

iHouse promotes diversity with annual Multicultural Variety Show

SIYUN ZHANG
STAFF WRITER

The International House (iHouse) hosted their third annual Multicultural Variety Show on April 24 in the Pilot House at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. The night was filled with a plenty of rich cultural performances to enjoy.

The show started at 7 p.m. Admission was free to all students, faculty and staff. Free food and beverages welcomed every attendee. During the intermission, audience members also had the opportunity to win door prizes, thanks to the raffle tickets under each seat.

Both student organizations and individuals on campus took active parts in this event and displayed cultures from around eight nations, including Brazil, India, Japan, Ethiopia, Mexico and Korea. The performers showcased different styles of dance, singing and music from their respective countries.

In addition to an eclectic mix of performances, the show ended with a fashion show finale. Models walked down the red carpet, dressed in either modern or traditional styles.

Nora Jijane, graduate, economics, is one of the iHouse leaders who helped organize the event.

"Because the Multicultural Variety Show is an annual event on campus in spring, we knew we had to plan it in advance," Jijane said. She stated that it took the organizers about three months to prepare. "We checked all the lists of student organizations on campus and tried to reach each of them...and asked them if they would like to perform and show their talents... We also asked about individual students



(1)



(2)



(3)

SIYUN ZHANG/THE CURRENT

1) Audience members pack the Pilot House 2) Brazilian Dancer Livia Oliveira takes the stage 3) Performers line up on stage for applause

spontaneously," Jijane said.

This year, iHouse did not want to focus on any one continent or country, instead making an effort to include various cultures across the globe.

"Last time it was more about African culture. Now we have Mexican, Japanese, Korean and other cultures," Jijane said.

On the night of the variety show, the stage was filled with passion and energy, each cultural performance distinctive from the next. Off-campus individuals were also invited to participate this year. The third performance of the night consisted of an African dance performed by family dance

crew Habasha. The youngest dancer was eleven years old. Robel, one of the dancers, said, "We have just established our dance crew for about one month. The dancing we performed represents different tribes in Africa."

Livia Oliveria, dance, junior, performed an enthusiastic Brazilian-style dancing called "Frevo". Oliveria is in her second semester at UMSL. She learned this dance at the age of 15.

"Frevo' means boiling. We usually dance with umbrella in carnivals," Oliveria said. "It is from the north-east state called Pernambuco in Brazil."

Ezana Ephrem, 14 years-old,

played an Ethiopian wedding song on saxophone. He has been playing the saxophone for about three years. Ephrem performed 'Yehewit Hewit,' a song that is usually the first song that every couple will dance to at their wedding.

The audience was captivated by the performances, throwing themselves into the energy show.

"It's awesome. It's interesting to watch different styles and cultures," Luiz Perez, senior, computer science, said.

The Multicultural Variety Show provided a platform to embrace different cultures across the world, right here at UMSL. The event enhanced the

relationship between international and American students, providing an opportunity for international students to showcase their cultures and for American students to gain awareness of different cultures all around the globe.

"[The variety show] was just to show the talents across the world from different students in UMSL...Standing [right] in front of us, it is completely different [than just going] through YouTube and checking the videos," Jijane said. "It's just something fun on campus. People are happy and proud of their cultures as well as where they come from."



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THE UNDERCURRENT *By Siyun Zhang*

HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR FINAL EXAMS?



QIANYING ZHANG
 Senior, Chemistry

"I will read the textbooks and try to memorize stuff as much as I can. I know it's maybe a heavy and kind of stupid way to do this, but it always works the best for me!"



TAYLOR LEMMON
 Junior, Early Childhood Education

"I will organize to see what I have to prepare for finals, and I study for the hardest earlier. I also go to the silent floor in the library to stay focused on my studying."



NICHELLE JACKSON
 Senior, Communications

"I will get a list of everything that I need to do. I just break it down to small categories and take it step by step so I can put it all together."

MON 79 _{HI} 54 _{LOW}	TUE 70 _{HI} 46 _{LOW}	WED 55 _{HI} 45 _{LOW}	THU 57 _{HI} 43 _{LOW}	FRI 64 _{HI} 45 _{LOW}	SAT 66 _{HI} 46 _{LOW}	SUN 69 _{HI} 48 _{LOW}
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The Current continues next year with UMSL administration support

HUNG NGUYEN
MANAGING EDITOR

University of Missouri—St. Louis's nearly 50-year-old student paper will continue next year with administrative support. On April 21, The Current's executive board met with UMSL administrators and deans to discuss possible production and funding models for the publication. While specific details are still forthcoming, it is certain the university will forgive the remainder of The Current's debt and save the paper after the Student Activities Budget Committee (SABC) had elected to eliminate its printing budget just last month.

The debt, a \$40,000 budget deficit, was racked up by two editors due to mismanagement and economic downturn affecting advertising sales between 2009 and 2011. These staff members are no longer at UMSL, and since then the editorial staff has continued to cut spending and establish mechanisms with the Office of Student Life to

pay back the debt. The publication's layout has undergone multiple modifications and officer pay rates have been reduced since 2009. With a structured payment plan and timely payments, the deficit has been reduced by roughly half within the last two years, a period when SABC had also continued to reduce funding for the paper due to overall student budget cuts.

Editor-in-Chief Sharon Pruitt, senior, English, had requested a budget of around \$29,000 for the 2014-2015 school year. The initial budget request was denied on March 19. Pruitt appealed the decision on April 4 and received notice on April 14 that SABC would uphold its decision based on unresolved issues of debt, revenue, and continued officer payments.

At the April 21 meeting, however, administrators spoke positively of The Current's future

on the UMSL campus, outlining possible avenues for continuing this university institution.

"We are working diligently with our students, various units in academic and student affairs, and dedicated alums to ensure that The Current continues as a robust student newspaper," Chancellor Thomas George commented. "We want to thank everyone who has been helping to craft creative and viable plans for top-level news reporting and fiscal health of The Current."

Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Curt Coonrod shared similar sentiments moving forward. "The University is committed to having a vibrant student newspaper. We look forward to working with the present Current staff, the Publications Committee, and others to achieve this goal which will include but not

limited to funding."

While the details are not yet final, Chancellor Thomas George announced at the meeting on Monday that the university will forgive the remainder of the debt and determine a suitable budget for the paper to continue. The budget would no longer be subject to approval of the Student Activities Budget Committee (SABC) but be determined through different mechanisms.

Further, in addition to maintaining the Publications Committee, advisers will be appointed from the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Fine Arts and Communication, and the College of Business to serve on both the editorial and business ends of the newspaper. Alumni support had been tremendous during last month as The Current battled its funding issues and they

are a source of what Cate Marquis, senior, media studies, advertising director and former editor-in-chief, calls "institutional memory." They provide relevant and useful experience from having spent time in the trenches themselves and it is expected that they too will have a role in The Current's future.

Officer payments are now set between \$300 to \$800 monthly and is fueled by advertising sales. There are talks of possibly changing this model to scholarship-based aid or a combination of salaries and scholarships.

The editorial staff is set to meet with administrators and the Publications Committee in the coming weeks to determine the final details for The Current.

"The Current is entering a new beginning, and we're fortunate to have the support of the university as we move forward," Pruitt said.

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Battle of the Bands raises money for charity

JANE LAKAYIL
STAFF WRITER

Pierre Laclède Honors College Student Association hosted its annual Battle of the Bands on April 23 at 7 p.m. at the Pilot House. The event was co-sponsored by "The U" Radio, University Program Board and Student Government Association, with food provided by Sodexo.

The event kicked off at 7 p.m. and continued into the night, ending at 9 p.m. Battle of the Bands consisted of five performances, judged by a panel made up of Honors College Dean Robert Bliss, UMSL senior Zack Nenaber, and a St. Louis Ronald McDonald House volunteer, Donna Hovis.

Marissa Steimel, University Program Board Chair, emceed the Battle of the Bands event and advertised for t-shirt sales as well as voting. T-shirts were sold for two dollars and raffle tickets were sold for one dollar. Voting comprised

of putting money into the bucket of the group being supported. The group with the most money in their bucket by the end was declared the winner. Of the five groups who competed, 'A Big Sad Whale' took home the trophy.

Comprised of Zach Petzel on guitar and vocals and Alexander Dabney on drums, 'A Big Sad Whale' draws its inspiration from fifties and sixties music. Their rendition of Chuck Berry's 'Johnny B. Goode' was an immediate hit with the audience and the judges. When asked how many performances they have partaken in together, Zach said "we've had about two gigs a month for the past four years." Not only have they performed together nearly 100 times, Alex also said "we've toured all over the Midwest." Both Zach and Alex are very proud of how much their hard work has paid

off, from being a basement group to one that travels across states to perform.

The other four performances of the night were also charged and captivated the audience's attention. Stevie Chrestensen and Keith Bleile opened the night with two original songs as well as a cover of Christina Perri's "A Thousand Years". The second act was 'Power Cross', a Christian band from University of Missouri - St. Louis' College of Optometry. They too performed three songs, getting the audience to stand up and join in singing their second song, "We Are Fireproof." 'Vauteau' was a solo performance by Tyler Votaw on guitar and the last act was by 'Mister Meena,' another solo performance by Benjamin Meena who produces his own hip-hop.

"It's really fun to hear music from fellow students, and it's

awesome you get to support a great cause as well," Franchesca Leffert, sophomore, biology, said. Though it was her first Battle of the Bands experience, she said she plans on attending next year's battle as well.

PLHCSA tries to find a new charity to donate to for each Battle of the Bands and this is the first year that proceeds have benefitted the Ronald McDonald House Charities. One of the volunteers at The Ronald McDonald House, Donna Hovis, spoke at Battle of the Bands about the charity organization. She explained that there are three Ronald McDonald houses in St. Louis that provide housing, food and general care for those traveling to hospitals with their sick children. Hovis shared her own experience with the Ronald McDonald house by talking about her stay there when her own daughter was in the hospital. She

also promoted volunteering for the charity through volunteering at various Ronald McDonald House hosted events or by cooking and cleaning at the House itself. Those interested can visit rmhcsstl.com for more details and for volunteering applications.

According to Honors College Student Association treasurer, Eric'el Johnson, sophomore electrical engineering major, "[PLHCSA] started sending out emails around February, just preparing and trying to advertise. I think within the last week it's been pretty busy...and we've just been telling bands to collect money ahead of time. And I'm just really happy that we collected \$599.92. It's a really big deal for us. This was bigger [than last year]. We noticed that our attendance gets bigger each year. I think it's the advertising that's really paying off."

CHERP helps to make UMSL's campus greener

ANYA GLUSHKO
STAFF WRITER

Campus Environmental Research Program (CHERP) began as an idea: an environmental science class that would take place in nature and help students learn about ecology. About five years ago, Dean of the Honors College Robert Bliss and Curators Teaching Professor of Biology Charles Granger established a partnership between UMSL and the St. Vincent Park, allowing CHERP courses to use the park for scientific exploration to help it move toward restoring native Missouri natural habitats. In 2009, a series of three Urban Ecology courses was launched as a part of CHERP.

"We use project-based learning and service-learning, as well as classroom discussion, to teach science inquiry and literacy; ecological literacy; and environmental ethics. Our goal is to prepare students to be active citizens and engaged throughout their lives enjoying nature and outdoor adventures; caring for the environment; and working to bring an emerging Ecological Civilization: thriving people, thriving human communities, flourishing nature, and flourishing aesthetic, moral, spiritual, experiential life," said Urban Ecology instructor James Fish.

One of CHERP's goals is to engage the UMSL community in service-learning by doing projects such as restoration of native

environments like wilderness and plants, in order to improve parts of the south campus and St. Vincent Park. These efforts can make UMSL into a leading green institution in St. Louis and the region as part of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Change Commitment. "...Students can start to see their place within an environment and identify ways they can personally contribute and plan for future needs. Each student passing through [UMSL] is a global participant, a decision-maker, a voter, a policy-generator and a citizen making personal choices... We want students to embrace the science, not fear it, and think ecologically, no matter their major or life path," Urban Ecology lecturer Jennifer Freund said.

The expanded course offerings are geared to fulfill the needs of traditional Honors College undergraduate students, upper division biology students, ecology area graduate teachers, and environmental activists in the Missouri Stream Team movement and other conservation organizations. The first course, Great Rivers Ecology, will be offered this summer. Students will study the basics of river and stream ecology during six weeks of online learning. Then they will meet in Louisiana, Missouri for a four-day float trip down the Mississippi River. They will be also conducting



Students gather before beginning the prairie restoration

ecological labs and observations of water quality, stream biology, fish studies, birding, river flow, geomorphology, and conservation. The class will camp out on river islands in a back country camp.

"Like rivermen and riverwomen of old, we'll tell stories around the campfire. And like Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, and Becky Thatcher, we'll have a great adventure on a great river learning how the 'Father of Waters' courses through our land and lives," Fish said.

Urban Ecology provides opportunities for students to get involved in re-wilding portions of campus and restoring native Missouri plants in St. Louis. Students participate in Missouri Stream Team and have monitored Engelholm Stream health for 5

years; the collected data is part of a statewide database. Students are also restoring a one-acre prairie garden and tackle other natural area restoration projects in St. Vincent Park, on UMSL's south campus, and along Great Rivers Greenway's bike paths.

"It's a fun course for anyone who wants to know more about nature and get their hands and their minds involved in learning. For some students, getting involved in an Urban Ecology course helps them establish a pathway to a green career," Fish said.

Students can make conservation-related proposals that can develop into larger-scale projects such as prairie rehabs, woodland rehabs, or landscaping innovation.

"I started taking this class

because I just needed to fill my science requirement, but Urban Ecology's actually more fascinating than I originally thought. The little field trips we take are awesome and it's so rewarding to be able to actually help and restore the ecosystem around us by doing physical work and really getting in touch with nature." Lea Walker, sophomore, business administration, said.

Students in Urban Ecology courses have planted gardens, cleared out invasive plants, and engaged in litter-pick-ups.

"For me, studying ecology in an urban setting has magnified the effect my habits have on the environment, prompting me to be more thoughtful with our resources," Elise Park, junior, interdisciplinary studies, said.

TOUHILL

Sandoval kicks off St. Louis Jazz Festival at Touhill

ALEXANDER NEUPERT
STAFF WRITER

The Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival 2014 opened on April 25 with the first of two nights of jazz performed at the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

The 11th annual Greater St. Louis Jazz Festival has become one of the most noteworthy jazz festivals in the Midwest. The festival helps to enhance the musical education and growth of participating area students, who get to interact with and learn from internationally renowned jazz musicians. These "clinicians," all music educators in their own right, hold clinics throughout the festival with the students and help them improve their abilities.

While the legendary Count Basie Orchestra would take the stage Saturday night, the headliner for Friday's performance was nine-time Grammy award winner Arturo Sandoval.

Before the Cuban-born protégé of jazz master Dizzy Gillespie hit the stage though, the audience was treated to a great opening show from our own UMSL Jazz

Ensemble led by festival founder and Director of Jazz Studies at UMSL Jim Widner.

The UMSL ensemble's set was full of energy, hoping to match Sandoval's, and got the audience pumped for the rest of the night. Several of the clinicians took the stage as guest performers as well. Chip McNeill, a jazz saxophonist and composer, and Rodney Whitaker, jazz bassist and celebrated Mack Avenue recording artist, were among those who lent their talents. They performed solos alongside the UMSL Jazz Ensemble, whose performance culminated with an appearance and solo from Sandoval himself, a teaser for the rest of the night as the show went into intermission.

When the main act finally took the stage with his band, the crowd cheered enthusiastically. Sandoval was quick to show his famous trumpeting skills as he hit the extreme lows and the cardrum-busting highs, which had his band members and the audience alike laughing along. And that was the general tone of the show as Sandoval made the Touhill lively

and fun, almost laid-back, but ultimately an atmosphere of good vibes.

The legendary jazz performer's first few songs were as fast-paced as ever, showcasing his expertise at hitting every note despite the speed. His trumpet dueled with the saxophone from his friend Ed Calle in alternating solos and the dual drummers provided the backbone for the tempo. The crowd was in love as one could hear between songs, with individuals voicing their admiration in brief moments of silence. Sandoval to his credit was incredibly humble and spoke to the crowd like friends or family, cracking jokes and simply being himself.

He proceeded to show his eccentric and eclectic style that has made him famous over the years. Along with his crazy trumpet solos, Sandoval played on his own little set of drums (and cowbell), jammed on a synth, and performed a scat solo for a good five minutes to the cheers of his fans. Eventually, he slowed the show down and sang a touching piece dedicated to his mentor



CountBasieOrchestra

COURTESY OF THE TOUHILL PAC

Dizzy Gillespie entitled "Dear Diz (Every Day I Think of You)" and after, played the piano himself for another slow song.

Sandoval ended his show on a characteristically energetic note, as he and his band played yet another ode to Gillespie in "A Night in Tunisia", which was written by his mentor. Yet again the Cuban trumpeter showed his range, making his trumpet literally squeak at its highest point. Armando

Manzanero, Sandoval's pianist, played a solo on the keyboard and the drummers got their own duet midway through the song as well. But his show ultimately ended how it began: with his trumpet blaring loud and strong. With the high level of energy and decent crowd interaction, as well as amazing articulation and music quality, Arturo Sandoval's jazz performance receives an A-

GALLERY VISIO

Gallery Visio hosts International Photo Contest exhibit

CATE MARQUIS
A&E EDITOR

The International Photo Contest is an annual gem at University of Missouri-St. Louis. UMSL students submit photos of international subjects, taken in countries ranging from China to Hungary, featuring subject matter from people to architecture to nature.

Gallery Visio, the student-run gallery in the lower level of the Millennium Student Center, unveiled these photographic beauties with a gallery opening on April 24 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. The exhibit runs through May 15.

This is the ninth annual International Photo Contest, which is sponsored by University of Missouri-St. Louis' Office of International Studies and Programs and by Gallery Visio. The contest is open to students, faculty, and staff at UMSL. The exhibit at Gallery Visio displays the best photos submitted for the contest, those winning honorable mention as well as first, second and third place winners.

There are twenty-two first-rate photos of international subjects and locations in this show.

Countries represented in photos include France, Italy, Japan, China, Hungary, Thailand, Czech Republic, Saudi Arabia, Laos and Bolivia.

Although the first, second and third place winners are labeled as such and placed together, the exhibit treats all the works equally, displaying the same size print and uniform height. The high quality of the "honorable mention" photos suggests that picking winners was a tough decision to make, but this is a contest, so naturally there are winners.

The first place winner was "Facing the Sun," a photo by Johanna Frost, freshman, business administration, in Paris, with the silhouette of a woman looking through an ornate iron gateway, at what might be the glass pyramid that serves as the entrance to the Louvre. Slanting light fills the courtyard seen through the shadowed doorway, with the iron gate dividing the brilliant light.

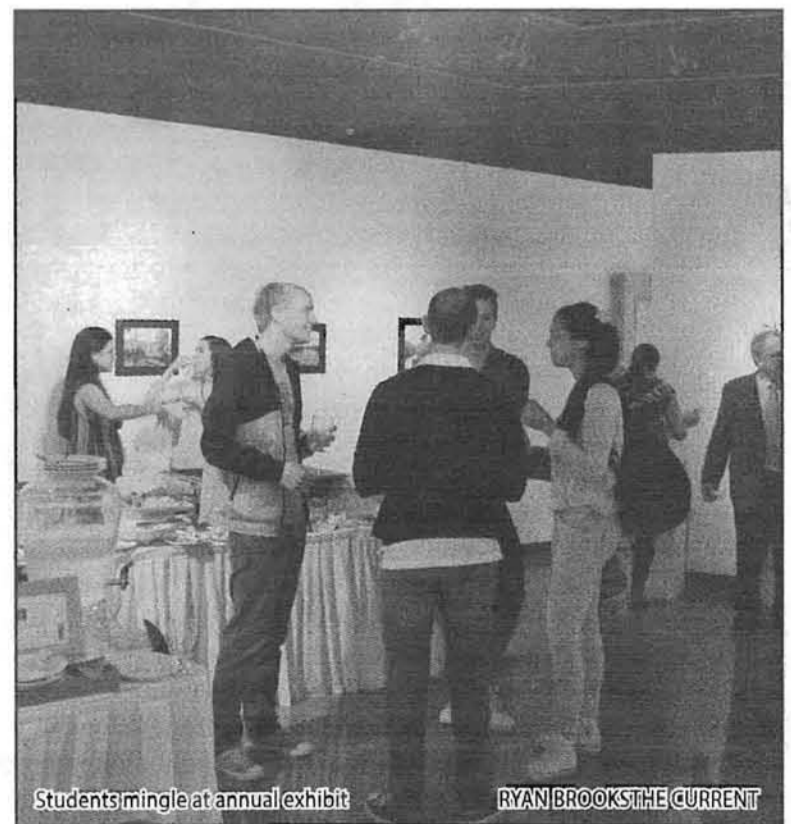
The second place winner, "Blue Boats" by Kevin Hill, senior, accounting, is an image of a row of small, bright-blue boats tied

up and floating in a harbor in Venice. The blue color dominates the image and draws the eye even from across the room.

The third place winner was a photo by Rachelle Brandel, senior, modern languages, "Past Meets Present," a photo in Kyoto of a Japanese woman, in a small wooden room and dressed in a pink kimono, image suffused with tradition, except she is looking at her equally-pink smart phone. The sense of surprise one gets upon realizing what is in her hand gives the photo a pleasantly amusing aura.

Touches of humor and contrast like that run through the whole exhibit. Sometimes the humor is in the title, such as a wide-angle shot of the top of the Great Wall of China called "Where's the Elevator?"

Some examples are "Women Wash, Men Fish," which shows a river where a pair of women in the foreground tend to washing, while a pair of men on a pier in the middle distance fish. In the background, a picaresque grand building, perhaps a palace, is



Students mingle at annual exhibit

RYAN BROOKS THE CURRENT

reflected in the water and the whole scene is framed with trees and greenery leaning in. In "Three Italian Chairs," three metal chairs, each painted a single bright color, are lined up against a stone wall in Florence, Italy. The image is both simple and striking.

The International Photo Contest exhibit is worth the trip to Gallery Visio for a quick glimpse of other lands through some fine photography.

Tritons experience ups and downs this past week

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

The University of Missouri-St. Louis women's tennis team defeated the Indianapolis Greyhounds 5-1 in the third place match of the Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament on April 20 at the Dwight Davis Tennis Center in St. Louis. The Triton women defeated the Greyhounds in two of the three double matches, and all six of the singles matches. Leanne Cantalupo, junior, civil engineering, contributed for the Tritons with a 6-2, 6-0 win in singles play. With the win, the Tritons placed third in the GLVC Tournament, and finished their season with a 17-6 overall record. On April 29, the NCAA will notify the women if they receive a bid to play in the NCAA tournament, which would be the Tritons first appearance in program history.

UMSL men's golf finished second place out of fourteen in stroke play of the Great Lakes Valley Championships on April 22 at the Otter Creek Golf Club in Columbus, Indiana. The Tritons finished their three-day effort with a total score of 871, carded through rounds of 292, 289, and 291. Indianapolis placed first with a team score of 866 (288-289-298). With the win, the men advanced to match play to compete for the GLVC Championship through two semifinal match play contests.

UMSL men's golf defeated

the McKendree Bearcats 4.5 to 0.5 in the Great Lakes Valley Match Play Semi-Finals on April 22 in Columbus, Indiana. Tritons Colby Yates, sophomore, undecided; Julien de Poyen, freshman, business; Warren Crow, senior, business; and Joe Atkisson, senior, international business, all defeated their individual opponents, while Anthony Cope, sophomore, business, tied his opponent. With the victory, the Tritons moved on to the second semifinal in match play, for the GLVC Championships, against Indianapolis. Indianapolis defeated Lewis 4.5 to 0.5 to advance to the championship round.

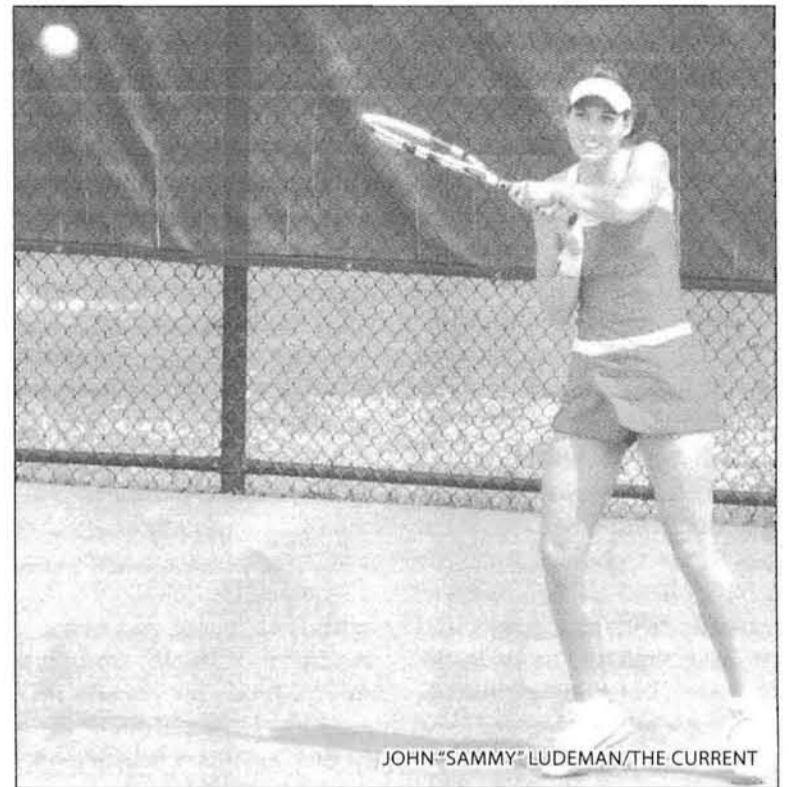
UMSL men's golf lost to the Indianapolis Greyhounds 2-3 in the Great Lakes Valley Match Play Championship on April 22 in Columbus, Indiana. Colby Yates, sophomore, undecided, and Julien de Poyen, freshman, business, contributed for the Tritons with their individual victories in the Championship. With the loss, the Tritons narrowly missed their chance at the first GLVC Championship in program history.

UMSL softball won both games in a doubleheader at Maryville on April 22. In the first game, the Tritons defeated the Saints 7-2 through seven innings. The Tritons scored seven runs in the third and fourth innings

alone. Maryville responded with two runs in the bottom of the seventh, but did not have enough productivity to overcome the deficit. In the second game, the Tritons defeated Maryville 4-2 through seven innings. The Tritons again struck first, scoring four runs by the end of the fifth inning. Maryville responded with two runs in the bottom of the sixth, but could not overcome the Triton's offensive production. Jena Boudreau, junior, nursing, contributed for the Tritons with six hits and five runs in the doubleheader.

UMSL men's baseball won both of their games in a doubleheader against McKendree on April 23 at the UMSL Baseball Fields. In the first game, the Tritons defeated McKendree 3-0 through seven innings. The Tritons scored the sole three runs in the game during the bottom of fourth, which McKendree had no offensive response. In the second game, the Tritons defeated McKendree 1-0 through seven innings. The Tritons scored the only run of the game in the bottom of the sixth off of designated hitter's Jake Beckwith, freshman, undecided, ground rule double.

UMSL men's baseball lost both of their games in a doubleheader against #22 Drury Panthers on April 25 in Springfield, Illinois. In the first game, the Tritons fell to the Panthers 3-14 through nine



JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN/THE CURRENT

Senior Louisa Werner volleys at the UMSL Tennis Courts

innings. Drury scored eight runs in the first two innings alone and fourteen overall, which would not be overcome by the Tritons. The Tritons scored two runs in the third and one run in the seventh. In the second game, the Tritons fell to the Panthers 1-5 in seven innings. The Tritons scored their lone run off of a Tyler Bunge, senior, business, single in the top of the sixth.

UMSL softball won one of two games in a doubleheader against #22 Truman State Bulldogs on April 25 in Kirksville, Missouri.

In the first game, the Tritons fell to Truman State 0-5 through seven innings. Truman State started off hot with three runs in the first inning, followed by two runs in the sixth. The Tritons recorded only two hits in the contest. In the second game, the Tritons won 3-0 in seven innings. The Tritons recorded one run a piece in third, fourth, and fifth innings to which Truman State had no response. Alex Stupek, freshman, nursing, contributed for the Tritons with two hits, one RBI, and one run in the closing game.

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IS AMERICA A FREE COUNTRY?

POINT: America is a free nation

The United States is the greatest, most powerful nation the world has ever seen. We enjoy a two party system of government with unparalleled integrity in the voting process. Any citizen age 18 and over, excluding felons, can vote. They can do so without fear of reprisal, without fear of a looming car bomb just outside the polling booth. Americans enjoy many rights guaranteed in the constitution, a living document that continues to thrive and evolve to meet the needs of the modern age. In many places in the world, citizens do not have the freedom to speak freely, to vote, to bear arms, nor is there a free press. In many nations, one does not have the right to a fair trial by a jury of their peers.

Unparalleled economic opportunity also exists in the United States. Our nation is the richest in the world, and many of the problems that citizens complain about are merely first world problems, as they are commonly called; mere inconveniences. Anyone who does not like life here is invited to try making a living in the Republic of the Congo,

Venezuela, Somalia, Zimbabwe, or Chad, as examples, to see just how good they have it here.

America is a land of hope and change. In the last several years, we have elected our first minority president, and the possibility of a woman president looks hopeful in the coming election cycle with the possible running of Hillary Clinton.

We have the most advanced military in the world, the best police force, and the largest number of advanced education institutions. We invented the very Internet that is bringing greater freedom, awareness, trade, and education to the entire world. Whistleblowers, like Edward Snowden, have even used the Internet to point out where and when democracy fails. It is a self-correcting system. Our nation would not be as great as it is were we not as free as we are. The founding fathers envisioned this nation as a place where anyone had the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. While many think our best days are behind us, others see the reality that this nation has many great years ahead of it.

COUNTER: America was never free

The United States is not a free country, and it never was. The ideals spoon-fed to the public at large are mostly lies. Do you have, and to what extent do you have, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, whatever these vagaries mean?

The mass media treats the republic and its officials with sycophantic adoration and borderline worship. We have now only six major media outlets, and they are all corporate owned. If the media were to report the real faults, corruptions and weaknesses inherent in our current system of government, the people would demand a restoration of legitimate government. Combating this is the job of the media, the "circus," which exists to keep the people distracted.

The majority of American people are more disconnected from the processes that run their government than ever before. A new study from Princeton and Northwestern Universities has concluded that the US is no longer a republic, but rather is an oligarchy.

"Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens" analyzed extensive data, comparing nearly 1,800 U.S. policies enacted between 1981 and 2002 with the expressed preferences of average and affluent Americans as well as special interest groups.

When a majority of the citizenry disagrees with the economic elites, they typically lose. Just look at the Patriot Act, passed in a time of fear to encroach on the freedoms of ordinary Americans; it is a method of control. The recent Citizens United Supreme Court decision is another prime example; this decision removes limits on campaign financing. Essentially, elites choose who the candidates will be via voting with their dollars. Americans at large feel they have a choice in who they vote for, but they do not choose the candidates. And, after candidates are elected, ordinary citizens have little, if any, control over the decisions made by these "representatives." At no time in history has the freedom of the ordinary American ever been secure.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Global water crisis deserves attention

JANE LAKAYIL
STAFF WRITER

Since the 1970s, the environmental movement in America has been gaining momentum. Most Americans are probably annoyed at this point and only vaguely pay attention when someone excitedly tries to explain the benefits of living a more environmentally friendly lifestyle. Despite constant exposure to issues such as recycling, saving trees, and the depleting ozone layer, there does not seem to be an adequate level of water literacy in our culture.

The human race at large can probably survive many decades, perhaps even over a century, with current rates of usage of fossil fuels, plastics, and other environmentally harmful chemicals and processes. However, humans can only survive without water for, at most, four days. If this is the case, why does a global water crisis not receive much attention? Can a large-scale water crisis even exist if there is seemingly nothing wrong with the water that we have access to right now?

It is exactly the latter question that highlights poor water literacy. There is a widening discrepancy between the people who have access to clean drinking water and those who do not. Every year, over two million people die from diseases caused by unsanitary water, with the majority being children. Their inability to access potable water is not necessarily related to proximity to a source of clean water; it is due to the political and economic barriers that restrict those people from accessing the clean source.

Originally, water privatization was meant to provide clean drinking water to those who legitimately could not access

it due to physical distance. However, as of 2013, water was a \$400 billion global industry, the largest behind oil and electricity. Seventy percent of that water use is for agriculture, twenty percent for industry, and only ten percent for direct human consumption.

Water privatization has been transformed into an industry that prioritizes profits above all else. In order to maximize profits, water bottle companies buy land that has exploitable water resources, treat and bottle the water and sell it to the people living around that area. When this happens in economically disadvantaged areas, people cannot afford to buy the clean water and resort to using unsanitary water from other bodies of water that have not been bought out.

In order to reap in the billions of dollars that it does on a yearly basis, water corporations have also influenced people in more economically advantaged areas into thinking that water from water bottles is substantially safer than tap water.

In 2007, Americans alone spent \$10.8 billion on buying bottled water, equivalent to 31 billion liters of water. Most of those Americans, if not all, have access to clean water in their own homes in the form of tap water. Despite this, most Americans seem to have some sort of obsessive need to grab a bottle of Fiji, Ice Mountain, Smart Water, or Dasani whenever they want water.

Sure, one can make the argument that tap water is unsafe because industrial chemicals, pharmaceuticals, pesticides and other organic wastes that are dumped into the bodies of water that provide us with drinking



water. However, bottled water is less monitored than the water that is provided to commercial housing units. Some bottled water has been proven to contain trace amounts of arsenic, organic chemicals, and various bacteria.

The fallacy about bottled water as a healthier choice, the damaging economic and human rights effects that water corporations have around the world, the skewed global distribution of water resources and the ever increasing population highlight the importance of taking responsible steps toward increased water literacy.

Due to demonstrations, appeals and petitions from countries all around the world, including India, Argentina, South Africa, Thailand, Mexico, Ecuador and Bolivia, in 2010, the United Nations General Assembly made an addendum to the resolution on human rights that recognized the right to clean water and sanitation. While we have made great strides in trying to fix a broken system, we must all realize that it is our responsibility as consumers to educate ourselves on the implications of the actions of those corporations that we support, as well as our own actions on a global scale.

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COMICS

MUSIC REVIEW COMIC by Greg Hartl

HI THERE, MY NAME IS GREG AND I LOVE MUSIC AND MAKING COMICS.

SO I DECIDED TO COMBINE THE TWO THINGS I LOVE INTO ONE COMIC.

I WILL USE THIS COMIC TO REVIEW MUSIC, AND TO DISCUSS A WIDE VARIETY OF TOPICS.

THIS FIRST COMIC WILL BE A REVIEW OF CUT COPY'S ALBUM "FREE YOUR MIND."

THIS ALBUM IS FAIRLY DIFFERENT FROM THEIR OTHER ALBUMS BECAUSE IT VEERS AWAY FROM THEIR TYPICAL INFLUENCES.

free your mind

INSTEAD, IT SOUNDS LIKE A MIX BETWEEN SOMETHING FROM THE PSYCHEDELIC SIXTIES COMBINED WITH DANCE MUSIC.

WHILE I LIKE THE SINGLE "FREE YOUR MIND," I DON'T THINK IT'S AS STRONG AS PREVIOUS SINGLES THEY'VE RELEASED.

IT'S NOT A BAD SINGLE BUT IT IS MISSING THE LITTLE KICK OR HOOK THAT THEIR OTHER SINGLES HAD. SINGLES LIKE...

WE ARE EXPLORERS. IS ONE OF THE CATCHIEST TRACKS ON THE ALBUM I ALWAYS FIND MYSELF HUMMING OR SINGING THIS SONG.

I THINK IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN CHOSEN AS THE SINGLE FOR THIS ALBUM. IT'S MY FAVORITE TRACK FROM "FREE YOUR MIND."

HOWEVER AS GOOD AS THE SONGS ARE THEY CANNOT COMPARE TO THEIR PREVIOUS WORK AND FEEL LIKE A STEP BACK INSTEAD.

IF YOU THINK I DISLIKE THIS ALBUM STOP!!! I ACTUALLY REALLY ENJOY IT. MOST OF THE SONGS ON ALBUM ARE FUN TO LISTEN TOO.

THE BEST SONGS:
-We Are Explorers
-Dark Corners & Mountain Tops
-Take Me Higher

FINAL VERDICT
7/10

IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH CUT COPY AND YOU ENJOYED IT YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT THEIR PREVIOUS ALBUMS PERSONALLY I WOULD START WITH IN GHOST COLOURS. I THINK IT IS THEIR BEST ALBUM.

TOMERVISION™

LIZZY, I'VE BEEN THINKING SINCE THAT GIRL WITH THE PINK HAIR IS SO POPULAR, WE SHOULD HAVE A MUSIC SEGMENT.

WELL, SOMETHING LIKE "DEEP PURPLE."

OHH, LIKE WHO?

Y'KNOW, DUN-DUN-DU-LIN-DUN-DUN-DAH-DU-LIN...

WHO?

"SMOKE IN THE WATER?" C'MON MAN, IT'S LIKE THEIR THEME SONG!

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"TOMERVISION" BY MIKE RENEZ

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