTON
Staff Writer

On March 2, University of Missouri - Saint Louis students volunteered their time with Go! St. Louis' Read, Right and Run Program in celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday. Students met in the Office of Student Life and dispersed to various elementary schools, where they shared the literary genius of the Seuss-man.

At Bryan Hill Elementary School in St. Louis, students celebrated before the volunteers arrived by making hats similar to the one worn by the literary favorite, "Cat in the Hat." Children from Preschool to second grade attended the read-aloud session.

The volunteers had a good time as well. "I read to two

groups of students at Bryan Hill elementary. We read Dr. Seuss' "Cat in the Hat" after singing happy birthday to him. The children were very attentive and enjoyed the morning. All the children were given UMSL pencils to help remember the university's involvement," Curt Coonrod, Vice Provost of Student Affairs, said.

"My job was to take pictures and make sure this event ran smoothly. The children really enjoyed being read to and were interactive. Altogether, I believe this event was a success and I am looking forward to volunteering again with Go! St. Louis," Ralph Jenkins II, senior, accounting, said.

Rodney Parker, athletic coach, Bryan Hill elementary, was asked by Principal

Cheryll Spann if he could be the person to lead the event. Overall, he felt that the effort of the volunteers had a superb influence on the enthusiastic children. He and his students are very familiar with the various works of Seuss and he found himself getting into the reading of the classic.

"It was a great reinforcement; it was a great story to tell kids about morals, about how to watch the house when their parents are not home. The seek-and-find - They had a great method of finding sight words and giving kids an image or a stage presence, if you will," Parker said.

Parker also believes that the children's eagerness to participate with their pre-made costumes made

Coonrod's appearance a very warming experience. "He had a dynamic way of helping the kids do a seek-and-find backwards. He had a unique way of telling people stories, tying in questions as he told them. I thought the kids did a great job in responding to him," Parker said.

Spann hopes that a similar program will come to the elementary school again.

"We are interested in anything that will motivate our students to become better readers, better writers and better students. What we want to do more often is engage our students. Make learning fun. Anything we can do to make learning fun, we are all over it," Spann said. She had expressed her appreciation for UMSL's

involvement in Dr. Seuss' Magic House, the Saint Louis Rams and the YMCA.

birthday, referring to the impact the classic has had on our society from childhood to adulthood. "Even though you want to ring that Cat and the Hat's neck, there are things you do not forget about," Spann said.

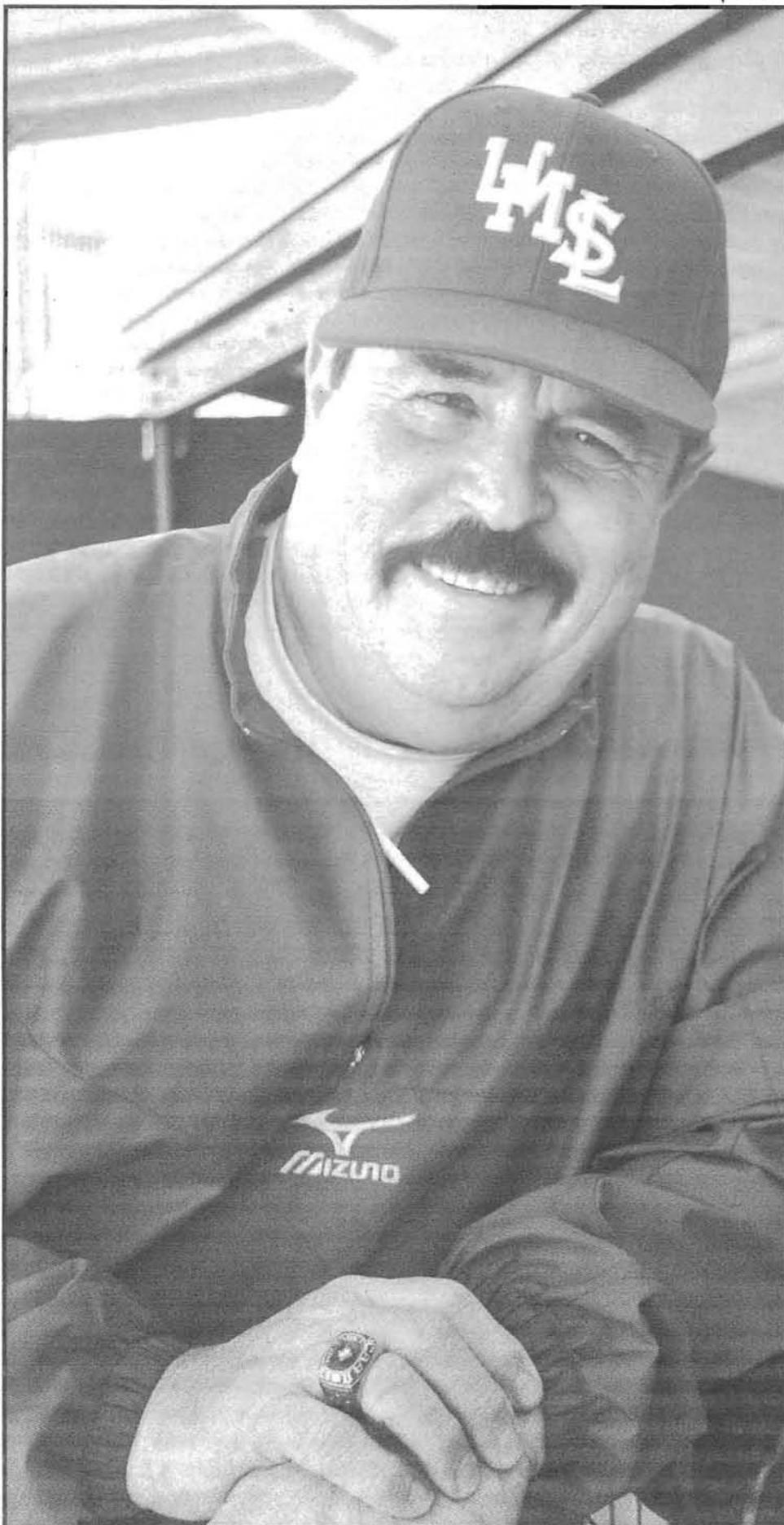
The celebration ended with a seek-and-find where children were instructed to find words that are often associated with Seuss books.

Many others celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday, including the Saint Louis Mills, the



Louis Rams and the YMCA.

Sports



Jim Brady, head baseball coach, at Wednesday's practice at the UMSL baseball field.

JENNY MEAHAN / THE CURRENT

Jim Brady looks forward to a successful spring season

ANGELA ACTON
Staff Writer

The Current: What were the best teams you ever coached? How does the current UMSL team stack up?

Jim Brady: There is a tie for a couple of teams. You have to separate eras and so forth. My '96 World Series team was exceptionally good. Our top two pitchers both got drafted. We had three all Americans on that team and those guys were really good. We set the school record for wins. It was a special group, it really was. They just played the game the right way.

My 2003 team was very similar, but back then we used wooden bats and we were the dominant team in the league. We walked through the conference tournaments. If we played against anyone in the country that used wooden bats, we would have beaten them; that's how good we were. That team also beat the team that won the national championship. We beat them when we got the chance to swing aluminum bats, 15-2.

Those are probably two of the best teams, as far as how our team compares, once again; this team still has a lot to prove. Our potential is such that we could be pretty good. But we have to play the game fundamentally, almost perfectly. We have yet to display that. We show the potential to at times, but great teams do it consistently. Kind of how the Cardinals were last year.

TC: Who was your favorite player to coach?

JB: The best all-around player I ever coached was Josh Morgan. He was a dominant player, he was the MVP of the league, he was a first team all-region, he should have been

an All-American. Morgan was the best pitcher and offensive player in the league. He had the lowest ERA (Earned Run Average). Other teams would throw somebody else when they knew he was pitching, rather than using their number one, because they knew he would beat them. He threw 98 miles per hour on the mound, and on the field he led the conference in home runs, stolen bases and batting average. He was second in RBI's, and he did it all with a wooden bat. He was drafted twice. First by the Yankees, then the Oakland A's, who he eventually signed with. He was here from 2004-2006.

The best pure hitter was Dan Chinnici. He was a three-time All-American here. He was the best pure hitter we ever had here, and the best two-strike hitter I've ever seen. He put on a show for everybody.

Right up there with him was a guy named Brian Rupp. He was a short-stop for us. Another tremendous hitter. He signed with the Cardinals and now he is managing with the Kansas City Royals.

On the pitching side, there were two guys. Morgan was the best all-around because he could pitch and play the field. The other two best pitchers I had were Andy Runzi, who was first-time All-American NCAA pitcher of the year 1993 and William Shanks, who was just inducted into the Hall of Fame. He was a dominant player back in 84-85. He signed with the Toronto Bluejays and went to Triple-A in one summer and had three saves there. He advanced very quickly.

TC: What about when you were a player - who were your best coaches?

JB: At the collegiate level, there was my assistant coach,

Ric Lessman. I played for him at Meramec, and back then we were a dynasty. We had over 1,000 wins at Meramac, which is incredible. We went to the Junior College World Series both years. He was incredible. He has so much knowledge and expertise. He had a tremendous influence.

My coach at Missouri State was Bill Rowe - the most professional, well-organized, best planner, best business organizer that I've ever been around. He was great to play for and I learned a lot about how to handle players. He knew how to make a buck go a long way.

The greatest may be Jimmy Dix, my predecessor here; I worked with him for a couple years. I learned more about the game under Jim than I learned in my entire life with everybody else.

On a professional level, Whitey Herzog, having the chance to watch him manage in St. Louis through the 1980s - just watching how he was always two innings ahead. I got to know him personally. He is an unbelievably talented man. His power of recall was unbelievable.

TC: Do we have potential this year? What are your final thoughts?

JB: We don't really excel at anything, but we appear to be pretty balanced. And if these guys buy into the concept that they play every game fundamentally sound, I think when you see this team you will like them. They sprint on and off the team; they are enthusiastic. Once they demonstrate that, people come out and see them. I think they have a chance to keep getting better and better. We have the potential to be good at every position. Our pitchers are going to give us a chance every game.

Men's basketball competes' for conference tournament championship

OWEN SHROYER

Sports Editor

The University of Missouri - St. Louis men's basketball team (19-9) watched closely as Drury (17-11) defeated Quincy (18-9) and moved on to face the Tritons in the quarterfinals of the Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament. The Tritons had already defeated Drury twice in the regular season, and looked to make it three times with their first ever GLVC tournament win.

Drury had the Tritons working hard in the first half. Jumping out to a quick five-point lead, Drury sent the Tritons a message that they had to work if they wanted to beat the underdog.

The Tritons had their biggest lead of the half at six points, but Drury battled back and eventually took the three-point lead going into the break. The first eight minutes of the second half were just as trying, since for the majority of that time the game was within a point.

UMSL went on consecutive 9-2 runs and finished the game strong with an 11-point victory, 71-60. That was momentous way to get the programs first GLVC tournament win, momentum much needed heading into the matchup against the three-seeded Northern Kentucky University Norse (23-5).

Being from the East. Divi-

sion, Northern Kentucky was not on UMSL's schedule this year. So the teams went into this game unfamiliar with each other's strategy. The beginning of this game foreshadowed the rest, its first four buckets being 3-pointers. The Tritons started the game on a 15-3 scoring run, riding momentum from their last victory. But although the Tritons for the majority of the first half, Northern Kentucky had the lead down to three by the end of the half.

A 3-pointer opened the second half, and the game was tied. Now Northern Kentucky had the momentum. They built a strong lead of eight

points and maintained the lead for the majority of the half. UMSL tied the game with five minutes to play, then tied it again with two minutes left.

With UMSL down two points, Joshua McCoy, junior, communications, knocked down a 3-pointer to give the Tritons a one-point lead. Then Charlie Woods, junior, psychology, hit a layup and the Tritons were up by three with 25 seconds left.

The Tritons wish they had those 25 seconds back. An offensive rebound for Northern Kentucky eventually led to a layup to bring UMSL's lead to one. Then a defensive rebound on a

missed free-throw gave Northern Kentucky a chance to get the lead. Northern Kentucky made a fast break 3-point basket with seconds left, and that was it for the Tritons' season. Northern Kentucky will face the five-seed Southern Indiana University (23-6) in the finals Sunday.

It was a season with many great milestones, records and moments. The Tritons had their best number of wins ever in GLVC play, the second-year head coach built up a solid program, returning players and transfers combined for a West Division Championship and Troy Long, senior, liberal studies had two stunning

game-winning buzzer beaters at home in front of Tritons fans.

In a season with 25 seconds of regret, the men's basketball team was resilient. When all is said and done, this team will remember that they were the best in UMSL history, at least for now.

The program will see some cornerstone players leave this year, including Troy Long, senior, liberal studies, Justin Hightower, senior, communications and Zach Redel, senior, business administration, but many talented players will be returning, stronger and more experienced for next year.

Lady Tritons basketball coach looks to extend winning streak

LEON DEVANCE

Staff Writer

Winning basketball games and conference championships is a habit the University of Missouri - St. Louis women's basketball coach Lisa Curliss-Taylor cannot shake.

Under Curliss-Taylor's direction, the Tritons have been in the Great Lakes Valley tournament for five years and reached the second round in the Division II championship in Curliss-Taylor's first season as head coach despite a 7-20 record. Curliss-Taylor is 46-91 in five years at UMSL and has an overall coaching record of 103-139 in nine seasons as a head coach.

This season, Curliss-Taylor's fifth at UMSL, the Tritons qualified for the tournament when they posted a 10-17 overall record that included a 5-13 record in the GLVC. The 11-seeded Tritons will tip-off against their hosts, 6-seeded Maryville Saints, in the first round of the GLVC tournament at 1 p.m.

The Tritons are 3-6 in GLVC Tournament action, but the Saints swept the Tritons this season in GLVC

league action. The Tritons lost 77-69 at Maryville in January despite a career-high 26 points from Kelly Carter, senior, elementary education. The Tritons lead the series 7-3 against Maryville, and Curliss-Taylor hopes to continue that trend.

"It was a goal of the team to make the tournament at the beginning of the season and it took a lot to reach it. Maryville's strength [is inside the paint, under the basket], and we have be prepared to guard against it [to win]," Curliss-Taylor said.

Curliss-Taylor's 2009-10, UMSL squad finished 12-17, including a 7-11 conference record in the GLVC. The Tritons gained their first tournament berth and conference win since 2005-06 season and GLVC tournament win since 2001.

Curliss-Taylor said there are no shortcuts toward building a winning program.

"When I arrived at UMSL, Kelly [Carter] was not one of my recruits. Her loyalty, leadership and work ethic

is huge [and has meant a lot to me and the team].

"It was frustrating because [the success we have achieved] has not been immediate. It requires a work ethic that some players are born with. If you have to teach the work ethic to players, it is a longer process. You look to see if a players also have the heart to develop. And if they have toughness. Sometimes it is hard to see but that is what you are looking for when you are recruiting players," Curliss-Taylor said.

Before Curliss-Taylor come to UMSL in the 2006-07 season, she led ETBU to a 22-5 record and the East Division American championship and won coach of the year honors. Curliss-Taylor had four players earn all conference honors. In three seasons, Curliss-Taylor coached three freshmen of the year. She coached seven all ASC East players at ETBU. Her 57 career wins at ETBU rank fourth on the school's win list.

Curliss-Taylor began coaching as a student-assis-

tant under Sherri Coale as the Sooners finished 25-8 and advanced to the NCAA Sweet Sixteen during the 1999-2000 season. Before coaching at EBTU, Curliss-Taylor served as an assistant at Division II Washburn University, where the team went 53-11. In 2002-03, Washburn recorded a 30-4 mark and won conference and regional titles before landing in the NCAA Elite Eight.

As an assistant at Norman High School, Curliss-Taylor, as the 6A sophomore girls head coach, earned the Sophomore Coach of the Year Award in the 2000-01 season.

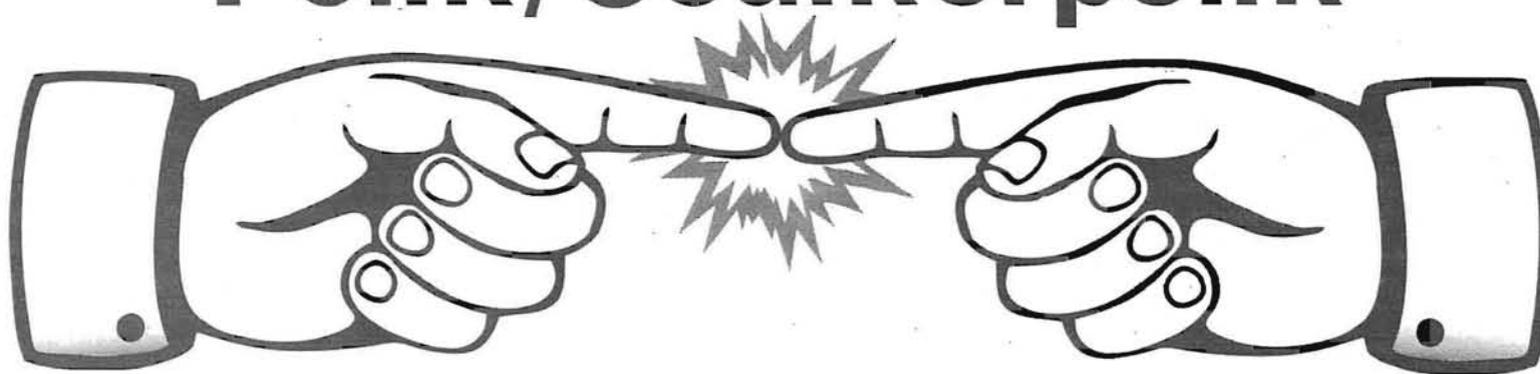
Originally from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Curliss-Taylor played at Oral Roberts University. Curliss-Taylor played the small or three forward and the four or power forward. She graduated from Oklahoma University with a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree in broadcast journalism. Curliss-Taylor and her husband, Preston, have a five year old daughter, Lauren.



Lisa Curliss-Taylor, Head Coach for Women's Basketball, outside the Mark Twain Building on Wednesday.

JENNY MEAHAN / THE CURRENT

Point/Counterpoint



Are so-called “doomsday preppers” taking things too far?

Doomsday: marketing schemes and drama queens

Albert Einstein once said that if honeybees were to disappear, mankind would only have about four years left to live. Honeybees are going extinct now, and at the present rate, they will be extinct by the end of 2012. However, Einstein also made multiple mistakes in the mathematics and physics used in calculating the viscosity of liquids, from which he deduced the size of molecules. Let's not hold it against him, though. Nostradamus, the ancient Mayans, the Book of Revelations and cable television are also to blame for the pandemonium of these late night “Doomsday” network watchers.

The upgraded term these psychos have received is “preppers”—instead of idiots, morons, whack-jobs, etc. They have their own set of principles regarding preparedness, which include having a year's supply of various items as well as being self-reliant, industrious, independent, thrifty and frugal. I hate to break it to these preppers, but penny-pinching and sovereignty will not get you far if there is no Earth upon which to demonstrate these traits.

According to Fox Business, 71 percent of those polled foresee a major disaster in their lifetime as an act

of God, not man; 27 percent think the Mayan calendar's prediction will be at least “somewhat true.” In spite of all this anxiety, 85 percent say they are not ready for an overwhelming event, and 39 percent of those who are prepping admit they would only last about two weeks on the supplies they have gathered.

The only bright side out of this whole possible catastrophe is the fact that at least the economy will go up before we all die (hypothetically), because stores are banking on these preppers. Popular items in a prepper's storage include garden seeds, freeze dried and dehydrated food, egg powder, wheat combo, just-add-water meals, fruits, vegetables and cereals. Websites are selling year-supply packages, and even on clearance they cost around \$3,000. Preppers are excited about this great “bargain,” though. “I am thrilled with both the inventory list of choices and the supernatural customer service found at Emergency Essentials,” Karen S., a reviewer on [beprepared.com](#), said. “In uncertain times like these, we can never be too prepared when it comes to the everyday necessities of caring for and protecting our family. The combination

of foodstuffs offered in the Premium 2000, along with some extra milk and baking goods cans, gives my family a huge safety net whether it be from natural disasters or man-made economic ones.”

Other survival guide necessities include camouflage cords (to blend in, and avoid all the nonexistent predators), and a four-in-one emergency hand crank LED flashlight and radio (assuming radio broadcasters survive Doomsday).

The media also influences people with their endless list of movies about the world ending. In a Fox Business poll, when people were asked about which movie most accurately predicts what will happen in the next 25 years, they responded thusly: “The Day After Tomorrow” (37 percent), “Armageddon” (31 percent), “Water World” (nine percent) and “Planet of the Apes” (seven percent).

If the world is coming to an end, there is nothing we can do to stop it. When it does, why would you want to live in a manmade cave surrounded by off-brand cereal when all of your friends and family are already dead? Worrying about it is like rocking in a rocking chair; it's something to do, but it doesn't get you very far.

Preppers' ‘crazy’ tag will vanish in true global crisis

Doomsday preppers may seem insane, but in reality they are some of the best prepared individuals for when something does go wrong.

We live in an increasingly chaotic world. As the climate spins further from predictability (we have yet to experience a serious snow this winter), the economy continues spiraling down the toilet and extremists continue to garner further support in every regime possible, we face a serious dilemma. The possibility for something to cause a global catastrophe is becoming an exponentially greater threat than at any other time in human history.

Consider the course of human history thus far. There is a reason that the concept of social Darwinism garnered so much support following Darwin's original ideas. Granted, there were those who simply wanted an excuse to be greedy and take away from their fellow man. However, it is also evident from history that in times of crisis the best prepared members of society are those who prosper.

Take any war in the history of mankind. When a war occurs, it is the stronger, better-prepared and/or more highly developed country that wins

in the end. The Spanish defeated the Mayans. The British easily defeated and created colonies on the lands of Native Americans. The Chinese successfully fended off the Huns. In each of these situations, one side was clearly more prepared for catastrophe than the other and thus came out of the situation better prepared to rebuild and recover.

In situations of a more natural variety - earthquakes, tsunamis or tornadoes - entire sections of a community can be damaged or devastated. When earthquakes hit a country such as the United States, we are capable of immediately reacting. We extract surviving citizens from the affected zones, begin reconstruction and often make improvements over the original structures to help assure that such incidents are not as damaging in the future.

However, a poorer country is not only going to be more severely impacted by a natural disaster but will often have to beg outside sources for support. We often hear about American corporations and emergency response organizations providing aid to foreign countries in times of disaster because those countries cannot singlehandedly pick

themselves up again. America, a more prepared country, is more capable of dealing with disasters than countries with less resources and training.

This same principle can be applied on a more local, personal level. Families that participate in doomsday preparation are simply emulating the activities and patterns of nations in history to guarantee that, should a disaster occur, they are as prepared as possible. If a global famine occurs, the family with the most stored away is going to have the best chance (if uninterrupted by outsiders) of remaining well-nourished throughout the catastrophe. A family with a stockpile of weaponry will be capable of defending themselves should an extremist group decide a rampage through the city is in order. If the economy collapses, a family that has stored a great deal of valuables such as gold will find itself more capable of bartering for goods in a world that no longer respects paper money. As long as preppers are not causing harm to their fellow man, their activities are truly nothing to be worried about. They want to be prepared for catastrophe. Maybe others should emulate their foresight.

Opinions

OUR OPINION

Gainesville High School punishment of students inappropriate

Everybody can agree that a safe education with freedom of expression is something America should stand for. Students should feel free to discuss their views on politics, art, history and social trends without fear of extraordinary repercussions from their teachers, administrators or peers. However, the moment a topic such as race is brought into the mix, educators seem to believe they are entitled to power over the outlying community, rather than the grounds they have been given to govern.

An exceptionally racist video was posted on YouTube by two students from Gainesville High School. Before this argument can even begin, it is necessary to acknowledge the inflammatory nature of this video. The video typically receives tags such as "extremely disturbing," "lewd" and "not safe for work." Those hoping to locate this video need to be sure they are in an environment that understands the purely educational or investigational purpose of watching it. While this board supports the viewpoint that the video should have been dealt with by powers outside of the high school, that does not change its terrifying content. So, be warned – the video in question is not for the faint of heart.

That being said, the school overstepped its boundaries.

Yes, the two girls are students of Gainesville High School. Yes, they reference groups in their school. However, not once is a specific student mentioned in the video. Beyond this, the students who made this video are often (allegedly) responding to racist remarks made against themselves by their peers. Thus, for the school to expel the girls was out of line.

Clearly, the video is full of racism, on both sides. So, the problem is not just a Caucasian and a Cuban-American lashing out at African American students, but that the video contains a great deal of racism on all sides. This video, if anything, shows that racism is a tremendous problem in this nation and needs to be dealt with on a grander scale. It was not the school's responsibility to punish the students and the punishment is not likely to change these girls' views.

To be frank, the school has no power over the video that was posted or the views these students have developed over the years. The job of the school is to prevent these views from developing in the first place. If the students had been racist in the school cafeteria, then the school would have been responsible for dealing with the students' behavior. However, given the situation, this video really should have been dealt with by higher powers. The

school had no power nor responsibility in this situation.

An appropriate way of dealing with this video would have been legal action on the part of Youtube (for blatant disregard of their Terms of Service) and possibly legal action in regards to civil rights laws. Perhaps the students should have been made to visit with a counselor and discuss the problematic views they have developed. However, the school had no authority to force their students out, as the situation did not directly involve the school or a dispute between any particular students in the school.

Freedom of speech is a controversial topic. As pundits for different political ideals entrench themselves further in their own self-worship and seemingly develop a greater sense of animosity against any views not aligned with their own, it becomes easier for the youth of our nation to express similar views without fear of repercussions. This does not give a high school the right to kick students out for expressing general views on the internet. This situation was poorly handled.

Unsigned editorials reflect the majority viewpoint of The Current's Editorial Board: Matthew Poposky, Jeremy Zschau, Janaca Scherer, Ashley Atkins, Hali Flintrop, Cate Marquis, Sharon Pruitt, Owen Shroyer and Nikki Vahle.

JANACA'S TOP FIVE

Five reasons cartoons at the college level aren't childish

As college students, obviously we are no strangers to stress. With midterms fast approaching, University of Missouri – St. Louis students need a way to catch their breath and ease their minds. What better way to relax than watching cartoons? Sit down with a favorite from years past or even a brand new one that came out this year. Either way, stress levels will subside.

Sure, it really isn't a great idea to watch mass amounts and put off homework. But watching a show for 30 minutes or an hour between study sessions could actually help your brain retain more knowledge. Here is a list of five reasons why, as a college student, cartoons should be on your to-do list.

1. There is no need to think while watching cartoons.

Simple and easy watching doesn't require the thought that shows like "CSI" or "Law & Order" do. It is possible to sit down and turn off your brain to watch an episode. Even the more adult-oriented TV shows these days don't have intense, hard to follow, miss-an-episode-and-you're-lost plots. Typically, the plot for the show is meant for a younger audience to understand, so no underlying messages are hidden, no deeper meaning needs to be taken from the plot and there are no large words that need to be looked up in a dictionary.

2. They're cheaper to make, so look for better graphics and awesome voice actors.

No need to pay for awesome CG effects. No need to pay for amazing actors when all that is needed is their voices. The fine art of cartoons has developed to be simplistic and astoundingly beautiful. The variety of graphics can range from simplistic line drawings to beautiful in-depth systems. The number of voice actors in the business will blow your mind, as well. Mark Hamill, most famous for his role as Luke Skywalker in "Star Wars", has played a variety of roles across the cartoon world. Tim Curry also has multiple TV shows under his belt. You'd be surprised at which actors have crossed the realm into cartoon voice-overs.

3. Cartoons can keep watchers' imaginations alive.

Imagination is what got everyone as far as they are today. So why, as soon as we are in college, do we take a chainsaw to it and destroy everything that our imagination stood for? Watching cartoons will help to keep your imagination alive and kicking. Even cartoons day's era can help. Shows like "Adventure Time", "Family Guy" and "American Dad" all require imagination going into the show. Who doesn't want to be a kid again, even if it is only for thirty minutes?

4. It can be a bonding experience for parents.

Many of us grew up watching the television shows that our parents did. "Mickey Mouse", "Popeye" and "Betty Boop" all come to mind when reliving the bonding experiences



Janaca Scherer

that I had with my parents in front of the TV. Those with kids have the opportunity to share with their children some of the shows that they remember growing up (let's leave out the ones with semi-questionable content in them). Grab a bowl of popcorn and make some new memories with your kid while reliving some of the old ones in the process. Shows like "The Simpsons" or "Ren and Stimpy" all played major roles in our generation's upbringing. Share that with your kids.

5. Watchers get to relive their childhoods.

Children of my generation probably remember watching "Mickey Mouse", "Popeye" and "Betty Boop" with their parents. So why shouldn't our children remember watching "Pokemon", "Rugrats" and "Captain Planet"? Reliving a time that may harbor fond memories for some isn't a bad thing. Those moments should be relished whenever they can be attained. Everyone deserves a trip down memory lane once in a while.

Janaca Scherer is the Design Editor and a columnist for The Current.

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

SCIENCE MATTERS

Antibiotic overuse in animal feed increases MRSA risk

People hear it from their doctors all the time: do not use antibiotics needlessly because it just helps breed drug-resistant germs. Too bad big livestock businesses never got the message.

A recent report in the scientific journal *mBio*, from the American Society for Microbiology, confirmed what many scientists long suspected: using the same antibiotics in farm animals as we use for infections in people has potential to breed antibiotic resistance.

Large commercial animal farming operations, especially confined animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, load up overcrowded animals with antibiotics. In part, this is done to forestall infections that could spread among so many animals so close together but commercial operations also add antibiotics to feed to promote fast growth and create leaner meats. Adding antibiotics to feed encourages the growth of antibiotic resistant bacteria strains in the animals' internal systems.

Europeans were wise enough not to use the same antibiotics in farm animals that they used for people. In this country, no such precautions are in place. Livestock operations use the same kinds of antibiotics families might get from their doctors or hospitals.

Many scientists think this practice is unwise and unsafe. Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA, infections have become something people dread. While most people think of hospitals as the source of this feared infectious agent, this report highlights another source. About two percent of healthy people

carry this staph strain, according to the National Institutes of Health, but most serious infections are linked to health care settings like hospitals. About 20,000 deaths each year are attributed to MRSA complications.

The new study is led by Lance Price of Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen), Pathogen Genomics Division, in Flagstaff, Arizona, Marc Stegger of Department of Microbiological Surveillance and Research, Statens Serum Institut, in Copenhagen, Denmark and Henrik Hasman of the National Food Institute, Technical University of Denmark, in Lyngby, Denmark. The researchers conducted a genome analysis that revealed that a MRSA strain found in livestock in 2003 likely came from an antibiotic-sensitive strain in humans. The MRSA strain is readily passed to people who work with livestock and cause skin and respiratory infections. The strain is found in cattle, pigs, turkey and other livestock species.

The researchers used a technique called whole-genome sequence typing to examine a wide sampling of the same staph strain, including resistant and methicillin-susceptible (MSSA) versions, both from animals and humans. The samples came from 19 countries over four continents. Their results "strongly suggest that livestock-associated MRSA CC398 originated in humans as MSSA," according to the paper's abstract. Further, the line of *S. aureus* appears to have also acquired tetracycline resistance.

Originally, human strains of *S. aureus* were mostly sensitive to antibiotics, methicil-



Cate Marquis

lin-susceptible *S. aureus*, or MSSA, which meant those infections could be easily treated with available antibiotics. In livestock, staph strains had several times acquired antibiotic resistance. Once this human strain was passed to livestock, it could change into various new strains and acquire resistance. The fact that this strain originated in humans means that its resistant form could be more easily transmitted to humans.

MRSA and similar microbes in meat can be killed by cooking at high heat, but the risk of infection still exists from handling the meat without proper hand washing and to people working with the farm animals.

While public health discourages American patients and doctors from using antibiotics unnecessarily, such as for viral infections, public health authorities need to step up efforts to remove unneeded antibiotics from animal feeds.

While the study highlighted an overlooked public health issue, it also illustrates the power of genomic studies. Increasingly, we are able to reveal an organism's history and evolution through its DNA sequence.

Cate Marquis is the A&E Editor and a columnist for The Current.

MAD WORLD

Wedding industry is married to shameless excessive spending

One would think that the sharing and celebration of love is the most important aspect of a wedding. But that doesn't come for free. The wedding industry is one of the richest industries in our society today. Think of all that needs to be bought for the occasion. There are many (mostly useless) things that "need" to be purchased, of course, but a wedding dress alone can cost as much as a semester's tuition at an in-state university. Drop five grand on a dress that you will only wear for one day? Why not? It's your day!

Those three magic words are meant to dissuade brides-to-be from listening to the common sense most people have that triggers alarm bells when faced with the option of spending more on wedding favors than they did on their first (and second) cars. The wedding industry has that never-fail antidote to the voice of reason: "It's your day."

The business of a wedding allows one to indulge the more selfish parts of their personality – the desire to live beyond their means, to be selfish, and to be demanding. That can be empowering and freeing to a certain extent, but even that feeling of "finally, I can feel confident in asking for what I want" that many women experience when planning their nuptials has been corrupted by the Big Bad Wedding Machine. It takes that newfound confidence that allows a woman to feel important enough to assert her wishes and takes advantage of that to turn a profit.

Turning a profit really is what it all comes down to. A wedding is intended to be an expression of love, but it has been turned into a state-sanctioned-and-regulated practice with a focus on outlandish materialism. Can any aspect of life really truly escape the influence of consumerism? Everything we do in our lives involves buying things we probably don't even really need.

Puberty for girls means buying makeup and more things that promise to make her beautiful. Every milestone is just a set of new purchases. Life and death can all be reduced to things to buy, like pointless baby items and satin-lined caskets.

Weddings, however, may be the most unashamed in their demand for consumers to indulge their most frivolous whims, as evidenced by people who spend upwards of a thousand dollars on things like individually hand-painted aisle runners.

But what's the alternative? Get married in the woods wearing an organic cotton sack, exchange rings made from twine and feast on woodland berries and tree bark at the reception? Everything that is of importance to us is so tied up in the pursuit of ultimately useless goods that it can be hard to separate oneself from it. When watching "Say Yes to the Dress" there are times when one can't help but wonder why it is that some women are so dedicated to the idea of having an expensive dress to get married in. Is that dress really all that much better than any of the others? There



Sharon Pruitt

have been episodes where the women in question have been shown nearly identical dresses, yet insist that the more expensive one somehow looks better.

Does the influence of a materialistic society really run so deep that we can't even recognize it anymore? Have we really reached a place where, collectively, when holding in each hand two identical items, we truly believe that one is better than the other simply because it has been branded as such?

The only hope is the Do-It-Yourself bridal movement that is becoming increasingly popular lately. The wedding industry reveals itself to be pretty money-hungry upon closer examination, and the fact that there are women out there who are taking the fun parts of weddings – like love, creativity, and fun – and leaving out the materialism and excessive spending is inspiring. It just goes to show that while we do live in a machine propelled by money, you can always find a way to do things on your own terms.

Sharon Pruitt is the Opinions Editor and a columnist for The Current.

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

Horoscopes

CURRENT HOROSCOPES by The Inane Collective altered by: Random Acts

PISCES
(FEB. 20 - MARCH 20)

YOU ARE SO DAMN SEXY. STOP BEING SO DAMN SEXY. It burns our eyes. You may now believe how sexy you are when you feel overshadowed, but you mean the world to some people.

ARIES
(MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

March has been a calm month for you, a time to recharge and de-stress. As Mercury moves out of your sign your social life can be expected to take a swing, for better or worse. Enjoy March and be prepared!

TAURUS
(APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

This has been a hard month for friendship. It may seem like some friendships take too much work to maintain, but with perseverance a dying friendship can be brought back into full bloom.

GEMINI
(MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Since the new year, stress has been high in your life, but as March ends expect a lull. Use this time to sit back, relax and have some fun with old friends and family.

CANCER
(JUNE 22 - JULY 22)

After finally your place in the world, use this time to enjoy your hard-won peace and prosperity. Remember not to hog all the glory. Share some with the people who have helped you find your way.

LEO
(JULY 23 - AUG. 21)

You have entered a time of stability and hopefully of happiness. Be sure to reconnect with family and friends and let them know how life is going for you. Use the chance to brag a little!

VIRGO
(AUG. 22 - SEPT. 23)

While new love is flattering, now may be a time for distance and rationality. Take some time for yourself this week and hang out with some good friends instead.

LIBRA
(SEPT. 24 - OCT. 23)

With all the balancing you've been doing, now may be a time to accept a little help. It may seem hard at first to rely on others after years of self-sufficiency, but no one can carry the weight of the world on their shoulders forever.

SCORPIO
(OCT. 24 - NOV. 22)

With Saturn in power this week ventures in love should experience more success than at any other time this month. This is a time, though, that requires some deliberation about the difference between lust and love.

SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 23 - DEC. 22)

With the sun in power for your sign this month, more and more people will be noticing your fine appearance. While this attention is flattering, try to remember the people that really matter in your life.

CAPRICORN
(DEC. 23 - JAN. 20)

With Neptune waning, life is in full swing for you. All the faces and places can be confusing when moving at such high speeds, but you'll miss it when life slows down again.

AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21 - FEB. 19)

Life has changed drastically this year, but only for the better, as you'll soon see. Be sure to take advantage of every opportunity you see and use this time to grow.

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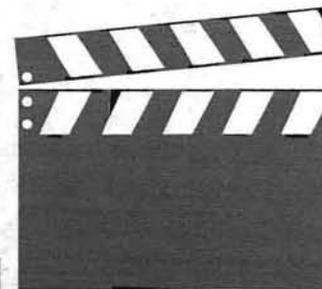
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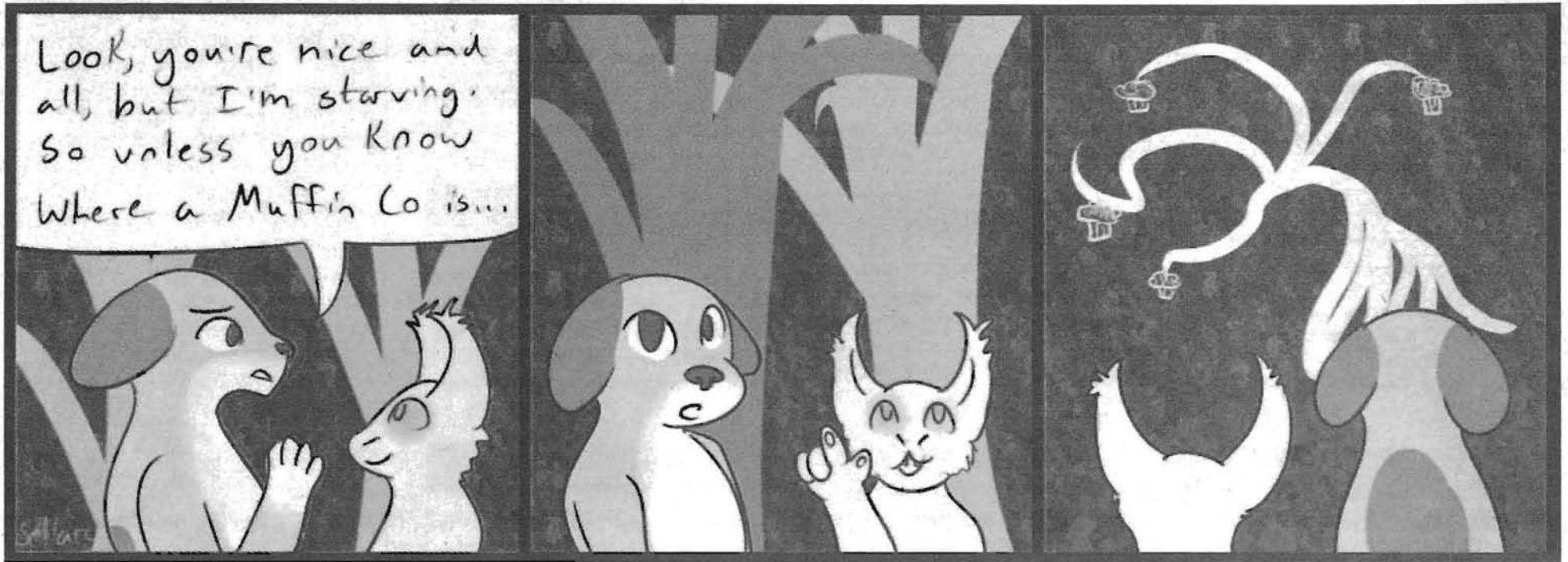
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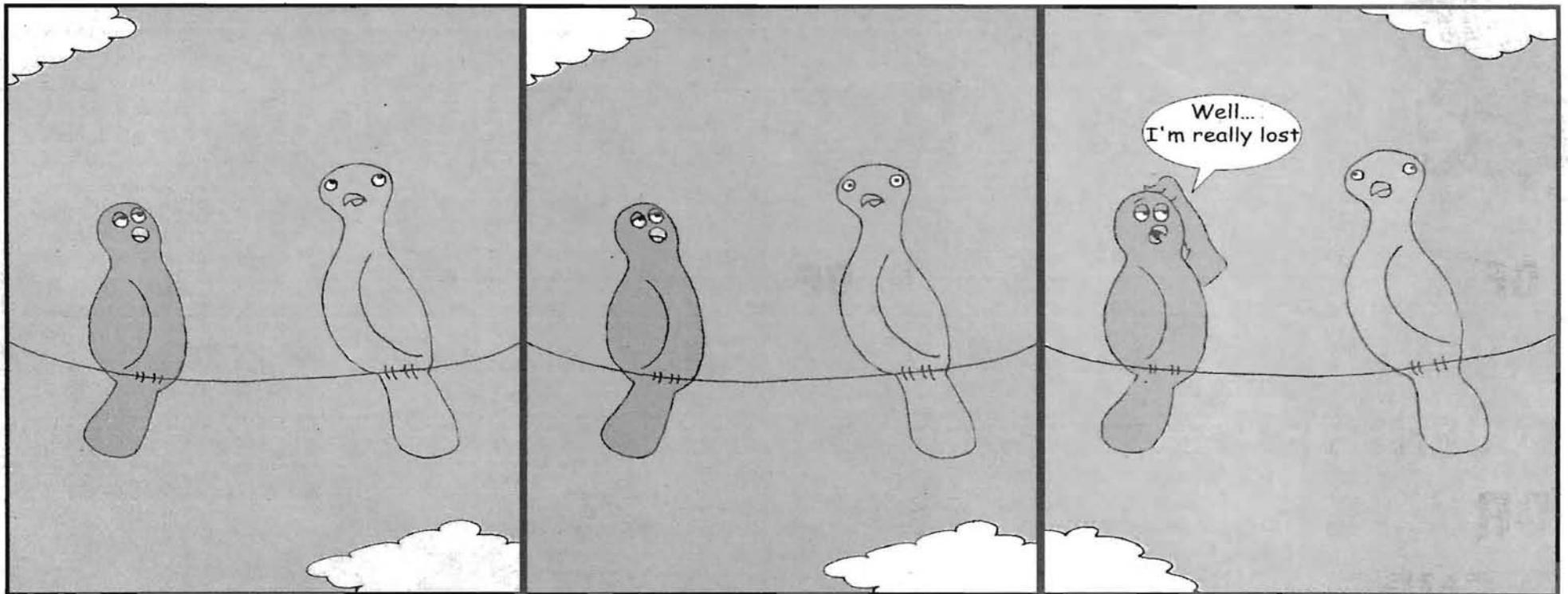


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