



This 'Dance' trips all over its audience

The movie, resonating with the typical problems of high-school students, takes a turn toward "teen flick" as the main characters face social issues.

◀ See Page 6

THECURRENTONLINE.COM

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

INSIDE



OMNIMAX film charts flight of the butterfly

What if, in order to meet our mates, eat, sleep, live or survive, we had to travel between 500 and 5000 miles?

"Amazing Journeys," currently featured at the OMNIMAX, tells about the migrations of many creatures that have often been overlooked by most humans.

▲ See page 3

BRIEFS

Computer thefts mystify officials

BY NICOLE MANOUGIAN
special to The Current

Police are trying to discover who stole one computer and tampered with two others in the Chat Room of the Millennium Student Center between Dec. 26 and Jan. 2.

According to Bernard Diggs, operating manager of the Student Center, there wasn't supposed to be anyone in the building. Before the staff left, he said, the doors were safely secured. There wasn't a forceful entry.

"It is a total mystery on how they got into the building, because there isn't a trace of evidence," Diggs said.

The police report said that a monitor, keyboard, and mouse were stolen. The equipment was valued at \$2,500. Captain James Smalley of the UMSL police said that the thief had to cut through security cables to loosen the computer. The cables are looped through a hole in the ground, securing the computer much like a bicycle chain.

UMSL will be forced to add a thicker cable to each computer and the University is seriously looking into adding hidden cameras to the room to prevent another computer from being stolen, Diggs said.

"It's sad. You want to think you can trust some people, but sometimes you can't," Diggs said.

Commencement to be telecast on TV

On Friday, Jan. 26, the Higher Education Channel (HEC-TV) will telecast the winter commencement held Jan. 14 in the Mark Twain Building. HEC-TV is available to cable television subscribers in St. Louis and St. Louis County.

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Unchartered territory

Charter school takes UMSL to court over contract dispute

BY RHASHAD PITTMAN
staff writer

The African-American Rite of Passage, Inc., filed a lawsuit against UMSL on Jan. 17, months after the University revoked their second charter application.

The lawsuit argues that the original contract between UMSL and TAARP in June 1999 is still valid, even though the charter school changed management companies.

After originally receiving its charter in 1999, TAARP submitted another application in January of last year, after hiring Charter Consultants to replace Beacon Education Inc. Beacon currently manages both of the other UMSL-sponsored charter schools, the St. Louis Charter School and Thurgood Marshall Academy.

Chancellor Blanche Touhill sent a letter in September stating that the change in management was a "serious breach" of their agreement.

TAARP organizer Lamar Beyah immediately appealed to the UM System President Manuel Pacheco, who upheld Touhill's decision.

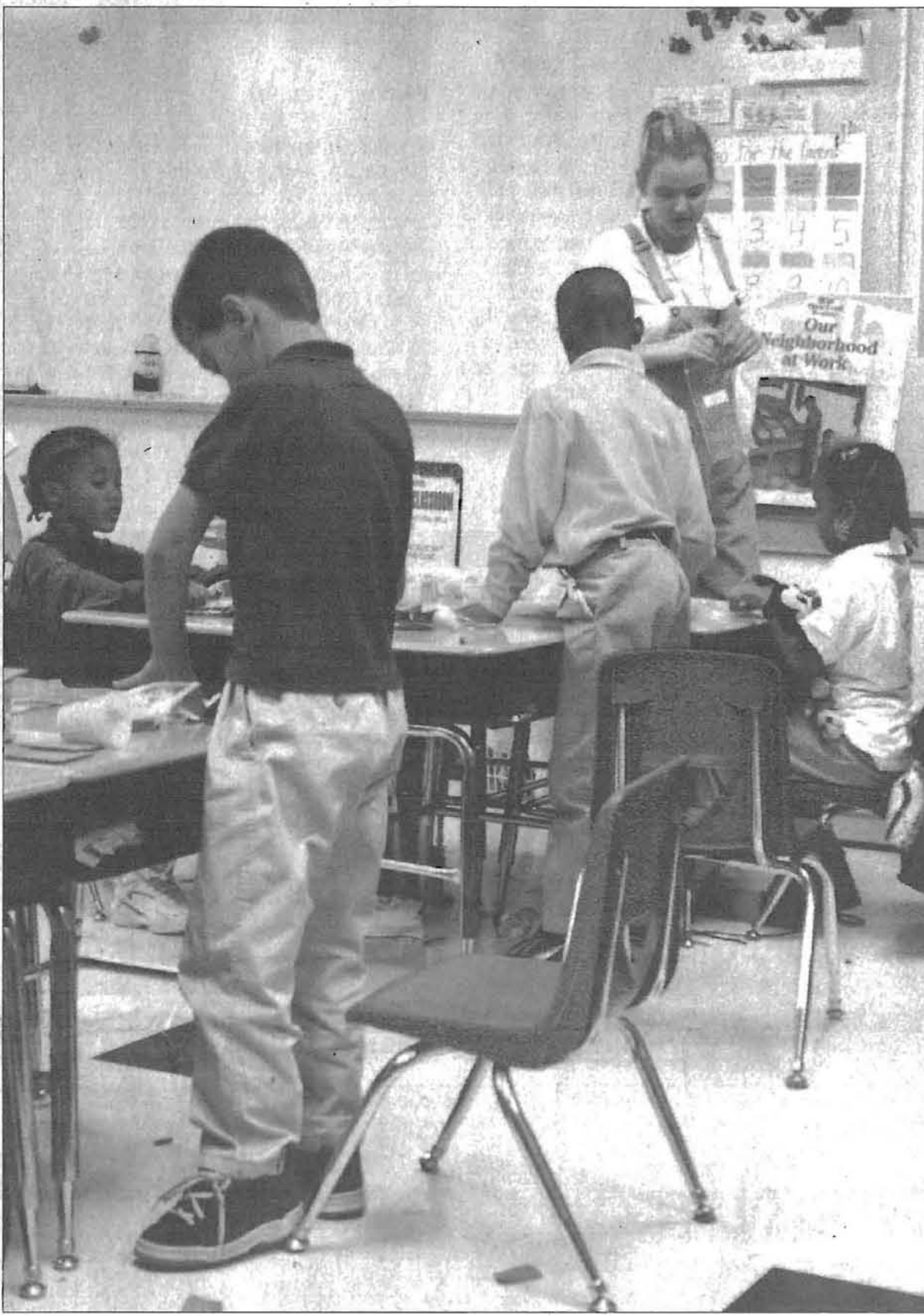
"I kind of expected that," Beyah said of Pacheco's decision to uphold the revocation. "It only confirms that UMSL is going to have to make some new decisions on charter law in the future."

Bob Samples, director of University Communications, says the lawsuit wasn't a surprise either.

"They made it very well known to us and others that this whole affair would likely end up in litigation," he said. "We think we've acted properly and in the best interest of the community, and we intend to show that in court."

Beyah expects a positive response from the community over the lawsuit

see LAWSUIT, page 10



Darren Brunel/The Current

This first grade class is learning the basics of instruction at the St. Louis Charter School, located at 5279 Filer Ave.

How are charter schools different from traditional schools?

BY RHASHAD PITTMAN
staff writer

Missouri state law defines a charter school as "an independent, publicly supported school."

Charter schools are sponsored by either a school board, public 4-year college or university, or community college.

State law encourages sponsors to grant charters to schools that are geared towards "high-risk students and to the re-entry of dropouts into the school system."

Charter schools, for the most part, are exempt from the laws and rules that apply to other public schools. Their educational standards and rules are outlined in their application, which have to be approved by their sponsor.

After a charter is approved by a sponsor, the state board of education has forty-five days to reject the charter approval.

A sponsor can revoke a charter at any time, "if the charter school commits a serious breach of one or more provisions of its charter or on any of the following grounds: failure to meet academic performance standards as set forth in its charter, failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management, or violation of law," Missouri law states.

As long as they have not reached capacity, charter schools are basically required to enroll all students who live in the school's district that submit an application in on time.

The Center for Education Reform says that charter schools are run by "educators, parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs" under sponsors that "monitor their quality and integrity, but allow them to operate freed from the traditional bureaucratic and regulatory red tape that hog-ties

see DIFFERENT, page 10

Concrete tests won't cause further delays, officials say

BY JOSH RENAUD
senior editor

Concern over the quality of concrete slabs used in the new East Drive parking garage will not delay its opening, University officials said on Friday.

The University had requested that Tarlton Corp., the contractor for the garage project, use concrete with a high concentration of micro-silicates said Reinhard Schuster, vice chancellor for Administrative Services. This concrete mix is more dense than regular concrete, and is thus better able to protect the steel reinforcement bars inside of it from chlorides that might seep into it.

Some of the concrete slabs in the East Drive Parking Garage failed a recent chloride test, sparking some concern, Schuster said. The contractor assured the University that the test results would improve over time as the concrete cured.

"We're going to give [Tarlton] time to run all their tests and do whatever they have to do," Schuster said. "If it still doesn't pass, then we're going to be talk about adding some sort of epoxy coating over it. We'll get it there one way or another."

The garage is scheduled to open Feb. 23, said Tom Royster, senior construction project manager. The tests will take 90 days, which was cause for concern, he said, but that won't stop the opening of the garage.

If there is a need for additional parking, then the garage will be opened while the University awaits the test results, said Sam Darandari,



Mutsumi Igarashi/The Current

Construction continues on the East Drive Parking Garage. The garage will have some unique features like an exposed elevator that will allow passengers to look out as they ride it.

director of Campus Planning and Construction.

"We're going to open the garage, and if the tests come up negative, then we'll [start] the sealing of the garage decks at that point," Royster said. If they have to "put the sealant down, they're going to power-spray those decks, prior to the sealing. The oil and the salts that the cars bring in won't be a factor."

Royster said the garage had other safeguards to protect the steel inside the concrete. The reinforcement bar is two inches below the surface of the concrete, he said, and the rebar itself is coated.

Originally the garage was slated

to open in December. Royster said the project had been delayed because the contractor didn't order certain materials in time. The contractor will absorb any extra costs caused by the delay, he said.

When the East Drive Parking Garage opens, it will be very similar to its sister garage on West Drive, Royster said. The East Drive garage, though, will have some new features like a car-counter that indicates if the garage is full, as well as an exposed elevator that will allow passengers to look out on the campus as they ride it, Royster said. The garage's first level will be dedicated to housing certain maintenance vehicles.

SGA sends proposed constitution to UMSL student body for vote

BY LORI CALLANDER
special to The Current

Just as the Congress represents the citizens of the United States, the Student Government Association at UMSL exists to represent the student body. However, few students are aware that, by enrolling in classes, they join over 15,000 other members of the SGA.

Like the U.S. government, the SGA is kept in check by a constitution which mandates the responsibilities and limits of the organization and the elected representatives who serve as the voice of students.

The SGA's current constitution was adopted in 1989 and with the exception of the addition by-laws, the document has remained unchanged over the past 12 years.

However, on Tuesday students will have a chance to approve a revised, rewritten constitution. Polling places will be set up on the second floor of the Millennium Student Center and in Marillac Hall

on the South Campus. Polls will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for day students and from 5 to 8 p.m. for evening college students.

The call for changes in the constitution came about, in part, as a response to circumstances that occurred last year in the SGA.

KEY CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION

- addition of elected comptroller (see Section 3b on pg 5 of constitution)
- addition of stipulation that a representative from each student organization must regularly attend student assembly meetings (pg 2 of constitution)
- all elected SGA officers must be in good academic standing, be enrolled in at least 3 credit hours, and "consent to background review by the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs" and have no current or prior felony convictions (pg 2-3 of constitution)

Students last year learned after an investigation by The Current that Darwin Butler, then SGA president, was a convicted felon. Butler had been able to attend UMSL through a work-release agreement. When a judge revoked that agreement in October 1999, Butler was unable to fulfill the duties of his

see SGA, page 10

Bulletin Board

Put it on the Board:

The Current Events Bulletin Board is a service provided free of charge to all student organizations and University departments and divisions. Deadline for submissions to The Current Events Bulletin Board is 5 p.m. every Thursday before publication. Space consideration is given to student organizations and is on a first-come, first-served basis. We suggest all submissions be posted at least two weeks prior to the event. Send submissions to: Violeta Dimitrova, 7940 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis MO 63121 or fax: 516-6811. All listings use 516 prefixes unless otherwise indicated.

Monday, Jan. 22

- **Welcome Back at the Women Center**
All are invited in Room 126 at the Millennium Student Center to find out about the organization. For information about the exact time, please contact Annette or Karen at 516-5380.
- **Job Search Strategies Workshop** from 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Room 327 at the Millennium Student Center. Free. Advance registration is required. Please call Career Services at 516-5111. The same workshop will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 24, from 1 p.m. to 1:30 p.m..
- **Catholic Mass** will be held at the Catholic Newman Center at 7:30 p.m. at 8200 Natural Bridge Road, located across from the West Drive entrance to North Campus. For more information, call 385-3455.

Tuesday, Jan. 23

- **Lecture Series- "Courage and Conscience: Rescue and Resistance During the Holocaust"** from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Summit Lounge, University Center. Free. For more information, contact Terry Williams from the Center for

International Studies at 516-6495.

Wednesday, Jan. 24

- **Rec Sports Registration Deadline** for the following activities: Coed Volleyball League, Basketball Leagues, Arena Football Leagues, Bowling Doubles League. Sign up in the Rec Sports Office, 203 Mark Twain Building. All intramural activities are open to students, faculty, and staff. For more information about the leagues, call 516-5326.
- **Meeting for OUT-** the UMSL Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, and Transgender group at 4 p.m. in Room 384 of the Millennium Student Center. Room is located on the third floor in Student Organizations. Contact Matthew at 636-230-7483 for more information.
- **Soup and Soul Food**, a simple meal and time for prayer, meditation and reflection, from 12 to 1 p.m. at the Millennium Student Center, room 315. It is sponsored by Wesley Foundation Campus Ministry. All are welcome, and for more information, call Chris Snyder at 314-409-3024 or Roger Jespersen at 385-3000.

Thursday, Jan. 25

- **New Exhibit at Gallery 210**
"John Dilg: Perfect Memories" features a series of small-scale paintings in pictographic form of flora, fauna, and expansive skies. A reception and gallery talk by the artist is from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Gallery, Room 210 in Lucas Hall. Call 516-5976 for more details.

Friday, Jan. 26

- **Physics Colloquium**
Dr. Jay A. Switzer from the Department of Chemistry and Materials Research Center at the University of Missouri-Rolla, will present "Epitaxial Electrodeposition of Metal Oxide Semiconductors." Coffee will be served at 2:30 p.m. in Room 516 of Benton Hall, and the colloquium begins at 3:00 p.m. in Room 328.
- **Performance: Hip-Hop in Germany**
The German Culture Center sponsors the event at the Century Rooms in the Millennium Student Center from 10 a.m.

to 1 p.m.. Free. For more information, please contact Larry Marsh at 516-6620.

- **Soup with Sister** will follow mass at the Catholic Newman Center at 12:05 p.m. at 8200 Natural Bridge across from the West Drive entrance to North Campus. For more information, call 385-3455

Saturday, Jan. 27

- **The Art of Kimono: Tradition, Fashion, and Textiles** will be held at the Summit Lounge in the University Center from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.. Free. For more information, please contact Terry Williams from the Center for International Studies at 516-7299.

Sunday, Jan. 28

- **Catholic Mass** will be held at the South Campus Residence Hall Chapel at 7:30 p.m.

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THE CAMPUS CRIMELINE

January 11, 2001

A staff member reported that between 1/10/01 at 5:30 p.m. and 1/11/01 at 7:45 a.m. 15 compact discs and 4 ear-phone pieces were stolen from 211 Lucas Hall. The items were taken from a desktop.

January 12, 2001

A burglary occurred sometime between 1/10/01 and 1/11/01 at a University Meadows apartment. Entry into the apartment was apparently gained by forcing the front door. Both residents

were out of town at the time of the incident. It has not been determined what is missing.

January 13, 2001

Two staff members reported that their purses were stolen from 238 Research Building between 12:15 p.m. and 1:15 p.m.. Both contained credit cards, cash, and a cell phone. On 1/15/01 both stolen purses were located in a Stadler Hall third floor men's restroom. Still missing are a cell phone and cash.

January 17, 2001

A student reported the theft of his Winter 2001 parking permit. The permit was stolen sometime on 1/11/01 from the student's vehicle, while it was parked on the third level of the new West Drive Garage.

January 18, 2001

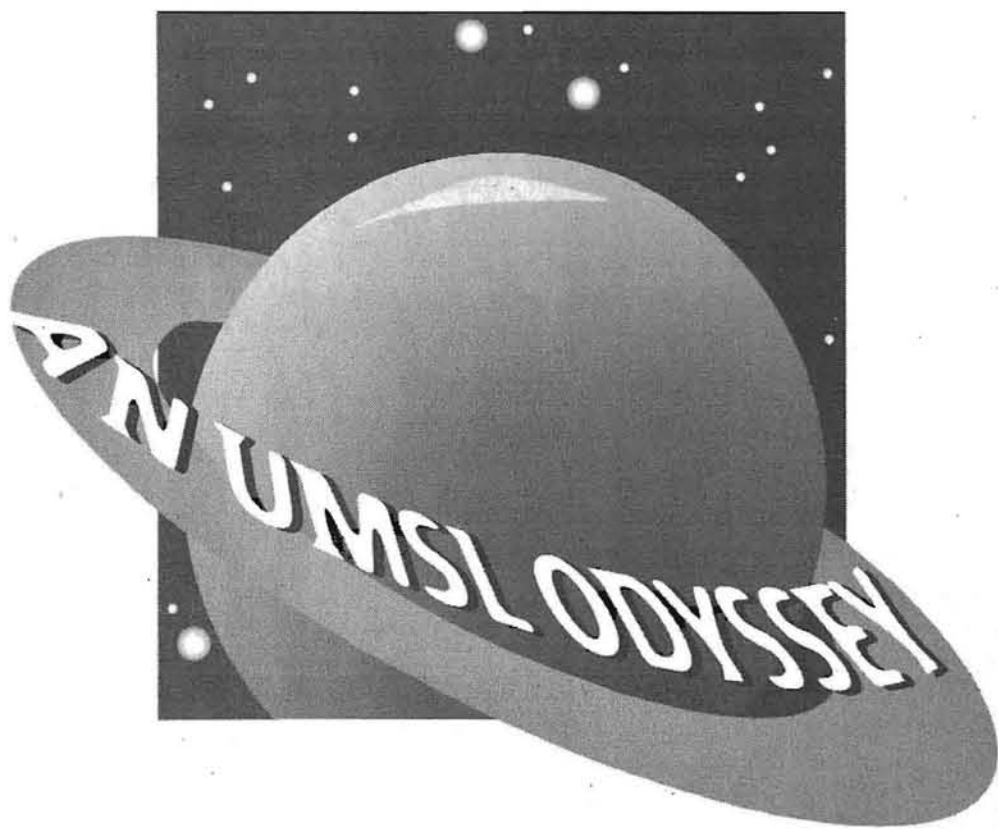
A University van was stolen from the South Campus between 4:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.. Police officials from the City of Berkeley recovered the van on Faye and Davenport. Several arrests were

made. The van received major damage while it was missing. The investigation continues.

A student reported that on 1/16/01 at 5:15 p.m. she parked her vehicle on level 2 of the West Drive Garage. After parking, she applied her permit to the rear window and went to class. On today's date she reported the permit was missing from her vehicle's window.

The Campus CrimeLine is a free service provided by the UMSL Police Department to promote safety through awareness.

Homecoming 2001




Homecoming Dance

Friday, Feb. 16 at the Renaissance Hotel

Other events to look forward to during the week of Homecoming (Feb. 12 - 17)

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| Ping Pong tournament | Big Man On Campus | Recreational Sports Day |
| Basketball Games (Feb. 13 @ 5:30 and 7:45) | Alumni Pre-Game Brunch | Bonfire |
| Homecoming Court | Prospective Student Orientation | Basketball games (Feb. 17 @ 1:00 and 3:15) |
| Basketball games (Feb. 15 @ 5:30 and 7:45) | Pep Rally | Powder-Puff Football (Greek/Non-Greek) |

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August 21, 2000
ISSUE #92

ONLINE **Strike snags Arts Center** Nelson steps down as vice chancellor

It takes a lot of people to make a paper...

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Refugees displaced internally

BY SARA PORTER
staff writer

"Around the world, over 25 million people a year are being driven from their home countries by their own governments," said Dr. Roberta Cohen, of the Brookings Institution, an international relief organization, in her lecture on "Human Rights in Global Perspective: 25 Million in Flight—What Can and Should We Do?"

"These people, called 'internally displaced refugees,' are victims of genocide, mass murder, and starvation," Cohen said.

Cohen, co-author of the books "The Forsaken People" and "Masses In Flight," cites such affairs as the Iraqi occupation and war against the Kurds in the 1990s, the Sudan, which "has the largest internally displaced population," according to Cohen, the ongoing conflict in Kosovo, and various other examples. "Stories of child soldiers, mass rapes, amputations, and murders are quite common," Cohen said.

Many times, Cohen said, the most common reaction by these governments is none at all. "When we have gone to these countries, we have been told many times, 'Those are not our people,'" Cohen said.

Despite the grim situation, Cohen said, some relief has been granted to the internally displaced refugees. "Since the late 1970s, there has been an established criminal court against human rights violators," Cohen said. "Also, there has been an increased public demand for action." She also refers to various groups such as UNICEF, World Health Organization, and the Red Cross, who have aided internally displaced refugees.

"Even though the help is there, more can be done. These people have often declared they don't need food, they need security," Cohen said.

Such groups as the Brookings Institution are lobbying for more protection for the internally displaced, including providing relief, protection, and in some cases, military intervention. "National sovereignty should not be a shield against crimes of humanity," Cohen said. "People have a right not to be arbitrarily displaced."

Cohen hopes that this century will see the end of these crimes. "We have to decide whether we want governments to stop internal genocide in the 21st century."

Cohen's speech is a part of the Center for International Studies lecture series "Human Rights in Global Perspective." For more information, call the CIS at (314) 516-5753.

Observe an 'Amazing Journey' in the Omnimax

The flight of a butterfly...

BY ANNE PORTER
staff editor

Most of us consider our commute to work or school to be a long distance.

What if in order to meet our mates, eat, sleep, and survive we had to travel between 500 and 5000 miles?

"Amazing Journeys," currently featured at the OMNIMAX, tells about the migrations of many creatures that have often been overlooked by most humans.

"Amazing Journeys" begins by showing the annual autumn trip that over 100 million Monarch butterflies make from the United States and Canada to Michoacan, Mexico.

These insects, even though they weigh less than a paper clip, travel over 2500 miles to mate in the fir forests.

Gray whales swim even further from the Arctic Ocean to the lagoons of Baja, California, to give birth to their calves. In these protected waters by California, the mothers and newborns are protected from predators.

On Christmas Island, just in time for the monsoon season, the 120-million population of red crabs leave their holes on the rain forest floor and depart for the rocky coast to mate for the new generation.

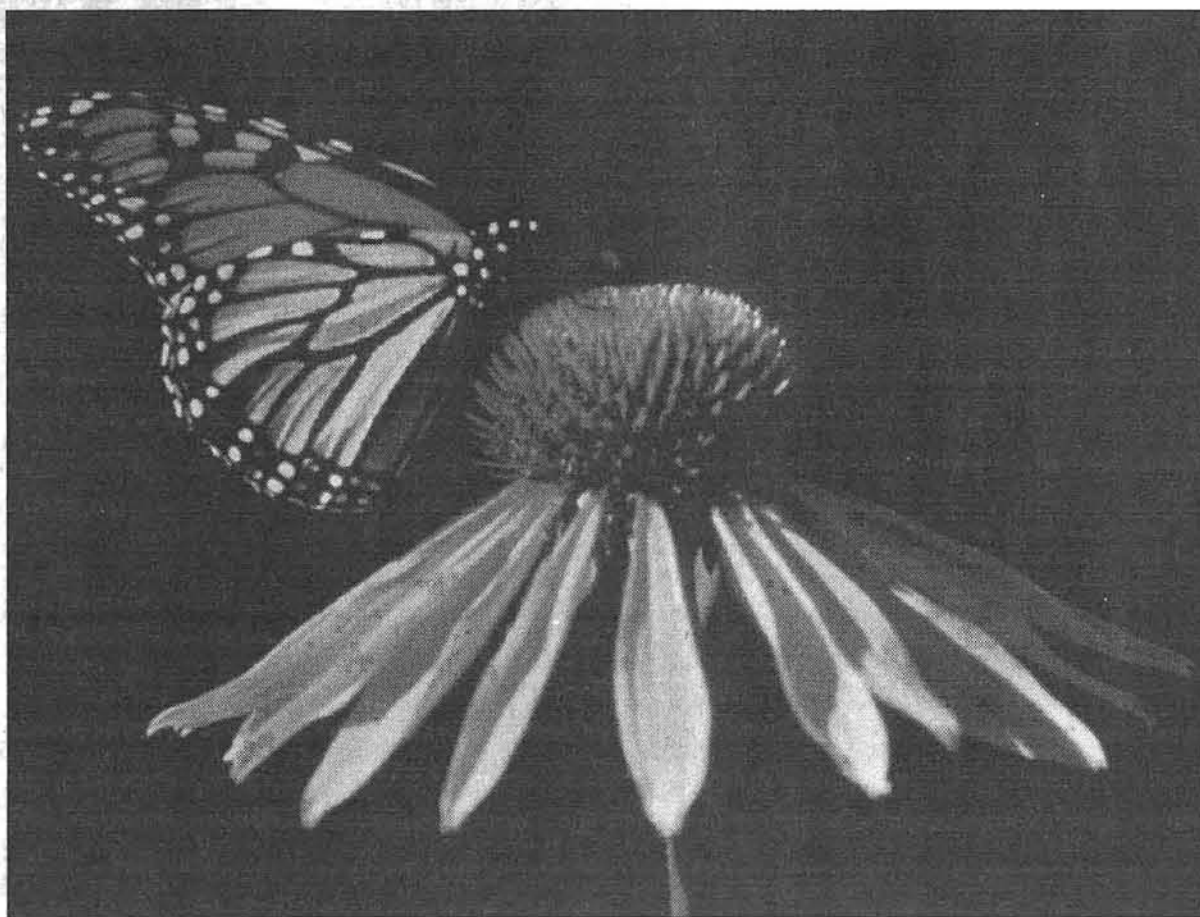


Photo courtesy of St. Louis Science Center

A migrating butterfly in 'Amazing Journeys,' a film currently showing at the Omnimax.

With all the Canadian geese on campus, the migration of birds should be easy to recognize. Many species of birds that live in the Northern Hemisphere travel south in search of food and warmer climates. With the combination of internal compasses, the senses of sight, smell and sound, and genetically passed flight patterns, the birds find their destination every year.

Zebras travel more than 500 miles through a dangerous path of crocodiles, hyenas and lions to the northern

tall grass plains. These plains provide the only food and water during the dry season in the south.

Humans, just as the zebras in Africa, still migrate with the seasons. Hunters and gatherers still exist in Africa today just as they did millions of years ago. Some move in search of prey and fertile soil and other search for water and pasture for their domesticated animals.

"Amazing Journeys," in addition to its larger educational focus, also informs viewers about environmental

issues that effect all of us, not just the particular animals focused on in this film. This movie gives us a glimpse that very few get to see into the lives of animals and helps us to remember that Earth is not just for humans, but also other species of animals.

The footage and imagery is absolutely incredible in conjunction with the music, flowing with the movement in the film.

"Amazing Journeys" tells a story about life, not just yours and mine, but of every creature on Earth.

John Dilg paints 'Perfect Memories'

BY SARA MUELLER
special to The Current

Iowa artist John Dilg will be visiting UMSL this week and featuring his exhibit, "John Dilg: Perfect Memories." The exhibit will be located at Gallery 210 in Lucas Hall.

The exhibit will begin with a reception in Dilg's honor at which he will discuss his paintings. The reception, which will be on Thursday, Jan. 25, from 4:30-6:30 p.m., is free and open to the public. Here he will explain his way of thinking in order to help others understand his work. There will also be a question-and-answer period after his gallery talk.

Dilg will also be on campus the following Monday, Jan. 29, giving a slide lecture at noon in 229 J.C. Penney. The lecture is sponsored by the Center for Humanities, is open to the public, and the artist will also answer questions from the attendees.

The exhibit will feature Dilg's work, which was influenced by the Minimalist school of art and by growing up in rural Iowa. "In concert with the titles, these images both recollect and recompose important memories that, through personal in premise, could be applicable to anyone. My

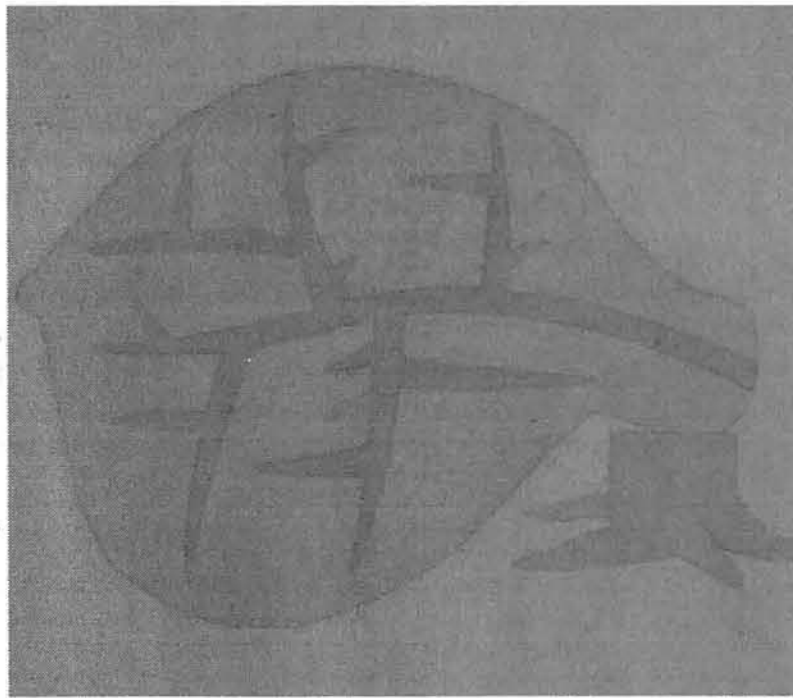


Photo courtesy of John Dilg

The John Dilg's show features a variety of minimalist works of art in Gallery 210.

paintings strive to identify archetypes that represent, among other things, our resignation to the mystery of undiscovered sources and propose that, since nature has been misplaced, the 'natural' is always unnatural," said Dilg.

Dilg takes an abstract approach to his work. The paintings lack unimportant detail and instead focus on the most important aspects, such as the shape or color. The paintings simplify and abstract experiences, forcing the viewer to use "knowledge that resides

in memory and imagination, rather than intellect" to explain the meaning. Much of his work is filled with metaphor.

One painting that will be on display at the exhibit is titled "Wilderness." "Wilderness" features a tree cut off at the base. To the left of the tree is a tear-shaped figure with the picture of healthy tree branches inside. According to Terry Suhre, director of Gallery 210, this painting is very typical of Dilg's work over the past five years. There is a single subject matter, and the painting is done in earthy colors. The painting also has the common theme of a loss or absence of nature.

Dilg is visiting from the University of Iowa where he is currently a professor of painting and drawing. He has had many other displays all over the country. "I believe exposure to the arts is essential for a well-rounded education. This exhibit is an opportunity to see the real thing, the actual objects, and to be with the artist. This experience could inspire interest and expand our knowledge in a new area," said Suhre.

For those who cannot attend the reception, the exhibit will be open through February 24, 2001. The Gallery's hours are Tuesday through Saturday 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and it is located in room 210 of Lucas Hall.

BOOK REVIEW

Chen provides a superb look at Chinese life

BY SARA PORTER
staff writer

Da Chen was born in 1962, the year of the Great Starvation and the start of the Cultural Revolution in China. Chen, author of this moving and many times humorous autobiography, "Colors of the Mountain," believes this shaped his entire life.

In one of the earlier passages, Chen wryly discussed being born during a drought. "Dad wanted to give me the name Han, which means drought," Chen writes. "But that would have been like naming a boy in Hiroshima Atom Bomb, and since the Chinese believe that their names dictate their

fate, I would have probably ended up digging ditches, searching for water in some wasteland."

Many of Chen's reminiscences deal with a country under Mao Tse Tung.

This is a world where beatings are quite commonplace, where many people, including Chen's father and grandfather, were frequently sent to labor camps, and where even making a slight joke about the local government, as Chen describes in one passage, is punishable by imprisonment.

Other memories of his childhood, like joining a hoodlum gang for a time and his troubles in school, are quite universal. Take away the political setting, and this story could have been

written in Brooklyn in the 1950s or St. Louis in the 1990s.

Above all, Chen's autobiography is a tribute to the people around him—his idealistic father, his strong-willed mother, Professor Wei, a born Christian who taught Chen English, and most moving of all, his alcoholic grandfather, who Chen describes as "always dying."

"Colors of the Mountain" is a well-done portrayal of Chen's childhood, and if he writes a sequel dealing with his adult life, I will definitely look forward to reading it.

Arts & Events on Campus

Jan.-Feb. 24

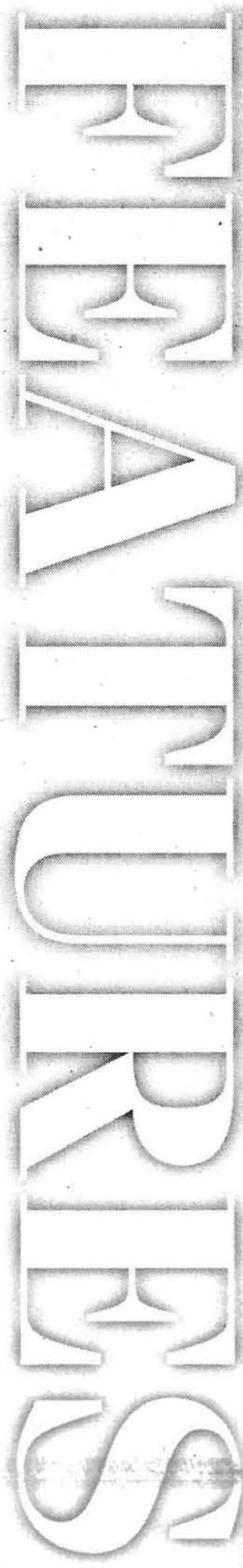
"John Dilg: Perfect Memories", exhibit of paintings at the Gallery 210, room 210, Lucas Hall.

Jan. 25

Lecture by artist John Dilg on his work displayed at Gallery 210, at Gallery 210 4:30-6:30 pm. Free and open to the public.

Jan. 29

Lecture and slide show by artist John Dilg on his paintings, in J.C. Penney auditorium at noon. Free and open to the public.



EDITOR

WE NEED ONE!

features editor

phone: 516-5174
fax: 516-6811

EVENTS

Worth noting: the St. Louis Art Guild is sponsoring "Anything Goes," an art contest open to artists in any genre. Prizes range from \$50-\$300. Deadline is Jan. 27-28. All art will be displayed at the Artist's Guild until March 10. For more information please contact Betsy Gibbs at (314) 776-3114.

Jan. 25

Author James Hynes will read from and sign his book, "The Lecturer's Tale," a satire about a college professor who requires supernatural powers, at Left Bank Books at 7 p.m. Admission is free. Please contact Lisa Greening and Michelle Hand at Left Bank at (314) 367-6731.

Jan. 29

Author Trezza Azzopardi will read from and sign her book, "The Hiding Place," a coming-of-age story set in Wales, at Left Bank Books at 7 p.m. Admission is free. Please call Lisa Greening or Michelle Hand at (314) 367-6731.

Juilliard String Quartet will perform at the Sheldon Concert Hall at 8 p.m. Performances are \$20.00 for general admission and \$15.00 for seniors. Call the Premiere Performances office at UM-St. Louis at (314) 516-5818.

Jan. 31

Author Jill Connor Browne will read from and sign her book, "God Save the Sweet Potato Queens," a collection of stories, recipes, and advice from Southern women at Left Bank Books. Admission is free.

SPRING

EDITORIAL BOARD

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

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Letters to the editor should be brief and those not exceeding 200 words will be given preference. We edit letters for clarity, length and grammar. All letters must be signed and include a daytime phone number.

OUR OPINION

Important constitution vote needs high student turnout

If you've been inside the Millennium Student Center lately, you can't miss the signs for Dr. Ruth. Student Activities is bringing the popular speaker to campus about a month from now. Wisely, they've begun promoting the event with fliers, signs, and other forms of advertising. As a result, the event gets lodged in students' minds, and the turnout will probably be very good.

You can't say the same about the Student Government Association, Student Activities' next-door neighbor on the third floor of the Student Center. SGA also has an important event coming up, though most students don't know about it. What is it? Well, the SGA is asking the student body to vote on a new constitution this Tuesday. It's probably the most important thing SGA will do all year.

Most students, if asked, probably don't realize the recent history that made a new constitution necessary. That's why it's frustrating that you can't find any information about it on fliers, signs, or even on SGA's own website.

But the constitution is an important issue. And just like the recent U.S. presidential election, there are a lot of things at stake that make it crucial that students vote on this. Many people around the campus community want this constitution to pass—administrators and students alike. There are also quite a few students who are disturbed by some of things they see in the new constitution, and they are fighting to defeat it.

Because there's a lot riding on this document, a large turnout is essential. It would be a shame for only a hundred students decide the fate of the largest student organization on campus, the organization that claims to represent them all.

So what are some of the important issues in the proposed constitution?

First, the proposed constitution would reduce the number of at-large representatives in the Assembly. It would also impose much stricter attendance regulations on organizational representatives.

Also, the new constitution would require background checks of all officer candidates and would not allow students with prior felony convictions to hold office.

The new constitution would give the vice chancellor for Student Affairs the ability to remove students from office if he or she finds them in violation of certain requirements.

The constitution formally adds the office of comptroller to the SGA. The comptroller is responsible for overseeing the Student Activities Budget Committee.

This just scratches the surface. We recommend that students take a few extra minutes and visit SGA to get a copy of the proposed constitution (since they can't be found anywhere) to study privately. Decide how you feel about these changes. If you think they are good, then vote for the constitution. If you aren't comfortable with this draft of the constitution, then vote no.

The issue:

The constitution vote being held this Tuesday is an important event for all students, even though most probably don't know about it. The constitution contains many changes that will affect the way the SGA operates for years to come.

We suggest:

Students should visit SGA and check out the new constitution to learn how it will change things. Then they should decide how they feel about the constitution and vote Tuesday.

So what do you think?

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

On Tuesday, we hope many students will come out and voice an informed opinion on the constitution.

GUEST COMMENTARIES

Constitution will strip student's rights

The banners in the new Millennium Student Center should read "We love to take UMsl students' rights away from them," if the proposed SGA constitution is approved by the students on Jan. 23.

While this draft is the best revision that I have seen in years, it will take away student rights. This constitution came from a mandate from the Senate Student Affairs Committee in 1999, after the famous Darwin Butler situation. They wanted to prevent another one.

First, this proposed constitution gives the vice chancellor for Student Affairs more power in student government. That person has the authority to conduct background checks on candidates. One year background checks could be conducted, the next year no background checks, depending on the candidates. Also, the vice chancellor will have the ability to remove a student from office. Students are supposed to govern



STEVEN WOLFE
Guest Commentator

themselves in student activities. Giving this power to the vice chancellor would violate the power of the students to govern themselves.

Second, students who are not members of student organizations, which is a large percentage of the UMsl student body, lose power in the SGA Assembly. The proposed

constitution increases the ratio of representatives to 1 for every 750 students in an academic unit from the 1 for every 500 students in the present constitution. However, every recognized student organization still is required to send a representative. This tells us that students in student organizations have more power in the SGA Assembly than students who are not.

Third, student organizations have stricter requirements regarding their Assembly participation. No longer will an organization be allowed to send a proxy to Assembly meetings. After three misses, the organization will lose its representation and its budget. This stricter requirement does not recognize that UMsl is primarily a commuter campus where classes are held throughout the day during the week. Students have other responsibilities; school and student govern-

see WOLFE, page 9

ASUM prepares for new year of lobbying

Greetings from the capital of Missouri, Jefferson City. My name is Joshua Stegeman. I am a senior political science major and along with junior political science major Corey Inskip, I am representing your student concerns for higher education issues in the state legislature as Associated Students of the University of Missouri (ASUM) lobbyists. I would like to inform you, the student body of UMsl, of our progress on issues for which we have decided to lobby during this legislative session. First allow me to introduce the ASUM to those who are unfamiliar with its capacities on campus.

ASUM is new to UMsl, as it is in its first year on campus, so things

have been moving slowly, but we are certain the organization will be successful for student representation at the university, state, and national levels. ASUM is comprised of students from the four campuses that make up the University of Missouri System: the St. Louis, Kansas City, Rolla, and Columbia campuses. ASUM is a campus organization that lobbies in the state and national legislatures for student representation on higher education issues. ASUM is also preparing other activities for the campus such as voter registration drives, lunches/dinners with local legislators, student involvement in student showcase day at the capital in Jefferson City, and coordination with

the Student Government and Senate on campus.

It is an exciting time in Jefferson City because of the inauguration of the new governor of Missouri, Bob Holden. The legislative session actually began on Jan. 3, so that meant Corey and I cut our holiday breaks short in order to start our duties for our student constituents. The Missouri Senate is divided 16-15 with a Republican majority, but there are three vacant seats that will be filled by Jan. 24 elections. This means that the Senate could be divided 17-17, so a compromise between the two parties was reached. The

see STEGEMAN, page 10

Murphy's auto-noise law applies to bowling, too

Ever had a car that was making funny noises? You take it to the repair shop and sit with the mechanic inside the car. You start it up, and wait expectantly, so you can let the mechanic hear for himself the noise that's troubling you.

More often than not, your stupid car will be nice and quiet. You'll smile weakly at the mechanic and mutter "It ALWAYS does it. I don't know what to say!" and then return home frustrated.

I have that experience, but with bowling instead of cars.

You see, I've grown up bowling. My mother's parents were always big bowlers. They played in leagues on the military base in San Antonio. Every time we visited them, we could count on spending at least one afternoon bowling.

At home, we would bowl every once in a while, too. I envied my Papa and my Dad. While I only knew how to throw the ball straight, they both threw these wicked hooks and had a knack for racking up high scores.

Over the years, I got stronger, but I never changed my straight-ball ways. I began bowling socially with my friends from school. We didn't play regularly, but my average rose, anyway. I would usually throw around a 110 or 120.

And that's when my "noisy car" experiences started. Occasionally, I

had some really good games. I bowled as high as the 140s and even the 150s. But these games always happened with friends. When I went bowling with the family, I could never bowl that well.

I didn't believe it was a psychological thing, and I still don't. But for some reason, I do bowl better with friends. When I joined the staff of The Current, I heard about their bowling nights. It took me a year, but finally I started playing with them.

It was the first time I had ever bowled regularly. Bowling night was Tuesday, every week. While I was very consistent, it did help my game. Over time, I threw new record high games: 172 and 184.

Last week, I did something I never dreamed I would ever do. I broke the 200 barrier and threw a 207.

Two hundred is a big number in bowling. That plateau is what separates the really good players from the beginners. It's the number that always awed me when my dad would bowl.

Now that I've achieved it, I'm not sure I'll be able to repeat it any time soon. But I also know that the next time I bowl with my family, I'll be trying my damndest to break that plateau. I want to show my dad something besides a score sheet. And with any luck, the car will actually make some noise this time.



JOSH RENAUD
editor-in-chief

Mystery note tests nerves of one UMsl graduate

For many years my parents have waited for me to graduate.

And finally, last Sunday that day had arrived.

Or so we thought...

The day began innocently enough. Before graduation preparation was to begin at 2 p.m., I went to my parents' house to eat brunch.

The Saturday before, I had received a letter from the Arts and Science Department, saying that I needed to complete an academic profile, and that I would be removed from the graduation list. This completely confused me.

After all, I had my gown, my tickets, my announcements. I had everything that was required to graduate. Everything except for taking this academic assessment.

Not even stating, of course, that I had no idea what this was. I had received no notice in the mail of the times this test was offered, and therefore, I had no idea that I had to take it.

In order to even get to this day, I had to receive my dean's approval, because I had six extra hours, and I had to take both a major and minor assessment test.

When I had obtained my dean's approval, I visited my adviser to ask if there was nothing left that I needed to take or do in order to graduate, and he said no. So this letter was quite a shock.

The wrong graduation date of May 2001 was listed on the top of the letter, and the check mark by the

category that said, "Your name has been removed from the graduation list."

Under that was a handwritten note, which said unless I talked to my adviser by Jan. 26, I would not be allowed to graduate.

So it was Sunday, Jan. 14. My family would be in the Mark Twain

AND THE POINT IS...



ANNE PORTER
managing editor

gymnasium to see me graduate, but by that time I was so panicked, I did not know if I would be.

I decided that I would eat quickly and drive to campus to locate someone who could decipher this whole ugly situation for me.

By the time I got to campus it was 12:30 p.m.

First stop: Arts and Science advising. My thinking was that this was graduation day, hopefully someone would be here.

No one was, but someone told me that advisers would be in Mark Twain as early as 1:30 p.m.

Second stop: Mark Twain. The building was not even open yet. A police officer told me that he didn't know of any advisers that would be there to answer questions, even though the graduate directions had said this.

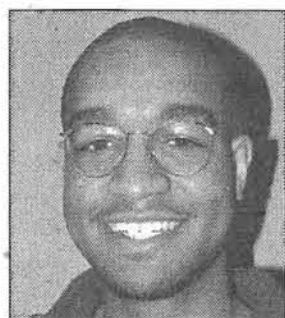
There was nothing I could do until 2 p.m., when the gym would open, so I took a shower and got ready.

By 2 p.m., I had my boyfriend drop me off at the door, so that I could stand in line and find someone who could explain this whole mess of a graduation ceremony to me.

see PORTER, page 9

Under Current

by **Mutsumi Igarashi**
staff photographer



Michael Patton
Sophomore/ Undecided

It has its challenges, but I'm very optimistic about an awesome semester.



Aimee Lemoine
Junior/ Accounting

Everyone at UMsl is friendly- I've liked it so far.



Steven Blassingame
Sophomore/ Education

I have been more focused than previous semesters. it's been great.



Jennifer Lagamann
Junior/ Graphic Design

This will be a very interesting semester for me. I had to take a math class. I am very bad at math. It's my worst subject.

How has your new semester started?

Club plays two, no wins

BY NICK BOWMAN
staff writer

What started off badly ended up worse when the UMSL Rivermen's Hockey Club came out of the weekend a step below. With a 19-2-2 overall record, the Rivermen are still in great standing with the rest of the Mid-American Collegiate Hockey Association, but with weak play and a lack of spirit, the team will face a tough challenge against Palmer College on Jan. 26 and 27.

"We had an extremely disappointing weekend," said leading UMSL scorer Jeff Wear, who added three goals and two assists to his portfolio over the weekend. "We beat ourselves."

The first contest against first-year team Robert Morris College, no. 8 in the ACHA national rankings, featured a solid performance by the Rivermen. The lead switched hands three times before ending in a 5-5 tie.

The Rivermen struck first with a goal by Mike Winkler, which was quickly answered by the Morris defense. A Wear slapshot later in the period again put UMSL on top, but the Morris offense answered in beating Rivermen net-minder Dan Schuermann to even the score at 2-2 after 20 minutes of play.

Morris came out firing in the second period, scoring two unanswered goals and going ahead 4-2.

But the Rivermen rallied in the third period with Scott Peterson beating the Morris defense twice in the third and another Riverman hitting the net to go ahead 5-4 with just under one minute to play.

With only 30 seconds remaining in the contest, the Morris offense beat Schuermann one final time to end the

match in a tie.

"We played really well, and it was a shame that we couldn't have gotten a [win] out of that [Robert Morris] game," said Wear. "But we played a very solid game."

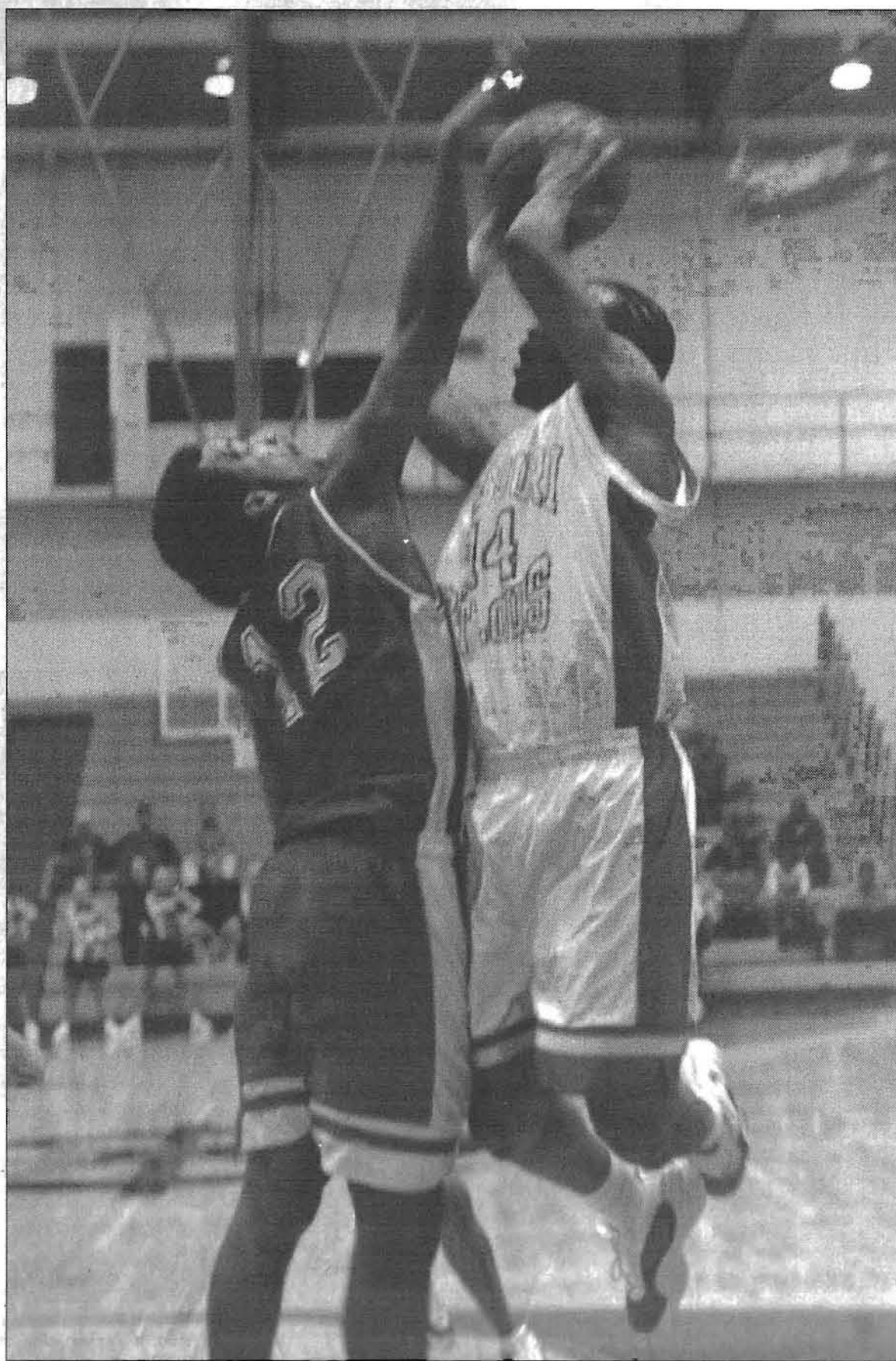
The following night, the Rivermen found themselves staring at a familiar foe in Northern Illinois University.

The Rivermen threw the first punch at 10:57 with Ryan Craig scoring off of a feed from Peterson. Minutes later Northern Illinois threw the second punch, a shot off the stick of the Huskies' offense that found itself behind Schuermann, the first of three in the period. During the first, Jake Todd took a shot to the head that fired up the UMSL bench, and freshman Mattias Puppillo took offense, taking a game misconduct with a massive hit on the Northern Illinois captain. Todd was later ejected for spearing in the third period.

Northern Illinois would go up by as many as three points before Peterson finally put a shot on target and in the net. Both Craig and assistant captain Ben Gilbertson were credited with an assist. 1:30 later, UMSL scored again with a goal coming from transfer John Yacovelli. Peterson and Craig were again on the play with assists. But this only fired up the Huskies as they matched with two goals to set the score at 3-6 after two periods of play.

The Rivermen laced up their skates tight in the third, with Wear scoring his only two goals of the night in the first five minutes of the period. Craig would add a third to set the score at 6-6, but Schuermann could not stop the last puck to cross the goal line as Northern Illinois would score with 3:27 left in the contest and hand the Rivermen a 7-6 defeat.

No. 1-ranked USI pummels Rivermen at home, 84-69



Darren Brune/The Current

Greg Ross jumps for two at a recent game played by the Rivermen. The Rivermen lost last week to Southern Indiana.

BY DAVE KINWORTH
staff editor

The Rivermen's basketball team, coming off their first conference victory of the season over SIU-Edwardsville, had a larger task at hand last Monday as they hosted the No. 1 team in the nation in Southern Indiana and fell 84-69.

UMSL jumped ahead early as the Rivermen led out of the gates 15-4 against Southern Indiana. But Southern Indiana mounted a comeback and eventually tied the ballgame at 24-24, and then went on a 15-0 run in the last three minutes of the first

half to head to the locker room, leading the Rivermen 43-33.

UMSL shot only 30 percent from the field in the first half connecting on 11-36.

In the second half, Southern Indiana dominated, as they shot 48 percent from the field and never looked back as the Rivermen shot only 27 percent from the field for the game.

The Rivermen were led by Juan Dumphord who contributed 17 points, while Greg Ross and Michael Coleman added 16 and 11 points respectively. Coleman also added five rebounds and seven steals to his cred-

it in a failed effort.

UMSL then rebounded from the loss on their first of two road games in Indiana as the Rivermen defeated St. Joseph's 86-71. St. Joseph's was coming off of an upset win against Northern Kentucky, a team that was ranked in the top ten in the nation at the time.

With the win, UMSL boosted their record to 2-6 in the Great Lakes Valley Conference and 6-8 overall.

The Rivermen host four straight home games starting this week as they take on Indianapolis Jan. 25, before Northern Kentucky comes to the Mark Twain Building Jan. 27.

Cole throws in towel as SID, goes home

BY DAVE KINWORTH
staff editor

With the Rivermen and Riverwomen's basketball game coming to an end this past Wednesday against SIU-Edwardsville, so did the era of Sports Information Director (SID) Chris Cole come to an end at UMSL.

Cole, hired last summer to fill the position of SID vacated by Michael DeFord, has accepted a job to work at Northern Kentucky, his hometown.

"It brings me closer to my family, back to my home," Cole said. "Fewer hours and kind of outside the field of sports information, so less stressful. But the main reason is to be closer to my family."

The job does not entail any sports engineering at all, but Cole looks at that on a positive side.

"I will still have sports in my life, I will just be able to enjoy them now instead of having to stress through them every night of the year," Cole said. "I will actually be able to enjoy college football, NFL football and high school football, the stuff you really don't get to enjoy as an SID."

Cole had ambition as SID at UMSL, while showing a new energy to the Mark Twain Building employees and athletes.

"One of my goals is to leave the office in better shape than I found it," Cole said. "I think I've done that. I didn't accomplish things that I hoped to, but I accomplished other things that I didn't think that I could. It is something that in a short time, it is kind of hard to really accurately pull a yard stick up to what you have done. I haven't been here long enough to do that."

The search to replace Cole has already begun as Athletic Director Pat



Cole

Dolan has applicants in line to fill the position.

"Because the position or search was conducted less than six months ago, you can go back into the pool that you had and accept those people at face value," Dolan said. "Plus at the same time, the position was posted last Monday and it will come off posting this Friday and there are some real quality candidates that we already have, but I can't make an offer until next Monday."

Dolan is searching for an SID with similar traits of those that Cole possesses.

"I would like to get somebody with experience," Dolan said. "Chris was very good with the Web, so I would like to at least have somebody who can maintain that, but that changes daily. Chris has a lot of creativity and a lot of energy. Because it is a one-man shop, you can get really bogged down with the pressures and the time lines of games. Chris was very willing to step out of that and seemed to meet the deadlines and provide some energy. Almost all of the fall sport athletes know him fairly well that they can give him a love punch on the shoulder and coaches seemed to be able to work well with him."

Rec Sports brings football to U

BY NICK BOWMAN
staff writer

As students of UMSL, we may never experience the thrill of tearing down a set of field goal posts after a chilling conference victory, but for many of us, the spirit of the pigskin still calls for action and to some, one season is just not enough.

Earlier this semester, Intramural Athletic Director Pam Steinmetz and her staff found an answer to this call, forming an arena football league, the first of its kind for UMSL.

"We are really looking forward to this new league," said Steinmetz. "It

will be a trial run of sorts, but we've just got to play first and fix any problems as we go along."

Unlike the already popular flag football league, whose only rival for participation is outdoor soccer and floor hockey, the arena league will have a whole new slate of rules and guidelines similar to those of rugby.

Teams will consist of at least four players per roster, with a maximum of 15. If a team shows up with three, they will still be allowed to play without a forfeit. Substitutes may come in at anytime, given that the ball is not in play.

The quarterback will be given four

seconds to release the ball from the snap or lose the down and every player on the field will be an eligible receiver. To make things more exciting, any player in possession of the ball may throw in anywhere and in any direction as long as the ball is live.

There are no kick-offs or punts in the new league. The offense will start with the football on its goal line and will have four chances to cross mid-field or score. Touchdowns are worth six points, with a two-point conversion attempt following each score.

see F-BALL, page 7

Blues' apparent success not impressive until playoffs



LATEST SCOOP

DAVE KINWORTH

The St. Louis Blues might be the team to be besides the Colorado Avalanche on the road to the Lord Stanley's Cup this season, but part of me will just not allow myself to be emotionally distraught again with another first- or second- round exit from the playoffs.

The Blues this season have had just an outburst of wins in the first half of the season, but be forewarned, the regular season is not over just quite yet. There will be slumps that the Blues have in the second part of the season, especially with the number of injuries that they have suffered

thus far. With Pavol Demitra scheduled to come back in the next few weeks and Pierre Turgeon hitting a slump and rash of injuries, the younger core of this team will be forced to step up in the following weeks.

Scott Young has proven this first half of the season that he is a premier player, not to the level of Mario Lemieux or Brett Hull, but he adds character and grit in his scoring approach. He got an early start in his goal-scoring as he led the National Hockey League in scoring for a couple of weeks early into the season.

But needless to say, the Blues may have the second best record in the league to date, but let's not get our hopes up yet. Remember who led the league last season in points and failed to get out of the first round of the playoffs? Well, of course it was our very own Blues. No matter what people say about how the Detroit Red Wings lost in the first round of the playoffs one year and then went on the following season to win the Stanley Cup, we are not the Red Wings.

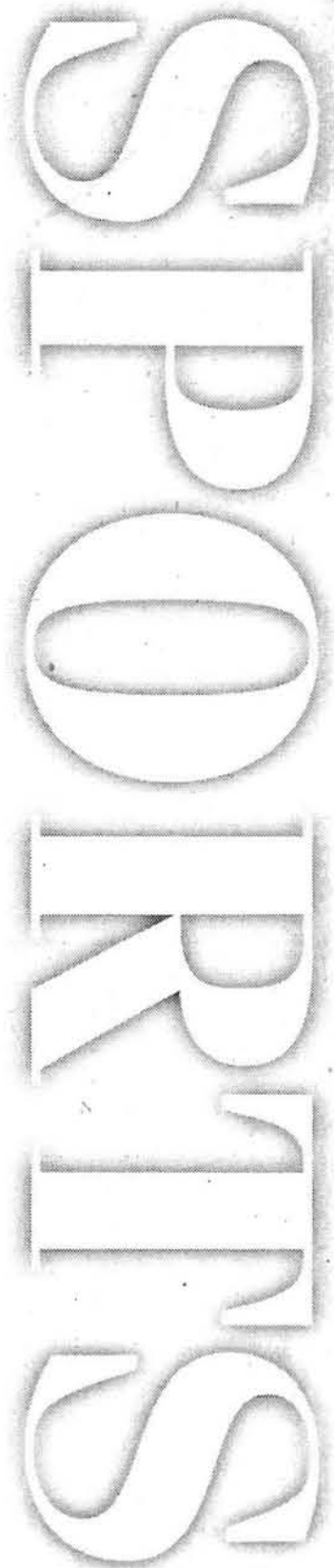
The Blues need to find their own place in the NHL. We are not the Red

Wings, who display a core of veteran scorers in Brendan Shanahan and Steve Yzerman. We are not the Colorado Avalanche, who in a short couple of years after their relocation have dominated the Eastern Conference. The Blues are a young team with stellar goaltending. That is one thing that these other two teams do not have.

With Scott Johnson and Roman Turek roaming the nets for the Blues, the security factor is there if one were to go down with an injury. Either Johnson or Turek can start a game and it does not matter who the oppo-

nent is, because they are both in a division of their own. They, along with the All-Star defenseman Chris Pronger and AI MacInnis, are the core of the Blues—not focused on just scoring, but the other half of the game in defense.

The Blues may have the parts to get out of the first round of the playoffs this year with a solid defense, but beware. The San Jose Sharks might not make the playoffs this season, but another team with the taste of an upset may loom in the near future again for the Blues.



EDITOR

DAVE KINWORTH
sports editor

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GAMES

Men's Basketball

v. Indianapolis
7:45 pm, Thur., Jan. 25

v. Northern Kentucky
3:15 pm, Sat., Jan. 27

v. Bellarmine
7:45 pm, Thur., Feb. 1

Women's Basketball

v. Indianapolis
5:30 pm, Thur., Jan. 25

v. Northern Kentucky
1:00 pm, Sat., Jan. 27

v. Bellarmine
5:30 pm, Thur., Feb. 1

Visit the UMSL athletics website at

www.umsl.edu/services/athletics/athletics.html

A&E

EDITOR

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MUSIC

January

25

Eddie Money
8 p.m.
The Pageant

26

Mary Alice Wood
8 p.m.
Sheldon Concert Hall

27

North Mississippi All Stars
9 p.m.
Blueberry Hill's Duck Room

February

3

Hollie Marie and Nikki Nahra
8 p.m.
Focal Point Arts Center

4

The Chieftans
7:30 p.m.
Powell Hall

10

Linkin Park with Taproot
8 p.m.
The Pageant

14

Chuck Berry
9 p.m.
Blueberry Hill's Duck Room

20

Face to Face
Snapcase and H2O
7:30 p.m.
Mississippi Nights



Julia Stiles plays Sara and Sean Patrick Thomas plays Derek in "Save the Last Dance," a musical drama based on the hip-hop dance scene of Chicago's South Side.



FILM REVIEW

'Antitrust' provides lots of high-tech suspense

BY RHASHAD PITTMAN
staff writer

Milo Hoffman is a young computer programmer whose computer genius gives him three vital career moves to decide from in the suspenseful, high-tech thriller "Antitrust."

Fresh out of college, Milo can either continue working with friends in a garage on a mission to become a successful start-up company, or decide to join the largest software corporation in the country and probably get rich quick. Or, he can turn down a lucrative job offer, receive \$42,000/year and a Buick, and help the government put the bad guys in the computer industry away. Such a hard decision.

Milo (Ryan Phillippe) decides to take his programming talent for a visit to corporate America, after being recruited by Gary Winston, a corporate C.E.O and Bill Gates look-alike.

Winston (Tim Robbins) heads the multi-billion dollar software corporation N.U.R.V., which stands for Never Underestimate Radical Vision. In a visit to the lavish company in the heart of Silicon Valley, Milo meets the innovative business owner that is constantly in the media.

While laid back in an office that looks more like a lavish living room, Winston asks Milo what his plans are for the future. When he discovers that Milo and his start-up company would like their valuable programming information when it is fully developed to be "open source" and not privately

'Antitrust'

Length: 120 min.
Rated: PG-13
Our opinion: ★★★

controlled, Winston reminds him that any big business can come along and take control of that information.

Winston then asks Milo to work for N.U.R.V. to help him complete the SYNAPSE project, which would create digital convergence, linking telephones, television, and computers all together into one unit.

Going against the advice of friend and business partner Teddy Chin (Yee Jee Tso) Milo joins N.U.R.V. and inevitably leaves his friends and start-up company behind. Milo soon finds out that Teddy and N.U.R.V. critics were right about the corporation closing the market to competitors.

This is a quick-moving film that goes well with such a young cast—everybody seems in their 20s except for Robbins and a few bad guys. Many suspenseful moments permeate the movie, leaving the audience on its toes from the rising action to the resolution.

There are a few instances where the motives for Milo's actions are obscure, but they become clearer as the plot unveils. It's a must-see not only for "computer geeks," as they are called numerous times in the movie, but for anyone who enjoys a good suspense movie with a twist that is sure to make your jaw drop.

This 'Dance' trips all over its audience

BY LORI CALLANDER
special to The Current

"Save The Last Dance," a musical drama based on the hip-hop dance scene of Chicago's South Side, is an exploration of a cultural clash that occurs when the spark of interracial romantic love ignites controversy. The film, presented by Paramount Pictures and MTV Films, has recently been released to local theaters and, on the night of the screening, the theater was packed. Perhaps the crowd was drawn by the attractive cast, such as main characters Sara (played by Julia Stiles) and Derek (played by Sean Patrick Thomas).

Sara is a sheltered white girl, who moves from a small suburban town in Illinois to the city of Chicago to live with her estranged father after her mother dies. She loves ballet and, losing hope on her dream of someday studying dance at Julliard School of Arts, she enrolls in an all-black public high school where she meets Derek. Derek is a black guy who is a seasoned native of urban Chicago. Despite his rejection of the gang-banging lifestyle of his friends, he is accepted by his peers and has gained popularity for his talent with the hip-hop style of dance. United by their common love of dance, the couple gets together, and their blossoming romantic relationship causes trouble to erupt.

The movie, resonating with the typical problems of high-school students, takes a turn toward "teen flick" as the

'Save the Last Dance'

Length: 113 min.
Rated: PG-13
Our opinion: ★★

main characters face social issues, such as peer pressure, acceptance or rejection by cliques, and the disapproval of friends and family. Despite the movie's theme that states "the only person you need to be is yourself," the primary character, Sara, exemplifies a different example. Throughout the movie, she attempts to "fit in" by caving under the pressure of social obstacles by changing her entire being, including her style of dress, attitude, hobbies, habit of study, and manner of speech. What sort of message is this supposed to send out to young people?

The themes of the movie, along with costuming consisting of designer clothing worn by exceptionally good-looking characters with blindingly white teeth, give it elements similar to "Beverly Hills 90210." The difference is that the setting of "Save the Last Dance" is portrayed as a supposed ghetto, and the specific issues involved in the movie are old and worn out.

If you are still convinced that this teen flick is a must-see, save your money and wait until it comes out on video. Better yet, do yourself a favor and accept this suggestion: save your time on "Save the Last Dance."

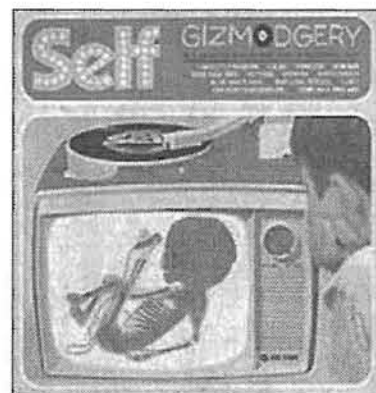
ALBUM REVIEW

It's back to preschool on new Self album

BY EMILY UMBRIGHT
special to The Current

Self is not a band that just plays with their instruments. On their album entitled "Gizmodgery," Matt Mahaffey and the rest of the band actually trade them in for something a bit out of the ordinary. The band has always toyed with beats and special effects, and Gizmodgery is no exception. It is mixture of break beats and catchy tunes backed by experimental noise.

Experimentation is something on which Self prides themselves. Mahaffey formed the band in Murfreesboro, TN after putting together material for their debut album entitled "Subliminal Plastic Motives" in 1995. Mahaffey, who writes and plays most of the songs on the new album, has always been one to blend hip-hop beats with indie pop guitar noise and Gizmodgery is no exception. All of the music on the album is made with toys. That's right. Toys. By making legitimate, well-produced music using toys, Mahaffey indirectly pokes fun at bands that experiment with electronic instruments by using toys to produce the same sounds. However, without the toys, Self, with their ironic, happy-go-lucky sound, might sound like any other band. Comparisons to Beck and Blur are obvious but, there are also traces of Weezer.



'Gizmodgery'

Artist: Self
Label: Spongebath
Our opinion: ★★★

indie rock guitars. This is where Mahaffey's art comes alive. It is as if he has given up the novelty of playing toys and actually begins to use them. The guitars actually sound real. The background noise sounds natural. The toys are forgotten and Self becomes themselves. These songs are more closely aligned with songs like "Cannon" and "Superstar" on "Subliminal Plastic Motives," because they contain Self's distinct fusion of rock and electronic music.

The album winds down after a cover of The Doobie Brothers' "What a Fool Believes." Track nine, titled "9 Lives," is a bit different from the other tracks (despite its Weezerish pop melody) just because it sounds slightly darker than the cheerful, quirky attitude that permeates the rest of the album. "Gizmodgery" ends with a 1950s heart-wrenching love ballad, followed by an edited reprise of "Trunk Fulla Amps."

This album should not be overlooked. It is worth checking out if you are into energetic, funky, alternative pop. Not a bad effort for a band that rocks out with little gizmos.

Dead phones litter landscape, restrict options



MARQUEE RAMBLINGS

CATHERINE MARQUIS-HOMEYER

Have you noticed this too? The other day I was running a little late on my way to work, and decided I'd better stop and let my boss know I'd be late. Since I don't have a cell phone, I pulled over to use a pay phone. But when I got out to use the phone, I found that the coin slot was blocked—the phone didn't work at all.

I got back in my car, drove a little further and stopped at the next pay phone—same thing. Two phones later I found a functional one, but the experience was unsettling. While I had encountered a few non-function-

al public phones before, it wasn't as extensive as this time. Why are there so many dead phones?

Of course, most of you would say "why don't you have a cell phone like everyone else?" Well, I have a pager so people can reach me, but until now I didn't think I really needed a cell phone—I don't talk on the phone all that much and those arguments about having one for emergencies never really seemed convincing to me—since I could always just use a pay phone. Until now.

Recently, the local paper ran an article about the vanishing of the

phone booth, and how it had been such a useful prop to movie makers and even a cultural icon—think Superman—it was a shame to see it go. But the still-visible but increasingly non-functional public phone is more insidious change, since the phones are physically still there.

What if my phone call had really been an emergency? Sure, there's often someone around with a cell phone, but what if there wasn't, or my phone had been damaged in a wreck or the battery was dead?

There are a lot of "what ifs," but the point is that what appeared to be

another option—that pay phone—might really be an illusion. I like to have lots of options—even if I already had a cell phone, a functional public phone would be a good thing, too.

If public phones really do disappear, and they might with the increasing popularity of cell phones, I'd be more or less forced to get a cell phone, because then you really would have to have one for emergencies. Is this a good thing? I like to have lots of choices, and every student knows that when money is tight, you have to make some tough

choices about how you spend your money. Some might choose to get a cell phone and forego a phone in their apartment or some might go with the cheaper home phone and just chance it with the remaining working pay phones. But why should we have to give up this other option?

I guess I'm going shopping for a product I don't want and on which I'd rather not spend my money. Another "necessity" to drain my paycheck. Welcome to the modern free market.

ALBUM REVIEW

Flint sparks hot new album

BY CHARLIE BRIGHT
staff writer

"The Shuffleboard Queens" is an album from one of the most creative and broadly talented artists I've heard lately. Deirdre Flint's songs reminded me of every girl I liked in high school, the ones with a great sense of humor and no pretenses. A distinct folk beat connects the songs well, unified also by their comic look at the life of a single woman.

My favorite song was "The Boob Fairy," about a sprite that goes from home to home granting breasts to budding girls. She explains that "the boob fairy never came for me." In the middle of the song there is a discourse with the audience wherein she asks everyone to sing the refrain with her. She even invites "full-figured" audience members to change the lyrics to "The boob fairy wouldn't let me be," and men to lament the missing pectoral or hair fairy, or "maybe some other fairy you just want to mumble about."

The other songs share the same good-natured and laugh-at-yourself outlook at life's foibles. I sang along to several when she asked, was still laughing out loud the third time I listened through the album. This brings me to my single greatest endorsement of the CD: when it finished, I started it over again from the beginning. There are subtleties in every song that I found I would pick up on

The Shuffleboard Queens

Artist: Deirdre Flint
Our opinion: ★★★★★



when I listened a second time.

What impressed me about Deirdre Flint most was that her songs had both serious and comic elements. The album's namesake, "The Shuffleboard Queens," is a deep and moving song to a good friend lost long ago. Other songs like "Tinman" and "Marrow of My Bone" are pleas for earnest change, while "Fishlands" is a first-person story from a fish's perspective.

Thirteen clever and deep songs make "The Shuffleboard Queens" an album for anyone who likes satirical music (Barenaked Ladies, The Dr. Demento Show) or folk, and everyone with a sense of humor.

F-BALL, from page 5

The ball itself will undergo changes as well. Rather than using a traditional leather football, the league will use a Throton—an aerodynamic rubber football, which should better augment the passing nature of the league.

Play is every Wednesday night starting Jan. 31, with games starting at 7:00 p.m. The last game will start at 10:00 p.m. Sign-up sheets are available in the Recreational Sports office of Mark Twain.

Other events coordinated by Rec Sports include the spring coed volleyball league, which starts Jan. 29. Teams should have at least three men

and women on their roster. Basketball will also start this month, with league play for both men and women beginning Jan. 20. For those who rather not exert themselves on the hard courts of Riverman Hall,

UMSL and Rec Sports will sponsor a bargain bowling league at the North Oaks Bowl, 7125 Natural Bridge Road, every Wednesday starting Jan. 31 at 3:00 p.m.

and running through 4:30. "Our main goal in Rec Sports is to offer something for everyone," said Steinmetz. "No matter who walks through those doors, they should have something to do."



FILM REVIEW

'Thirteen Days' captures essence of Cuban Missile Crisis events

TIM THOMPSON
staff writer

During the last two weeks of October 1962, the entire world stood on the brink of thermo-nuclear global war. It was a time that nobody who ever lived through would ever be able to forget. It was a showdown between the United States and the Soviet Union called the Cuban Missile Crisis and almost ended in armageddon.

Roger Donaldson has captured the essence of that historical event in the film "Thirteen Days," which stars Kevin Costner.

In the film, Costner plays Kenny O'Donnell, who was a special assistant to the president at the time, John F. Kennedy, played by Bruce Greenwood.

Costner does a very good job portraying Kenny. His mannerisms were definitely well researched, and the vital role he played in protecting JFK from both the press and the military is vividly displayed.

Bruce Greenwood also does a fine job with his portrayal of JFK. The late president's manner of speaking and wit were very well researched. Also, the chronic back pain that J.F.K. suffered as a result of a W.W.II injury is detailed. In fact, one scene shows J.F.K. downing several pills to try and temper the pain. In other scenes, the former president is wincing as he goes to sit in his rocking chair, which was specially designed to relieve much of the pain.

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy is very accurately portrayed by actor Steven Culp. He was able to get the accent down perfectly, and he did a nice job imitating the manner in which R.F.K. would stand with his arms always crossed in front of him. R.F.K. also had a habit of rolling his shirt sleeves all the way up to his elbows, and this was also accurately depicted.

The story line is astutely researched, and Donaldson does a remarkable job capturing the fear, suspense, and madness of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Donaldson also seems to hint at the possibility of the militaries of both the United States and the Soviet Union, pushing their respective nations toward war while civilian leaders were working feverishly to prevent it. This creates a very unique situation in the movie, because it shows that the Cuban Missile Crisis was not only a

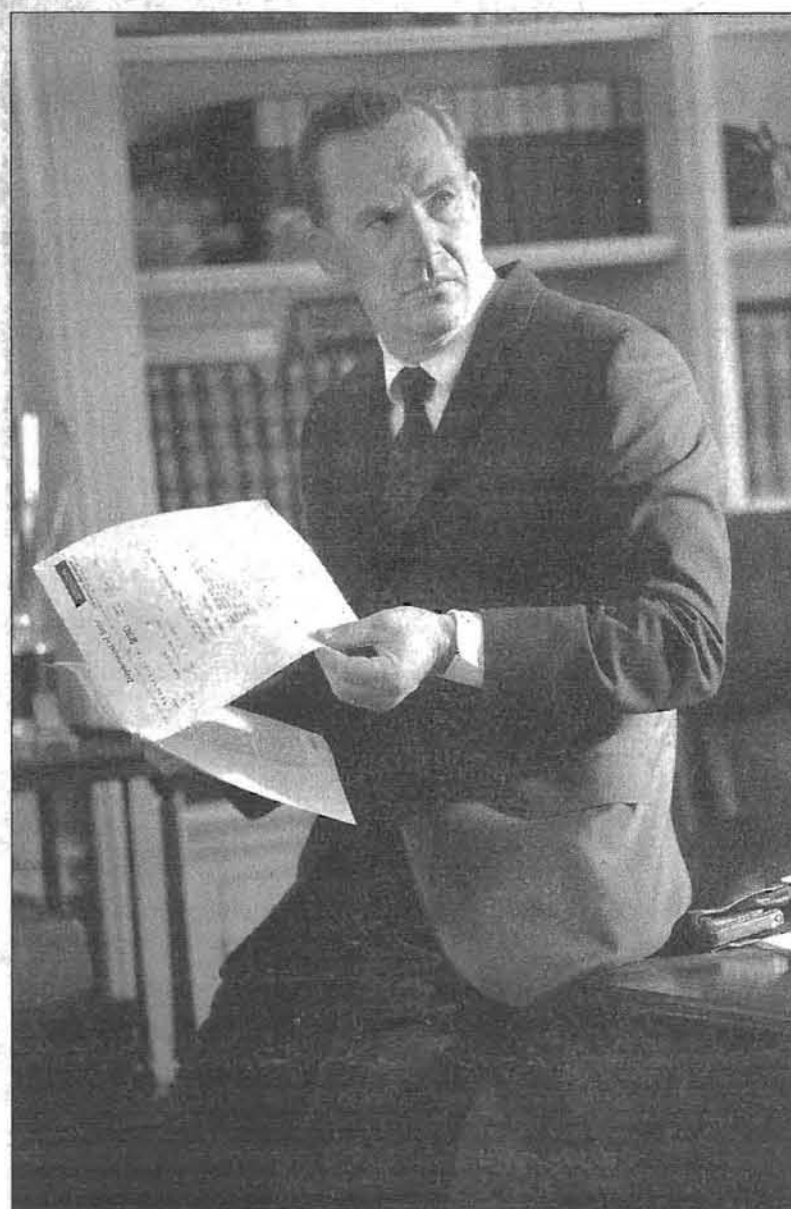


Photo courtesy of New Line Cinema

In "Thirteen Days," Kevin Costner plays Kenny O'Donnell, the special assistant to President John F. Kennedy who played a vital role in protecting JFK from both the press and the military.

Thirteen Days

Length: 140 min.
Rated: PG-13
Our opinion: ★★★★★

face-off between two superpowers, but also a struggle between various opposing forces within each country.

The only critique I have about the movie is that you do not get the chance to see what is going on behind the scenes in the Soviet Union during the crisis. Many historians have concluded that Soviet military officials and Communist hard-liners were pulling Premier Khrushchev's strings and push-

ing him toward war. Recent historical evidence lends weight to that possibility. It would have been refreshing to see that explored in the film.

In spite of this, the film accurately portrays the major players during the Cuban Missile Crisis, at least on the U.S. side, and captures the true magnitude of the situation. I concur with the slogan used in the ads completely. Until you see this film, you will never know how close the world came to nuclear war.

I do not want to tell you everything that happens in the movie, because it will obviously spoil it, but I can say that it is well worth your time and money.

R-women play hard, lose in OT

BY DAVE KINWORTHY
staff editor

The Riverwomen's basketball team faced an uphill battle with the No. 16 team in the nation in Southern Indiana, but UMSL proved that they belong among the elite as the Riverwomen fell to Southern Indiana in double overtime 99-76.

In the first half the Riverwomen trailed by as much as 14-25, but went on a 14-5 run to close the margin to 34-28 heading into half-time.

In the second half, the Riverwomen came out firing as two-field goals by senior Tanisha Albert and a pair of free throws by Christy Lane tied the score at 34-34 only 1:29 into the second half.

The score changed hands the remainder of the second half, with only 1:45 remaining in the contest, Lynette Wellen sank a field goal to give the Riverwomen the lead 62-59. But with only 19 remaining in the game and the score in the Riverwomen's favor at 64-61, Natalie Glaser of Southern Indiana hit a three-pointer to send the game into overtime. In the second half alone, UMSL outscored Southern Indiana 36-30 and shot 47 percent from the field in that time span.

UMSL traded baskets with Southern Indiana and went into the second overtime tied at 73-73.

In the second overtime, Southern Indiana recorded 13 unanswered points until the Riverwomen scored their first point 2:19 into the second overtime. Southern Indiana then went on a 26-3 run to end the Riverwomen's thoughts of an upset.

UMSL was out-rebounded in the second overtime 5-1, while Southern Indiana shot 60% from the field in the two overtimes.

The Riverwomen were paced four players who scored in double digits. Albert recorded 26 points while Wellen had 15 points, eight rebounds and seven steals. Brittney Dowell and Lane had 13 and 10 points respectively.

Coming off the loss to Southern Indiana, the Riverwomen rebounded to defeat St. Joseph's on the road 78-68 and moved their record to 4-4 in the Great Lakes Valley Conference and 8-6 overall.

The Riverwomen will play Indianapolis at home Jan. 25 and Northern Kentucky on Jan. 27 in heated GLVC match-ups.

Are you ready for Valentine's Day?

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On Monday, Feb. 5 along with your normal issue of *The Current* newspaper, you'll find a special pull-out section designed to help you make the best of your Valentine's Day. There will be reviews of local restaurants, movies and a list of places to go and things to do. And for those of you who are bitterly against Valentine's Day, we even have a few pages for you.

Don't have a date? No problem! There's going to be a whole slew of personal advertisements from people on campus. You can even place your own if you want and they're free. Look for boxes around the Millennium Student Center and drop one in. That's it.

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Happy Valentine's Day From
The Current

This 'George' was inaugurated more than 200 years ago

On Jan. 20, 2001, George W. Bush was sworn in as the 43rd president of the United States. In the spirit of this event, I think it is fitting to talk about the very first president of our great country.

The date was April 30, 1789. The place was the Federal Hall in New York City. An estimated crowd of nearly 10,000 people waved their hats and cheered. Simultaneously, 13 cannons fired several ordinances in a dynamic salute. With a display of confidence, a 57-year-old man began walking toward a small platform. He was an imposing figure, standing nearly 6 feet, 4 inches in height. His name was George Washington.



TIM THOMPSON
history columnist

When the swearing in ceremonies concluded, he became the first president of the United States. Since then, he has come to be known as the "father of his country."

His story is truly amazing. George Washington was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, on Feb. 22, 1732. He received an informal education from his father and half-brother Lawrence. Early on, the young Washington took a liking to mathematics, which he proficiently used to survey lands of the Ohio River Valley. He became such an accomplished surveyor that when he was just 17, he was appointed surveyor of Culpeper County, Virginia. This would be the first public office Washington would hold.

Washington's military career commenced in 1752, when he was appointed adjutant of the southern district of Virginia. Three years later, the French and Indian War broke out, and he was made commander of all colonial troops in Virginia, achieving the rank of colonel.

In 1758, he commanded a Virginia regiment that wrested control of Fort Duquesne on the Ohio River from the French. It was a great victory that brought the young man much adulation.

Washington gained invaluable combat experience in the French and Indian War. He also gained an astute understanding of logistics and developed outstanding organizational skills. He would put all of these to very good use during America's struggle for independence against the British.

In the summer of 1775, when that struggle began, Washington was unanimously elected commander in chief of the Continental Army. Within two short years, he succeeded in turning an untrained, unskilled, rambunctious mob squad into a formidable fighting force with several elite units such as Morgan's Riflemen, a regiment which inflicted catastrophic losses upon the British at the crucial battle of Saratoga.

After America's success for independence drew to a successful conclusion in 1783, Washington presided over the Continental Congress that was laboring hard to forge a unified nation.

Worn out by endless service to his country, Washington looked forward to retirement at his home in Mount Vernon once a new government had been established. Political in-fighting and endless turmoil threatened to tear the new nation apart, however. Someone with exceptional leadership qualities was urgently needed to bring the warring factions together, and prevent disaster.

America, once again, turned its eyes to George Washington.

Driven by a sense of duty, he undertook the office of presidency of the United States in 1789, serving consecutive four-year terms. During his tenure, Washington stabilized the American economy, while normalizing relations with Great Britain. He also laid the framework for future US presidents.

Upon his death in 1799, George Washington was eulogized with the words, "First in War, first in Peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

'Antiques Road Show' to highlight Mercantile Library

BY TIM THOMPSON
staff writer

On Jan. 22, the Mercantile Library at UMSL will be featured on "The Antiques Road Show," a weekly production of WGBH, a public television affiliate out of Boston. The show will air at 6 p.m. on KETC Channel 9.

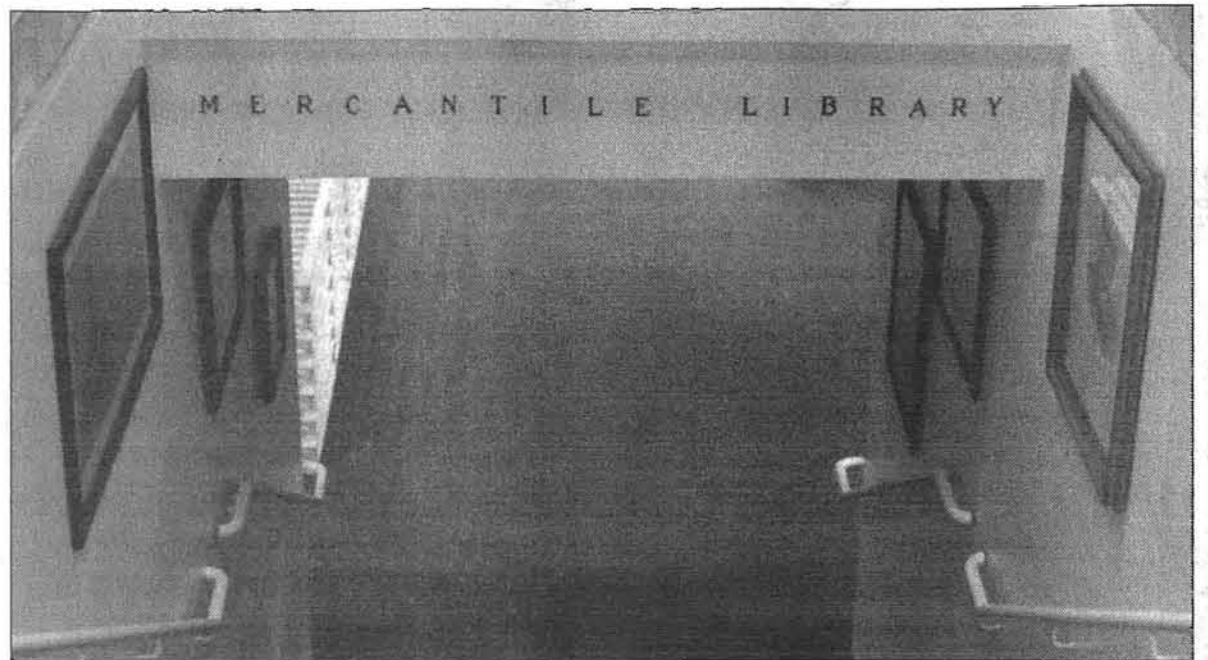
The Mercantile Library's fine collection of rare Americana prints on steamboats and the Mississippi River will be one of the major focuses of the program.

Some of these rare works include: Karl Bodmer's watercolor prints of life along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and George Katlin's paintings of Native Americans, as well as the first known painting of the city of St. Louis, completed in 1832.

John Hoover, the director of the Mercantile Library, wrote the script for the piece. "We are very pleased to be a part of 'The Antiques Road Show' and it comes at a very good time," Hoover said. "The national exposure will be a very good thing for the University."

Last summer, "The Antiques Road Show" visited many historical sites in the St. Louis area, and became very interested in the Mississippi River and much of the history attached to it. They were especially fascinated by river travel, specifically steamboats.

The Mercantile Library has an extensive collection of artifacts con-



Darren Brunel/The Current

On Jan. 22, the Mercantile Library at UMSL will be featured on "The Antiques Road Show" on PBS. The library's collection of rare Americana prints on steamboats and the Mississippi River will be one of the major focuses of the program.

nected with steamboats. These include numerous models, paintings, as well as an authentic pilot wheel. It was a perfect place from which to film the upcoming episode.

Aug. 4, 2000, the crew from "The Antiques Road Show" arrived at UMSL, and began filming from the backdrop of the aforementioned pilot wheel, eventually moving down into the atrium.

Don Cresswell, a member of the Mercantile Library's National

Board, and a world-renowned expert on art, narrated the whole project. He has worked with the Mercantile Library on numerous occasions in the past, and is also the director of the Philadelphia Print Shop, which sells historical maps and prints to museums throughout the world.

"I really like the Mercantile Library, and admire the collections it contains," Cresswell said. "Frankly, I believe that it to be one

of the finest libraries in the US. I was happy that we filmed there."

John Hoover was also very pleased with how things worked out. "We were all real glad to have Don," Hoover said. "The crew began filming at noon and continued until six that evening, they covered a considerable amount of material."

If you are unable to see the program on Jan. 22, it will air several times during the week.

SABC budget deadlines pushed back

BY STEVE VALKO
staff writer

Budgets for student organizations across the UMSL campus were to be submitted to the Student Activities Budget Committee on Jan. 12, by 5 p.m. However, a funny thing kept reoccurring before the date.

"The Thursday of the 11th, a representative of one or more of the student organizations said that at one of the budget preparation workshops, a public announcement was made saying that the 19th was the deadline for submission. And the woman who did the workshops was not at work Thursday [11th] or Friday [12th] for me to verify it did occur. So to be completely fair to everybody, I decided to extend the deadline until 19th," said Rick Blanton, co-chair of the

SABC.

Blanton said that the budget workshops were held five times during the fall semester at different times to help accommodate the busy lives of the students. At one of those meetings the misinformation was said to take place.

"It was brought to our attention that at one of those workshops, there was a probability that the workshop facilitator said the 19th is when [the budgets] are due, even though inside the budget materials we had printed Friday the 12th."

Blanton noted that after talking with the workshop facilitator, she couldn't remember saying the deadline was the 19th.

"She said she had a question about the fact that 12th is at a time when we don't have classes," said Blanton.

Ayo Olson, comptroller of the Student Government Association, also confirmed that a large number of student organizations called the SABC to say that they thought the deadline was said to be Dec. 19.

Blanton also noted that the 12th falling on a day that classes aren't in session was also a factor in why he changed that deadline.

Olson acknowledged this problem by saying, "It was real disheartening to see the students take off from their holiday break to come in and work on their budget."

Blanton also said that he wasn't pleased with the deadline issue, since the groups were given the budget packets Nov. 7, 2000.

"[The student organizations] could have turned [their budgets] on Dec. 1, they had them so early. So it didn't sit

well with me that someone would come in on Jan. 11, saying that 'we don't have [our budget] done in time because class wasn't in session,' when they've had the budget material for quite some time," Blanton said.

The SABC is made up of 11 students, and is responsible for allocating student activity fees to student organizations. They collect budgets and interview the organizations to make sure the dispersal is proper. Blanton noted that the total student activity fees collected would be around \$500,000.

Blanton said SABC members do most of their work between December and May, since budget deliberations with the various student organizations occur during this time frame.

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Dana,

I am so sorry. I was so drunk. Koala Bear

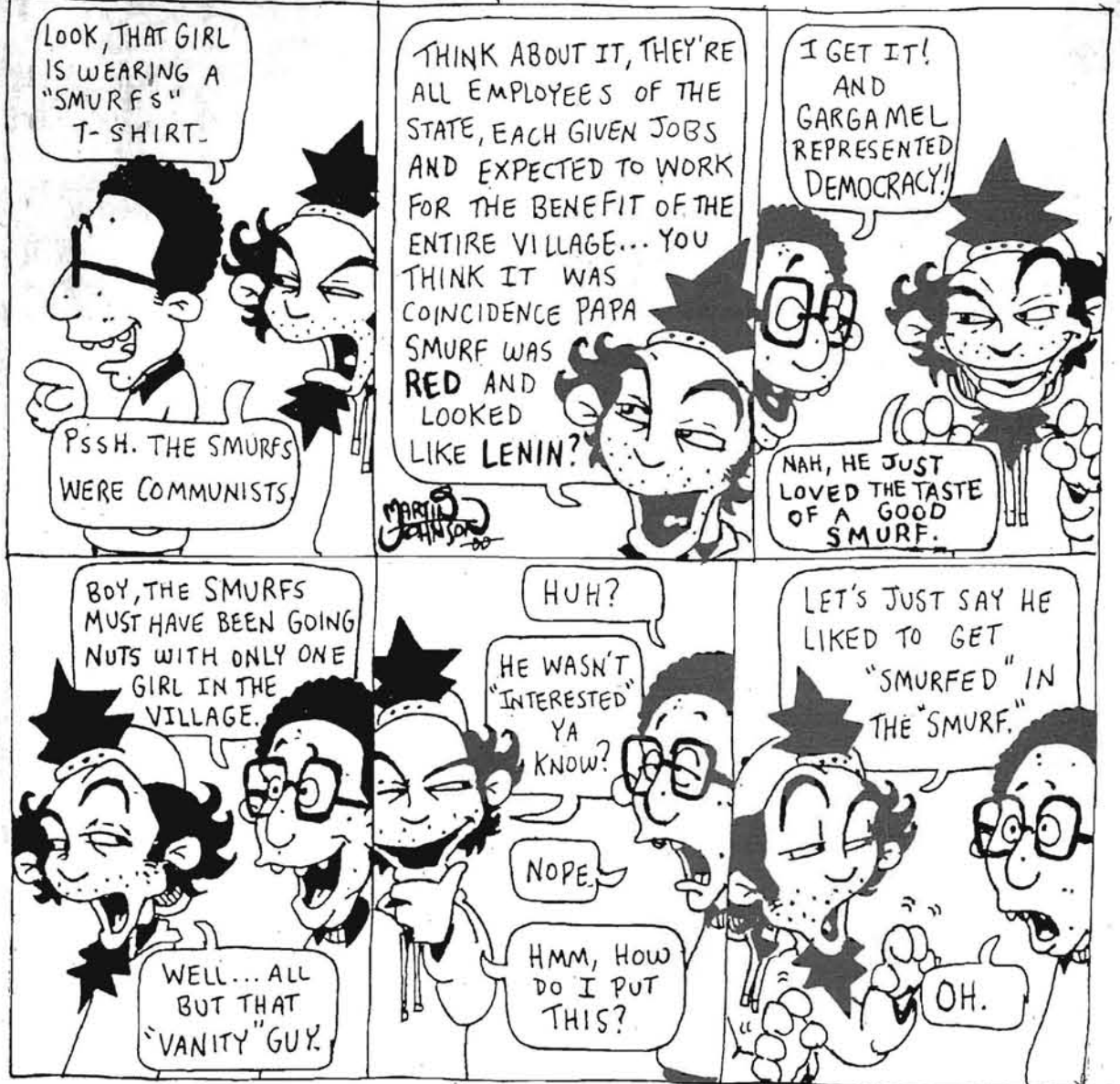
Valentine's Day

Look for info in coming issues of The Current about our Valentine pull-out section and how you can get your own personalized message in it.

Jackie Sarris

You look more and more like Julia Ormond every day. I love Julia Ormond. -Josh

THE NERD TABLE BY: MARTY JOHNSON



WOLFE, from page 4

ment may not be their first priority at all times. The proposed constitution does not recognize this fact of life on a primarily commuter campus.

Fourth, transfer and new students will not be represented in the Assembly, since at-large representatives are chosen during the winter semester. Also, there is no procedure to fill any vacant at-large representative seats that may open over the summer.

Fifth, the procedure for electing the SGA officers and the new Assembly is not outlined in the proposed constitution. While the terms of the offices are stated in the proposed constitution, the election com-

mittee can change the procedures each year depending upon its whims. This could lead to corruption in the election process.

Before the Oct. 24 SGA meeting, I submitted a number of amendments that would help correct some of the problems. However, at the Nov. 14 meeting, my amendments were not presented to the Assembly. This violated my right as a graduate school representative. This also tells me and the student body that the SGA officers want no dissent on this constitution.

This election is being handled in a questionable way. The first public announcement of this election came

by a message from SGA President Ryan Conner on The Current's web forum on Jan. 18, with students voting on Jan. 23. This does not allow the student body time to study and debate the merits of the proposed constitution.

Having the polls open only one day is not standard procedure for SGA elections. Since many students attend classes only Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday, some students will not be given an opportunity to voice their opinion. This strategy was planned purposely by the SGA (and probably with the support of some UMSL administrators) who want to see this constitution passed without dissent.

Students, please don't be apathetic this time. Study the draft constitution and decide for yourself. After reading the document, I hope that you agree that this proposed constitution will take away students' rights to govern themselves. Vote no on this proposed constitution. If this new constitution is passed, our student rights will continue to be taken away. What is next: maybe censorship of The Current or background checks of all students?

--Steven Wolfe

PORTER, from page 4

When I finally did find that unfortunate person, I was so upset and excited that I said, "I got this letter yesterday, it was mailed in Thursday and says that I can't graduate, even though I have my cap and gown and tickets."

He then explained that this was just a test and that once I took the test, my diploma would be mailed to me, but that I would be allowed to walk in the ceremony.

OK, so I could finally breathe. I knew I would not disappoint my family and that I would at least graduate in the formal sense.

But let me say, that was quite a dirty trick to play just before graduation.

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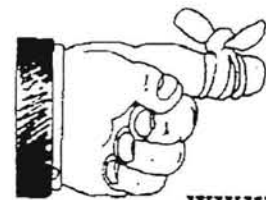
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Police investigate reported Meadows apartment break-in

BY RHASHAD PITTMAN
staff writer

An UMSL student and University Meadows resident reported on Dec. 2 that an unknown male in her apartment woke her up by ejaculating on her.

After returning home from a night club with friends, the student reported that she came home about 3 a.m. and went to sleep. Shortly thereafter, she woke up with the suspect standing over her and ejaculating on her face and head, she said. After she woke up and asked him what was he doing in her apartment, he fled, the police report stated.

The student told police that she didn't know how the suspect got into the apartment because the doors were locked before she went to sleep, the report stated.

She also told UMSL police that money and her driver's license were missing from her wallet.

"We found no evidence of there being a break-in," said Captain James Smalley of UMSL police.

A few days into the investigation, the student stopped cooperating with police, Smalley said, adding that she signed papers not to prosecute the suspect.

"Once you have a victim that doesn't want to cooperate, it's to no avail" to continue the investigation, he said. "You need that person's cooperation."

Smalley said that there's no way to know if the suspect is an UMSL student, especially with the constant flow of traffic in and out of the Meadows.

Although apartment break-ins at the Meadows are rare, numerous car break-ins involving petty theft have plagued the complex throughout the school year.

A Meadows resident and UMSL student reported on Nov. 5 that her vehicle was damaged and that her radio and compact disc player were stolen. On that same day, another Meadows resident reported his CD player, speakers, amplifier, and a bag containing personal possessions stolen as well.

In October, another car break-in involving a CD player and CDs were reported stolen from a car in the Meadows. That same day, an attempted car break-in was reported by a student. Another incident in September involved an attempted theft of a front-end bra car cover.

Smalley said that the car break-ins were probably committed by "outsiders" who were looking for items that would be a "quick sale" out on the street.

He advised residents to conceal items in their cars, be aware of suspicious-looking people, and call police if they witness any crimes being committed.

"We can be anywhere on campus in three to four minutes," he said.

Sponsoring charter schools can be difficult balancing act

BY RHASHAD PITTMAN
staff writer

Although they may benefit hundreds of parents and elementary students throughout St. Louis city, UMSL-sponsored charter schools may put a "financial burden" on the university's budget.

Sponsoring charter schools has potential to be very costly to the University without financial assistance from the state with such cost as reviewing 3- to 4-inch-thick charter applications, sponsoring future charter school field trips to the University, and numerous other activities, said Bob Samples, director of University Communications.

Samples said that UMSL is not currently reviewing applications until the state determines if it will provide funding for sponsors. UMSL's main objective, Samples said, is to try to prevent charter schools from putting a burden on the campus budget.

UMSL presently sponsors two charter schools, the St. Louis Charter school, 5279 Fyler Ave., and Thurgood Marshall Academy, 4300 Goodfellow Blvd. Both schools opened last fall with a combined enrollment of over 800 students in grades K-6, Samples said.

Harris Stowe College, St. Louis Community College, the St. Louis Board of Education, and Southeast Missouri State are also currently sponsoring charter schools or have already approved them, he said.

A school official at Central Missouri State University told Samples that CMSU is spending about \$300,000 a year on charter schools, he said.

"They're a full year ahead of us," said Samples. "They take a little bit of a more hands-on approach."

In addition to the cost of being a sponsor, UMSL has spent thousands of dollars over the charter revocation of The African American Rite of Passage, Inc. (TAARP) that occurred in



Darren Brunel/The Current

Children's projects lie on the ground in a classroom at the St. Louis Charter School. The school is located at 5279 Fyler Ave.

September, Samples said.

TAARP resubmitted an application in January of last year after hiring Charter Consultants and dropping Beacon Education Inc., a firm that provides management services for both the St. Louis Charter School and Thurgood Marshall Academy. UMSL considered the change in management a "serious breach" of their agreement.

After TAARP's charter was revoked, a two-day hearing that involved numerous UMSL employees and four University attorneys was held so that a three-member panel could hear both sides and make their recommendation to Chancellor Blanche Touhill, said Samples. Touhill decided to stick with UMSL's decision to reject the

charter. TAARP's organizer Lamar Beyah immediately appealed to the UM System President Manuel Pacheco.

Samples said that Pacheco recently sent a letter, dated Dec. 18, to inform TAARP that UMSL's decision would be upheld. In response, Beyah filed a lawsuit against the University on Jan. 17.

John Hylton, interim associate vice chancellor for Academic Affairs, says that state legislatures and charter school sponsors throughout Missouri will meet Jan. 25 to discuss state funding for sponsors.

"There is some work being done by state legislation to provide some resources for charter school sponsors," he says.

LAWSUIT, from page 1

and says that he is receiving a lot of support in and out of the state.

"We see ourselves as pioneers for charter schools...particularly in the city of St. Louis," he said. "Our dilemma here is well-known around the country. I think there's more people aware of this lawsuit nationwide than there are in the city."

Beyah said that charter schools in Colorado, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, California, and Arizona have faced similar obstacles. Most of them won their charters, he said, adding that only 4 percent of charter schools nationwide are unsuccessful in obtaining sponsorship.

"We're quite confident that the court will rule in our favor," he said.

SGA, from page 1

position until he was released from the St. Louis County Justice Center, March 31, 2000.

Without constitutional provisions for dealing with the extended absence of an elected SGA official, turbulence brewed in the SGA, said Rick Blanton, director of Student Activities at the time, and the SGA was unable to properly perform in its representation of the student body. In October 1999, the University Senate Student Affairs Committee proposed that the SGA's constitution should be updated in case a similar situation were to occur in the future. This is a key issue in the proposed changes to the constitution, Blanton said.

Blanton, eight students, and Paul DeGregorio, director of Outreach and Development, drafted a new constitution and released it in March, but the SGA Assembly was unable to approve it and send it to the student body for a vote that semester.

Ryan Connor was elected SGA president in a special election held this fall. Since then, he has made updating the constitution a priority, Blanton said. He organized meetings to further revise the document and the constitution finally passed before the Assembly in November. Now the constitution is up for the approval of the student body.

Students are invited to examine the document; copies will be made available in Room 379 of the Millennium Center 379, said Connor.

STEGEMAN, from page 4

agreement calls for co-leadership in all positions, such as committee chairs and vice-chairs, as well as the head of the Senate, the president pro-tempore. Senators Ed Quick (D) and Peter Kinder (R) were elected to serve as co-president pro-tempore on Jan. 3.

Governor-elect Holden was inaugurated on Jan. 8, as were the rest of the executive officers. A grand celebration and ball followed the inauguration ceremonies. Since that time there has been little activity in the legislature, because the executive officers are acquainting themselves with their new duties, and over 40 new legislatures are becoming accustomed to their new jobs. This is the first of two sessions for this new legislature: the first session is in 2001

and the second session is in 2002.

Some of the issues we intend on lobbying are the adoption of the federal statute of allowing 18-year old jurors, opposition to FERPA, continued efforts on English proficiency, making absentee voting easier for students, tenant-landlord relations, the tobacco settlement money, the UM-system budget, as well as a variety of other issues ranging from hate crime to graduate health care legislation.

Hopefully, next week I will be able to provide greater details of the progression regarding these issues. It is a pleasure to serve you as a student representative in the Missouri Legislature. If you need to contact me, please call 1-573-882-2701, or e-mail me at Hyperconjugate@go.com.

DIFFERENT, from page 1

public schools."

The CER says that charter schools have an advantage over traditional public schools because "instead of jumping through procedural hoops and over paper work hurdles, educators can focus on setting and reaching high academic standards for their students."

Like other public schools, charter schools are state funded according to their enrollment. The more students they have, the more money the school will receive. Some charter schools get additional money through state and federal grants, especially in the early

stages of operation.

Since Sept. 1999, 31 states and the District of Columbia have opened approximately 1,700 charter schools containing about 350,000 students, CER research says.

St. Louis Charter school principal, Doug Thaman, says that he can't think of a reason for parents not to send their children to charter schools.

"There's a much higher level of accountability in a charter school," he said.

Charter school teachers aren't in a union, he noted.

"We can lose our charter at any

time if we don't do what we were hired to do," said Thaman. "We're physically responsible if we don't improve test scores."

Thaman says that the St. Louis Charter school differs from traditional teaching methods by being a "project based school" that uses projects for "meaningful learning".

The school's focus is on taking basic skills like arithmetic, reading, and writing and implementing them in class activities, he said.

"We don't do a whole a lot of worksheets," said Thaman. "We do things a little bit more creative and a

little more meaningful to the kids."

Through these projects, he says, other subjects such as Social Studies and Science "come into play".

Choosing a charter school over a traditional public school is beneficial in numerous ways, he adds, due to the smaller class sizes, low student-teacher ratio, detailed curriculum, and firm discipline policy. Not to mention that parents have a choice on where to send their kids, he noted.

"I think it's important to give parents a choice without having to pay tuition," Thaman said. "[Tuition] can be so expensive."

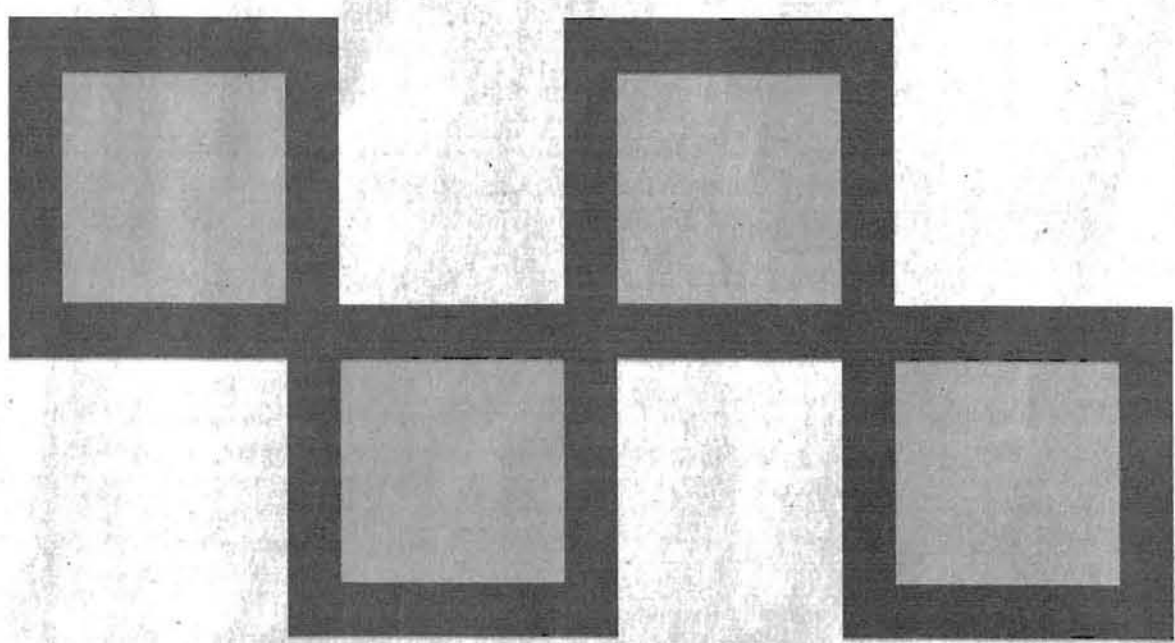
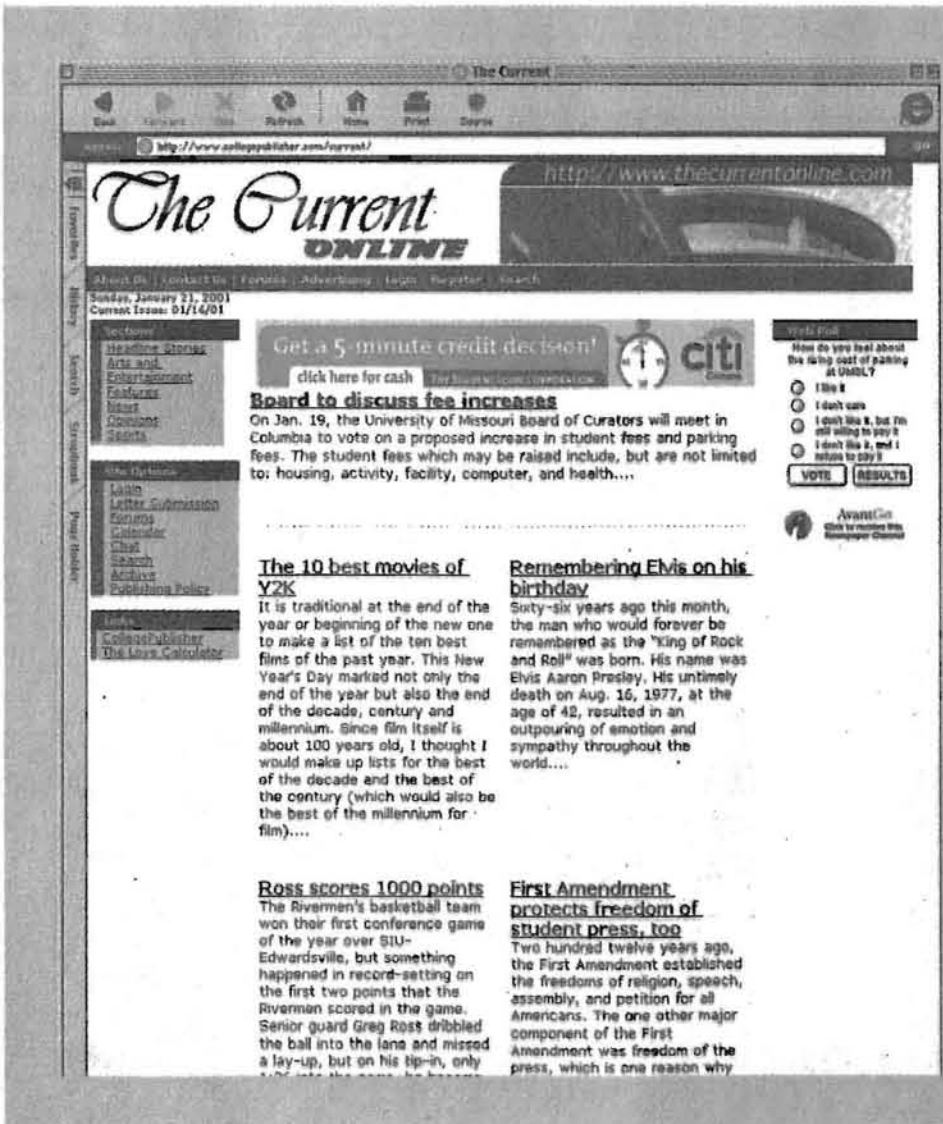
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