

## State Representative Sharon Pace visits UMSL for informal Q&A lunch

HEATHER WELBORN  
FEATURES EDITOR

State Representative Sharon Pace met with University of Missouri—St. Louis students and faculty on January 18 at the Fireside Lounge of the Millennium Student Center. The informal meeting was organized by the Associated Students of the University of Missouri (ASUM). Attendees were invited to ask Representative Pace questions over a light lunch.

State Representative Pace spent the hour answering questions and outlining her legislative goals for this year's session. The congressional issues she mentioned ranged from Right to Work and raising textbook prices, to gun laws and decriminalizing marijuana. She explained the aims of the committees she is involved in this session and briefly outlined her reasoning in giving support to a number of bills.

"If it's at the expense of education, I won't vote for it," Pace said.

The Representative was candid in her responses and discussed the "tedious process" of passing a bill in Missouri. She offered a handout to attendees with a page-wide cartoon depicting how a bill is enacted into law. The process involves dozens of steps that a bill must sequentially satisfy to become policy. To avoid rejection, a bill must be approved by committees in both the house and senate, where it is amended and eventually voted on. Only a fraction of these bills survive this legislative gauntlet.

"We're having some trying times in Jefferson City," Rep. Pace said. She expressed her disagreement with upcoming bills she saw as "anti-women," and chastised the speaker of the house for refusing to hear bills regarding health care.

"Health care is a big issue,



State Representative Sharon Pace engages the audience at UMSL Q&A Lunch

[yet] the speaker does not want to talk about it," Pace said. "The Democrats put out one bill to see if we could get a hearing on it last session," she continued. "None of us got a hearing."

Responding to the speaker's ability to ignore important issues, an attendee asked Pace if the people of Missouri had the right to determine which issues the speaker addressed.

"It should be," Pace said. "In Jeff City, the speaker decides what bill gets to the committee, and the committee chair decides what gets voted on."

Another attendee asked Pace how students can influence the speaker's decision and facilitate change.

"Attend those committee meetings," Pace said. "You have to be visible. You can write the speaker and let him know you want hearings on particular bills." She also recommended sending emails and calling your district representatives to become more involved. "Keep going. You can't let up."

ASUM provides information on political events happening in Jefferson City to the student body

and community. Kevin Carpenter, senior, sociology, ASUM president, describes the group's mission as a non-partisan effort at transparency.

"We don't have a view on issue A or B," Carpenter said. "We try to bring both sides to the student body."

Carpenter explains ASUM's decision to extend the invitation to Rep. Pace for the on-campus conversation.

"It's been a while since we've had our state representative or legislator come to the campus," Carpenter said. "This was our way of saying, 'Why don't you come and visit?'"

Let's have lunch and discuss."

After the event, Carpenter commented that while he would have liked to have seen a larger turnout, he felt like he accomplished his goal.

"This is the first one ASUM has done in a couple years," Carpenter said. "It's a good start."

ASUM invites students and faculty to attend their next event with House Representative Clem Smith on January 27 at 11a.m. in Century Room A of the MSC.

(Turn to Page 4 for more on Representative Pace's visit to UMSL)

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Letters to the editor should be brief, and those not exceeding 250 words will be given preference. We edit letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent, or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number. Students must include their student ID numbers. Faculty and staff must include their title(s) and department(s). The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to respond to letters. The Current reserves the right to deny letters.

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**CAMPUS CRIMELINE**

January 4, 2014 - 3:45 p.m. Report # 14-03 - ACCIDENTAL INJURY - MARK TWAIN GYM. A non-student was transported to the hospital via ambulance after suffering a head injury playing basketball. Disposition: Report taken.

January 11, 2014 - 2:30 a.m. Report # 14-08 - WARRANT ARREST - WEST DRIVE. A non-student was arrested for outstanding traffic warrants from St. Ann PD. Suspect was conveyed to his residence after St. Ann was unable to pick him up. Disposition: Report taken.

January 13, 2014- Report # 14-10 - THEFT - SETON HALL. An UMSL Faculty member reported a laptop stolen from an office between December 20, 2013 - January 13, 2014. Disposition: Report taken.

January 16, 2014 - Report # 14-18 - AUTO ACCIDENT LEAVING THE SCENE - REAR OF POLICE STATION. An UMSL Police car was struck and damaged while parked behind the police station, unknown time of occurrence. Disposition: Report taken.

January 16, 2014 - Report # 14-19 - DRUG VIOLATION - UNIVERSITY MEADOWS. Apartment management discovered drug paraphernalia in a furnace, investigation continuing. Disposition: Report taken.

**THE UNDERCURRENT** By Sarah Myers

**WHAT DID YOU DO OVER WINTER BREAK?**



**COURTNEY HAYDEN,**  
 Anthropology, Junior  
 "Hung out with friends from high school and watched lots of movies."



**PATRICIA THIEMANN**  
 Accounting, Junior  
 "Off from school bus driving job for entire break, relaxed, and enjoyed time off work and school."



**STEVE MANNING,**  
 Biotechnology, Sophomore  
 "Went to church and spent time with friends and family.."

MON 46 <sub>HI</sub> 16 <sub>LOW</sub>	TUE 18 <sub>HI</sub> 18 <sub>LOW</sub>	WED 37 <sub>HI</sub> 10 <sub>LOW</sub>	THU 18 <sub>HI</sub> 9 <sub>LOW</sub>	FRI 37 <sub>HI</sub> 27 <sub>LOW</sub>	SAT 41 <sub>HI</sub> 23 <sub>LOW</sub>	SUN 36 <sub>HI</sub> 23 <sub>LOW</sub>
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# Homecoming celebrations to take place in February

KARLYNE KILLEBREW  
STAFF WRITER

For the first time since the early 2000s, University of Missouri—St. Louis's Homecoming is being held in the spring from February 3 through February 8. There's been a bit of buzz about the break in tradition as well as unofficial speculation about why the change was made.

Traditionally, homecoming is held during the first week in October and centered around a men's soccer game. However, there were no home games in the 2013 men's soccer season, leading to an assumption that homecoming was moved to accommodate the sports schedule.

Jessica Long-Pease, Director of Student Life, clarified some details about the change.

"Homecoming is about bringing

alumni back to the institution, creating networks between current students and alumni, and facilitating the idea of UMSL pride," Long-Pease said. "We wanted to make sure that the connections we had with Homecoming made sense, so we decided in conversations with athletics and alumni relations that potentially moving homecoming back to February in conjunction with basketball would enable us to do more to promote UMSL athletics and pull our alumni back in...In addition we already have [a] signature athletic event—Pack the Stands—that enables us to take something already in existence where we're seeing about 10,000 people at each game and tie that in at Homecoming."

Student opinion on the matter

varies across campus.

"It's utterly ridiculous," Robert Mason, junior, criminology and criminal justice, said. "It's being held in February, so we just get off break January 20. No one's really thinking about homecoming as we would have been in October. We get back in August [so] we have a whole month in the fall semester to think about homecoming, get things ready, and get our tickets and such. That [change] could [contribute] to low ticket sales."

Long-Pease assures that the marketing issues have been accounted for and accommodated.

"We've put information out starting in November. One of the things we're doing to make easier access is putting the homecoming ticket sales online. Enabling the

student to [purchase] electronically will keep sales up because there is not an obligation to come to campus," Long-Pease said.

According to Long-Pease, 11 applications for Homecoming Court have been submitted so far. There is also a steering committee of 15 people, the largest Long-Pease has seen at UMSL.

Many students are embracing the change. Fredreca McGlown, a graduate student studying communications, is one such student.

"It's a good thing to be held in the spring, especially revolving the event around Pack the Stands. I think that will increase attendance at Homecoming...[and] help us develop a better relationship between the students and the

alumni. It gives us the opportunity to be different from the rest of the universities, where students don't necessarily have to worry about conflicts between homecomings at different institutions. It sets us apart," McGlown said.

Homecoming 2014 will still feature some of the traditional events students can look forward to. The big dance will be held at the end of homecoming week as usual. A number of popular spirit activities like "Big Man On Campus" will also be returning. Additionally, a "Sink My Battleship" event will be held that Tuesday, as well as a 5K run on Saturday morning.

For the full schedule of 2014 Homecoming events and activities, visit [umsl.edu/wow](http://umsl.edu/wow).

# Groundbreaking of the Science Learning Building a major step forward for campus science community

KARLYNE KILLEBREW  
STAFF WRITER

On Monday, December 9, 2013, the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Science Learning Building was held in front of Benton Hall.

Chancellor Tom George and Alumni Association President Michael Finkes addressed the audience, after which the first shovel was taken to the mound of dirt representing the space for the new building. People then filed into the lobby to a buffet and mini-bar and milled about celebrating the science community's expansion.

In their speeches, both speakers revered the old science building

for the many contributions it has made to the University of Missouri-St. Louis. They were even more delighted to celebrate seeing the plans for an updated complex finally come to life.

According to Lawrence Barton, PhD, professor emeritus of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, the new edifice is 25 years in the making.

"There were three building committees who were paid to design buildings...in the 90's the money was diverted to the Touhill," Barton said.

Chancellor Tom George had previously revealed that despite years of lobbying and compromise there is no state aid to help the university pay for the much needed upgrade. The center is being financed through bonding over a 30-year payment plan of \$2 million dollars per year.

Despite the delays and costs, the new Science Learning Building is still considered by many to be a very necessary change.

"I couldn't be happier. Benton Hall has served us well, but it's time for a renovation of Benton

and Stadler, plus a new building for the next generation of science students," Finkes said.

Chancellor George believes it will provide a "better teaching atmosphere," stating, "You've got to invest money to create the best type of environment for students."

Joseph O' Sullivan, dean of the UMSL-Washington University Joint Engineering Program, referred to the new infrastructure as a "great expansion [that] will provide new labs for engineers... [and] attract new students for their freshman and sophomore years."

Many students have been anxiously waiting and hoping for this upgrade as well.

Lisa Gowens, graduate, biochemistry, called the new addition "desperately needed."

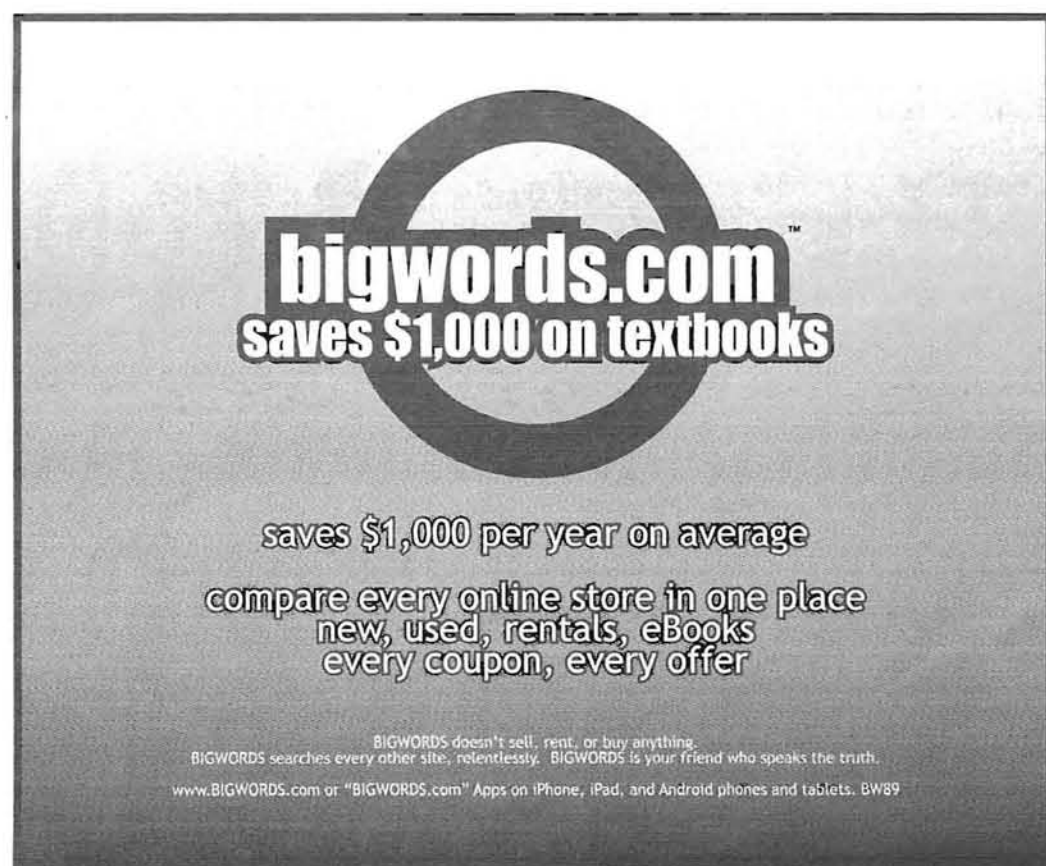
"I hope with the labs they update course material," Jordan Rays, graduate, chemistry, said.

The new Science Learning Building is expected to be completed in 2015.

## NEWS BRIEF

As construction continues on the new Science Learning Building, portions of Lot Q will be closed until the end of January, weather permitting, to create 30 new parking spaces east of Stadler Hall.

Lot Q and Benton Drive will still be accessible from West Drive, with new bidirectional traffic lanes. Those needing to access University Boulevard and the Main Circle, however, will need to use Natural Bridge Road, as Benton Drive will be blocked off directly west of the south Stadler door.



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# ASUM hosts discussion with state representative

HEATHER WELBORN  
FEATURES EDITOR

Dozens of students and faculty gathered together at the Fireside Lounge in the Millennium Student Center on January 17 for a light lunch and open conversation with Democratic State Representative Sharon Pace. The event was organized by The Associated Students of University of Missouri (ASUM), a University of Missouri—St. Louis organization who hosts events like these in an effort to increase student awareness of state political happenings.

State Representative Pace opened the meeting by addressing legislative issues of interest to her, starting with gun laws.

"We have the gun bill coming back, which is important," Pace said. The legislative effort, which Pace supported, was stopped by a little over a dozen Republicans last session. "They saw the need in doing that," Pace said. "We do work together at times. We will have bills we're not going to agree upon and we agree to disagree." She does not take it personally when legislation she supports fails. "Majority of course rules," Pace said. "That's how it works in a democracy."

The conversation soon switched to higher pursuits. "We're talking about legalizing marijuana," Pace said. "I did a survey and

the majority of people in my district want that to happen." She stated that while she supports decriminalization efforts, she requires realistic regulation. "I believe in medical marijuana, but there need to be controls," Pace said. "I don't want anyone on the road high."

Pace offered a printed end-of-session report to attendees that listed legislation she sponsored, supported, and opposed last session. She briefly addressed the bittersweet aspect of politics with mention of a house bill she sponsored. The bill sought to offer more protection to mass transit workers who fall victim to assault. After her bill had been amended and passed on to the senate, the Governor vetoed it because of the wording of one amendment. The addition came on the last day of the session, and called for renaming a section of I-70 "Graham's Picnic Rock Highway," notoriously known as "Slave Rock."

"I couldn't even vote for my own bill!" Pace said.

Other bills Pace sponsored included banning employers from using an applicant's credit history as a hiring criteria for jobs unaffected by credit history. She also passed a bill in the House last session that made drug sales near a daycare a crime. The bill did not



Rep. Pace talks with students in the Fireside Lounge

make it through the Senate.

State Representative Sharon Pace is the Assistant Minority Whip of the House of Representatives for the State of Missouri, serving citizens of the 70th district in the Missouri General Assembly. She serves on three committees this session: Appropriations-Transportation and Economic Development, Health Care Policy and Crime Prevention, and Public Safety. A St. Louis native, Pace welcomes local views on legislative issues raised during the congressional session.

For students looking to better

understand the daily duties of a state representative, Pace recommends taking advantage of internship opportunities at the state capitol in Jefferson City.

"We have internships a day or two a week," Pace said. Students are paired with a legislator of similar background and attend meetings, hearings, and other daily duties. "Get on the list [...] before we're out of session in May," Pace said, noting that a certificate is usually issued to interns upon completion of their job shadowing.

In a pamphlet she distributed at the meeting, Pace urges her

constituents to contact her to voice their opinion on local and state concerns. She reminds readers that copies of additional legislative, government, and tourist resources are available upon request through her office, free of charge. State Representative Pace points residents online to [house.mo.gov](http://house.mo.gov) for an up-to-date listing of proposed bills and hearings, as well as *lawmaker contact information*. For more information, email State Representative Pace directly at [sharon.pace@house.mo.gov](mailto:sharon.pace@house.mo.gov).

## Preview: WEEKS OF WELCOME

The University of Missouri-St. Louis promote Triton pride by welcoming new and returning students every semester with Weeks of Welcome. Below is a sampling of the first week of events and activities. For the full listing of Spring 2014 Weeks of Welcome activities and events, including the 2014 Homecoming schedule, visit [umsl.edu/wow](http://umsl.edu/wow).

### JANUARY 21-27

Free Wellness Classes, Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center

Stop by Mark Twain this week for a free Aerobic & Spinning class. Registration is open for all wellness classes running through May 10. Classes are lead by certified fitness instructors and range from Kickboxing and Pilates to Yoga and Aquatic Exercise. For a full list of wellness classes offered this semester, visit [www.umsl.edu/services/recsport](http://www.umsl.edu/services/recsport).

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 21

#### Help-A-Triton

8:00AM - 4:00PM

Help-A-Triton is a volunteer initiative where current students, faculty, and staff from various academic colleges, administrative departments, and student organizations assist students with navigating campus by staffing strategically placed information tables across campus. Volunteers can

help with directions, building codes, academic and administrative services information, class locations and many other issues you may encounter in your first two class days. Help-A-Triton tables will also have maps and information that will assist you with navigating around the various construction sites on campus.

#### Baby, It's Cold Outside

10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Fireside Chat Lounge

Warm up with fellow students at the Fireside Chat Lounge on the 2nd floor of the Millennium Student Center for free snacks and refreshments.

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

#### Winter Expo

11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Millennium Student Center 2nd and 3rd Floor Rotundas

Need more info on joining a student organization

or contacting a department on campus? Members of the University Programming Board are available today in the MSC to address your inquiries.

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

#### Hypnotist Josh McVicar

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.,  
Millennium Student Center Pilot House

Watch in wonder as McVicar captivates attendees with his magic and hypnosis performance. Students are encouraged to volunteer as participants at the show.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

#### Be a Kid Night

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Oak Hall Game Room

Get your nostalgia fix with an evening of film, fun and free food, courtesy of the University Program Board.

## FILM REVIEW

## 'The Wolf of Wall Street' gathers A-list cast for unapologetic debauchery

PAUL PEANICK  
STAFF WRITER

Martin Scorsese's "The Wolf of Wall Street" is the true story of Jordan Belfort, who rose to power as a wealthy stockbroker in the 1980s. Starting as a penny stocks trader, he used his chutzpah, salesmanship, and charisma in a stratospheric, drug-filled rise to wealth and power.

The film is based on Belfort's memoirs. Belfort is played by the devilishly charismatic Leonardo DiCaprio, and is accompanied by an A-list cast including Matthew McConaughey, Jonah Hill, Rob Reiner, and Jean Dujardin. It is the fifth collaboration between DiCaprio and Scorsese and perhaps the first that can remotely be called a comedy.

Belfort (DiCaprio) takes a job at an established Wall Street firm in 1987, led by swaggering Wall Street elder statesmen Matthew McConaughey, who advises Belfort to take on a lifestyle of frequent masturbation and cocaine use in order to succeed. Belfort loves his job but the firm fails after the "Black Monday" stock market crash.

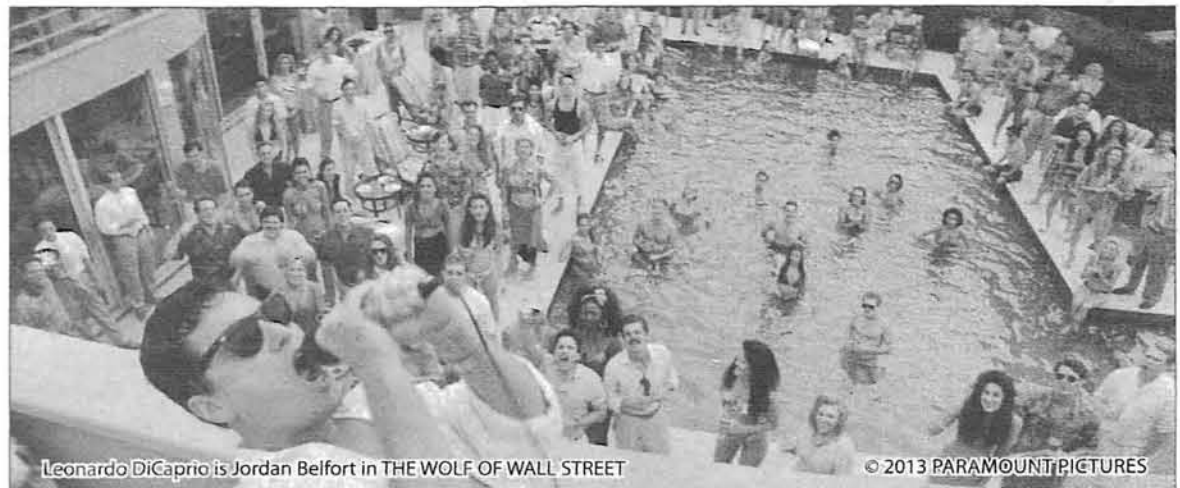
His firm now defunct, Belfort takes a job at a penny stock "boiler

room" called the Investor Center. Here, sleazy salesmen push cheap penny stocks on mailmen, garbage collectors, grocers, and similar blue-collar individuals. Earning a fifty percent commission per sale, Belfort quickly reestablishes himself as a money-maker and realizes the potential of such an endeavor.

Bringing together a band of merry men to his aid, Belfort writes a sales script to entice the richest one percent of Americans into buying his high commission penny stocks. He christens his new firm "Stratten Oakmont." The firm is an immediate success but is essentially a "pump and dump" scheme. The success of Stratten Oakmont propels Belfort and his cohorts from anonymity into the Wall Street limelight.

The rest of the film is an exercise in debauchery that has few equals. DiCaprio's charm, wit and humor quickly disarm the audience. His victims are never seen on screen. They are the nameless, faceless investors that his firm defrauds on their way to riches.

Belfort divorces his first wife Teresa (Cristin Milioti) after she



catches him snorting coke off the breasts of his lover Naomi (Margot Robbie) in the back of a limousine. Belfort remarks on how guilty he feels before moving Naomi into his apartment three days later. Belfort's bachelor party costs two million dollars, and involves over fifty of his coworkers, one hundred hookers (fifty on the plane and fifty waiting at the hotel upon landing), enough drugs to sedate a small nation, and, in the aftermath, the refurbishment of the entire 28th floor of the hotel where the party was held. The wedding thereafter, needless to say, is a storybook affair.

Belfort's exploits catch the attention of the FBI and the SEC after his right hand man, Donny Azoff (Jonah Hill), gives Belfort expired Quaaludes. Thinking them

less potent, they consume huge doses, but it later turns out that the pills have a delayed fuse. In the ensuing chaos, Belfort crashes his Ferrari into everything save a human being, though he somehow gets off scott-free.

Belfort's drug abuse and excess do catch up to him, and as the FBI closes in, he turns snitch on his former coworkers. In the end, Belfort only serves two years in federal prison, and today is a motivational speaker.

Critics have argued that DiCaprio has too much fun as Belfort, breaking the fourth wall and addressing the audience throughout the film, and with so little consequence. DiCaprio's Belfort does not so much turn to the dark side as stumble into it and

accelerate, full speed ahead.

Scorsese's movie is quite entertaining, the work of a master. One is so mesmerized by the comedy of the rise to power and subsequent train wreck of Belfort's life that one barely has time to consider the gravity of the crimes he and his cohorts commit. Belfort and Azoff seem like heroes to the men and women they employ. The real Belfort even garners a cameo at the end of the film.

Scorsese executes this depraved act the way one would a jazz piece at full blast, and the raunchy affair is so entertaining we scarcely comprehend the great villainy of the crimes the protagonists (if they may be called so) carry out.

## CAMPUS ARTS PREVIEW

## Art exhibits, jazz-classical fusion, and 'Wizard of Oz' ballet show wide range of cultural events taking place on campus

ALBERT NALL  
STAFF WRITER

There is a wide variety of arts offerings on campus this month and next, ranging from works by an artist from Yugoslavia, the "Wizard of Oz" as a ballet, and a quartet of musicians who fuse jazz and symphonic music.

The student-run Gallery Visio opens its semester with a reception for "All That Ends Death," art works by St. Louis artist Peter Seay, on January 23, from noon to 3 p.m. In the exhibit, which runs through February 19, Seay "visually interprets his own stream of consciousness through various mediums and installations," according to the gallery.

At the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center, patrons can journey down the "yellow-brick-road" with a ballet rendition of the "Wizard of Oz," performed by Ballet Memphis on January 24 at 8 p.m. and on January 25 at 2

and 8 p.m. Presented by Dance St. Louis for its 28th season, the "Wizard of Oz" is choreographed by Ballet Memphis' Steven McMahon.

Another art exhibit, "Still Adjusting" by Zlatko Cosic, opens at Gallery 210 with a reception on January 25 from 4 to 7 p.m. Cosic is a graphical artist born in Yugoslavia who now resides in St. Louis. "Still Adjusting" surveys the war experience in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s and its aftermath. The exhibition runs through April 5. The Monday Noon Series will kick off on February 3 in the JC Penney Building's Room 402 from 12:15 to 1:15 PM with a lecture by the artist. Cosic will discuss his exhibit at Gallery 210, issues that reshape the reinvention of one's identity after a war and "Osmosis," his pictorial narrative focusing on themes of dislocation,

along with the effects of having to adjust to the transition to a new social atmosphere.

Artistic director Stacy West of MADCO will present a sequel to a work done in 2011 called "The Pulse" at the Touhill PAC in partnership with the UMSL music department. Students will once again produce an original work in which they will accompany live dancers during the performance. The performance of the "Pulse 2: The Rhythm Continues" will take place on January 31 and February 1 at 8 p.m. and on February 2 at 2 p.m.

In February, music and romance rule. So Percussion will enchant audiences with their white-knuckle, exciting blend of chaos and bedlam at the Touhill PAC on February 7 at 8 p.m.

The St. Louis Jazz Orchestra

presents a "Night at the Movies," under the direction of Jim Widner, on February 11 at 8 p.m.

St. Louis's own Improv Shop will perform its first show of the spring at the Touhill on February 12 at 7:30 p.m.

"Love is in the Air" will be presented by the St. Louis Ballet on February 14 at the Touhill at 8 p.m. and on February 15 at 7 p.m.

Events sponsored by the University Program Board at the Millennium Student Center include hypnotist Josh McVicar on January 23 and a spoken-word poet to appear on February 13. Both events will be held at the Pilot House at 7 p.m.

The Coffeehouse Series will start up again on February 19 from noon to 1 p.m. at the Fireside Lounge, with a performer to be announced.

The Monday Noon Series, which takes place at the JC Penney Building's Room 402 from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., will feature a musical performance on February 10 by the 442's, a new quartet that is a merger of musicians from jazz groups and a local symphony orchestra.

Other events of the Monday Noon Series include an author's talk and book signing on February 17 for "Historic St. Louis: 250 Years Exploring New Frontiers," by UMSL History Professor Fred Fausz. Finally, on February 24, U.S. Veterans from St. Louis will recite poems and short stories about their war experiences, collected in the national anthology "Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors."

# UMSL men's and women's swimming and diving teams finally afloat again

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN  
SPORTS EDITOR

For the first time since terminating after the 1995/1996 season, the University of Missouri-St. Louis will reinstate the men's and women's swimming and diving program for 2014/2015. No longer will the UMSL Tritons and our dedicated amphibious mascot, Louie, go without a fitting seaworthy sport.

The new program gives students another highly competitive program to look forward to and support. The teams will join six other schools' joint men's and women's swimming programs in the GLVC, including the Bellarmine, Drury, Indianapolis, Lewis, Truman State and William

Jewell programs.

The Tritons will face fierce competition, with the Drury Panthers being a force to be reckoned with in search of a GLVC title. According to the Endless Pools College Swimming Top 25 Division II Fall Power Rankings, both the men's and women's Drury swimming teams are currently ranked first among Division II teams. The Panther teams have a combined 20 NCAA Division II National Championship titles, 11 for the men and 9 for the women, since 1994.

The Tritons are up for the challenge, and the program

reinstatement comes at an exciting time. The Great Lakes Valley Conference will begin its first season sponsoring swimming and diving as a Championship sport. The inaugural GLVC Men's Swimming and Diving Championship will run February 12-15 in Crawfordsville, Indiana. Additionally, beginning this past fall, Maryville started their first women's swimming and diving season, adding in-town friendly competition.

The reinstatement timing also bodes well with the opening of the Student Recreation and Wellness Center, slated to be open for use by Fall 2015. The new

facility will feature a fitness and recreation pool with lap lanes, as well as a weight center and stretching areas. How the facility will be used by the swimming and diving teams is not specifically known, but the timing coincides nicely with the addition of the new programs.

As for who will coach these teams in their inaugural season, students will have to wait for an answer. UMSL is currently searching for the right applicant to fill the vacancy. More details, including a schedule for the upcoming season, are yet to be released.

The news of the new Triton

teams is definitely exciting, particularly because it provides a new opportunity for fans to become involved in UMSL Athletics. Not only is the swimming and diving program an additional sport that will cater to more students' sports preferences, but it will also be a high-quality program, competing against high caliber opponents in a respected swimming town. In fact, this year St. Louis was named one of 6 finalists to host the 2016 Olympic Trials by USA Swimming. Let the swimming begin!

# UMSL basketball looks to home play for wins

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN  
SPORTS EDITOR

While the University of Missouri-St. Louis student body went home to spend the holidays with family, the UMSL Triton basketball teams were left with work to do on the court. During the break from mid-December to mid-January, the women performed in eight contests while the men had six.

The women's basketball team played well in the holiday span, winning their first six contests before falling in their final two

games to Lewis on January 11 and Truman State on January 16. The women, with a 4-2 conference record, stand in third place in the GLVC West behind Drury and Quincy, both with 5-1 records in the conference. The Tritons' overall record stands at 11-3.

The Triton men's basketball team has also fallen into a funk, as of late. After winning their first three games of the break, they walked away from all three

of their final games with losses. The Tritons were defeated on January 9 by Wisconsin-Parkside and, like the women, fell to Lewis and Truman State on January 11 and 16, respectively. The men, 9-5 overall, currently sit in fourth place in the GLVC West with a 3-3 conference record behind Drury, Truman State, and Maryville.

Fortunately for the Tritons, starting January 30, both the men and women will have a four

consecutive home game stretch in the Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center. With backing from fans and the comfort home play, the stretch is a perfect opportunity for the Tritons to get some solid wins and carry positive momentum into post-season play.

If any students have been thinking about going to a game but have not made it out yet, this is a golden opportunity. Classes will still be in the syllabus stage:

just starting to warm up, but not yet fully in gear or overly serious. The days will still be a tad too cold to really be able to enjoy being outside, and most importantly, we are at a pivotal point in the basketball season where the support will be greatly beneficial. Games are free for students, so grab a blanket, a friend, and maybe some hot cocoa, and I'll see you at Mark Twain.

## BASKETBALL SCHEDULES

WOMEN'S			
1/23	Drury	Springfield, Mo.	5:45 PM
1/25	Missouri S&T	Rolla, Mo.	1:00 PM
1/30	William Jewell	Mark Twain Building	5:30 PM
2/1	Rockhurst	Mark Twain Building	1:00 PM
1/6	Saint Joseph's	Mark Twain Building	5:30 PM
2/8	Indianapolis	Mark Twain Building	1:00 PM
2/13	Bellarmine	Louisville, Ky.	5:45 PM (ET)
2/15	Southern Indiana	Evansville, Ind.	1:00 PM
2/20	Quincy	Quincy, Ill.	5:15 PM
2/22	Truman State	Mark Twain Building	5:00 PM
2/27	Maryville	St. Louis, Mo.	5:15 PM
3/2	GLVC First Round	TBA	TBA
3/6	GLVC Quarterfinals	Evansville, In.	TBA
3/8	GLVC Semifinals	Evansville, In.	TBA
3/9	GLVC Championship	Evansville, In.	TBA

MEN'S			
1/23	Drury	Springfield, Mo.	8:00 PM
1/25	Missouri S&T	Rolla, Mo.	3:00 PM
1/30	William Jewell	Mark Twain Building	7:30 PM
2/1	Rockhurst	Mark Twain Building	3:00 PM
2/6	Saint Joseph's	Mark Twain Building	7:30 PM
2/8	Indianapolis	Mark Twain Building	3:00 PM
2/13	Bellarmine	Louisville, Ky.	8:00 PM (ET)
2/15	Southern Indiana	Evansville, Ind.	3:15 PM
2/20	Quincy	Quincy, Ill.	7:30 PM
2/22	Truman State	Mark Twain Building	7:30 PM
2/27	Maryville	St. Louis, Mo.	7:30 PM
3/2	GLVC First Round	TBA	TBA
3/6	GLVC Quarterfinals	Evansville, Ind.	TBA
3/8	GLVC Semifinals	Evansville, Ind.	TBA
3/9	GLVC Championship	Evansville, Ind.	TBA

**POINT** **COUNTERPOINT**

**SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES: USEFUL TOOLS FOR HI-TECH CONNECTIONS OR DISTRACTIONS FROM GENUINE HUMAN INTERACTION?**

**POINT: Technology brings us together**

Though snail mail and other traditional means of communication have their merits, many people now turn to social networking websites in order to stay connected. This shift in communication styles is not only unavoidable, but something to be celebrated.

Many popular websites like Facebook allow people to communicate with family members that live far away and keep up to date on how they're doing. Not only do sites like these provide a fast and easy way to contact just about anyone, you can play games with someone miles away from you. In the past, physical distance between family and friends was not so easily conquered. In a world where there are a variety of unforeseeable circumstances that can potentially place families and loved ones miles and miles apart, anything that enables individuals to keep in contact with those close to them should be celebrated.

With social networking sites growing and growing throughout

the years, there are ways to contact people around the world, making it easier to build relationships and make new friends. In recent years, we've found ways to communicate through these websites using face-to-face video interaction. For those who are socially isolated or shy, social networking sites provide a way to interact and connect with others in a stress-free, controlled environment. For those with disabilities that makes in-person interaction a strained experience, online interactions can be a life-saver.

Change isn't something to be feared or fought against. What's important are the ways in which we use the new technology that we create. Social networking websites bring people from all walks of life closer together, giving people who may not have otherwise met the opportunity learn more about someone different from them. Hopefully in the future, we will think of even more incredible ways to enhance communication and promote connection between one another.

**COUNTER: Put your phone down already**

It is important that we, as a society, advance with the world around us by thinking of new and better ways to do things while making everyday life easier for us all. However, when it comes to things like social networking websites, advancement can be a double-edged sword.

Human interaction is all about being close to one another, interacting face-to-face. While it's great that we can now use social networking websites to interact with almost anyone around the world, "screen to screen," the way we connect with others online has become merely a shallow imitation of something meaningful. For those who want to use social networking sites to meet new friends and create relationships, social networking sites are a problem disguised as a solution. The bite-sized bits of interaction that social media sites like Twitter offer make it harder to form deeper connections than what can be expressed in 140 characters. Echo chambers – sites where most of the action comes from 'liking,' 'reblogging,' or commenting on something that's already been said – serve as a distraction from coming up

with an original thought and engaging in meaningful debates that just may change your original viewpoint.

Social networking sites can also leave users feeling disconnected from the real world. The weight of what's happening on a global scale is often lost when news is watered down to the barest of headlines, designed to be quickly and easily consumed before readers scroll down, moving on to the next hot topic.

While the advancement of technology will help us in a variety of ways in the future, that technology should not become a means for individuals to distance themselves from one another. With the onslaught of affordable smart phones, it's easier than ever to stay connected to everyone but the people physically around us.

Next time you're in line at the grocery store or waiting for class to start, consider this challenge: log off of Facebook, put down the phone, and strike up a conversation with the person next to you. Chances are, it just may change the course of your day more than 'liking' yet another status update ever could

**SCIENCE MATTERS**

**Polar vortex puts us in deep freeze, media in tizzy**

**CATE MARQUIS**  
A&E EDITOR



How did you weather the blizzard of 2014? When a snow storm dumped a foot of snow or more on our city and its region, it was the biggest snow storm since 1982. In 1982, the forecast originally called for an inch or so but the region got between one and two feet of snow. The official total for some parts of the city was 18 inches, and an area nearby in Illinois got 25 inches, according to the National Weather Service. This time the meteorologists were right on the mark and most people were prepared for that foot of snow. Accumulation varied over the area but the official total was 10.8 inches, a record for ninth largest single day snowfall in St. Louis.

But then the big snow was coupled with bone-chilling cold that also set records. Temperatures dropped to -8 degrees Celsius in St. Louis on the morning of January 6, and -13 in St. Charles. And we were introduced to, what was for many, a new term: polar vortex.

So, what is a polar vortex? On NOAA's website, Dr. Jim Overland of NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory describes a polar vortex this way: "Colder temperatures to the north and warmer temperatures to the south create winds that generally blow from west to east around the northern hemisphere. This atmospheric river of strong winds can vary from a straight west-to-east pattern, to a more wavy pattern. With the wavy pattern, cold air from the north can be carried south." NOAA also describes the phenomenon this way: "The polar vortex is a high altitude low-pressure system

that hovers over the Arctic in winter. When the polar vortex is strong, it acts like a spinning bowl balanced on the top of the North Pole."

Generally the polar vortex forms a tight pattern circling the arctic, NOAA notes, keeping all that cold air up there. But that pattern varied this year. Overland writes that what happened this January was that the jet stream followed a "wavy pattern over the whole Northern Hemisphere, and the path of the jet stream (was) out of the north over the central U.S., bringing cold air southward from the Arctic and producing record cold temperatures for the eastern half of the U.S."

Put another way on the NOAA website: "In early January, the polar vortex weakened and broke down, allowing fragments of cold air to slosh out of the bowl into mid-latitudes." The result was a blast of arctic air dipping into the central and eastern part of the country. There were colder temperatures in Chicago and St. Louis than parts of Canada and Alaska. Brrr.

Climate scientists wondered whether the weakening of the polar vortex might be related to climate change. Overland commented: "In the last five years, we've seen the jet stream take on more a wavy shape instead of the more typical nice oval around the North Pole. This waviness (led) to colder weather down in the eastern U.S. and eastern Asia. Whether this is normal randomness or related to the significant climate changes occurring in the Arctic is not entirely clear, especially when considering individual events, but less sea ice and snow cover in

the Arctic and relatively warmer Arctic air temperatures at the end of autumn suggest a more wavy pattern to the jet stream and more variability between the straight and wavy pattern."

Then the silly season started. The mere suggestion that global climate change might have contributed to the wobbly polar vortex and blast of arctic air sent the folks who have made weather into something political into a tizzy. Soon a story spun up that the polar vortex was a hoax. Meteorologists across the country were dismayed at the widespread coverage of this unscientific silliness, prompting even the decidedly unpolitical Al Roker to break out his college text book and read the section on the polar vortex phenomenon on national television. Really.

In no other developed nation on Earth is the weather, climate, or science generally considered political. Not even in Fox News head Rupert Murdoch's native Australia. Only in America. While pundits on American TV wring their hands over educational decline in this country, they continue to give coverage to scientific and unscientific views on science matters, as if hard data and unsupported suppositions deserve equal airings. So, the silly season will continue even as the winter season wanes.

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## -NEWS@NOON-

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