



Can there be a balance between IFC and Panhellenic recruitment?  
See Our View, page 4

Is President Bush right in his prediction of a Mideast peace treaty?  
See Quick Shots, page 5



No longer unbeaten, the Commodores turn their attention to Tennessee.  
See Sports, page 6



TODAY'S WEATHER



Partly Cloudy, 45/27  
Extended forecast, page 2

# The Vanderbilt Hustler

THE VOICE OF VANDERBILT SINCE 1888

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 2008 • 120<sup>TH</sup> YEAR, NO. 3

## THE WALL

compiled by ADAM WEINSTEIN

### TODAY Yale professor lecture

Dudley Andrew, a film and comparative literature professor at Yale University, will speak on "Tracking Andre Bazin to the Digital Age" at 2:10 p.m. in Buttrick Hall, Room 103. A conversation seminar will follow the talk at 3:15 p.m. in Buttrick Hall, Room 015 with professors Lynn Ramey and Sarah Childress, among others.

**TODAY**  
**'Thinking Thoughtful Theses'**  
The Writing Studio will host a workshop on developing theses at 5 p.m. in Alumni Hall, Room 117.

**TODAY**  
**Harry Belafonte lecture**  
Belafonte will speak as part of the Chancellor's Lecture Series commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. The lecture will be at 6 p.m. in the Student Life Center Ballroom with a reception at 5 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JAN. 15**  
**Resident Adviser information meeting**  
The Office of Housing and Residential Education will hold an informational session covering the recruitment and application process for prospective resident advisers in the Reinke Hall classroom from 5 to 6 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JAN. 15**  
**WiSkills information session**  
Find out more about WiSkills and sign up for the spring 2008 course from 7 to 8 p.m. in Garland Hall, Room 101.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN 16**  
**Add/drop period ends**  
Today is the last day undergraduates and Peabody professional students may add or drop a course with no entry on their records.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN 16**  
**Vanderbilt Hustler recruitment meeting**  
A meeting will be held at 5 p.m. in Sarratt 130 for all students interested in contributing to the newspaper.

See <http://calendar.vanderbilt.edu> for more events.

## Textbook tragedy

by DAVID BROWN  
Asst News Editor

"Ripoff."  
That's how senior Whitney Fare describes the cost of textbooks at the Vanderbilt bookstore.

On college campuses across the country, the price of textbooks has quadrupled the rate of inflation during the past decade, according to the Federation of State Public Interest Research Groups. The average new textbook most always crosses the \$100 threshold, and science and math books are dangerously close to exceeding \$300 a pop.

As the spring semester starts, Vanderbilt students are shelling out big bucks to pay for books.

When students rush into bookstores today, Commodore Cash, credit cards and checkbooks in hand, few know exactly who receives their money.

"I have no idea," said junior Lauren Levy. "I'm not really sure where the money goes. Does it go to the university?"

Actually, not even a fourth of the money benefits the school — campus bookstores are not solely to blame for high textbook prices. According to the National Association of College Stores, the prices break down as follows: The publisher takes 64.4 percent, the bookstore receives 22.4 percent, the author gets 11.6 percent and the remaining 1.7 percent covers shipping.

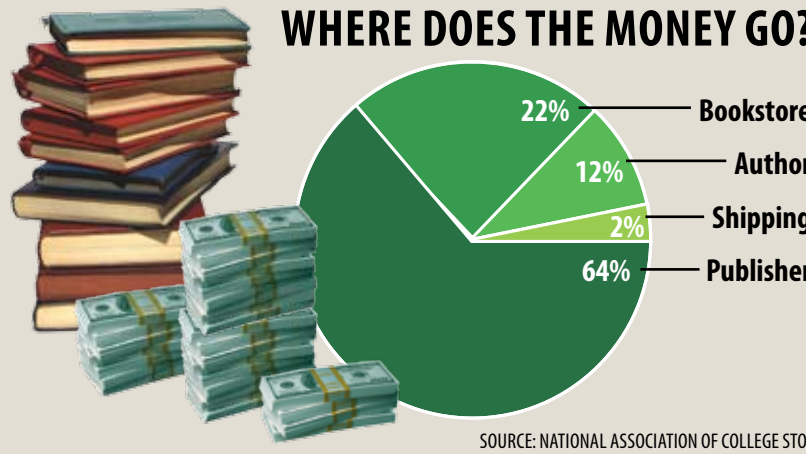
"Nationally, the price of textbooks represents about 5 percent to 6 percent of a student's cost of a college education," according to Follett Higher Education Group's vice president of media relations Clifford Ewert. Follett manages the Vanderbilt bookstore.

And despite that low percentage, book prices generate anger and disdain from many students.

Please see **TEXTBOOKS**, page 3



Julie Bryant purchases books for class at the Vanderbilt Bookstore on Jan. 7. The price of textbooks has risen at more than four times the rate of inflation over the past decade.



## Students hold opposing political positions

by JUDY WANG  
Staff Reporter

"And the youth vote goes to ... Barack Obama." At least, that is what several media stations have concluded after analyzing results among voting demographics in the New Hampshire primary and Iowa caucuses.

But for Vanderbilt students, political ideologies and favorite candidates differ, making it less clear who holds the majority vote on campus.

While many students on campus support the Illinois senator, they appear to do so based on his and their own ideals and policies, not because they belong to a voting demographic expected to support him.

But students throughout campus vary on which issues hold the most importance.

For some students, the war and foreign policy are key.

"The war is decreasing the quality of life for Americans and Iraqis because instead of targeting the extremist groups responsible for the terrorist attacks, all of Iraq is getting punished," said senior Charity Love. "Americans are suffering from personal loss, economic loss and a general loss in the amount of respect other countries have for us."

Another concern for students is the current and future state of our economy.

Please see **POLITICAL REACTION**, page 3

UPCOMING PRIMARIES
<b>Jan. 15</b> Michigan
<b>Jan. 19</b> South Carolina (Rep.)
<b>Jan. 26</b> South Carolina (Dem.)
UPCOMING CAUCUS
<b>Jan. 19</b> Nevada

## Panhellenic Bid Day gives women place in community

by ELIZABETH MIDDLEBROOKS  
Managing Editor

The Student Recreation Center buzzed with excitement Sunday as 484 women received bids from Vanderbilt's 10 Panhellenic sororities.

The women met five members from their new chapter at the Rec, where they introduced themselves to one another, received the Bid Day T-shirts, and learned chapter chants and songs.

The number of new members exceeded last year's 434, thanks in part to a larger number of prospective members.

Director of Greek Life Kristin Torrey said 547 women started the week, with 88 percent of those

women receiving bids Sunday, up from last year's 84 percent.

Of the 63 women who were not extended bids, most "chose to withdraw from the recruitment process at some point throughout the week," Torrey said. The rest were not placed in the chapters they wrote on their preference cards because they did not write on the card every house they attended on the final night of recruitment.

Please see **BID DAY**, page 3

—To view a slideshow of Bid Day, go to:



## IFC chapters welcome 265 new members

by JARRED AMATO  
Editor in Chief

Two hundred sixty-five men received bids to 16 Interfraternity Council fraternities Friday night, approximately 67 percent of the men that registered, according to Director of Greek Life Kristin Torrey.

The retention rate was a small increase from last year, Torrey added.

Lambda Chi Alpha welcomed 26 new members, the most of any fraternity. It was an increase of 10 men from a year ago.

"Our rush chair did a great job and a lot more of the house got behind rush," said

Kristian Stensland, president of Lambda Chi Alpha. "I'm very excited about the new guys we're bringing in."

Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Chi and Zeta Beta Tau brought in 23 new members, while Sigma Phi Epsilon welcomed 22.

"We basically got all of the guys we wanted, which is an amazing feat," said Joseph Yates, president of Sigma Chi.

Brian Hasselfeld, president of Zeta Beta Tau, was also thrilled with the new members.

"We're definitely pleased with the class," he said. "They're all going to be great additions to the Greek community."

Please see **FRATERNITIES**, page 3

IFC FRATERNITY	NEW MEMBERS
Alpha Epsilon Pi	19
Alpha Tau Omega	13
Beta Chi Theta	6
Beta Theta Pi	19
Delta Kappa Epsilon	10
Kappa Alpha Order	18
Lambda Chi Alpha	26
Phi Delta Theta	6
Phi Kappa Psi	17
Phi Kappa Sigma	10
Pi Kappa Alpha	14
Sigma Alpha Epsilon	23
Sigma Chi	23
Sigma Nu	16
Sigma Phi Epsilon	22
Zeta Beta Tau	23

**FIVE GUYS® IS COMING...**



# Odds & Ends

## WEATHER

compiled by ADAM WEINSTEIN

### TUESDAY



Mostly Sunny, 38/27

### WEDNESDAY



Mostly Cloudy, 46/33

### THURSDAY



Rain/Snow Showers, 43/29

## VUPD CRIME LOG

compiled by ADAM WEINSTEIN

### Monday, Jan. 7, 1:30 a.m.:

Ornaments were broken from a tree at a fraternity house at 200 25th Ave. when vandals tried to knock down the tree.

### Monday, Jan. 7, 12:59 a.m.:

Subjects were stopped for walking around Memorial Gym. Subjects admitted to drinking.

### Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2:04 a.m.:

Subject was stopped for driving without headlights at 2200 Children's Way. Subject had a strong odor of alcohol and performed poorly on a field sobriety test.

Check out <http://police.vanderbilt.edu/crimelog.htm> for complete listings.

## SERVICE GUIDE

The Vanderbilt Hustler (ISSN 0042-2517), the student newspaper of Vanderbilt University, is published every Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the academic year except for during exam periods and vacations. The paper is not printed during summer break.

The Vanderbilt Hustler allocates one issue of the newspaper to each student and is available at various points on campus for free. Additional copies are \$.50 each.

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### CORRECTIONS

The Hustler strives for accuracy and fairness and will correct errors of substance. See our correction policy on the Opinion page for information about notifying us.

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### BACK ISSUES

Back issues are available in Sarratt 130 during business hours.

## THE 123456789 STARTING 9

compiled by ADAM WEINSTEIN

### 1 Suspect in slain N.C. Marine case spotted in Louisiana and may be headed to Texas

**JACKSONVILLE, N.C.**—The key suspect in the slaying of a 20-year-old pregnant Marine was spotted in Louisiana and could be headed into Texas, authorities told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Marine Cpl. Cesar Armando Laurean was seen in Shreveport, La., Saturday night, said Shreveport police Chief Henry Whitehorn Sr. On Saturday, authorities said they recovered what they believe to be the burnt remains of Marine Lance Cpl. Maria Lauterbach and her unborn child from a fire pit in Laurean's backyard, where they suspect he burned and buried her body.

### 2 Bush warns that world must rally to confront danger of Iran

**ABU DHABI**—President Bush said Sunday that Iran is threatening the security of the world, and that the United States and Arab allies must join together to confront the danger "before it's too late," reported The Associated Press.

Bush said Iran funds terrorist extremists, undermines stability in Lebanon, sends arms to the hardline Taliban regime, intimidates its neighbors with alarming rhetoric and defies the United Nations by refusing to be open about its nuclear program.

Bush called Iran "the world's leading state sponsor of terror."

### 3 John P. Wikswo named Fellow of the IEEE

**VANDERBILT**—John P. Wikswo, Gordon A. Cain University Professor and professor of biomedical engineering, has been named a Fellow of the IEEE (originally the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), Vanderbilt News Service reported.

According to the IEEE, the award recognizes "unusual distinction in the profession and is conferred by the board of directors on a person with an extraordinary record of accomplishments in any of the IEEE fields of interest." Wikswo is being honored "for contributions to understanding electromagnetic effects on materials and biological tissues."

### 4 Governor will propose raises for state workers

**TENNESSEE**—State employees can expect some kind of pay raise when Gov. Phil Bredesen announces his budget later this month, The Tennessean reported.

Despite a gloomier economic outlook, Bredesen plans to make employee salaries a part of his proposed budget, along with fully funding priorities like K-12 education, the Basic Education Program formula for school money and the availability of pre-kindergarten.

Bredesen declined to say what percentage he will propose, reserving that detail for his Jan. 28 State of the State address.

### 5 Repairs to Blackwater convoy vehicles could complicate Baghdad shooting inquiry

**WASHINGTON**—Blackwater Worldwide repaired its trucks immediately after a deadly September shooting in Baghdad, making it difficult to determine whether enemy gunfire provoked the attack, The Associated Press reported.

Blackwater uses damage to the vehicles as proof its security guards were defending themselves against an insurgent ambush when they fired into a busy intersection, leaving 17 Iraqi civilians dead.

Investigators initially found there was "no enemy activity involved," and the Iraqi government concluded the shootings were unprovoked.

### 6 Clinton says Obama campaign "distorting" comments on race, Obama says that's ludicrous

**NEW YORK**—Democrat Hillary Rodham Clinton suggested Sunday that Barack Obama's campaign had injected racial tension into the presidential contest, saying her comments about Martin Luther King's role in the civil rights movement had been "distorted" by Obama's supporters, reported The Associated Press.

Both New York Sen. Clinton and her husband, the former president, have engaged in damage control this week after black leaders criticized them for comments they made shortly before the New Hampshire primary last Tuesday.

### 7 Will weakening economy survive current strains or collapse into a recession?

**WASHINGTON**—In the aftermath of the housing meltdown, the unemployment rate has leapt to a two-year high, record numbers of people have been forced from their homes and Wall Street has taken yet another nose-dive, The Associated Press reported.

The odds have grown that the economy will slip into a recession. At the beginning of last year, many economists put that chance at less than 1-in-3; now an increasing number says it has climbed to around 50-50.

### 8 OJ Simpson jailed in Las Vegas, accused of violating bail in armed robbery case

**LAS VEGAS**—O.J. Simpson was in jail Saturday, accused of violating terms of his bail in an armed robbery case, after he asked a bondsman to pass a message to a co-defendant, authorities told The Associated Press.

Simpson was awaiting a Wednesday court hearing, when prosecutors planned to request that Simpson's bail be revoked and he be kept in jail until trial, set for April.

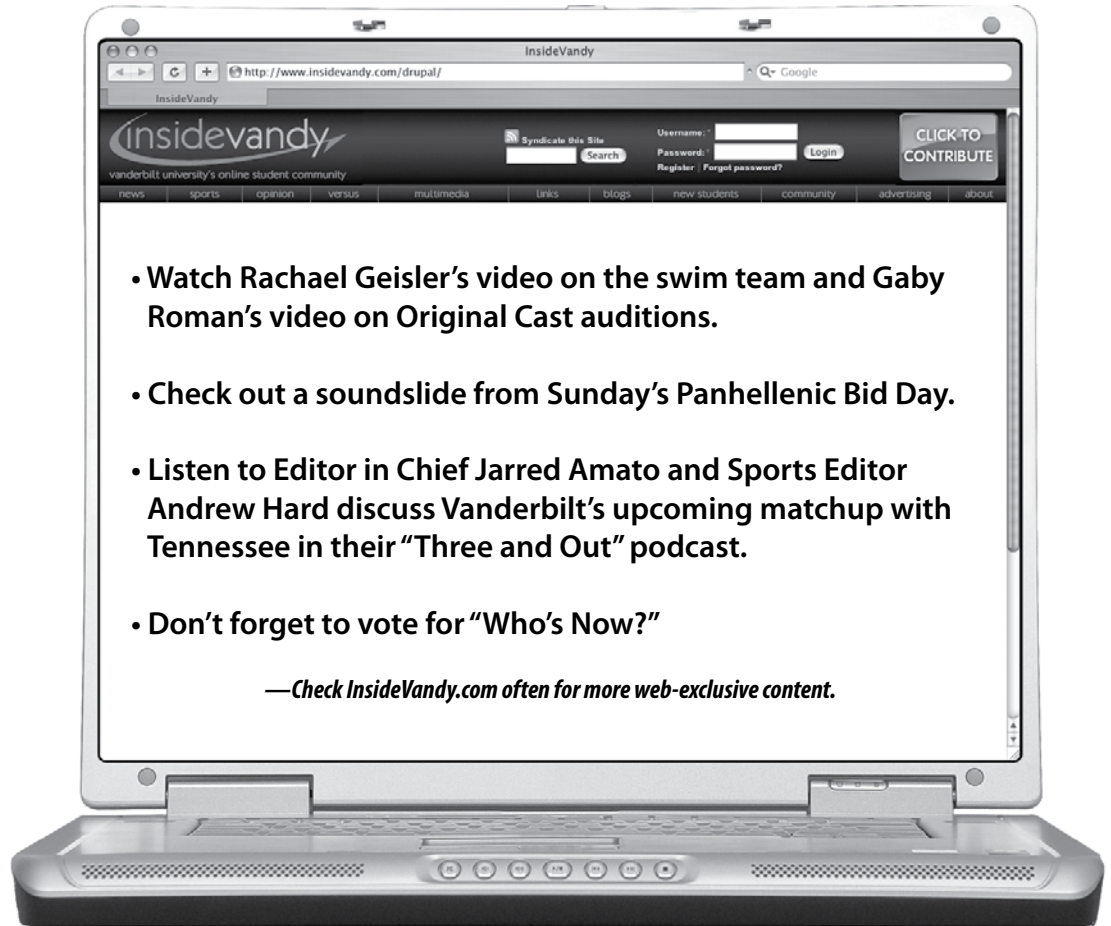
A police escort took him in handcuffs to the Clark County Detention Center.

### 9 Sapped of star glitz amid Hollywood writers strike, Golden Globes to quietly announce winners

**BEVERLY HILLS, Calif.**—Films and performances have taken a back seat to the business side of show business; unyielding writers have taken a hardball stance that has forced Globe organizers to scrap their star-studded telecast for a humdrum news conference to announce winners, The Associated Press reported.

On strike since Nov. 5, the Writers Guild of America refused to let union members work on the banquet-style show, prompting actors to boycott the ceremony rather than cross picket lines.

## WHAT'S NEW ON INSIDEVANDY.COM



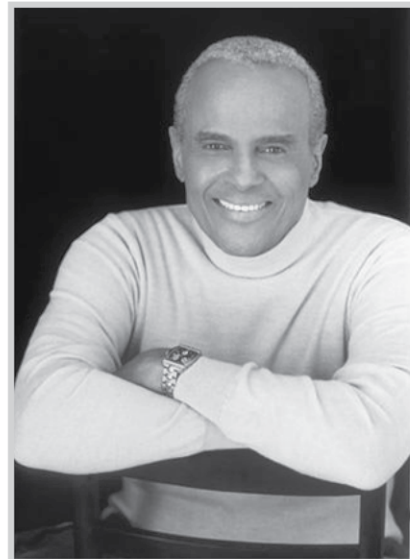
## SNAPSHOT

### COMMODORES SWIM INTO HURRICANE



CHRIS PHARE / The Vanderbilt Hustler

The Vanderbilt swim team hosted the University of Miami in its first home meet in 15 years and the only one this season Friday at Centennial Sportsplex. The Commodores lost to the Hurricanes 186-74.



Chancellor's Lecture Series & Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Series presents:

*Harry Belafonte*

Keynote Event

Monday, January 14th, 2008

5 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. lecture

Student Life Center Ballroom

**Harry Belafonte** is known worldwide for his accomplishments as a recording artist and concert singer, as an actor and a producer, and for his commitment to human rights. He became the entertainment industry's first cultural adviser to the Peace Corps in the early 1960s. He was also a driving force that united the cultural elements behind the needs of the Civil Rights movement. The success of that mobilization could be seen in the overwhelming presence of the arts community in places like the marches from Selma to Montgomery and the protests in Birmingham, Alabama, as well as the Freedom March in Washington, D.C., in 1963.

"My social and political interests are part of my career. I can't separate them," says Belafonte. "My songs reflect the human condition. The role of art isn't just to show life as it is, but to show life as it should be."



# TEXTBOOKS: Spring books expected to cost nearly \$500

From **TEXTBOOKS**, page 1

"Textbooks from the bookstore are ridiculously overpriced," said senior Julianna Staples.

"(Students) aren't looking at it as an investment into their future," Ewert said. "They look at it as something they have to read."

"College textbooks cost more than novels, non-fiction materials or cookbooks because textbooks tend to have high-quality bindings and paper, vivid color and graphics that drive up the price," Ewert said. "Additionally, demand nationally is much lower than that of bestsellers."

"Textbooks are a different type of book than, say, the 'Harry Potter' series," Ewert said. "They published millions of books. Textbooks have very small press runs."

The College Board estimates the average bachelor's degree-seeking student in the 2008 spring semester will pay \$494.

It is easy to exceed that number, though.

For example, a student taking Introductory Spanish this semester has to buy the

Spanish book bundle that costs \$208.20. And that's just one class. Full-time students typically take four or five courses per semester, or eight to 10 each year.

Buying used books can trim 25 percent off a new edition's retail price if students are willing to accept markings, notes and worn bindings left behind by previous owners. But used editions tend to be the first to fly off bookstore shelves, leaving those buying books later stuck with new copies.

At semester's end, students have the option of selling their texts back to campus bookstores for a portion of the original price. On average students can usually receive \$100 from every \$500 spent on books. Bookstores do not buy back every text, however, only those that professors plan to use during the next semester.

In addition to purchasing used books from the bookstore, many students are turning to the Internet to find books to buy. The emergence of online sites such as eBay and Amazon.com means students can shop the Web for textbooks with

sharp discounts.

But what's stopping online sales from putting brick-and-mortar bookstores out of business is shipping, which can be costly or delayed, and minor variations between editions that can render a book useless in class discussions or on exams.

BookFinder.com now also allows students to rent textbooks by the quarter or semester from market leaders Chegg (formerly known as TextBookFlix) and BookRenter.com. Additionally, the search engine compares prices between rental providers, always including the cost of shipping to help avoid unexpected surprises.

Students can save 54 percent buying textbooks from BookFinder.com, according to a survey conducted last week, based on prices for six sample course lists at UC Berkeley, Duke and the University of Iowa. At their local campus bookstores, students would pay an average \$325.80 for their semester's textbooks. Buying the same books cost an average of \$150.05 via BookFinder.com, including shipping — a real-life savings of \$175.75, or 54 percent.

In May, Congress' Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance developed eight solutions to immediately improve pricing: strengthen the market for used textbooks, set textbook guidelines for faculty, provide textbook information in advance to students, increase library resources, adopt alternatives such as paperbacks or spiral-bound books that will lower prices, implement textbook rental programs, improve financial aid policies, and use 21st century technology.

In many states, laws are being drafted where publishers would have to disclose the price of textbooks in advance to college professors as well as changes they make to books between editions. ■

—The Associated Press contributed reporting to this story.

—David Brown can be reached at david.c.brown@vanderbilt.edu

# POLITICAL REACTION: Views, favorite politicians differ throughout campus

From **POLITICAL REACTION**, page 1

"With the national debt (approaching) a \$10 trillion deficit, the dollar losing its worth across the world and the subprime mortgage crisis, if we do not do something now we will be paying amazing amounts of taxes," said freshman Naveed Nanjee.

These issues are taken into account as students analyze which candidate they feel is most competent for the job.

"I feel Mitt Romney is most qualified because of his successes in both the business and political realms," said freshman Nick Alexander. "Since he has had the most success in the private sector, he would be most ready to face the impending recession, or what have you."

"The most important issue to me is foreign policy, and McCain's experience is undeniable and his judgment is sound," said freshman Nehal Mehta.

The core beliefs, personal qualities and past credentials of every candidate appeal most to students as they evaluate the field of candidates.

## CAMPUS CAUCUS

Election Alliance '08 plans to hold a campuswide "mock caucus" Feb. 1 to allow students to express their opinions. They can make speeches on behalf of their candidate, engage in persuasive politics and defend their reasons for why, and how, they vote.

"Hillary's worked on a lot of her issues for a long time, and so I think she'd really know how to go about enacting them," said sophomore Alexa Marcotte. "She'd make a strong leader."

"To me, the most important thing in a president is ideology," said freshman Doug Denniston. "I think Obama's experienced enough for the job, and but he would also bring freshness and willingness to try new things." ■

—Judy Wang is a member of Election Alliance '08 and can be reached at zhu.wang@vanderbilt.edu

# BID DAY: Panhellenic chapters gain 484 new members Sunday

From **BID DAY**, page 1

Quota for a pledge class was set at 50 women per house, but "if a chapter does not meet quota, the chapter may choose to offer additional invitations for membership throughout the semester," Torrey said.

Eventhoughalmost83percent of the women received bids to their first-choice house, Torrey encouraged those who did not receive a bid to the chapter they wanted to participate in the Bid Day activities and get to know fellow members of their pledge class.

"Sometimes, (the women who did not receive a bid to their first choice) end up having a great time and decide to stay; other times they make the decision to drop out," Torrey said. "If they choose to drop out at any point before they are initiated they can participate in recruitment again next January."

Many of the women who received bids Sunday seemed pleased with their placements.

Freshman Catherine Bohls, a new member of Chi Omega sorority, said she is "very excited" about joining that chapter.

Bohls said she hopes to "make friends with similar people with similar interests and create a feeling of sisterhood" through joining a sorority.

Others said they were seeking new experiences through pledging.

New Kappa Alpha Theta sorority member, freshman Anna Yanker, said she hopes to gain new experiences through philanthropy, while fellow pledge class member, freshman Dorothy Padgett, said she hopes for "lots of new friendships."

Yanker said she looks forward to her experience with a sorority because "it's nice to finally be



New Panhellenic sorority members celebrate after receiving bids to chapters Sunday. Nearly 500 women gathered in the Student Recreation Center to learn if they would be invited to join a house on Bid Day. Of the 547 women who began the recruitment process, 484 received bids.

settled in on campus."

Panhellenic makes a commitment to potential new members to find a place for them

in the community, Torrey said.

"We are finding a place for (the women) in our community, not in one specific chapter," she said.

Padgett felt she found that place, saying it is comforting to "have a home" on campus. ■

—Elizabeth Middlebrooks can be reached at e.middlebrooks@vanderbilt.edu

# FRATERNITIES: IFC houses find semester-long rush process advantageous

From **FRATERNITIES**, page 1

Sigma Nu and Phi Delta Theta welcomed their first traditional spring classes and brought in 16 and six new members, respectively.

Beta Theta Pi and Alpha Epsilon Pi both recruited 19 new members, while Kappa Alpha Order took in 18 and Phi Kappa Psi 17. Pi Kappa Alpha brought in 14 new members, Alpha Tau Omega 13 and Beta Chi Theta six.

All IFC presidents seemed to prefer their semester-long rush process to the intense, one-week process of Panhellenic sororities.

"Guys have a whole semester to go out and experience different houses and meet the brothers, which allows them to make an informed decision and is much less stressful than sorority recruitment," said Prashant Kher, president of Beta Chi Theta.

Pete Madden, recruitment chair of Phi Kappa Psi, agreed.

"It's a lot easier to get to know the guys over the course of three to four months than it

would be if you had just five to six days," Madden said.

At the same time, there are also some disadvantages to the drawn out, informal rush process.

"You've really got to keep your game going all semester," said Chris Papa, recruitment chair of Sigma Nu.

Brian Hasselfeld, president of Zeta Beta Tau, added that the less organized rush process could be more problematic next year when the entire freshman class lives on The Commons, far away from Greek Row.

Cole Seaton, president of Alpha Tau Omega, said he believed that adding a week or two of formal recruitment at the end of the fall semester would be beneficial for IFC fraternities.

"I think fraternity recruitment would be more effective if we could combine the two," Seaton said, referring to Pan Hellenic recruitment. "It's almost too informal that some guys don't know what to do."

Torrey agreed.

"If I could take the best things from both processes, that would be great because there are pros and cons to both sides, and a whole different set of pros and cons for the way NPHC groups conduct things," Torrey said.

"It's so much more informal that for some students who don't know as many people, it's more challenging to decide," Torrey added. "If they're spending a lot of time rushing one or two chapters and then are released from the process, they're stuck. With Panhellenic, you still have choices."

While the IFC recruitment process may not be perfect, Greg Marino, president of Pi Kappa Alpha, still prefers it to sorority recruitment, which he called "superficial."

"I guess you can look at the amount of time we spend with these guys," Marino said. "I know all 14 of them on a personal basis." ■

—Jarred Amato can be reached at jarred.s.amato@vanderbilt.edu

# Vandals attack private American school in Gaza Strip

Associated Press

Gunmen smashed windows, burned buses and looted computers at a private American school in Gaza on Saturday in an attack that officials believed was linked to President George W. Bush's recent visit to the West Bank.

A previously unknown group claiming affiliation with al-Qaida left leaflets around the school that weresigned "Army of Believers, the al-Qaida Branch on the Land of Palestine." The group didn't specifically claim responsibility for the attack, but vowed to target "dens of vice and corruption," naming a number of restaurants in Gaza City.

In other Gaza violence Saturday, a man carrying four kilograms (nine pounds) of

TNT tried to attack a Hamas rally attended by Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. Israeli aircraft fired at a Hamas training camp in southern Gaza, killing two Hamas militants.

The Gaza quagmire threatens to derail efforts by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to reach a final peace agreement by the end of the year. Israel has insisted that the rocket fire from Gaza must stop before it can begin implementing any deal but Hamas has refused to rein in militants launching the projectiles.

Saturday's attack on the American International School was the second in 48 hours. On Thursday, just before Bush arrived in the West Bank, gunmen fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the school.

In a claim made to local media on Thursday, a separate unknown group, The Holy Jihad Brigades, said it was behind the attack that day.

Saturday's vandalism left one side of the building scarred with black smoke.

"This is terrorism against education," Principal Ribhi Salim said, while inspecting damage. He said that Islamic fundamentalists deem the school's co-ed system, and modern uniform, as offensive.

There is no evidence that al-Qaida has been operating in Gaza, but many Islamic extremists in the area have adopted the group's language and style recently. The Hamas rulers of Gaza deny charges by Israel and Abbas that al-Qaida operates quietly from the coastal territory. ■



# OPINION

## THE VANDERBILT HUSTLER

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**Paige Clancy**

### OUR VIEW

## Rush process needs balance

As another bid weekend passes, it's once again apparent that the two wildly different Greek recruitment systems are in need of a little balance between them.

Panhellenic rush, with its sheer intensity and complex pageantry, transcends almost every other event on campus — nothing commands the campus-wide attention that sorority rush does. The demanding schedule monopolizes the week for both freshmen and sisters to a degree that can seem, at the very least, overwhelming, particularly during the first week of classes.

Despite its intensity, the brief discussions and rotations of the sorority rush system create a level of superficiality

that's difficult to overcome. Unlike fraternity recruitment, sorority rush lacks the formation of real friendships beyond just a surface level, which are such an integral part of Greek life.

For all its flaws, however, the sorority system is fairly egalitarian. Each participant is almost guaranteed a bid. The fast pace and extremely large numbers of sorority rush also create, in some ways out of necessity, higher academic standards for sororities. Low GPAs are well-known first cuts in the system; this is hardly a bad thing — at a university like Vanderbilt, academics really should be a top priority.

With its more casual, relaxed experience, IFC's semester-long rush facilitates a sense

of brotherhood and community prior to initiation. Freshmen are better equipped to know if the fraternity experience is something they actually want to pursue. Unfortunately, a freshman can spend an entire semester hanging out at one fraternity, ultimately be cut and never get to be a brother anywhere. And, in order to get that bid, freshmen must be incredibly outgoing especially if — let's face it — they don't drink.

Ideally, both rush processes should incorporate the familiarity and personal relationships that come with fraternity rush, as well as the experience at each house, albeit brief, that sorority rush grants.

### COLUMN

## The FairTax promotes economic equality



**THOMAS DAVIS**  
Columnist

Former President John F. Kennedy once argued our tax system "reduces the financial incentives for personal effort, investment and risk-taking." Unfortunately, there has not been much improvement since JFK's presidency.

In fact, the tax code has become more complicated and burdensome. Since 1954, the number of words in the IRS regulations has increased by 939 percent. Just consider, how much time do you, or more likely your parents, spend preparing taxes? Or how much money do your parents spend having an accountant prepare your family's taxes? And how much time does a company spend making business decisions with respect to the tax code?

The answer is astounding: Economists estimate that we spend over \$200 billion every year and about 5.8 billion hours complying with the tax code. American companies spend another \$200-300 billion making business decisions based on tax implications. The average American spends twenty-seven hours preparing his or her income tax forms, and almost 45 percent of tax compliance costs are directly incurred by individuals.

While the current situation is complicated, the proposed solution is simple. It's called the FairTax. Some of the nation's most eminent economists and businesspeople have researched and developed a system applying a national sales tax of 23 percent on all goods and services at the retail level. In return, no more income tax. No more corporate income tax. No more payroll taxes, gift tax, alternative minimum tax, self-employment tax, capital gains tax ... you get the picture. By the way, no more embedded tax in the goods and services you currently purchase, which averages around 22 percent.

Whether you realize it or not, the cost of corporate income taxes, payroll taxes and other taxes have been factored into the price of the goods and services you purchase. So when politicians try to tax what they deem to be greedy businesses by assessing higher corporate income taxes, those taxes are actually passed on to the consumer. By eliminating embedded taxes, the prices of what you buy after applying the 23 percent consumption tax would hardly change from current prices. The difference is you bring home your entire paycheck and that tax is transparently assessed at the end, not through an onerous and bureaucratic system applied within a price tag.

And don't worry; this simplified system is revenue neutral. The government will collect as much money using the FairTax as it does under the current system, having no effect on current ability to fund government programs. Actually, economists expect economic growth to be around 10.5 percent for the first year, effectively increasing the government's revenue.

Under the FairTax, you would get your entire paycheck and would only pay tax on what you consume, encouraging Americans to do something we do not do well: save. In order to make the FairTax fair, all people would receive a prebate, or advanced rebate, that reimburses them for tax paid up to the poverty line. In other words, you only pay tax for living beyond your necessities.

Without a corporate tax, America will encourage companies to come back to the United States, providing new jobs for Americans. Without embedded taxes factored into the price of a product, American companies can export goods and sell them at prices lower than foreign products.

While the benefits are numerous and the drawbacks are few, I encourage you to question the FairTax Act of 2007. Challenge it. Look for shortfalls. But don't forget to take the time to find credible answers. Read "The FairTax Book" by Neal Boortz and Congressman John Linder. Visit FairTax.org. Search the Web for scholarly criticism. You will see the FairTax stands for innovation and equality. Do you?

—Thomas Davis is a sophomore in Engineering. He can be reached at [thomas.e.davis@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:thomas.e.davis@vanderbilt.edu).

## FACE OFF

### Absence of negative campaigns positively affects election



**KATHERINE MILLER**  
Opinion Editor

**SPENCER MONTALVO**  
Asst Opinion Editor



**AIMEE SOBHANI**  
Columnist

### AGREE:

It is unfortunate that negative advertising has become a staple of political campaigns. For weeks before every election, smarmy politicians dominate the airwaves with fatalistic predictions about what will happen if the competition wins. The spots are simplistic and bleak — and are usually riddled with half-truths, factual distortions and outright fabrications.

It is the negativity of such campaigns that disgusts voters and adversely affects their decisions to vote.

Negative campaigning will keep people away from the polls for three different reasons. First, negative advertising discourages supporters of the candidate who is attacked, particularly those who define themselves as independent voters — if a voter's ties to a candidate depend more on the candidate himself, rather than the candidate's positions. Attack advertising defuses partisan support for the opposition, just as advertising in general reinforces partisan preferences. For a supporter reacting to negative information, abstention from the election may be easier than switching to the attacker.

An alternative explanation is that negative advertising makes the public disenchanted with both candidates. By this account, candidates unintentionally depress turnout among their own supporters by using negative advertising.

Finally, negative campaigning diminishes the power of civic duty and may undermine the legitimacy of the entire electoral process. Campaigns that generate more negative than positive messages may leave voters embittered toward the candidates and the political processes.

As seen with the significant national support for the candidacies of Sens. Barack Obama and John McCain, the public values politicians who can seemingly rise above the vitriol that characterizes attack advertising. After the past decade of bitter partisanship, their messages of hope and honor, respectively, resonate with American voters.

Their refusal to participate in negative campaigning has created significant hurdles for their opponents; should they attempt to go negative, they face a potentially candidacy-threatening backlash from the public. In an election year with so much at stake and with so many undecided voters, no candidate can afford to risk the public stigma of derisive advertising. Unable to slander Obama and McCain, the other candidates must find a way to distinguish themselves on policy issues without contributing to the harsh politics of the past decade.

Notably, the voter turnout in Iowa and New Hampshire has been an overwhelming improvement on prior years. While this likely has much to do with the sheer national interest in this election, the campaigns have largely lacked the nastiness characteristic of the past. Perhaps, if the typical spite were involved, resentful voters would have already tired with this overlong election season, and turnout wouldn't be quite the same. In the long term, this de facto ban on negative advertising may improve the political landscape and discussion in the decades to come.

Rather than sling mud or engage in partisan bickering, politicians should deliver messages to the electorate which detail their policy points and provide substantive reasons for why the public should not vote for the other guy.

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### DISAGREE:

With the presidential election a mere 10 months away, hopeful candidates are doing everything they can to convince the general public they deserve to lead our country. The main contenders in the race have yet to be decided, but negative advertisements are already appearing in American homes all over the country. Though people claim to hate the role that negative advertising plays in the political process, it is a necessary evil — or is it even an evil at all?

Negative advertising has a bad reputation for a reason. Obviously, it seems a bit mean-spirited and unsportsmanlike for a candidate to attack his or her opponent. In addition, hateful commercials have the ability to trick viewers into focusing on minor, irrelevant details instead of meaningful issues.

Though negative advertising has a dark side, it is a very smart political tactic. Exposing an opponent's weakness and capitalizing on it makes perfect sense. Electoral campaigns are much like war: attack from the enemy's weak side to gain the greatest advantage.

Hostile ads also allow voters to see behind a candidate's angelic facade and remind them that the candidate is not as perfect as he or she claims to be. Someone needs to point out a candidate's flaws.

According to BNET, a division of a media-based company, "Ads containing information about the sponsor's opponent have more accurate policy content than so-called 'positive' or advocacy ads, which laud the achievements or vision of an individual candidate." Additionally, BNET mentions the fact negative ads allow both sides of a certain issue to be presented.

While it is true negative advertisements contribute to voter apathy (a survey conducted by BNET showed 75 percent of people believe negative ads contribute to political cynicism), the media's general coverage of elections is also a factor that depresses voter turnout. National media sometimes tend to focus on rather frivolous matters when it comes to elections, such as John Edwards's expensive haircuts for example. No wonder some people think that elections are a joke and choose not to participate.

The truth of the matter is that negative advertising works. For example, in 2004, a series of advertisements featuring the "Swiftboat Veterans for Truth" hurt the Kerry campaign a great deal. Bush's use of negative advertisements (according to the Washington Post, about 75 percent of Bush's ads were negative) probably gave him a slight edge over Kerry. Think about it: Who ended up winning that election?

Also, negative advertisements can test a candidate's ability to deal with the harsh reality of being president. After all, no matter who is running the country, there's always someone in the media criticizing his decisions and badmouthing his policies. A candidate may as well become acclimated to the large-scale negativity that he or she will have to experience on a daily basis for the next four years.

Americans should want their next potential leader to be able to deal with criticism, and negative advertisements can serve the purpose of weeding out those individuals who are ill-equipped to handle the pressures of running the country.

—Aimee Sobhani is a freshman in the College of Arts and Science. She can be reached at [aimee.f.sobhani@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:aimee.f.sobhani@vanderbilt.edu).

### OPINION POLICY

The Vanderbilt Hustler opinion section aims to stimulate discussion in the Vanderbilt community. In that spirit, columnists, guest columnists and authors of letters to the editor are expected to provide logical argument to back their views. Unreasonable arguments, arguments in bad faith or arguments in vain between columnists have no place in The Hustler and will not be published. The Hustler welcomes reader viewpoints and offers three methods of expression: letters to the editor, guest columns and feedback on our Web site.

Letters must be submitted either in person by the author to the Hustler office or via e-mail to [opinion@vanderbilthustler.com](mailto:opinion@vanderbilthustler.com). Letters via e-mail must either come

from a Vanderbilt e-mail address where the identity of the sender is clear or be accompanied with a phone call to the editor-in-chief. With rare exception, all letters must be received by 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday or Sunday. The editor reserves the right to edit and condense submissions for length as well as clarity.

Lengthy letters that focus on an issue affecting students might be considered for a guest column at the editor's discretion.

All submissions become the property of The Hustler and must conform to the legal standards of Vanderbilt Student Communications, of which The Hustler is a division.

### CORRECTION POLICY

Accuracy is our profession. As the "Voice of Vanderbilt," we are committed to ensuring our work is fair and accurate. Errors of substance will be corrected. With very rare exception, these corrections will be listed on Page 2.

Bring corrections to the Hustler office in Sarratt 130 or e-mail us at [editor@vanderbilthustler.com](mailto:editor@vanderbilthustler.com). You may also report them by telephone to the news line at (615) 322-2424 or the editor-in-chief at (615) 322-3757.

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**Deadlines are like magic!**  
**Katherine Miller, Opinion Editor**  
 President Bush is fun because he always brings completely unfounded optimism to utterly bleak situations. This week Israel and Palestine; next week the entire Spears family.  
 But, this time, I believe in our president's magic. A peace treaty will totally happen between Israel and Palestine in the next year. Sure, they hate each other, but whatever, right?  
 I like to imagine this taking place around a campfire. Israel and Palestine sitting on logs, making s'mores, drinking ginger ale, talking about theology, lost loves and T-Pain.  
 Suddenly, Israel catches Palestine's eye and, well, there's a twinkle there — a little glimmer of something special — and maybe it's not just the crisp, wintry air. It's unspoken, but they both know: They can share the West Bank.  
 Sixty years of national war over! Thousands of years of religious conflict done! Bush gets carried off the field like Rudy! All they needed was the gentle constraint of a deadline.

**Fundamental differences make peace treaty unlikely in short term**  
**Aimee Sobhani, Columnist**  
 The Middle East has always been a hotbed of violence and conflict. It seems unlikely a viable peace treaty that solves the Israeli/Palestinian conflict will materialize this year for many reasons.  
 The Israelis and the Palestinians are stubborn. Neither side will compromise. Squabbles over a few miles of land doom the entire peace process. With both sides unwilling to resolve minor issues, how can they manufacture a solution to solve the major problems?  
 Obviously, the Palestinians and the Middle East as a whole do not acknowledge Israel has the right to exist. Until they accept Israel's existence, no treaty will be able to stop the violence.  
 Israel also shares part of the blame. Its attacks on the Palestinians seem rather unjust; it's almost a David versus Goliath situation.  
 Only when both sides realize how devastating the violence is will a peace treaty come in to being. Unfortunately, nothing suggests that this realization will occur in the near future.

## QUICK SHOTS

One Issue, Four Responses

### Is President Bush's prediction for an Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty possible in the next year?

**President Bush's image in Mid East detrimental to peace process**  
**Jarred Amato, Editor in Chief**  
 President Bush recently promised a "signed peace treaty" between Israel and Palestine by the time he leaves office.  
 Despite the noble intentions, it was unwise for Bush to make such a claim for a few reasons.  
 For starters, expecting a deal to be made on such short notice, especially when the two sides disagree on major issues like the status of Jerusalem, is naive.  
 Additionally, there is the Palestinian perception that the United States, a longtime ally of Israel, has impure intentions in orchestrating an agreement.  
 Bush, a staunch Israeli supporter, already has a terrible image in the Middle East, which makes it even more difficult for him to convince Palestinians that he is acting in good faith.  
 Attempting to alter that image, Bush has come down hard on Israel recently, but that hasn't made much of a difference for most Arab leaders, who are eagerly awaiting the election of a new president in November.

**Expediency should not take precedence over substance**  
**Haley Swenson, Guest Columnist**  
 Though official proclamations may be made against continued violence in the near future by either Israel or Palestine, long-lasting peace will not come to the region until grievances on both sides have been settled in substantive ways and significant compromises have been made.  
 Any treaty that fails to address these considerable grievances only masks them.  
 The insufficiency of such a treaty makes President Bush's expedited peace process not only unlikely to happen in both the short and long terms, but, in fact, undesirable, if world leaders begin to prioritize speedy diplomacy over actual progress.  
 —Interested in writing a Quick Shot? To become a participant or to suggest an issue or question, e-mail [opinion@vanderbilthustler.com](mailto:opinion@vanderbilthustler.com).

## THE RANT



What is on your mind? The Rant is your place to anonymously sound off on any issue you want. Send in your rants with the subject "Rant" to: [opinion@vanderbilthustler.com](mailto:opinion@vanderbilthustler.com)

"Why is there such an imbalance of reactionary right-wing commentators in The Hustler? First Mike Warren and now Katherine Miller? Why do they need to write in The Hustler? Mike Warren is associate editor of The Torch, isn't he? Why doesn't he write, you know, in his own paper? If the Torch is doing so badly they need to find other outlets, then they should work on that, not take their liberal-hatred to yet another place. It's time The Hustler worked on providing an actual sampling of the pleasantly well-balanced political atmosphere at Vanderbilt, not printing the vitriol that would fit in Lickskillet, Ala."

"The weather should make up its mind. It's either winter, or it isn't."

"Somebody call MJ! The aliens from Space Jam are back, and they stole Ross Neltner's b-ball skills!"

"Why is everybody sick all of a sudden? The first weekend back during rush is the worst possible time to be sick."

"Ross Neltner's stat line for Saturday's loss at Kentucky: two points, three rebounds, five fouls, seven turnovers. He needs to be benched in favor of Darshawn McClellan now."

Compiled by Katherine Miller

COLUMN

# Obama combines hope and substance

**MARK MELASKY**  
 Guest Columnist

While it is the official position of the College Democrats to remain neutral in primary elections, we feel it is important to examine the qualifications of the frontrunners as we approach the Tennessee Primary. This column will focus on Sen. Barack Obama, winner of the Iowa caucus.  
 Obama captured national attention with his powerful speech at the 2004 Democratic Convention. He told us his fairytale of success. He told us about how his father was raised in a village in Kenya and got a scholarship to study in America. He told us about how his dad left, and he was raised by his mother's white family. In his book he talks about using drugs to make him forget his ethnic identity crisis. However, throughout all of this, he was able to graduate from Columbia University and Harvard Law School.  
 Overcoming extreme adversity to become a U.S. senator is impressive, but it does not earn a free pass to a presidential nomination. In his 2004 speech he asked, "Do we participate in a politics of cynicism, or do we participate in a politics of hope?" This is why Obama is different. For the past eight years this country has been deeply divided. Campaigns have been based on the fear of terrorism and the disapproval of gays. President George W. Bush sank John Kerry's swiftboat. To hear a candidate speak about change, hope and belief in ourselves is a nice change of pace.

Obama's campaign platform is not based on false hopes and idealism. He intends to remove all of our combat brigades from Iraq within 16 months. He wants to reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent, invest in a clean energy future, achieve oil independence and restore U.S. leadership on climate change. His healthcare plan, which is similar to the plan of Congress members, focuses on offering affordable health insurance to every American regardless of illness or pre-existing conditions.

**There have been questions about whether people would vote for him because of his youth or skin color. Voters in Iowa and New Hampshire have answered them."**

I encourage you to visit his Web site for detailed solutions on many more issues.  
 There have been questions about whether people would vote for him because of his youth or skin color. Voters in Iowa and New Hampshire have answered them. He is also beating every Republican candidate in national polls. After soundly passing his first tests in the national spotlight, Obama has demonstrated his ability to reach voters. It is the opinion of this columnist he would make an outstanding president.

If you are interested in working with the Obama campaign, an office was opened in Nashville over the break at 1940 Air Lane Drive. Their number is (615) 250-7837. Feel free to Email me for more information.

—Mark Melasky is a senior in Engineering and President of Vanderbilt College Democrats. He can be reached at [mark.n.melasky@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:mark.n.melasky@vanderbilt.edu).

A CONVERSATION WITH HARRY BELAFONTE

Harry BELAFONTE  
 Monday, January 14, 2008  
 Reception 5 p.m. • Lecture 6 p.m. • Student Life Center

Renaissance man Harry Belafonte does it all—sings, acts, writes, produces. His significant contributions to our cultural life are matched only by his decades-long commitment to the struggle for human rights across the globe.

With a special performance by Voices of Praise

This lecture begins at 6 p.m. and is preceded by a complimentary reception at 5 p.m. in the Student Life Center. Parking is available in Terrace Place Garage (21st Avenue South and Terrace Place).

This event is free and open to the public. Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-seated basis.

For more information, please e-mail [cls@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:cls@vanderbilt.edu), call 343-2574, or visit [www.vanderbilt.edu/chancellor/cls](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/chancellor/cls).

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2007/2008 Chancellor's LECTURE SERIES

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



## SPORTS

## THE RUN DOWN

## W2W4

**TODAY**  
Men's Basketball  
#7 Georgetown vs.  
#20 Pittsburgh  
6 PM, ESPN

Coming off a dramatic win against UConn, senior center Roy Hibbert leads the Hoyas (13-1) into a tough matchup against a Panthers squad (14-2) hungry to prove they can contend in the Big East.

## PLAYER OF THE WEEK

**Leigh-Ann Axt, Women's Swimming**  
Despite her team's loss to Miami, Axt captured her 12th individual race of the season by winning the 100-yard butterfly on Friday.

## GAME OF THE WEEK

**WBB: Vanderbilt 72, Mississippi State 50**  
The Commodores (12-5, 1-1) started out conference play with a bang, holding the Lady Bulldogs to 29 percent shooting. Four Commodores scored in double figures, led by sophomore guard Merideth Marsh's 15 points.

## THEY SAID IT...

"After coming from 16 points down in the game, it was heartbreaking to lose."

— Shan Foster after the Commodores (16-1, 1-1) suffered their first loss of the season to Kentucky.

## DAILY #

27

Points Kentucky scored off Vanderbilt's 22 turnovers in the Commodores' 79-73 loss in Lexington.

## STANDINGS

**Eastern Division:**  
Tennessee 2-0, 14-1

Florida 2-0, 15-2

Kentucky 1-0, 7-7

Vanderbilt 1-1, 16-1

Georgia 0-1, 9-5

South Carolina 0-2, 8-8

**Western Division:**  
Mississippi State 2-0 11-5

Arkansas 2-0 13-3

Ole Miss 1-1 14-1

Alabama 0-2 11-6

Auburn 0-2 9-5

LSU 0-2 7-9

Compiled by: DAVID NAMM

## Mental errors prove to be undoing

## Twenty-two turnovers doom Commodores.

by WILL GIBBONS  
Senior Sports Reporter

Winning despite a less than crisp performance became a theme during Vanderbilt's 16-game winning streak. On Saturday, living on the edge finally caught up to the Commodores.

Vanderbilt committed 22 turnovers, was out-rebounded 45-23 and at times had questionable shot selection. It also shot well below its 74.5 free throw percentage in making 16 of 25 from the foul line.

Perhaps it was the fact that 16 of those turnovers were committed by seniors that is most alarming.

"Seniors need to take responsibility and take control of the game," Foster said. "After coming from 16 points down in the game, it was heartbreaking to lose."

Though the Commodores showed some grit in eliminating a 46-30 second-half deficit, they appeared tired by the game's end.

The offense in the second overtime lacked the same flow it did in the comeback of the final 14 minutes of regulation. Despite the extra time, the team finished with a season-low 73 points.

"I didn't think our shot selection in the second overtime was quite what I was hoping for, but the key to this game was the first 10 minutes of the game, it wasn't the last 40 — a disappointing way for the game to get started," said coach Kevin Stallings.

The Commodores' comeback may have had a similar look to their December comeback at DePaul, in which Vanderbilt



Senior Alex Gordon stands dejected after the Commodores' fate was sealed. Vandy, now 16-1, lost to Kentucky for the first time since 2005.

rallied from 18 points down to beat the Blue Demons in overtime.

Still, playing at Kentucky is different from playing at DePaul, as evidenced by Kentucky's stingy defense that fed off the crowd and forced 22 Commodore turnovers.

"Rupp Arena was the loudest crowd and had the most people that I have ever played in front of," Alex Gordon said. "We need to control our emotions and come out ready to play."

Vanderbilt's 22 turnovers represent a trend that waited 17 games to finally present itself as a problem.

"It really doesn't matter what kind of defense you play against," Stallings said. "I'm surprised we only average 16 a game; it seems like 25 to me."

And while it is easy to blame the players for turning the ball over, Stallings puts it on himself to have the team ready to play.

"If you coach a team well, you can get them to go to the offensive boards, take care of the ball and take good shots," he said.

There is plenty of time to improve, but it was clear on Saturday that Vanderbilt did not have its best stuff.

"I don't think we brought our mental edge," Stallings said. "I don't think our discipline was very good on offense or on defense."

With Tennessee, Florida and Ole Miss all on the horizon, finding the mental edge will be key. ■

-Will Gibbons can be reached at [william.l.gibbons@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:william.l.gibbons@vanderbilt.edu).

## KENTUCKY 79, VANDY 73 (2 OT)

**Summary:** Vanderbilt's furious second-half rally fell short as coach Billy Gillespie won his SEC debut.

**Player of the Game:** Kentucky forward Patrick Patterson. The freshman played like a seasoned veteran in his first SEC game, registering 23 points and 12 rebounds.

**It was over when:** Vanderbilt senior guard Alex Gordon missed a 3-pointer with 22 seconds to play, giving Kentucky the ball back with a 4-point lead.

**Quotable:** "This was a very good win for us against a very good team. We never quit and hit a couple of key shots down the stretch. (Vanderbilt) had their chances and missed some of their shots." — Kentucky coach Billy Gillespie.

## Vandy's run fun while it lasted

## No longer unbeaten, Does look toward larger goals.

by ANDREW HARD  
Sports Editor

All good things must eventually come to an end (well, except the Patriots' run). Vanderbilt's undefeated run did so quite suddenly on Saturday in hostile Rupp Arena, though not without a spectacular comeback staged in an attempt to extend perfection another day.

"There's not a lot I have yet to learn about this team's character," said coach Kevin Stallings following the 79-73 double-overtime loss. "It was certainly there long before we had to try and come back in this game, and it will certainly be there because that's who these guys are."

After the most successful start in team history, the Commodores will need that character in a big way, as they are suddenly staring at a daunting upcoming schedule.

In its next four games, Vandy will travel to play NCAA Tournament hopefuls Tennessee, Ole Miss and Florida sandwiching a home game against struggling LSU.

This means that the Commodores (1-1 in SEC) are staring down a 2-4 conference record if they cannot win a key game in a hostile environment. That hypothetical hole could be insurmountable if the Commodores want a shot at the SEC East crown.

The Commodores may certainly be more talented than the Rebels and Gators this season, as they were over the Wildcats yesterday.

However, the great equalizer in college basketball is always a hostile home crowd, and nowhere was that more apparent than Saturday in Rupp.

"The thing that bothered me was that it looked like [the crowd] bothered our seniors more than it did our freshmen," Stallings said. "I think it makes a difference,



Coach Kevin Stallings looks to lead the Commodores to their first SEC East title since the 1992-93 season.

and I think the crowd was definitely a factor today."

The numbers may back up Stallings' assertion. Shan Foster may have hit one of the most difficult shots of his life to tie the game, but he still committed five turnovers.

Ross Neltner, a Kentucky native with 30 friends and family members in attendance,

finished with an uncharacteristic seven turnovers, two points and five fouls. Conversely, Darshawn McClellan had the best game of his Vanderbilt career with 10 points and three rebounds.

Defend the schedule if you want, but Vanderbilt has not beaten a ranked team this season, and only one opponent (Wake) is seriously contending for an at-large bid in the NCAA Tournament.

While many wins have been impressive with Vandy's outstanding scoring output, the Selection Committee needs quality wins.

Thus, we still have a lot to learn about the identity of this Commodore team, and they have much more to prove.

Can they win against tight pressure defenses night in and night out? They got through UMass with flying colors but had significant trouble getting into their sets against Kentucky, especially in the first half and in the first overtime, when they had all the momentum coming out of regulation.

Can they win on the road against a quality opponent? The next two weeks may be the best opportunities they have.

Can they sustain consistent defense against high-powered offenses? They did a fantastic job containing Kentucky but have struggled otherwise.

Tennessee will provide a huge obstacle on Thursday, as they lead the SEC in scoring average at 86.7 points per game.

If they do all these things, Vandy can and should win the SEC East. It's not usually worth worrying after a single loss, but this team has gone so long without one and has never had to deal with the adversity that follows a defeat.

That's why Saturday's game was so surprising and poses so many questions about the future of the 2008 Commodore squad.

If they play as they did in their first 16 victories, they will provide the necessary answers. ■

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## Bennett brothers shared NFL dream

by JARRED AMATO  
Editor in Chief

As his baby brother stood at the podium last Thursday, talking to a throng of reporters about his decision to enter the NFL Draft, Grant Bennett could not stop smiling.

It was a moment that both he and Earl had been dreaming about since they were little.

"It was pretty gratifying to see him up there," Grant Bennett said. "(Making it to the NFL) is something that we talked about growing up. It was a dream of both of ours, and it's good to see him finally fulfill it."

While many older brothers would have been jealous of their younger brother's fame, Grant Bennett could not have been happier for Earl.

"God has a plan for us all, and his plan for me was different than his plan for my brother," Grant Bennett said. "Earl being able to realize his dream is just as good as me realizing my own."

Grant Bennett, a 24-year-old graduate student at Alabama State and former player at Myles College, said he and Earl have competed against one another in everything. There was a natural rivalry on the gridiron, where Grant played defensive back and Earl wide receiver.

The one-on-one matchups were often heated, but as Grant put it, "it was all in competition."

Asked if he could still shut down his baby brother and future NFL wide receiver, Grant nodded confidently.

"Oh, yeah," he said. "But Earl's won his fair share of the battles, too. As long as I get the bragging rights one time, I'm cool."

Growing up, Grant said Earl was just like any younger brother.

"He was very spoiled, always wanted things his way," Grant Bennett said.

At the same time, Grant could tell there was something special about Earl.

"I knew he had the potential, but like I told him, talent will only get you so far," Grant Bennett said. "It's about how hard you work to separate yourself from the other players. Once he got the work ethic that he has, I knew the sky was the limit for him."

As Earl Bennett prepares for April's draft, Grant knows teams can't go wrong drafting his younger brother.

"His ability speaks for itself. Anybody could pull up his stats, but Earl's also got character," Grant Bennett said. "That's the No. 1 question coming into any draft — character issues. They do a thorough background check, and they leave no stones unturned, so his biggest asset is his character."

Earl Bennett agreed.

"If they want a great guy on and off the field, I can provide that," he said. "Hopefully, I can provide some excitement on the field, just go out and work hard. I'm always willing to take that extra mile to get better." ■

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The Vanderbilt Hustler presents

# WHO'S NOW?

## WHAT IS THIS?

We're running a 32-athlete, single-elimination tournament to find Vanderbilt's biggest star. You can check out the voting criteria, bracket and voting schedule below.

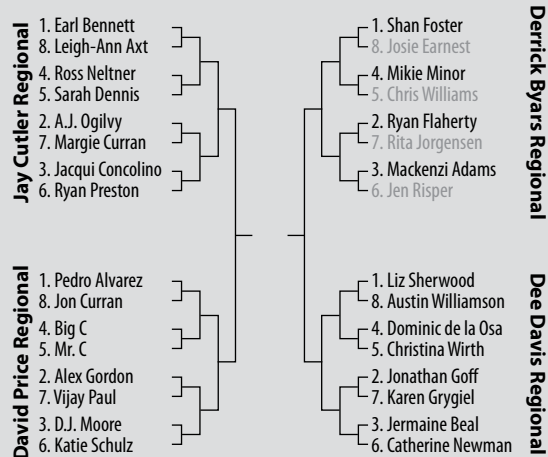
## HOW DO I VOTE?

Go to [www.INSIDEVANDY.COM](http://www.INSIDEVANDY.COM) to cast your vote. Voting for the first round of the Jay Cutler Regional ends Tuesday at 5 p.m. Results will be posted in the following issue.

## VOTING CRITERIA

- Individual accolades**  
How big is your trophy room? Have you broken any school records, earned All-SEC honors or taken home any big-time awards?
- Team success**  
You may be talented, but remember the name on the front of the jersey is more important than the one on the back. Have you led your team to the Big Dance or won an SEC title?
- National exposure**  
You may be a hero in Nashville, but do people around the country even know you exist? Have you earned All-American status or appeared on Mel Kiper's Draft Board?
- Fan appeal**  
You may be big-time, but when you walk around campus, can fans even recognize you? Do they wear your jersey, cheer for you at games and friend (maybe even poke) you on Facebook?
- "It" factor**  
It's hard to quantify, but do you have the intangibles every star needs?

## BRACKET



## SCHEDULE

**FIRST ROUND**  
1/11: Derrick Byars Regional  
1/14: Jay Cutler Regional  
1/16: David Price Regional  
1/18: Dee Davis Regional

**SECOND ROUND**  
1/21: Byars Regional  
1/23: Cutler Regional  
1/25: Price Regional  
1/28: Davis Regional

**QUARTERFINALS**  
1/30: Byars and Cutler Regionals  
2/1: Price and Davis Regionals

**SEMIFINALS**  
2/4: Byars Winner vs. Davis Winner  
2/6: Cutler Winner vs. Price Winner

**FINALS**  
2/8: Byars/Davis Winner vs. Cutler/Price Winner

**REVEAL CHAMPION**  
2/11

## JAY CUTLER REGIONAL



**1** **EARL BENNETT, JUNIOR**  
*Football, Wide Receiver*

- SEC's all-time leader in receptions (236)
- Biletnikoff Award semi-finalist, first team All-SEC
- Recently declared for NFL Draft
- No. 10 football jersey most popular among students

**8** **LEIGH-ANN AXT, FRESHMAN**  
*Swimming*

- Has won 12 individual races in IM and butterfly this season
- Leader of the second-year program
- Has a bright future with black and gold

**4** **ROSS NELTNER, SENIOR**  
*Basketball, Power forward*

- Two-year starter for nationally ranked Commodores
- "Nelly" does the "little things" every team needs
- Played center for last season's Sweet 16 squad
- Averaging 7.9 points and 5.5 rebounds per game

**5** **SARAH DENNIS, SENIOR**  
*Soccer, Forward*

- Scored four goals and added two assists in '07
- Four-year starter on a successful team
- Also an accomplished artist: paints murals around Nashville

**2** **A.J. OGILVY, FRESHMAN**  
*Basketball, Center*

- Australian sensation averaging 19.4 points and 7.1 rebounds per game
- Potential SEC Freshman of the Year and future NBA draft pick
- Australian flag seen in student section for every game
- One of Vandy's most recognizable athletes

**7** **MARGIE CURRAN, SENIOR**  
*Lacrosse, Attack*

- Team-high 50 goals and 14 assists (64 points) in '07
- Second team All-American
- Fifth all-time in both goals and points
- Helped Commodores host first NCAA Tournament game in school history

**3** **JACQUI CONCOLINO, JUNIOR**  
*Golf*

- All-American recorded 10 top-10 finishes in 12 events in '07
- Won the NCAA Central Regional
- Named Team USA's MVP in U.S.A. vs. Japan Collegiate Golf Championship
- Good chance we'll see her on the LPGA Tour sometime soon

**6** **RYAN PRESTON, SENIOR**  
*Tennis*

- Two-time first team All-SEC selection
- Ranked No. 24 in the ITA southeast region singles poll
- No. 1 player for team that advanced to NCAA Tournament

## THE HUSTLER'S TAKE:

Axt is going to have a fine career on West End, but she's a major underdog against Bennett, the prolific wide receiver who's on his way to the NFL.

## THE HUSTLER'S TAKE:

The "4-5" matchup is always the toughest, and this one is no exception. Neltner has been the Commodores' "glue guy," while the multi-talented Dennis excels on the pitch and in the studio.

## THE HUSTLER'S TAKE:

Curran has a chance to become the best lacrosse player in school history, but it will be tough for her to knock off Ogilvy, the center with a killer game and sweet accent.

## THE HUSTLER'S TAKE:

Preston has had a great career, but it'll be difficult for him to upset Concolino, a future star on the LPGA Tour.

## DERRICK BYARS REGIONAL FIRST ROUND RESULTS



<b>1</b> SHAN FOSTER ..... 88%	<b>SHAN FOSTER</b>	<b>DERRICK BYARS REGIONAL CHAMP</b> (Named Jan. 30)	<b>RYAN FLAHERTY</b> 75%.....	<b>RYAN FLAHERTY</b> <b>2</b>
<b>8</b> JOSIE EARNEST ..... 12%			25%.....	<b>RITA JORGENSEN</b> <b>7</b>
<b>4</b> MIKIE MINOR..... 58%	<b>MIKIE MINOR</b>		50.3%.....	<b>MACKENZI ADAMS</b> <b>3</b>
<b>5</b> CHRIS WILLIAMS..... 42%			49.7%.....	<b>JEN RISPER</b> <b>6</b>

## Axt leads Vandy swimmers

Commodores host first meet in 15 years, fall to Miami (Ohio).

HUSTLER STAFF REPORT

When the Hurricanes tore through the Centennial Sportsplex on Friday, they certainly left their mark.

The Vanderbilt Commodores lost 186-74 to Miami in their first home meet in 15 years in spite of a valiant effort by freshman Leigh-Ann Axt, whose 12th individual-race win of the year came in the 100-yard butterfly.

"I think overall it went well," said coach Jeremy Organ. "Everyone was excited to swim in front of the home crowd. We had a lot of real good times."

"The girls were a little tired from the

break. Overall, I'm very happy with what I saw."

Strong performances were turned in by freshmen Rachel Dyer, who finished second in the 1000-yard freestyle, and Jennifer Molchan, who finished third in the 200-yard freestyle as well as second in the 100-yard and 500-yard freestyle.

Axt, however, stole the show. In addition to her individual win, she finished second in the 200-yard freestyle.

In the day's final event, the 200-yard freestyle relay, the team of Axt, Christina Chao, Alex Jennings and Molchan finished second with a time of 1:42.11. ■

## LSU defeats Vandy women

Sylvia Fowles scored 18 points and grabbed 11 rebounds as the No. 11 LSU Tigers (13-3, 2-0) defeated Vanderbilt 62-51 on Sunday afternoon. The Commodores (12-5, 1-1) set a season low with just 10 points in the first half.

LSU led by as many as 16 before Vandy cut the deficit to five on a Jessica Mooney free throw with 6:31 remaining. A three-point play by Fowles made it 47-37 with 4:52 remaining, and Vandy never got closer than seven the rest of the way.

Mooney led Vandy with 15 points while Liz Sherwood added 13.



CHRIS PHARE / The Vanderbilt Hustler  
Ashlee Bridge and the Commodores play their next game at home Thursday against No. 10 Georgia.

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	7			2				
		8			1			6
	9	6		1	8			
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1/11/08 SOLUTIONS

2	7	6	9	5	4	3	8	1
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9	6	2	5	4	3	1	7	8
5	9	7	4	6	2	8	1	3
1	3	8	7	9	5	2	6	4
6	2	4	3	8	1	5	9	7

## CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Lug about
  - Principle of good conduct
  - Wood source
  - Truant GI
  - Canine tether
  - In good health
  - Mr. Arnaz
  - Areas of interest
  - Perfect memory
  - Roofing stone
  - Felder's need
  - "Galahad"
  - Themes
  - Sister of Osiris
  - Indeed
  - Earth or Mars
  - Tide type
  - Charmingly deceptive
  - Purplish brown
  - Mocamedes
  - Desert's land
  - Hoodwinked
  - Highly excited
  - Pelted with rocks
  - Pindar product
  - Drum with fingers
  - Park, CO
  - Bodily distresses
  - Kidnapped to be a sailor
  - Abominable snowman
  - Memorandum
  - To come
  - Mown expanse
  - Dregs
  - Football kicks
  - English school

- DOWN**
- Small amount
  - Be in debt to
  - Tex-Mex choice
  - "Murder in the Cathedral" dramatist
  - Napoleon's isle of exile
  - Blue shade
  - Whisker
  - Man or Dogs
  - Classy
  - Weaving diagonal ribs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
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1/14/08

1/11/08 SOLUTIONS

I	R	S	L	I	Q	U	O	R	H	A	L	E	
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