

Bellerive launch celebrates UMSL talent in latest issue, 'Chimera'

HEATHER WELBORN
FEATURES EDITOR

Students and faculty filled the Museum Room of the Pierre Laclède Honors College (PLHC) on February 28 for the launch of this year's edition of Bellerive, the annual literary student publication. Attendees excitedly chatted with each other at the event, referencing stories from their open copies of "Chimera," this year's issue of Bellerive.

Award-winning poet Kelli Allen gave the keynote address, encouraging writers of all genres to keep pursuing their passion for poetry and prose. A University of Missouri—St. Louis alum, Allen was published in an earlier issue of Bellerive. Her debut poetry collection, "Otherwise, Soft White Ash," was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in 2012. Allen read selected passages of "Chimera" to the audience, analyzing each one and praising its execution and imagery.

"Chimera" is the 14th issue of Bellerive. The student publication, which started as an extracurricular endeavor, was transformed into an honors course in its fourth year. Geri Friedline, assistant teaching professor at the PLHC, teaches the undergraduate honors seminar that produces Bellerive.

"Nancy Gleason and Dean Bliss saw the value of exposing students in the Honors College to a class that would allow them to be a part of the creative and publication process," Friedline said.

Students enrolled in Friedline's fall-only seminar are involved in every aspect of the production process, from submission selection to layout. Each piece of writing is reviewed blind, without the name of the author, to ensure



1) Kelli Allen addresses attendees 2) Bellerive celebrated the launch of its 14th issue on Feb. 28 3) Bellerive students discuss literature with Allen

each piece is evaluated on its own merit.

"We go over how to critique literature before reviewing the submissions - what kind of qualities to look for, form and structure," Friedline said.

Students follow a formal scoring sheet as they analyze

each piece of prose and poetry, discussing the highest-rated selections as a group while narrowing down which pieces to include. After multiple rounds of voting and discussion, the writing with the highest criteria makes the final cut.

"One of the things that's stressed throughout the semester

is your personal preference, whether you like the topic or not, matters to some extent," Friedline said of the student selection process. "We're looking at this as a piece of art, and there's a difference between appreciating and liking the piece."

A hallmark of Bellerive is its cross-disciplinary development.

"It's not a quality that is derived from a very limited audience. The course isn't open only to English majors," she said, later emphasizing the diversity of the submission and selection process. "What [the students] all have in common is they like to read poetry and prose."

(continued on page 4)

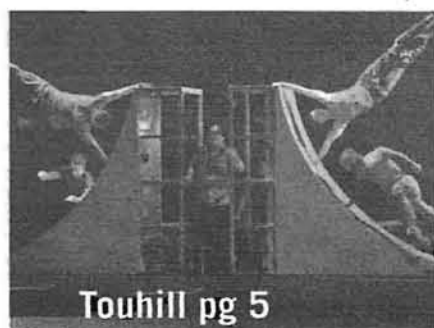
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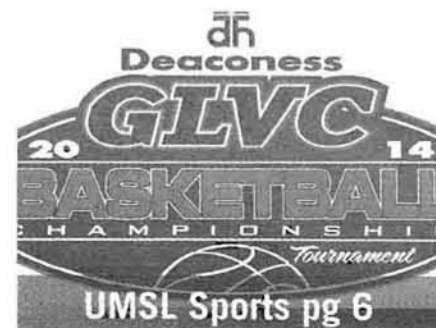
Bellerive Launch pg 4



Film Review pg 5



Touhill pg 5



UMSL Sports pg 6

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CONTACT US

388 MSC, 1 University Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63121-4400

Newsroom
314-516-5174
thecurrenttips@umsl.edu

Business/Advertising
314-516-5316
thecurrentads@umsl.edu

Fax
314-516-6811

Editor-in-Chief
thecurrenteic@umsl.edu

Internships and Volunteer Positions
thecurrentjobs@umsl.edu

Letters to the Editor
thecurrenttips@umsl.edu

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THE CURRENT ONLINE



Photo credit: Ben Gibbs

Diavolo: Trajectory

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• More stunning photos of 'Diavolo' at the Touhill
• The Current is having a recruitment party! Follow us online and be the first to know all the details!

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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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THE UNDERCURRENT By Siyun Zhang

WHAT'S THE MOST DIFFICULT CLASS YOU'VE EVER TAKEN?



JAMIE VAN
Biology, Junior

"Chem 2. There's a lot of math involved."



JASON HAN
Secondary Education
English, Senior

"It's an English class about writing about literature. It's really boring."



SALLY BARROW
Psychology/Criminology and Criminal Justice, Junior

"It's a gender studies class. It's a high level class and there is a lot of writing required."

MON 22 HI
13 LOW

TUE 38 HI
23 LOW

WED 43 HI
25 LOW

THU 43 HI
28 LOW

FRI 57 HI
34 LOW

SAT 41 HI
25 LOW

SUN 43 HI
30 LOW

NEWS BRIEFS



College of Nursing holds annual conference

Wrapping up Black History Month 2014, University of Missouri—St. Louis' College of Nursing presented the Seventh Annual African-American Nursing History Conference on February 28 at the J.C. Penney Conference Center on North Campus.

The conference was titled "Health Disparities: Initiatives that Are Bridging the Gap."

Discussions centered on diseases such as cancer and obesity and how they affect African-American communities. The forum was meant for current and future nursing professionals, college and high school students, and interested community members. Free health screenings were provided.

Senate holds universities accountable, passes college performance funding bill

Missouri Senate Bill 492, a college performance funding bill sponsored by Senator David Pearce, R-Warrensburg, passed to the House on a 33-0 vote last week.

If it passes in the House, the legislation would require Missouri's 13 public four-year institutions to develop five goals with the Department of Higher

Education that include metrics such as graduation and retention rates as well as job placement in a field appropriate to degree level.

Funding will still be made available to these institutions, but to be eligible for increases in state funding - when available - they must meet the determined performance criteria. An amendment in the bill allows for

suspension of certain benchmarks, such as job placement during periods of economic downturn.

The bill, if passed into law, would expire in 2016.

A similar provision for the state's community and technical colleges is currently being explored in the House.

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-NEWS@NOON-

Affirmative Action: An Ongoing Debate

Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2014 | **Time:** 12:15 to 1:30 p.m.

Location: SGA Chambers, third floor of MSC

Presenters: Shawn Woodhouse, Associate Professor of Higher Education Administration in the Division of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies for the College of Education

Lunch: Pizza for the first 25 attendees

"News at Noon" is a monthly forum for faculty and student discussion about current events, co-sponsored by The Current and The New York Times, with support from the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Student Life at UMSL.

Bellerive Launch

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The selection process proved challenging for first-time editors.

"It is harder than [the students] think it's going to be," Friedline said. When it comes time to limit the submissions for publication, students have a hard time letting go of their favorite pieces. "We get down to that last round of voting, and there's some really good stuff and we can't fit it in. Those, I think, are the toughest decisions on the students, letting go of a piece they've read and talked about and really gotten attached to."

The Bellerive staff experience a connection not just to the pieces they evaluate, but the publication process itself.

"The awe by the end of the semester when they really realize what kind of talent we have on campus - people are [...] publishing the kind of stuff you'd pick up off a shelf at a bookstore, it's really amazing," Friedline said.

Over the years Bellerive has been publishing, it's clear that submitters who make it to print exhibit a similar reaction.

"For a first-time published author, when you put the book in their hand and they see it for the first time, they flip to the page where their piece is, and it's real," Friedline said. "I thrive on that. That's what I like best about being

involved in Bellerive."

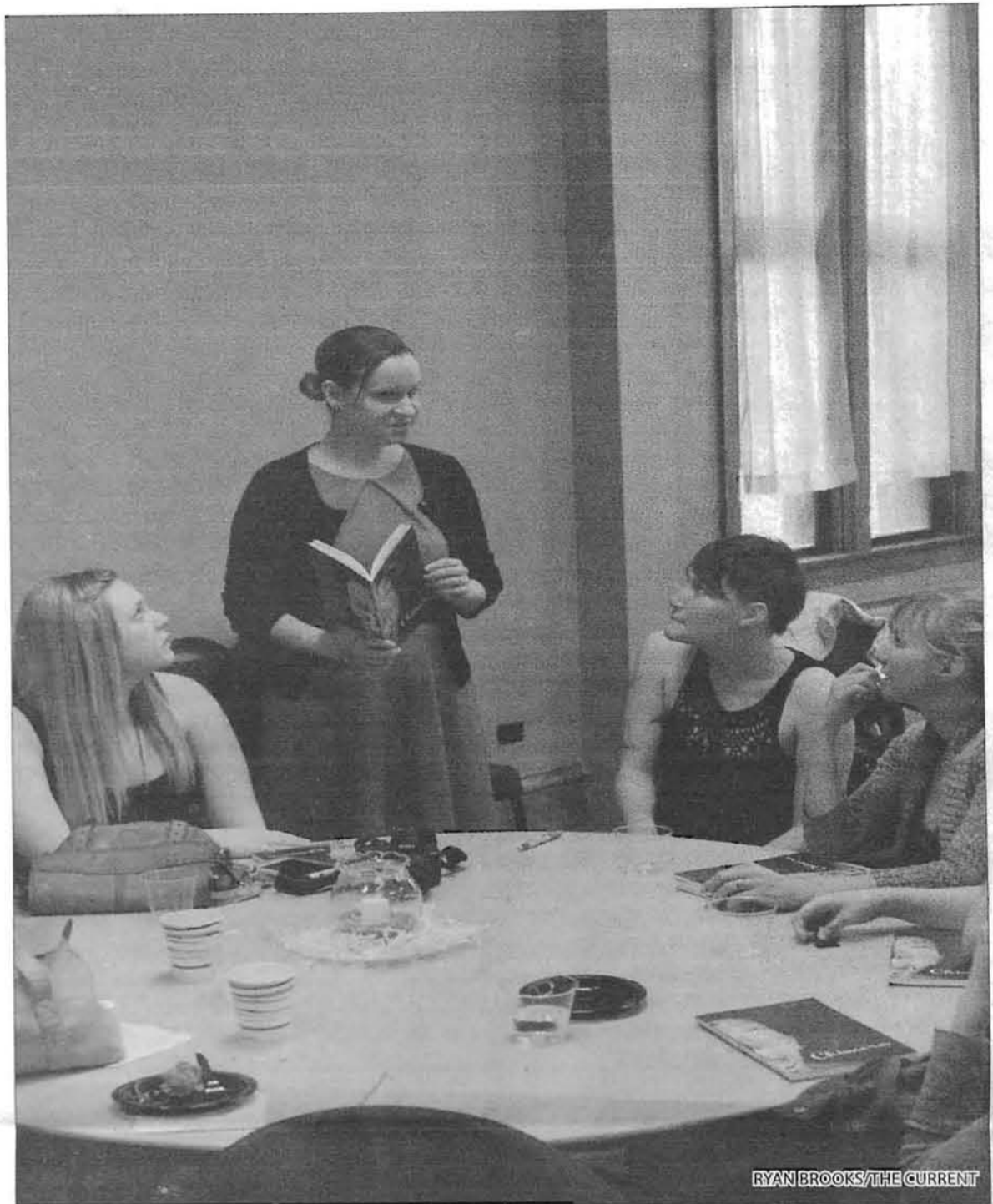
Friedline encourages Honors students of all backgrounds to enroll into her Bellerive publishing course in the fall. She also encourages writers, photographers, and artists to consider submitting to Bellerive, now accepting submissions for the 2015 issue.

"A lot of times when I talk to a first-time published author, the first thing they say is, 'I didn't think I was good enough,' but they are good enough," Friedline said.

She remarks that the writing talent at UMSL exceeds the limitations of Bellerive's space each year, and warns submitters against being discouraged if their work doesn't make it in. She encourages writers to resubmit their work if it is rejected, as well as send it to other creative publications on campus, like PLHC's Brain Stew and the English department's Litmag.

"Those that don't get in have very little to do with whether they're good enough," Friedline said. "We have limited space and have to let go of things that are very good."

Copies of "Chimera" are available at the UMSL bookstore for \$7.



Kelli Allen, UMSL alum, discusses writing and literature with launch party attendees

RYAN BROOKS/THE CURRENT

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TOUHILL REVIEW

'Diavolo' dancers soar above Touhill stage, thrill audience

CATE MARQUIS
A&E EDITOR

If you combine acrobatic dancers, Cirque Du Soleil-style choreography and really big moveable props, what you get is the amazing innovation of Diavolo. Dance St. Louis, the presenting organization, brought the amazing dance/acrobatics troupe Diavolo to the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center for a three-performance engagement from February 28 to March 1. This was the Los Angeles-based Diavolo's second visit to the Touhill.

The Touhill's Anheuser-Busch Hall was packed for the Friday night performance and doubtless many in the audience had seen or heard about Diavolo's creative, heart-stopping and beautiful performance the last time they were here. Diavolo delivered the playful, high-energy artistry and thrills the audience came for.

Founded by their artistic director Jacques Heim, the Parisian choreographer who created Cirque du Soleil's innovative Las Vegas show "KA," Diavolo includes modern dancers, acrobats, martial artists, ballet dancers, stunt performers and athletes who perform upon enormous, moving

architectural constructions. The troupe even includes a local dancer - Jennifer Olivas of Festus, Missouri, who studied dance at Webster University. Architectural engineers are part of the company too because these specially-created structures are more than giant props.

The architectural creations serve as mobile platforms that the performers can move and manipulate and on which they perform and even launch themselves from. Diavolo describes its performances as "architecture in motion," which indicates how integral these huge structures are to their shows.

This weekend, Diavolo presented two of the four productions in their repertoire. "Transit Space" opens with dancers walking around the stage in casual street clothes, some dressed as skateboarders and carrying what look like skateboards without wheels. As the performance picks up speed, no wheels are needed, only the dancers' feet, as they launch into running, leaping, sliding, flipping stunts, dance moves and acrobatics on four large

moveable skateboard ramps.

The piece was inspired by the documentary "Dogtown and Z Boys," and the spoken word imparts personae to the dancers, exploring feelings of isolation, sense of community and life purpose. Set to a spoken word and rock soundtrack, the dancers take apart the ramps, separating the steel surfaces from the blonde wood base. Transformations are a big part of this piece. The steel arches are transformed into bridges that the troupe dances across and under, flipped on their sides to form walls of a subway or a wall to hide behind before springing into view.

The performers flip as they run up the ramps, clash hands and hang off the edges and generally seem to defy gravity and physics. Unlike circus performers whose style emphasizes a stunt's danger and difficulty, dancers make it look effortless (although it is clearly not), accomplishing their amazing moves with grace and breathtaking artistry.

After intermission, the troupe presented "Trajectoire," a dance



piece dominated by a single large architectural prop and set to a modern serious music composition by Nathan Wang. The prop/set was a semi-circular wooden and steel structure that resembled a boat or a moving stage, with a translucent lower portion, through which a light was shown. Dancers performed on the wooden deck, under the rocking base, hanging off the rails that projected from the ends, in ever increasing patterns of complexity.

The dancers rocked the huge structure, spun it ninety degrees and even nearly brought it vertical. They transitioned from dancing on it to flying off it, in a series of

launches that extracted gasps from the enthralled audience. At times, dancers flew so high, launched from an almost vertical surface, that the audience sighed with relief as each was caught in the arms of other performers on stage. The effect was both beautiful and hypnotic.

As playfully charming as "Transit Space" was, "Trajectoire" was the stunner of the evening, bringing the crowd to their feet at its conclusion and applause that brought curtain calls for the smiling if clearly exhausted performers.

FILM REVIEW

'The Wind Rises' soars with epic story, gorgeous animation

CATE MARQUIS
A&E EDITOR

Whether the Oscar-nominated "The Wind Rises" takes home the golden statuette or not, this gorgeous, hand-drawn Japanese animated feature film is indeed a winner.

If you are even a casual fan of Japanese anime, you know the legendary Studio Ghibli. Director/writer Hayao Miyazaki is the creative force behind such animation classics as "Spirited Away" and "Princess Mononoke." When Miyazaki announced he would retire after "The Wind Rises," anticipation was high for his last Studio Ghibli film. And "The Wind Rises" delivers, both on its history-based story and its quality of film-making.

"The Wind Rises" is an epic film told with cinematic artistry. Written and directed by Miyazaki, it tells the story of a young Japanese boy who falls in love with the idea of flight and airplanes in the years after World War I. Jiro is inspired by the famous Italian aeronautical designer Caproni, who appears in

his dreams, but being near-sighted, the boy is unable to become a pilot. Instead, he grows up to be one of his country's first aeronautics engineers in the 1920s. As a student, Jiro meets a girl, Nahoko, whose beauty and gentleness haunt him after he rescues her during an earthquake. The character of Jiro is based on aviation innovator Jiro Horikoshi, and the director uses the life, loves and struggles of this gifted engineer to tell the history of early aviation in his country, recount several important Japanese historical events and paint a picture of life in Japan leading up to World War II.

The aviation subject is clearly close to the director's heart, as the name of Studio Ghibli was inspired by the nickname of a WWII Italian airplane manufactured by Caproni. The Italian word "ghibli" means a strong Mediterranean wind, based on the Arabic sirocco. Miyazaki used it to connote a fresh wind in animation. It was certainly apt.

Studio Ghibli films are famous

for their attention to detail and their artistry in animation. "The Wind Rises" fulfills those expectations and more. In fact, it stands as one of Miyazaki's best.

The animated imagery is simply gorgeous, lifting one's heart and transporting one back in time and to another culture. As Jiro strives to realize his dreams of flight, his efforts are set against the political and social upheaval taking place in Japan as the innovative 1920s give way to the darkness of the Great Depression in the 1930s. The beautiful visuals capture lovely details like the wind-blown blades of grass as well as the soaring exhilaration of flight, the horrors of an earthquake and the emotions of the characters, all in stunning hand-drawn detail. Artistically, "The Wind Rises" succeeds as animation art, as engrossing storytelling and as impressive cinema.

The Tivoli and the Plaza Frontenac are both now showing this instant classic animated



film. Plaza Frontenac Cinema is showing a dubbed version of "The Wind Rises," while the Tivoli is screening the version in Japanese with English subtitles, so either preference is accommodated. As an added bonus, the dubbed version features the voices of Joseph Gordon-Levitt, John Krasinski, Emily Blunt, Martin Short, Stanley Tucci, Mandy Patinkin, William

H. Macy and Elijah Wood, among others in an impressive line-up.

Even if one is not a big fan of anime, "The Wind Rises" is worth a trip to the theater for its epic storytelling and cinematic artistry. If one is a fan of Studio Ghibli, this film is a must-see, to be savored as the last work of the great Hayao Miyazaki.

UMSL basketball aims for success in Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

Both the University of Missouri-St. Louis men's and women's basketball teams have accomplished the first part of their season's goals: to compete in the Great Lakes Valley Conference Tournament. They both have earned the opportunity to extend their seasons, and now have a shot at walking away with the conference championship.

For the UMSL Triton women, who come into the GLVC tournament seeded fifth, the postseason appearance was hardly surprising, considering their exceptional play. Over the course of the season, the women have accrued an overall record of 20-6 and 13-5 in GLVC play. If we look at the Triton's overall 2013-2014 season statistics, the women have outscored their opponents by an average of 12.8 points per game, in addition to out-shooting, out-rebounding, out-assisting, and out-stealing their opponents. Additionally, they have averaged fewer turnovers over the season

than their opponents. From the statistics it is evident that they are good - really good.

The Triton women begin their GLVC journey by hosting the number 12 seed Rockhurst Hawks on March 2. This season, Rockhurst has accrued a record of 9-17 overall and 4-14 in GLVC play. The Hawk's game against the Tritons represents the first time Rockhurst has participated in GLVC postseason tournament competition. The Hawks do not look very competitive from their season record, but their strong play as of late has earned their right to be included in the tournament, including winning three out of their last four games with a 43.6 percent shooting percentage. Comparatively, the Triton women look better. However, only one loss means elimination from tournament play and the Tritons cannot afford to underestimate any of their tournament opponents.

As for the Triton men, their

season has consisted of a little more fight than the women, with their postseason appearance not being as obvious. The Tritons finished the regular season with a 15-11 overall record, 9-9 in GLVC play.

" BOTH [THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TEAM] HAVE A SHOT AT WALKING AWAY WITH THE CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP."

The men secured their conference bid with the final regular season home game against Truman State, ending a four game losing streak

and securing their number 8 seed in the GLVC tournament. Since then, the men defeated Maryville in nail-biting fashion, winning 68-66 in the season finale. Fortunately for the Tritons, their current two game winning streak gives them momentum going into tournament play. On the downside, history is against them, sporting a mere 1-8 overall record in GLVC tournament games. With the historically low postseason production for the Triton men, it will give them the opportunity to make history with a successful tournament appearance.

The Triton men host the number 9 seed Missouri S&T Miners on March 2. The Miners have accrued an overall record of 12-14, and 7-11 in GLVC competition. Over the Miners final four games of their season they have won three, the only loss being their season finale this past Thursday against #5, Drury. Missouri S&T touts the highest scoring offense in the

GLVC averaging 89 points per game. Their Achilles' heel, which offsets their impressive offensive production, is their defense which averages second to last in the league with 90 points allowed. When the Tritons and Miners first met up in January, the Tritons walked away with a 79-85 loss. The Triton men, if they want to stay in the postseason, will be fighting hard to keep the Miner's offensive production to a minimum.

For both of the Triton basketball teams, the first round of the Great Lakes Valley Conference tournament gave them the privilege of home field advantage by being held in the Mark Twain Athletic & Fitness Center. If either team wins and advances they will join the remaining teams in Evansville, Indiana, where the remainder of the tournament will be played.

UMSL teams record no losses in strong week for men's and women's tennis and basketball

JOHN "SAMMY" LUDEMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

The University of Missouri-St. Louis men's tennis team defeated the Bellarmine Knights 5-4 on February 23 in Elsau, Illinois. The UMSL Tritons won three out of the six singles matches they competed in and walked away with victories in two out of three doubles matches. Standing out for the Tritons was the play of Harry Heyburn, junior, international business, who dominated his opponent in singles competition with 6-0, 6-0 sets before teaming up with his doubles partner Nils Mueggenburg, junior, international business, to win their doubles match 8-0.

UMSL men's tennis defeated the #39 Harding Bisons 5-2 on February 24 at the Frontenac Racquet Club in St. Louis. The Tritons walked away with victories in all of their doubles matches, and two out of four singles matches. In singles, Harry Heyburn, junior, international business, gave the Tritons another big boost with his 6-3, 1-6, 11-9

win, and was followed by Tim McLarty, junior, international business, having a 6-1, 6-3 match victory. Next for the Tritons, the men's tennis team will host Southern Indiana on Saturday, March 8.

UMSL women's tennis defeated the Harding Bisons 5-4 at the Frontenac Racquet Club in St. Louis. The Tritons won two of their three doubles matches, and three of their six singles matches. In singles Louisa Werner, senior, finance, contributed for the Tritons with a 6-3, 6-3 victory, followed by Leanne Cantulpo, junior, civil engineering, who had a 7-5, 2-6, 11-9 victory. Next, the UMSL women's tennis team will host Southern Indiana on March 8.

UMSL men's basketball defeated the Maryville Saints 68-66 on February 27 at Maryville University in St. Louis. The game was close throughout with 8 total lead changes, but in the end the game came down to the last

seconds. With the score tied 66-66, Femi John, senior, business administration, made the game winning layup with 19 seconds left in regulation. Tylor Wimbish, junior, liberal arts, led the Tritons with 19 points. Michael Weber, senior, liberal studies, and Darian Cartharn, senior, communications, contributed with 14 points each.

UMSL women's basketball defeated the Maryville Saints 58-51 on February 27 at Maryville University in St. Louis. The Tritons caught fire in the second half. Down 41-40 with just over eight minutes in regulation, the Tritons rallied with a 16-5 run that the Saints could not recover from. Hazaria Washington, senior, communications, led the Tritons with 20 points and 11 rebounds, a double-double. Devonna Smith, senior, social work, also recorded a double-double with 11 points and 10 rebounds.

UMSL men's baseballs season opener versus the Minnesota Crookston Golden Eagles on February 28, and the remainder of their weekend series was canceled due to inclement weather. The

Triton baseball team will travel to Winter Haven, Florida on March 6 to take on Grand Valley State, before facing Ashland in a doubleheader the following day on March 7.

TRITON SPORTS UPCOMING GAMES						
Mon 3/3	Tues 3/4	Wed 3/5	Thurs 3/6	Fri 3/7	Saturday 3/8	Sunday 3/9
Men's Golf- Las Vegas Desert Classic (All Day)			Softball vs. Southwest Minnesota State (3PM)	Women's Tennis vs. Illinois Springfield (1:00PM)	Softball vs. Wisconsin- Parkside (12:00PM)	Softball vs. Lewis (12:00PM)
Women's Golf- Las Vegas Desert Classic (All Day)			Softball vs. Southwest Minnesota State (5PM)	Men's Tennis vs. Illinois Springfield (1:00PM)	Women's Tennis vs. Southern Indiana (12:00PM)	Softball vs. Lewis (2:00PM)
			Women's Basketball- GLVC Quarterfinals (TBA)	Baseball vs. Ashland (3:00PM ET)	Men's Tennis vs. Southern Indiana (12:00PM)	Women's Basketball- GLVC Championship (TBA)
			Men's Basketball- GLVC Quarterfinals (TBA)	Baseball vs. Ashland (5:30PM ET)	Softball vs. Wisconsin- Parkside (2:00PM)	Men's Basketball- GLVC Championship (TBA)
			Baseball vs. Grand Valley State (2:30PM Eastern)		Women's Basketball- GLVC Semifinals (TBA)	Baseball vs. Tiffin (10:00AM ET-)
					Men's Basketball- GLVC Semifinals (TBA)	Baseball vs. Tiffin (12:30PM ET)
					Baseball vs. Wayne State (3:00PM ET)	



POINT

COUNTERPOINT

SHOULD CERTAIN BOOKS BE BANNED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

POINT: Books are banned for a reason

Books that encourage racism, depict overtly sexual situations or promote violence should be banned, not to encourage censorship, but in order to make sure that school-age children are not exposed to inappropriate material. Parents have the right to decide what is and is not appropriate material for their children to read, much in the same way that any guardian would be expected to monitor the television shows that their children watch and the video games that they play. Enrolling their children in public school should not mean giving up the right to make key decisions regarding the media their children consume.

While it is easy to categorize anyone in favor of banning books as small-minded zealots, most who oppose keeping controversial books in schools do so in the interest of protecting their children and others from harmful influences and subject matter that they are not emotionally prepared

to handle. Every child progresses at their own pace. Parents are the best judge of what ideas they are ready to be confronted with. Because teachers and administrators only get to know children in an academic setting, they are not fit to make decisions that can negatively affect students on an emotional level.

Furthermore, there's no advantage to assigning inappropriate material that does not question the behavior depicted within its pages. For instance, "Catcher in the Rye" contains copious amounts of profanity that in no way challenges the use of such language by young people.

Those in favor of banning books are not fighting to start a fire in the middle of town and keep it burning with used copies of "Catcher in the Rye" and "To Kill a Mockingbird." Any parent who'd like their children to be exposed to any banned book is free to do so on their own time, in their own homes.

COUNTER: Book banning discourages awareness of key societal issues

Books should not be banned in public schools because it limits the intellectual growth of our children. By limiting their exposure to certain topics, we bar their opportunity and democratic right to decide their individual stance on controversial, but often critical, societal issues.

While parents may want to protect their children into adulthood, sheltering them from ideas that may lead them astray from family tradition, e.g. religious practices and established patriarchy, it leaves them ignorant and defenseless when their beliefs and ideals are being attacked. Being aware should bolster faith and devotion to tradition, both religious and non-religious, because it enables one to test and contrast one's lifestyle choices against those of others. In an increasingly globalized modern society, education on these issues also enables increased tolerance and respect for others in various stations and situations of society.

Reading books about controversial issues such as rape, witchcraft, vampirism, teenage substance abuse, homosexuality, and teenage sex also encourages dialogue and consideration of the issues. Many of the instances of mistakes being made involve

ignorance about both the issue and how to handle it once it has arisen. Banning books also creates a silencing effect, an unwritten taboo on the subject that makes young students unwilling to come forward and prevent potential problems. Young students need to be exposed to these ideas so that they understand what the issues are but also so that they feel open to communicate with authority and caregiver figures in their lives.

Teens who leave their newborn babies to die in a trash can or who don't report being raped or who hide their sexuality well into adulthood aren't necessarily just motivated by their own convictions. A portion that factors into their decision-making comes from the environment, the society from which they originate. Whether that society is willing to partake in conversation about the issues or sweep them under the rug is a crucial consideration. Book banning is an overtly paternalistic imposition that marginalizes particular issues, silences them from the public sphere and creates such taboos that perpetuate societal issues simply by discouraging awareness and prevention.

Expanding Beyond Our Borders

Cultural styles become modern trends

DANYEL POINDEXTER
STAFF WRITER

Trying to pinpoint one style in America is like trying to find a needle in a haystack. Throughout its history, America has adopted the themes and ideas of many different cultures and helped them to become the 'next-big-thing.' From hairstyles, clothing, and makeup, it's easy to see the influence other cultures have had on our national style.

Let's thank the ancient Egyptians to start things off. We actually owe a lot to the ancient Egyptians when it comes to fashion and style. They helped develop one of the very popular hairstyles of today: dreadlocks. This is not known to a vast majority of Americans, but dreadlocks originated from ancient Egyptian times, when the Egyptians used to wear their wigs and style them into "locs." It was their way of being creative. We also get a lot of our sandal styles from them, along with famous Egyptian eyeliner designs.

Native Americans are also a group that we should thank for many of the designs we wear now. Native tribal patterns on clothing and accessories are one of the hottest trends that we have today, and they originate from the patterns worn and

passed down from generation to generation. Moccasins and mohawks, styles that are all the rage right now, were also popular shoes and hairstyles during the time period.

It's isn't only the Native Americans and Egyptians that America should thank for their diverse style. Many, many cultures also contributed to America's styles of the past and of today. For instance, we owe places like Scotland a round of applause for getting us hooked on plaid and Africa for their vibrant colors and rich patterns. Because Americans are so used to seeing a variety of designs on an everyday basis, there aren't many who consider and appreciate the variety in what we have to wear and where that variety comes from.

Fashion shows are a great example of the way America welcomes influences from all over the world. Large scale events like New York's Fashion Week bring in designers from all around the world to show off their work. The best thing about these types of events is the variety of ideas that designers bring to the table. Some designers go for the more modern look that would appeal more to younger audience, while



some take a step back in time to revisit the traditional styles of their homelands. By showcasing what they have to contribute, and those styles being adopted by both high and low end retailers, international designers give American fashion-lovers even more styles to choose from.

Americans are lucky. We get to experiment every day with the way we style our hair, put on our makeup, and wear our clothes. Some countries don't get that option, so be grateful that we have the freedom to choose our own style from so many available options. The next time you grab something from your closet, think about what it is that you're wearing, where it really came from, and look forward to the new styles we'll be adopting next.

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