

The Student Voice of Methodist College

smallTALK

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Congrats to Graduates

President Hendricks distributes diplomas to the winter graduates in Reeves Auditorium. Photo by Matt McHale

Memorial Honors Student

Will Montoya
Editor-in-Chief

Courtney Noelle Fleck



Methodist College observed on Wednesday the Jan. 4 death of student Courtney Noelle Fleck. The 21-year-old Pennsylvania native died in a car accident while returning from Christmas break. An English major scheduled to graduate in May, she will be sadly missed.

Fleck was traveling with Laura Schmidt, also a Methodist student, when her vehicle collided with a tractor-trailer. Schmidt suffered injuries and is recovering at her home in Ohio.

College Chaplain, Rev. Benjamin Wells said Wednesday's memorial

offered students a time of mourning but also a time of joy.

"The memorial service [was] a celebration because we do not grieve as those who have no hope, but as those whose hope is in God," he said. "It [was] a celebration of her life."

Students Needed for Accreditation

Amber Smith
Staff Writer

Dr. Spencer Davis is looking for students to help with the accreditation process this year.

SACS, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is now imple-

menting a mandatory program in order for schools to be accredited. This new program is the Quality Enhancement Plan, also known as the QEP.

This new program focuses on one educational aspect for every college and school. The chosen aspect is then improved over the course of a given number of years, to finally be reviewed by SACS.

There have already been a few proposals for improvement, including one for critical thinking. Methodist, however, wants students involved. The main goal is for students to choose what area needs to be improved, whether it's writing skills, reading, or any other educational as-

pect worthy of enhancement.

The Accreditation Committee at Methodist has already looked at a few other schools as role models. The QEP will officially be implemented in 2009, but the Committee has already gotten a jump on the project in order to ensure an excellent program.

Right now, the Accreditation Committee is composed solely of faculty and staff members. Davis hopes to expand the committee to include three students.

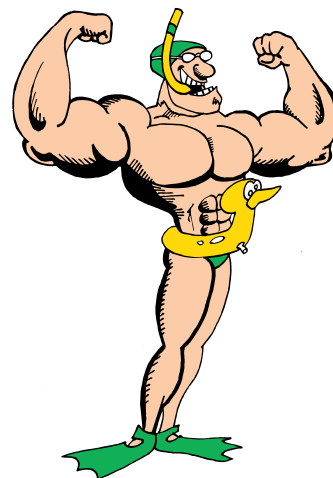
SACS even proposes to put a QEP office here at Methodist. In the meantime, the main goal of the Committee is to do all they can to get students to help

with the program. Davis stresses the importance of student participation.

If students don't help make proposals for aspects to be worked on, their voices aren't being heard. Methodist College includes faculty, staff, and students, so all three parties should have a say in what goes on at the college.

For more information, Dr. Davis can be contacted in Clark Rm. 126, extension 7688. His email address is spdavis@methodist.edu. Dr. Trevor Morris can also be contacted for information concerning accreditation.

If you are interested in serving on the committee, please see either professor as soon as possible.



Who will be the next Big Kahuna?

Go to page two to find out more!

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Come see smallTALK STU crown the next Mr. Methodist JAN 25 at 8p.m

Tragedy Explodes in Small Town W. Va.

Laura Lester
Staff Writer

To most Americans, Jan. 2, 2006, was a new year; to some, a new beginning.

But in the backwoods of Tallmansville, W. Va., Jan. 2 represents anything but.

Like any other day, 13 men awoke on the second of the new year to go to their job, supplying the nation with a much needed mineral-coal.

Arriving at the site at the Sago mine, the working men went deep under the ground into a cold dark hole which most of them consider their home away from home.

Only today they did not know their lives were about to be put in immense danger.

At 6:30 a.m. an explosion trapped 13 men two miles under the earth.

...At 6:30 a.m. an explosion trapped 13 men two miles under the earth...

Immediately the small coal town of Tallmansville turned into a media frenzy.

The families of the men ranging in ages 27-61 years gathered at a local Baptist church seeking information and hoping that they would once again come face to face with their loved ones.

The minutes of waiting soon turned to hours, and they were losing hope and becoming desperate.

While the families were terrified to hear about the fate of their loved ones, rescue crews from West Virginia and surrounding states were working aimlessly to bring the men out safely.

On the 38th hour dreaded news arose: a body was found. The families clutched together even more, praying that the remaining 12 were still alive and fighting for their lives.

Shy of midnight, the families' prayers were answered, or so they thought: the command center reported that 12 bodies were recovered- alive. Church bells chimed, and a relieved community sobbed in joy, screaming "They're alive!"

Three hours later all the joy was squashed as the community discovered there was a miscommunication, and in fact 12 had been found dead and only one alive.

The survivor is a 27 year old man named Randal Mc Coy who is married and a father of two children. His wife said the reason for his survival could have been donated oxygen by some of the older miners.

Mc Coy was placed on a ventilator and taken to Ruby Memorial Hospital in Morgantown. His condition is stable, yet he is still in a coma.

There are still many unanswered questions for the less fortunate families. For now, Mc Coy is in a hospital in Pennsylvania and being cared for by expert doctors as well as his loving wife and two children.



Last year's Mr. Methodist winners: second runner up Nick Kimps, Mr. Methodist Kinsey Stuart and first runner up Dante Alvarado. Photo by Kayla Ruh

The Next Big Kahuna

Melanie Gibson
News Editor

Who will be the next Big Kahuna?

On Wednesday, January 25, at 8:00 p.m. in Reeves Auditorium, you are cordially invited to this year's Mr. Methodist Pageant to find out.

Proceeds from the pageant will benefit Fayetteville Urban Ministry's Adult Reading Program.

Each contestant will compete in a series of competitions including sportswear, formalwear, talent, and question/answer.

The winner will receive a cash prize, their

name on a plaque in the Lion's Den and their picture on the front page of smallTALK, among other goodies.

Hosted by our very own Cheryle Rivas, director of college relations and marketing, the Mr. Methodist Pageant promises to be a splashing good time full of laughs and hot guys.

The pageant also features performances by: LaToya "Lady T" Robertson, a junior here at Methodist majoring in music and business administration; Chrissy Byrd, the reigning Princess of North Carolina; and the Monarch Dancers.

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smallTalk is the student-run newspaper of Methodist College. It is published every other week throughout the school year. The newspaper is editorially independent of Methodist College, and any ideas and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the faculty, staff and administration of Methodist College.

smallTalk welcomes Letters to the Editor. All letters should be delivered to the Student Media office on the first floor of Berns Student Center or sent via email to smalltalkstories@hotmail.com.



Cram Jam was the theme for the winter exam breakfast where faculty and staff members of Methodist College serve the students and offer a chance to relax before exams begin. Pictured above right, Sandy Combs, Yong Ahn, President Hendricks and Wilford Saunders serve breakfast to the students. Above left, teams of students competed in a Fruit Loop stringing contest. Pictured right Tim Geary, Matt Bolte and Frankie Nobile attempt to toss candy in to each others' mouths. Photos by Melanie Gibson

We would like to let our readers know that Jameson Jones had resigned as Co-Sports Editor. Freshman Ashley Genova will be our new Co-Sports Editor.

Interest? Green and Gold, Your Money and You

*DeMario Campbell
Staff Writer*

College is at its most expensive price ever. Rising tuitions have always forced students to take out more loans, and with the loans, there will be interest.

In response to this change of events, the federal loan interest rate has risen.

In just six months, the Federal Stafford loan rate has risen 1.93 percentage points to 5.3 percent, while the Federal PLUS loans for parents will also rise 1.93 percentage points to 6.1 percent.

With these increases, there will be higher interest payments of your college loans in the future. This is a serious problem. More and more students each year are finding themselves in debt.

However, there may be a potential solution that could help you in the long run.

Loan consolidation is a practice in which you consolidate all your loans and lock in a single rate on the money you owe. That rate is a weighted average of all your loans rounded up to the nearest eighth of a percentage point.

This is a good practice, but it must be done when the time is right in a low rate environment when the rates have fallen.

Right now the consolidation rate is not a good rate. If rates fall again, it would be wise of you to contact your lender and try for consolidation before new laws prevent you from using this money saving measure. (http://money.cnn.com/2005/05/31/pf/college/loanrate_change/)

Middle East Heats Up

*Steven Magnusen
Managing Editor*

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a massive stroke on Dec. 18th, rendering him incapable of continuing his duties, and leaving many to wonder who will take the nation's highest office in his place.

Meanwhile in Iran, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has renewed his nuclear efforts, with attempts to enrich radioactive material.

While he claims that Iran only intends to use the materials for energy purposes, France, Britain, and Germany have demanded that he stop his nuclear programs immediately and allow inspectors to validate the safety of his programs.

However, Ahmadinejad has refused. The President also turned down Russia's offer to safely and securely handle the materials in Russia, later to be sent back to Iran in a for useful for energy but not powerful enough for a weapon.

The combination of these two events has cast a dark cloud over the Middle East.

...President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has renewed his nuclear efforts, with attempts to enrich radioactive material...

Iran's nuclear program, along with Ahmadinejad's repeated anti-Israeli rhetoric, has boosted Benjamin Netanyahu's chances of winning the coming elections in Israel.

Netanyahu has openly advocated military action against Iran in his campaign speeches around the

country. If Israel alone isn't threatening enough, France, Britain, and Germany have threatened military action if Iran does not comply with their requests.

However, if any U.N. resolution were to be passed to sanction military action against Iran, the Chinese and Russians would have to be convinced of its validity.

Since any permanent member of the U.N. Security Council can veto any resolution passed through that committee, either nation could put a stop to a proposal by the western powers.

President Bush has refused to comment either way on what role U.S. forces might play in any bombings or invasion that might take place. When asked at a press conference, the President even refused to recommend a course of action to the U.N.

Cram Jam 2005



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OPINIONS

The Students' Voice

smallTALK

Remille's Ramblings A Review of the Past Semester

Remille Shipman
Senior Sports Editor

Disclaimer: After one semester of endless ramblings, E. Remille Shipman returns to deliver whatever thoughts that may be on his mind about the Methodist community. I don't do this to offend anyone; I do this because I just want to be heard.

Our holiday break this year-or should I say last year-was rather short, wasn't it?

It really doesn't seem that long ago that myself and everyone else on campus were busy packing their things and cramming for finals during the first two weeks of December.

Well-I hope that all of the students, faculty and staff enjoyed their breaks-I was content with my time off for the most part.

Now we are back



here at Methodist again. We've gone through the trouble of registration (although the lines seemed to be as half as long as they were Friday) and we've paid what seems like millions of dollars for books. And now I'd like to welcome you back with some random thoughts-again.

For starters, did it

seem like Methodist's population shrink a bit at registration? I know our statistics said that we actually grew, but it didn't seem like it on the 9th. As I said before, the lines were gigantic and lengthy last fall wasn't an issue at all, but I was just wondering...

Did anybody notice how many people

were waiting in line at the business office two Mondays ago? I thought Meth-Co told us to get cleared with the business office at the end of last semester... maybe we were TOO anxious to get out of here back in December. I thought all of us hated long

lines.

I think SAC is going to fare even better next semester now that they have last semester under their belt. When somebody embarks on a new venture, they need time to adjust to what works and what doesn't. SAC has done that, I think. And why haven't students used Chris' House very much? I'd take advantage of Direct TV and a comfortable couch any time I could.

If complaints continue about the cafeteria, then I challenge students campus-wide to make it known to SGA or anyone else that can do something about it. This statement is overdue, but complaining is useless when you don't do anything to change it.

I hope Spring Fling goes off without a hitch this April. I've never been to one for various

reasons, but I hear it's a big deal.

To all of the spring sports teams who are liable to complain about a lack of coverage in the coming months, I invite you to send a correspondent or someone to possibly write a blurb or provide and/or assistance to our tiny sports staff-my e-mail is eshipman@hotmail.com. I respect all teams equally, but I can't do fair justice to everyone alone.

Why did the Lion's Den close briefly for about 30 minutes last Thursday? In my time here, I do not remember the Lion's Den closing for a lunch break. I believe this service was meant to operate during OUR lunch breaks.

Also, why did the cafeteria fail to open on time and as advertised during Martin Luther King Jr. Day? I had to go off-campus and spend my precious money on lunch because the staff took close to thirty minutes to tell us that they were short staffed. Sodexo should have created something called a backup plan.

I don't know if I can run a circle around the entire campus often anymore. It's relatively difficult, especially if you aren't totally in shape yet. And finally, I hope this semester is even better-socially and academically-than the last one.

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The Runaround

Melanie Gibson
News Editor

When did “student” become synonymous with “stupid”? Some staff members at Methodist sure seem to think it has.

They give students the runaround and make us go through unnecessary channels to get information we need. Or they don't even humor us with a response.

Case one: I needed a list of all the student athletes and their respective sports for the Homecoming bonfire. To get this list, I had to call Belinda Ivey, the athletics administrative assistant. I asked if she could just email the list to me. For some reason, this request wasn't possible, but I might be able to pick the list up from her office later that week, Ivey said.

So I asked her to give me a call when the list was ready.

Later that day, Ivey called saying that for some reason Coach Melissa Hay would be getting the lists, and I could pick them up from Hay because she was working on the Homecoming bonfire.

Was I not working on the bonfire? I mean I was the one who called.

Case two: The Residence Hall Association has a special program for its members called “King of the Hill.” The program holds a drawing to win free food and great seats at home football games. To add more incentive to the program, the RHA executive board thought it would be a good idea to have the winner's name announced at the game as well.

So RHA President Norma Bradshaw called Lee Wright to make this happen. Wright did not respond.

She tried again, calling Wright at least three times and emailing him twice.

Bradshaw received no response at all.

Case three: Bradshaw has also been working on a website for RHA that is linked to the Methodist College webpage. After a couple of emails between her and Mike Molter, the assistant dean for distance education, who confirmed that a site would be created, Bradshaw emailed him the required information. She was then told he would be working on it.

That was at the beginning of September. It is now January. The site is still not up. Nor has Bradshaw received any updates concerning its progress after emailing Molter and requesting them.

It has taken two phone calls from Tanya Davis to even receive a response from Molter concerning the webpage.

Case four: Last year, student LaToya Robertson wanted to change her meal plan from the 21 to the 14-meal plan, so she went to visit the previous Sodexo manager in the cafeteria concerning the matter. He told her to go to the business office to make the change.

Robertson went to the business office, only to be sent back to the cafeteria to talk to the manager. Robertson had to go back and forth at least five times before the Sodexo manager decided he ought to call the business office to figure out the problem.

What makes staff members think they can ignore us students? We aren't stupid. They think we aren't important because we are just students. Do they think we can't handle responsibilities? How can we if they don't let us try?

It shouldn't take a phone call from another staff or faculty member to make things happen. It is the student's responsibility to handle certain duties.

At least give us the respect of a timely response to an email or a phone call.

Voice From the Wilderness

A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord” Isa 40:3

David Santiago
Staff Writer

Sitting at home over Christmas break I listened to the conversation between my Grandmother and another elderly person of her generation. When the conversation turned to the church I could not help but realize that the denominational prejudices of the old days are still alive in the older generation that is still with us. While naturally I was aware that your typical televangelist such as John Hagee or John MacArthur still held such views, it was a wake up call to see people take that seriously in my own living room. She echoed her beliefs that those poor Catholics who think they will end up in heaven will be surprised to awake in hell, and that those Methodist just don't teach the Bible anymore. This hit me rather personally since I myself am a Methodist with heavy Catholic leniencies.

I could not help but contemplate how far we have come. My generation has come a long way since our grandparents'. We have seen the good workings of the ecumenical movement which only recently has expanded to our brethren in the Catholic and Orthodox world. Talk of reunification may be non-existent, at least for now, but we have at least managed to start burying

the hatchet and start working together for common purposes.

Unfortunately, nothing stays stagnant in this world, so than I must question where the church is headed next. The way I see it, there are two directions that we can't take from here. One is to wimp out just before the ecumenical movement draws us together and descends back into the same nonsense that has plagued the church since the reformation and the great Schism of 1054 (when the great church split becoming the Orthodox in Eastern Europe and Catholics in the west). Will the next generation repeat the same mistakes of the past generations, causing war between denominations and only do more harm to the mission of the church, or will we finally stand together untied as we were meant to? I'm not saying either side was right or wrong in the reformation, I'm just saying that we need to see it for what it was, a tragedy caused by the mistakes of leaders on both sides. It led to civil war between God's people, and both sides are to blame, neither one was the hero here. The reformation happened and we are left to deal with the aftermath now, but it is not something to be celebrat-

ed. If anything it's a mistake we can learn from. It led to persecution of Protestants by Catholics in Europe, and persecution of Catholics by Protestants in England and America. If we let the next generation descend into that same pattern of nonsense, than everything the apostles worked for will truly be for nothing.

Our generation has done well; we have ended much of the hatred, now it's up to us to start breaking down the walls. Yes, it may be too late now after hundreds of years to ever be one church institutionally again, but that's a pretty pathetic excuse to not reach out and find a common ground to serve God together on. We must think about what the church is doing next, and how it will affect the mission of the church in general. Even if denominational titles and minor distinctives are kept, the walls that separate us from being God's people working together can still come down. Either way, we can't expect things to stay the way they are, they will either go one way or end the progress we have made, or the other and draw us closer together. I don't believe the church stands a chance divided the way it is now in the post modern era. Something's got to give.



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Sophomore Residency

Ashley Genova
Co-Sports Editor

Part of the major experience of college is becoming independent. Students gain a great amount of independence by living in the dorms, but there are many restrictions and authorities that exist. Because of these restrictions, some students choose to assert their independence by finding an off campus residence.

Previously, the freshmen class was the only group prohibited from living off campus, but soon the policy will apply to the sophomore class as well.

Why should Methodist College have the authority to dictate when students are allowed to be completely independent? Only the students can know when they are mature enough to live off campus, and this maturity can develop at anytime; people mature at different rates. Some underclassmen may be more prepared to live off campus than some upperclassmen. If the under-

classmen are prepared to live off campus and have the resources to do so, why should this opportunity be denied to them?

The Methodist website argues that living on campus is cheaper, safer, and more beneficial to academics than living off campus. If students are really mature enough to live off campus, then they should also be mature enough to keep up with their studies. It is a bit strange to call campus "safe" when people can easily walk on campus. Enough attention is paid to cars entering campus, but what about pedestrians? Though a dorm room is cheaper than an apartment, some students may think that their money is better spent on an apartment.

The choice between an on campus or off campus residence should be left for the students to make, despite their class. Methodist cannot make the right decision for all the students, but the students must make that choice themselves.

Love Doctors: No Jerks Please

Dear Doctors:

I am in love. My man is the sweetest and best looking guy around.

One of my friends told me that my man is the daddy of a little boy in another city. I thought she just told me that because she was jealous, so I asked him. He told me that this old girlfriend tells people that she is her baby's daddy but that it isn't true. He got mad when I asked him if he was sure. He says there is no way he is going to be saddled with supporting a kid.

Now I am thinking about this all the time. What if he is this baby's daddy? If he is one of those jerks who denies his own son because of money, I want nothing to do with him.

I don't want to make him mad and ask him again, but I don't want to keep messing around with him if he really is a jerk. Got any advice?

No Jerks, Please

Dear No Jerks,

Rumors can be ugly, upsetting, and hurtful. It is no wonder that bringing up subject has upset your boyfriend, but he could also be defensive because it is true that he has a son.

If it is true he has a son, you have a reason to be concerned: what if you found yourself in a situation similar to his old girlfriend? It is even more alarming that he refers to taking responsibility as being "saddled". How would he react if his old girlfriend was you?

Analyze your relationship so far. Has he shown any deception or any lack of responsibility? This rumor may not have any truth at all. It may be painful to confront him about this subject again, but you should hear this from only your boyfriend or not hear it at all.

But if it is true that

he has a son, you have the right to know. Talk to your boyfriend about being more open with your past lives. If you truly are in love, you need to trust each other and keep no secrets.

Good luck,
Ashley

Dear No Jerks,

Is the only thing that is wrong with your relationship a rumor? If you keep asking about this rumor you could create a trust issue and destroy the relationship. He will be offended that you would take the word of a stranger over his, and rightfully so.

I advise you to give the guy you love the benefit of the doubt. But do keep your eyes open for a tendency to call other people liars instead of owning up to his responsibilities. Ask yourself: 'Is this man

consistently willing and able to take responsibility for his own actions?'

If you see evidence to the contrary, you will probably want to distance yourself from the relationship. You want to make that decision based on what you know to be true, rather than what might be true.

I believe that a man of character, who might have fathered a son, would want to know for certain. The truth would not be too hard to find out with DNA testing. Disrespecting a former girlfriend by calling her a liar without knowing for sure would be a jerky thing to do. I don't know how long you have known your man, but if he really is a jerk, you will find out. I believe that people can't hide their true colors forever. Keep an open mind and take care of yourself.

Best wishes,
Darlene










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Please Note: RHA meetings have moved to Garber Basement

Accomplishments for YOU: New cigarette receptacles; Lower Clark parking lot is now paved; Vending Machines are on their way

Current Goal: more parking
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For more information, come to a meeting!

ria_methodist05@hotmail.com
office is located in the Berns Student Center
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www.myspace.com/methodistcollegerha



ENTERTAINMENT



A Steak Buffet, Minus the Steak

Will Montoya
Editor-in-Chief

There's a new steak house and buffet in town that isn't very tasty.

That's right folks Julian's Steakhouse and Buffet offers no steak on the buffet, bland food, and a skimpy selection.

Julian's steak house and Buffet is located at 231 Skyland Shopping Center in Spring Lake, NC. They offer a cozy atmosphere, delicious hot rolls, and Julian's Famous Buffet, which I wasn't very impressed with. One would think that a steak house and buffet would include at least some steak on the buffet, but that wasn't true. The buffet didn't even include one ounce of steak which was disappointing for the \$8.99 dinner buffet

Julian's Steakhouse and Buffet

231 Skyland Shopping Center
Spring Lake, NC 28390
(910) 436-2890

Hours

Sun-Sat 11 a.m. – 10 p.m.

Average Price Lunch \$7.50

Average Price Dinner \$10.00

The tastiest foods were the Lasagna, and the hot rolls.

Price for the buffet is \$5.99 for lunch, and \$8.99 for dinner, this price does not include your drink. The drink will cost an additional \$1.45. The steak dinner comes with the choice of a house or Caesar salad and a side dish starting at \$9.99 with the most expensive steak, the Rib-eye, costing \$18.99.

Julian Jimenez, the owner of Julian's Steakhouse and Buffet, stated "we opened on December 27, and so far business has been very good." He also added, "I plan to put steak on the buffet in a couple of weeks."

Perhaps the buffet will be worth checking out in a couple of weeks when steak is added, but for me one trip to Julian's was enough for my appetite.

price tag.

The dinner buffet had a limited variety of food, which included fish, noodles, yellow rice, fried chicken, veggies, BBQ pork, a salad and fruit bar, and a couple cakes which was the dessert bar. Besides not having steak on the buffet, there was not a large variety of food, no specialty food, and honestly the food was bland.

GREEN AND GOLD CAFETERIA

Upcoming Events



Home Cookin
Countdown
January 23-27
Lunch

Comforts of home bring things to mind, especially favorite foods and flavors. Each day of the week, we will be counting down from #10, two items, Monday thru Friday, that were picked by your fellow students. We are still accepting your favorite recipes, so bring them by the cafeteria on your next visit with us.

Coming Soon:

Look For Our Weekly Menu
and
Specials On the Web

Monday- Friday

Hot Breakfast: 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
Continental Breakfast: 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Lunch: 10:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Dinner: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday-Sunday

Continental: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
Brunch: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Dinner: 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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M O V I E S

Magnusen & Aldridge



Steven Magnusen
Managing Editor

I rarely see a horror film that I actually enjoy. Usually, they aren't very frightening, they have a terrible plot, and the acting is horrible.

In "Hostel," the acting is still horrible. There are no famous actors in it, and the advertisers plugged Quentin Tarentino's name on it, even though it is unlikely that he played any role in the creative process of the film. The acting is unconvincing at best, and simply annoying at worst.

The plot is what saves "Hostel" from being thrown in the pile with all the other crappy horror wannabes out there. The story is creative and interesting, and that helps draw the audience into the action. The plot is realistic, and that may be what scares audiences the most.

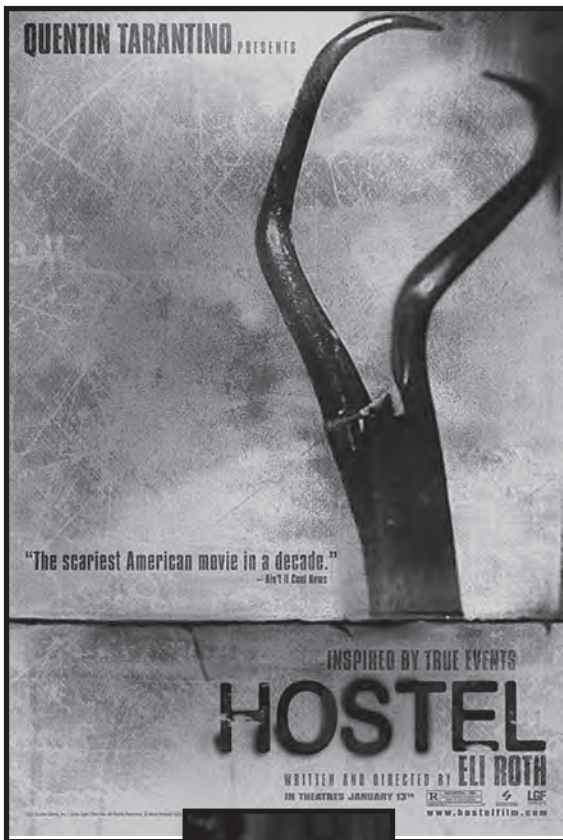
Unfortunately, you have to sit through half an hour of gratuitous sex to get to anything that actually has anything to do with what's actually going on in the plot. A third of the movie seems more like pornography than legitimate film. The sex is clearly aimed at the teenage and college crowd, and it will draw some people in. However, it adds nothing to the value of the film in the long run.

"Hostel" suffers greatly from the lack of a strong central character. Half-way through the film, I found myself wondering who exactly the main character is, and why I should care what happens to him. Eventually, Director Eli Roth narrows the focus of

the movie to a single character, but the audience has no reason to sympathize with him.

More interesting are the bad guys, who torture their victims for no apparent reason other than pure insanity and hatred. It is the absolute violence of the tormentors that draws the sick curiosity of the viewer. "Hostel" is very bloody, and if you have a weak stomach, you might want to stick to something a little more tame. I've seen worse and the gore in this film is overhyped, but it is still enough to give some people problems.

"Hostel" is by no means a great movie. In fact, I hesitate to call it "good." have given it two and a half stars because it is, sadly enough, one of the best horror films in recent history. Go see King Kong instead



Joe Aldridge
Entertainment Editor

"Hostel" was one of the worst movies I have ever seen.

Not only did this movie not know which way it was going, or even how it was going to get there, all the hype about the gore in this movie was for nothing.

I'm sure everyone has heard by now that EMS paramedics were standing by outside theatres around the country just in case someone couldn't take the "extreme" nature of this film.

I cringed more at "The Passion of Christ."

It seems that if a director is not well-known in Hollywood all he/she needs to do is get a powerhouse like Quentin Tarantino to add his name.

The fact that Tarantino presented this film had the cult film crowd flocking to the theaters.

The problem was that while director Eli Roth might have the vision for a horror movie, he has yet to direct a good one. His other so-called

horror film included "Cabin Fever," which was a big disappointment to horror film fans.

Although the acting in this movie was better than that of such horror film flops as "Saw" and "Cabin Fever" it was not enough to make the film any better.

The story is one of friends traveling through Europe and trying to party hard one last time before they graduate from college.

To the unsuspecting friends the fun is interrupted when a member of their group has gone missing. In a country whose customs are not familiar these friends find themselves more trouble than they can handle.

Without giving too much of the story away I will just say that the idea behind the movie is one that could happen in real life, possibly. This idea is one that could have been the foundation for a great horror story, because believable horror films are the most intense.

Unfortunately, the fact remains that the first half of the movie is nothing more than cheap porn and the second half was nothing more than an expensive "Friday the 13th."

Weekend Box Office Stats:

Rank:	Title:	Weekend:	Total:
1.	Hoodwinked	\$16.6M	\$16.6M
2.	Glory Road	\$16.5M	\$16.5M
3.	Last Holiday	\$15.7M	\$15.7M
4.	The Chronicles of Narnia	\$12.2M	\$263M
5.	Hostel	\$11.7M	\$36.8M
6.	Fun with Dick and Jane	\$10.3M	\$94.2M
7.	King Kong	\$9.2M	\$205M
8.	Tristan & Isolde	\$7.85M	\$7.85M
9.	Brokeback Mountain	\$7.06M	\$32.1M
10.	Cheaper by the Dozen 2	\$6.78M	\$74.6M

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Steven Magnusen
Managing Editor

When a friend of mine popped in the Smashing Pumpkins "Greatest Hits" CD while we were driving, I thought to myself "Smashing Pumpkins – what was it they played again?" After my friend skipped to "1979" memories of the Smashing Pumpkins came flooding back.

Since then, "Greatest Hits" has become one of my favorite CDs. While a lot of the songs didn't get much radio time (partly because of crude content), every one of them deserves at least one click

of the "repeat" button on your radio. The guitar riffs and hooks are catchy in each song and the tracks compete with each other to get stuck in your head. Lead singer Billy Corgan's voice can get a little whiny at times, but after a few listens, one gets used to the tone of it.

"1979" and "Tonight, Tonight" are by far the most well-known tracks

on the CD, and it's worth paying the price of a full album just for those two songs. The band also included a cover of "Landslide," a track that has been recorded by multiple artists, but never as well as the Smashing Pumpkins have done it. These, along with some fan-pleasing classic tracks and two new songs, make "Greatest Hits" a CD that is worth every penny.



Demario Campbell
Staff Writer

Singers of today pay tribute to Luther Vandross in a new album.

On July 1 of last year, the world lost one of the most prolific singer/songwriter's of its time. Luther Vandross died last year through complications he had from a stroke in 2003. This musical legend is gone but not forgotten and this is evident in this 15 track album celebrating the life of this musician. "So Amazing, An All-Star tribute to Luther Vandross" does just what it says by showcasing all of the stars of today singing the songs of Vandross's career. This Album peaked at no. 1 on its release date Sept. 20, but has since then plummeted to the mid forties on Billboard's Top 100.

Mary J. Blige sings Vandross's famous "Never Too Much" showcasing her ability in a perfect performance. Aretha Franklin's rendition of "A House Is Not a Home" has a low, but soothing mode that only the Queen of R&B can deliver. Patti LaBelle's timeless and never changing voice gives us "Here & Now" with the true heart-felt feeling that only La-

belle can deliver. John Legend performs "Love Won't Let Me Wait", in a deep cool tone. Usher's rendition of "Super Star" is also a great addition. Angie Stone sings "Since I Lost My Baby" giving life to the song with her outstanding vocal skills.

Other stars who perform on the album are Jamie Foxx, Fantasia, and Beyoncé with Stevie Wonder paying tribute to Vandross. Donna Summer uses her disco skills in Power of Love. Alicia Keys and Jermaine Paul sound excellent in "If This World Were Mine." Celine Dion's rendition of "Dance with My Father" is great and takes you back to the 2004 Grammy Awards where she had first performed this song. Elton John sings with Vandross "Anyone Who Had a Heart," which was made after Vandross's death and the only duo on the album.

This album, showcased on The Oprah Winfrey Show on Thanksgiving, displays pure talent from artists of today, while giving respect to a legend of yesterday

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sports



Women's Basketball p.10
NFL Conference Championships p.11

Women's Basketball Routs Ferrum



Junior Stacy Williams shows off her dribbling skills during a recent game. She averages 11 points and six rebounds per game so far this year for the Lady Monarchs Basketball team.

Photo courtesy of Monarchs Online.

Amber Smith
Staff Writer

The Lady Monarchs pulled an astounding win against the Ferrum Panthers on Jan. 14.

The conference rivals played an impressive game against one another Saturday afternoon.

The first half opened with a bang. Freshman Zan Messer shot a three-pointer in the first few seconds. Courtney Bissette, a sophomore, also followed with a three-point shot.

Ann Forsberg, also a freshman, sank four three-point shots throughout the game, with two of the shots back to back. She finished with 13 points. Sophomore Ashley Harris and junior Stacy Williams

also worked the ball amazingly up and down the court. Harris finished with seven points and six points, while Williams finished with 14 points.

Both teams were aggressive in the first half. The Monarchs showed great hustle and determination to win. The two teams had several team fouls by the end of the half.

The second half was slower than the first. Messer sank another three-point shot. Amanda Underwood, a freshman, also shot two three-pointers. The Lady Monarchs led by as many as 21 points in the second half.

The final score ended 88-71 in favor of the Lady Monarchs.

Monarchs Are In Lead

Remille Shipman
Sports Editor

Conference play has finally come around the corner for the Monarchs, and so has the form that won them 20 games last season.

The Monarchs appear to have put their frustration of a seven-game losing streak behind them after recording two straight victories over USA South foes Greensboro and Ferrum. Methodist ended their aforementioned seven-games when they clawed out a 72-68 road victory over rival Greensboro on January 11.

However, the victory almost slipped through the Monarchs' fingers as they nearly blew a 20-point lead in the second half. Greensboro guard Steve Berg hit three key three-point baskets during the Pride's 16-2 run late in the second half that tied the game at 68-68 with 1:25 remaining in the game.

After Greensboro's Justin Daniels missed a three-pointer that could have given them the lead, Monarch forward Antwin Shuford converted two free throws to give Methodist a 70-68 lead after he was fouled on a lay-up attempt with 37 seconds remaining.

Greensboro then turned the ball over on the next possession, and junior guard Robert Lee converted both of his free throws after he was fouled to ac-

count for the final score. Lee finished with 14 points while Shuford recorded 12 points and 11 rebounds, and junior Dragan Radmanovic and senior Eugene Grant scored 15 and 10 respectively.

Methodist then successfully opened its USA South home schedule with a convincing 78-64 over rival Ferrum on January 14.

The Monarchs made sure that the outcome would not be in doubt as they jumped to a 7-0 lead and remained ahead for the majority of the game. Ferrum cut into Methodist's lead when Jon Godsey's three-pointer cut the Monarchs' lead down to 58-51 with 9:41 remaining, but Methodist regained control with an 11-2 run to increase

the lead to 16 with 5:40 remaining.

Ferrum never got closer than 12 points the rest of the way. The Monarchs' heralded trio of Seth Thomas, Lee, and Grant lead the way as they scored 21, 20 and 14, respectively.

Methodist head coach David Smith believes his team has finally put their struggles behind them.

"It's (the two conference victories) just what the doctor ordered," he said. Methodist's improved chemistry and confidence have given the head coach the belief that the Monarchs will hold on to their current claim on first place in the USA South.

"We're in first place, and we're gonna keep it," Smith said.

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Playoffs to Remember

Steven Magnusen
Managing Editor

A matter of weeks ago if you asked the average football fan which teams would be in the conference championships, it isn't likely that Carolina, Pittsburgh or Denver would be mentioned. And yet, in some of the most enjoyable playoff games in recent history, the Panthers, Steelers and Broncos have fought within one win of a Super Bowl appearance. However, the Seattle Seahawks loom as the heavy favorite among the remaining contenders.

It isn't any surprise the no. 1 seeded Seahawks have made it this far, and based purely on the numbers, it's a good bet that they will represent the NFC in the big game.

Still, it isn't a given that Seattle will beat

the wild card Panthers in the conference championship this Sunday. The Panthers tore apart the best defense in the NFL in their victory against Chicago last week, and they will look to repeat the performance against the Seahawks.

In the NFC Championship on Sunday, all eyes will be on two players. Shaun Alexander of Seattle is the NFL's most prolific running back. His stunning 27-touchdown season makes him Seattle's greatest threat. Carolina's Steve Smith is one of the best wide receivers in the league, if not the best. With the veteran Muhammad traded to the Bears, and rookie Colbert dropping passes left and right, Smith is Carolina's one-man show when the ball is in the air.

If either Alexander or Smith has a bad game on Sunday, it is unlikely their team will be able to pull

out a win.

On the AFC side of the ball are the wild card Steelers and the Broncos. Pittsburgh, much like Carolina, relies heavily on their running game and a strong defense. They'll have to depend on Jerome Bettis to run the ball with power. But "The Bus" can't beat the Broncos alone. Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger will have to connect with Antwaan Randle El to keep the Steelers offense on the move. If Pittsburgh gets bogged down by the Denver defense, their own defense will tire quickly and the result will be disastrous. In order to win, the Steelers will have to mix up their offense and keep possession long enough to give the defense a rest.

The Broncos are a well-rounded team with few standout players. They play as a team, and the loss of certain players will not be a death blow. Jake



Carolina running back Steve Smith danced through the Bears defense for 218 yards. Photo courtesy of www.panthers.com

Plummer is their most vital asset, since Bradlee Van Pelt is a weak backup quarterback with little experience, and no playoff record. If Plummer remains healthy, the Broncos should be a steady favorite over Pittsburgh.

In a postseason full of surprises, it is almost impossible to predict who will make it to Super Bowl XL. If the Panthers and

the Steelers win, it would make for the first all-wild card NFL championship in history. Previously, no wild card team has ever made it to the Super Bowl. Based on the stats, expect the Seahawks to face the Broncos. Seahawks fans have certainly waited long enough to see their team reach the top. It's been 21 years since they last won a playoff game.

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Who do you think will be in Super Bowl, and why?



Tiffany Battle
Sophomore, Biology Major

"Pittsburgh and Carolina, the Panthers had a good season with lots of unexpected things happening and Seattle had an ok season."



Sammie Burke
Sophomore, Elementary Education Major

"Carolina and Pittsburgh, because I like them and they are doing good so far."



Deepak Shrestha
Sophomore, International Student

"Denver and Seattle, they are both good teams."

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