



**The Dores did not play that well Monday against Division II Tusculum in their 80-79 exhibition victory ...**

For more, see **Sports**, page 6



**Campaigning on Facebook and MySpace is so last campaign season ...**

For more, go to **InsideVandy.com**

**It does not make sense to support and oppose two versions of equally justified murder. . .**

For more, see **Opinion**, page 4

**TODAY'S WEATHER**



Sunny, 53/31  
Extended forecast, page 2

# The Vanderbilt Hustler

THE VOICE OF VANDERBILT SINCE 1888

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2007 • 119<sup>TH</sup> YEAR, NO. 71

## THE WALL

compiled by SYDNEY WILMER

### TODAY Blood drive

The blood drive will begin at 7 a.m. and last until 5 p.m. on the second floor of the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital. Appointments are suggested and can be made at [www.givelife.org](http://www.givelife.org). Use sponsor code Vandy19.

### TODAY Documentary screenings

The Law School Justice Program will sponsor a screening of "Of Civil Wrongs and Rights: The Fred Korematsu Story" at 5:30 p.m. in the Moore Room.

### TODAY '41st Annual CMA Awards'

"Country Music's Biggest Night" kicks off at 7 p.m. at the Sommet Center. If you are not going to the event, see page 2 for street closings downtown.

### TODAY New Russian Cinema

Today is the final day of the film series "New Russian Cinema: Three Nights of Post-Soviet Reality." Although in Russian, the films will have English subtitles and a brief introduction by Professor Irina Makoveeva. It begins at 7 p.m. in Stevenson Center 4309.

### TODAY Lecture on AIDS epidemic

Dr. Sten Vermund, director of the Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health, will speak on "The AIDS Epidemic: Prevention and Treatment in Zambia" in Furman Hall, Room 114 at 7:30 p.m. Gregory Barz, professor and leader of the Kampala Project, will also speak about Kenyan popular music.

### THURSDAY, NOV. 8 'The Tempest'

VU Theatre will present William Shakespeare's "The Tempest" in Neely Auditorium at 8 p.m. Undergrads can see the show for free with their Vanderbilt ID.

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



# Meet Jean

*Looking past the label: Asian-American*

by SYDNEY WILMER  
Asst News Editor

KATIE DePAOLA  
Staff Reporter

### Looking past the label

This series was inspired by the idea that each person has a distinct story, and it is important to get to know each other in order to make this big world a bit smaller. It is also based on the notion that our differences are what make us unique.

Only by facing our own misunderstandings can we begin to break down the walls we have created.

**Just reading about these individuals isn't enough to understand their struggles, passions and unique stories. To watch these students discuss identity in their own words, go to:**



### People might think I...

- ... am a math genius
- ... love rice
- ... can't speak English
- ... am fresh off the boat
- ... am shy, docile or submissive
- ... know karate

### But...

- ... though I'm actually better at math, I majored in English. Go figure.
- ... I love nerds and all types of junk food and used to eat a box of Pop-Tarts a day.
- ... I definitely struggle with Korean.
- ... I was born in New York and have only been to Korea a handful of times.
- ... nope, total dragon lady here.
- ... I almost failed high school gym.

Labels do not matter to senior Jean Son. Though it has taken time, she can talk about it now because she finally feels comfortable with herself.

"I've struggled with issues of identity, about fitting in and issues of class and ethnic differences," Son explained calmly.

As an Asian-American, cultural belonging involves more than one would expect. She is not simply Korean, and she is more than just American. But sometimes neither description seems to apply.

Son considers America her home, but she finds herself firmly in the minority at Vanderbilt. And when visiting her father in Korea, she feels out of place in a different way, often labeled a foreigner and forced to deal with curious stares.

So for Son, fitting in depends less on the ideas of others and more about self-confidence and determination.

Her experiences this summer in America and Korea highlighted the struggle of identity creation, forcing Son to ask what happens when labels do not fit.

### American in Korea

In Korea, people around Son considered her American.

Please see **MEET JEAN**, page 3

## WORLD NEWS BRIEF

### 2007 becomes deadliest year of war for American troops despite recent downturn in violence

The U.S. military announced six new deaths Tuesday, making 2007 the bloodiest year for American troops in Iraq despite a recent decline in casualties and a sharp drop in roadside bombings that Washington links to Iran.

With nearly two months left in the year, the annual toll is now 853 — three more than the previous worst of 850 in 2004.

But the grim milestone comes as the Pentagon points toward other encouraging signs as well — growing security in Baghdad and other former militant strongholds that could help consolidate the gains against extremists.

SOURCE: AP

—For more news briefs from around the world, nation and campus, see page 2.

# Committee lists chancellor qualifications

by DAVID BROWN  
Staff Reporter

The Chancellor Search Committee has begun the process of selecting and interviewing candidates for Vanderbilt's next leader.

The Chancellor Search Advisory Committee recently concluded a 12-week effort to profile the kind of candidate the university desires.

The committee submitted its findings to the Search Committee in a position scope, which details the state of the university and the challenges the next chancellor will need to address.

Some of the challenges listed include recruiting and retaining an impressive faculty, bolstering graduate programs, building the next generation of residential colleges, and strengthening Vanderbilt as a whole.

The Advisory Committee sought feedback from the entire Vanderbilt community, from Medical Center staff to the Faculty Senate.

Students were encouraged to participate in the search process as well.

Despite low turnout at some of the committee's listening sessions, Vanderbilt Student Government President and Advisory Committee member Cara Bilotta said student opinion was important.

"We still received valuable input from the students through the sessions and the e-mail surveys," she said.

From the various responses, the Advisory Committee formed a list of personal and professional qualifications for the next chancellor, including providing intellectual leadership and committing to a diverse Vanderbilt.

"The consistent theme throughout the faculty, student body and staff was that the next chancellor (should) provide balance and transparency, whether it is between teaching and research or academics and social environment," Bilotta said.

But even with this call for balance and transparency, the process by which the Board of Trust chooses the next chancellor will be "extremely confidential," said Mike Schoenfeld, vice chancellor for public affairs.

"Schools of Vanderbilt's size usually go about these types of searches quietly, with no public interviews and no set time table," he said.

Some students said they would like a transparent search process.

"The administration is not doing enough to communicate with students, and the process should be very open," said sophomore Chris Baity. "I would like to know who the candidates are and their backgrounds."

Although there is no firm deadline for choosing the next chancellor, the Board of Trust is "eager to move to the next chapter," said one board member in an e-mail.

Overall, student opinion on the search varied widely.

Some students, like senior Tinesha Allen, want the next chancellor to focus on "increasing endowment and improving the value of Vanderbilt."

But junior Julie Won disagreed the chancellor would have a great impact.

"Whomever they chose, it won't affect student life," she said. ■

# Student organizations duplicate efforts

by KELLY SWOPE  
Staff Reporter

Vanderbilt has over 311 registered student organizations, but some students feel they are not all necessary.

This proliferation of organizations is raising concern at universities across the country, said an Oct. 27 article published by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

"It seems like there are so many organizations that they are overdoing their cause," said freshman Phil Greenwald. "When a cause is overdone, it loses its meaning."

However, some argue that while the themes may be similar, each student group has a different approach.

Face AIDS and VandyCARES are two student groups that raise awareness of HIV and AIDS but have slightly different goals. Face AIDS was started by students who participated in last year's Kampala Project, a Maymester service-learning

program in Uganda. The group aims to educate others about the international AIDS pandemic and support local efforts to help victims of HIV and AIDS.

VandyCARES leads most of the local initiatives and is collaborating with Face AIDS and the Global Health Council to plan World AIDS Week in December, said president Supriya Sarkar. Their goal is to reach out to Nashville AIDS victims and provide "provocative" information to the Vanderbilt and Nashville communities.

Freshman Shivali Sarawgi, who has considered starting a student organization, feels this collaboration benefits all of campus.

"If people doing similar things could work together they could do more," she said.

Still, the number of student groups continues to grow.

Even more groups have been started since September, when 311 groups were registered at the Office of the Dean of

Students.

At the end of October, freshman Ronald Yim resurrected an inactive chapter of the Vanderbilt Sierra Club to offer an environmental perspective, in addition to that of Students Promoting Environmental Awareness and Recycling.

Yim said Sierra Club plans to work with SPEAR, but no official plans will be made until the group acquires more members.

For now, he plans to focus on hosting speakers and teaching environmental awareness in Nashville schools.

Many other organizations also focus on similar themes, and there are some that serve the same communities in Nashville and abroad.

This has caused some to wonder if organizations duplicate their efforts.

"It's almost to a point where it's just for show," said freshman Chris Cole. ■

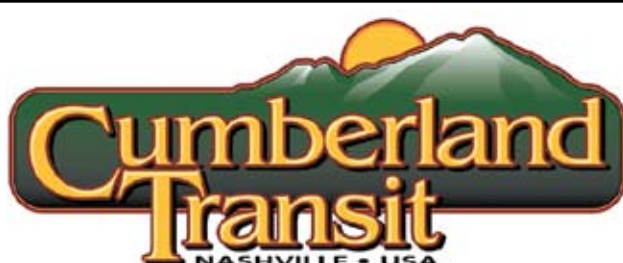
# Taking a tornado time-out

Students retreated to basement hallways, like this one in Sarratt Student Center, Monday night during the tornado warning.



ELIZABETH MIDDLEBROOKS/The Vanderbilt Hustler

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# Odds & Ends

## WEATHER

compiled by SYDNEY WILMER

### THURSDAY



Partly Cloudy, 60/38

### FRIDAY



Sunny, 61/35

### SATURDAY



Partly Cloudy, 64/48

## VUPD CRIME LOG

compiled by SARA GAST

**Saturday, Nov. 3, 11:30 a.m.:** Two people threw a large pumpkin at a vehicle near the Student Life Center.

**Sunday, Nov. 4, 1:35 a.m.:** A person was operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated near Village at Vanderbilt.

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

## SERVICE GUIDE

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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.

### PRINTER

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### BACK ISSUES

Back issues are available in Sarratt 130 during business hours.

## IN THE KNOW

The news you need — in brief

compiled by SYDNEY WILMER

### WORLD

#### Indian girl born with 4 arms and 4 legs undergoes surgery while revered as goddess in village

A 2-year-old girl born with four arms and four legs was undergoing surgery Tuesday to leave her with a normal body. The girl named Lakshmi is joined to a "parasitic twin" that stopped developing in the mother's womb. The surviving fetus absorbed the limbs, kidneys and other body parts of the undeveloped fetus.

A team of 30 doctors was removing the extra limbs and organs, surgery that if successful would give her a good chance to live past adolescence. They have already separated the fused spines and the next step will be to remove the extra limbs and the rest of the "parasite," said Dr. Sharan Patil, the orthopedic surgeon leading the operation.

SOURCE: AP

#### Bomb targets lawmakers visiting northern Afghan factory, kills 28 people

A bomb attack struck a group of lawmakers Tuesday as they were being greeted by children on a visit to a sugar factory in Afghanistan's normally peaceful north. At least 28 people were killed, including five parliament members, and dozens of children were wounded.

U.S.-backed President Hamid Karzai blamed the "the enemies of peace and security," a euphemism often used for the militant Taliban. But such a spectacular attack could also have been the work of al-Qaida. The Taliban denied involvement.

Video obtained by the AP of the scene just before the blast shows schoolchildren, tribal elders and government officials lining the streets to greet 18 lawmakers.

SOURCE: AP

#### Skepticism, distrust greet America's unified military command for resource-rich Africa

Just a few years ago, the U.S. military was rarely seen in the oil-rich waters of West Africa's Gulf of Guinea. This year, it plans to be there every day.

The Defense Department last month created a new unified U.S. military command for the continent called Africom.

For American commanders, Africom means consolidating responsibility for a continent previously split among three other regional commands.

However, Africom's creation has provoked so much skepticism on the continent that one of the most basic questions — where it will be located — remains unresolved.

SOURCE: AP

### NATION

#### Teacher shot outside Fla. high school during apparent robbery; 3 arrested

A teacher was shot Tuesday outside at a Miami-area high school during an apparent robbery, and police later arrested three suspects, officials said.

The man was shot in the upper torso and was in critical condition, Miami-Dade Police Detective Alvaro Zabaleta said.

The teacher had been taking a cigarette break across the street from the school during lunch when he was confronted by another man who tried to rob him, said Quintin Taylor, a spokesman for Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

He "was alert as he was being transported to the hospital," Taylor said.

SOURCE: AP

#### Gubernatorial races in Kentucky, Mississippi head slim lineup for 2007 elections

Voters headed to the polls Tuesday to select governors in Mississippi and Kentucky, while five big-city mayors and a slew of ballot initiatives took top billing elsewhere in a quiet Election Day before next year's presidential vote.

Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour, one of the few politicians to emerge from Hurricane Katrina looking good, was heavily favored to win, while Kentucky Gov. Ernie Fletcher, a Republican like Barbour, was trailing badly in the polls.

In Louisville, sheriff's deputies and elections officials asked members of the liberal political group MoveOn.org to move back tables set up near polling precincts.

SOURCE: AP

#### Facebook unveils program to target advertisements based on behavior of users and friends

The online hangout Facebook said Tuesday it plans to help companies target their advertisements based on what its users and their friends buy and do on the Internet.

Facebook's move could change the tone of the site and revive privacy complaints it faced last year.

Facebook will now allow companies to build profile pages similar to the ones millions of users around the world now maintain.

Companies can embed coding on outside sites such as eBay Inc., enabling a Facebook user who lists an item for auction, for example, to generate alert messages for their Facebook friends, who may then check out the item next time they log on.

SOURCE: AP

### CAMPUS

#### Study links melatonin excretion with sleep levels in children with autism

Vanderbilt sleep researchers are reporting a relationship between good sleep and how much melatonin the body produces — the first in a series of research studies intended to help children with autism spectrum disorders sleep through the night.

Professor Beth Malow presented results of the study, "Nocturnal urine 6-sulfatoxymelatonin levels are related to sleep parameters in children with autism," Nov. 3 at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in San Diego, Calif.

"This suggests that children with ASD who have decreased melatonin levels have decreased levels of deep sleep," Malow said.

SOURCE: VANDERBILT NEWS SERVICE

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

Have a question? We'll answer it (or do our best to try). Send an e-mail to [news@vanderbilthustler.com](mailto:news@vanderbilthustler.com).

compiled by LISA GUO

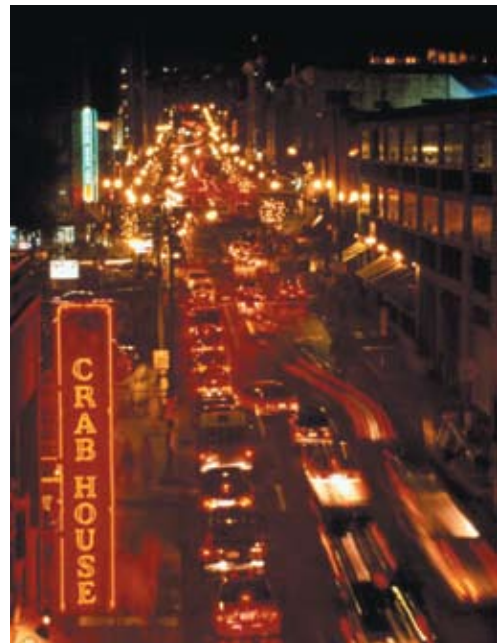
### QUESTION:

Will it be difficult to go downtown tonight because of the Country Music Association Awards?

### ANSWER:

The following streets will be closed for the CMA Awards:

- Demonbreun Street between Fourth and Fifth avenues south
- Fifth Avenue South between Broadway and Demonbreun
- Alley behind Country Music Hall of Fame between Fourth and Fifth avenues south
- Seventh Avenue South between Demonbreun Street and Broadway
- Sixth Avenue South between Franklin Street and Broadway
- Clark Street between Sixth and Seventh avenues south



NEIL BRAKE / VU Media Relations

### SNAPSHOT

## TRANSLATING GOOD HEALTH



LORI CATANZARO / Photo Provided

Juniors Susie Ecklin and Meghana Bhatta, students in the Spanish for the Medical Professions course, interacted with Latino workers and their families at the Siloam-Vanderbilt Health Fair Saturday. They distributed materials in Spanish to educate Siloam residents about health issues.



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- Wasabi crusted tuna salad
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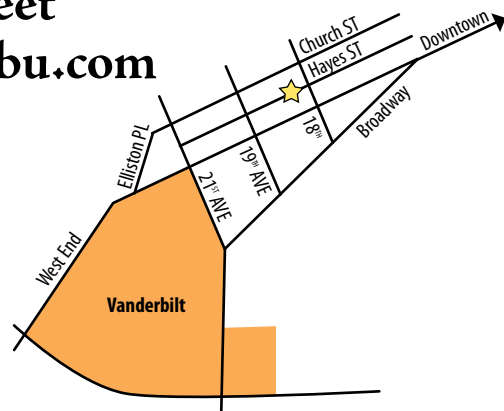
- Maple glazed duck over sweet potato risotto
- Black pepper crusted salmon
- Moroccan lamb shank
- Brazilian style Paella in spicy tomato broth

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### Directions from Vandy:

Travel heading toward downtown, go to 19th Avenue and take a left, take a right on Hayes Street and Mambu is on the left between 18th and 19th Avenue.



# MEET JEAN: Ignorance not uncommon experience for Son

From **MEET JEAN**, page 1

Even though she visits twice a year, an internship at her father's real estate firm tested her confidence in her own identity. At times, people considered her a foreigner in a place her father calls home.

"When I was in Korea, tensions ran high," Son said. "For some reason, it felt like it was really obvious that I wasn't from around, and that made me uncomfortable."

Even in daily interactions, Son struggled to fit in. Though conversational in Korean, Son needed the help of another intern to understand some of the more technical aspects of her job.

"I made mistakes," she said. "In the workplace, the cultural clash was the strongest."

Even outside the workplace, Son said she felt conspicuous and unsure of the expectations of Korean culture.

"When I went out to eat dinner with my father and his partners, I wondered if it was appropriate to engage in conversation, or if I was supposed to be the daughter," Son said. "A woman, or a younger person, is expected to be more of a listener than a talker."

Though most Americans label her Asian based on appearance, Koreans had a different opinion.

"I didn't feel like I fit the Korean

beauty standard," she said. "There is an emphasis on Western features, pale skin. Koreans are curious about foreigners, so I felt like people stared. I definitely felt like I stood out from the pack."

## Korean in America

But in New York City, where she was raised, people saw her as an outsider too.

Early in the summer, Son worked as a receptionist at a nail salon on the Upper East Side and as an intern for the Web site Gurl.com.

Son said she rarely experienced any kind of discrimination, but ignorance was not uncommon.

"There was the one crazy lady who would come in and ask one of the

girls, 'Did you just come over from the Orient? Did you just get off the boat?'" Son said. "It was offensive, but she was crazy, so it was OK."

And cultural differences existed even between Son and her Asian colleagues. Though many of the other employees at the nail salon were Asian, most were Chinese. Son said connecting with them was difficult and sometimes caused conflict — especially when she made mistakes.

"At first I didn't know what I was doing, so it would cause tension. They would talk about me in Chinese," Son said. "I couldn't understand what they were saying, but it was obvious."

But a willingness to learn more about each other eventually led to greater understanding. One co-worker watched Son log into Facebook and expressed interest in her life, though they did not share many of the same experiences.

"She was really curious about the things I did in college because she had been working at the nail salon to support herself," Son said.

After a summer of standing out from the crowd, Son is more comfortable with herself than ever before.

"It is so rewarding to be able to work through these kinds of issues," she said. "There is no reason to let the issue of identity get the best of you." ■

# Comedic candidacy encourages youth

by **KELLY SWOPE**  
Staff Reporter

Although political satirist Stephen Colbert will not be a presidential candidate, he still has a remarkable ability to motivate his viewers to take action, students said.

Colbert, host of the popular late night Comedy Central show "The Colbert Report," will not appear as a candidate on the South Carolina primary presidential ballot after the South Carolina Democratic Party Executive Committee voted 13-3 last Thursday not to include him.

Colbert announced his candidacy on "The Colbert Report" on Oct. 16 for both the Democratic and Republican nominations in South Carolina, although he only filed for the Democratic Party ballot Nov. 1.

Following the vote, Colbert withdrew his two-week-old campaign from the race.

"Although I lost by the slimmest margin in presidential election history — only 10 votes — I have chosen not to put the country through another agonizing Supreme Court battle," Colbert said Monday in a statement. "It is time for this nation to heal."

Despite the unsuccessful attempt, there is still widespread support for a Colbert presidential

bid. The Facebook group "1,000,000 Strong for Stephen Colbert" has nearly 1.5 million members, 1.1 million more than the leading Facebook group for Sen. Barack Obama, who has the most supporters of any other candidate on the Web site.



COLBERT

Colbert's humorous bid has some rethinking their views of the actual candidates' ability to influence people outside their parties.

"Most candidates can't get people excited about running for president," said freshman Abbey Hall. "He definitely appeals to younger people more than serious candidates."

"I think it's a political commentary," said freshman Elizabeth Eiland, who said she believes Colbert is trying to make a statement about the election climate in the United States.

Freshman Katie Des Prez watches "The Colbert Report" and is a member of the Facebook group "1,000,000 Strong for Stephen Colbert." But she said she never believed the campaign to be legitimate.

"(People) weren't going to support Stephen Colbert

for president because of his political views," she said. "People want to be part of a cultural phenomenon."

Another point of interest to students is Colbert's ability to mobilize his viewers to take political action. In 2006, he used his show to endorse the naming of a public access bridge in Hungary after himself, winning the first and second rounds of the online voting process. The Hungarian government decided against naming the bridge after Colbert, although there was a ceremony with the Hungarian ambassador honoring the true winner on an edition of "The Colbert Report."

The bridge-naming movement and the failed presidential campaign have changed Colbert's public image for some of his viewers.

"Anyone in the spotlight, someone who has charisma like him, definitely can influence people who watch his show," said junior Joann Lee.

Others believe Colbert has a role to play in the political activism of American youth.

"He showed that people running for president should reach out to kids more," said freshman Sarah Goodrich. ■

—The Associated Press contributed reporting to this article.

## Tigertones 'tame' Vanderbilt audience



CHRIS PHARE / The Vanderbilt Hustler

The Princeton Tigertones joined the Dodecs and Swingin' Doers last Friday as a part of their annual tour. The Tigertones are Princeton University's signature all-male a cappella group.

# Police in Pakistan clash with lawyers protesting state of emergency

Associated Press

Hundreds of lawyers defied a stepped-up security presence and demonstrated against Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf Tuesday in response to the suspension of their constitution.

Some protestors chanted "Musharraf Go!" while others

yelled "Musharraf is a criminal — we will not accept uniforms or bullets!" and "Traitor!"

But James Ray, a Vanderbilt political science professor, said the removal of Musharraf might not solve any of their problems.

"The alternative to Musharraf is probably worse," Ray said. "Another faction such as the military could take over or the

coalition could take over. It's just not a good situation."

Many of those detained have been lawyers, who have been in the forefront of protests. The government says about 2,500 were detained; the opposition says 3,500.

Musharraf, who took power in a 1999 coup, also leads their army. He declared emergency

rule and suspended the constitution Saturday ahead of a Supreme Court ruling on whether it was legal for legislators to re-elect him last month to a new five-year term while he serves as army chief.

Musharraf has ousted seven independent-minded Supreme Court judges, put a stranglehold on independent media and

granted sweeping powers to authorities to crush dissent.

The authoritarian turn has embarrassed even close Western allies, who have justified pouring billions of dollars in aid into Pakistan with Musharraf's pledges to restore democracy.

The United States faces a unique situation because of its close relationship with Pakistan,

Ray said.

"Pakistan plays a crucial role in government issues," he said. "They're supposed to be a base that the government of the United States can count on to help." ■

—Adam Weinstein contributed reporting to this article.

# Plant Operations in 'sticky' situation after student discovers mousetraps

Rodents not major issue on campus, Petty says.

by **ADAM WEINSTEIN**  
Staff Reporter

Plant Operations removed glue mousetraps, once used throughout campus, from The Commons Dining Center last week after a student expressed concern the traps were inhumane.

In an e-mail, freshman Lauren Wagner wrote, "When I unplugged my laptop adapter, I noticed what I think were the 'sticky' mouse traps — the ones that kill mice in horrifying ways. My friends and I don't have 'animal activist' views by any means, but we were still sickened, as I'm sure a good portion of the Vanderbilt (community) would be."

According to Assistant Vice

Chancellor for Plant Operations Mark Petty, the glue traps are part of the Integrated Pest Management system, which is used throughout the country and supported by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The IPM Web site explains, "Instead of poisoning the mice or rats with chemicals, (glue) traps are used to trap the pests and then humanely exterminate them."

But the traps raise concern about the slow death process they can cause.

"If a mouse gets caught in the trap, it gets left there to die of hunger or dehydration," Petty said. "It might also try to bite its limbs off, in which case it would die from bleeding."

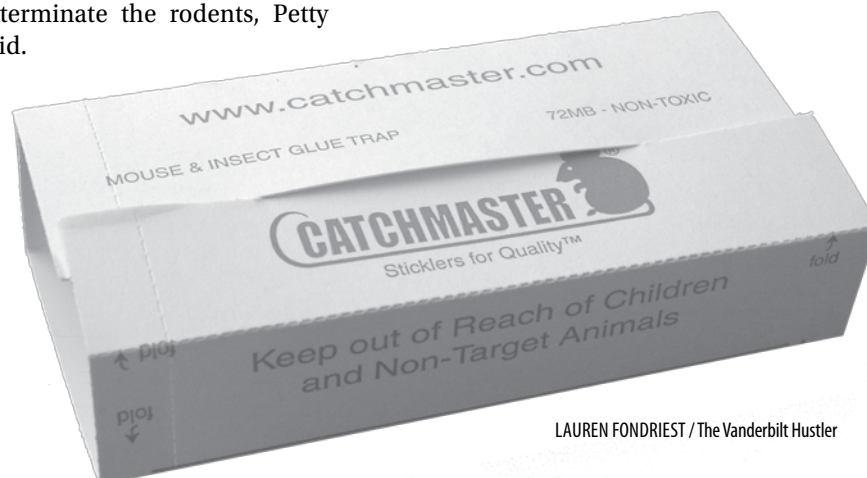
The sticky traps were chosen because spring-loaded snap traps, which effectively break the rodent's neck, cannot be used out in the open because of the risk of injury to people using the facilities. Poisoned traps are also a danger to people.

And mousetraps are necessary in a

dining center, Petty said.

"As terrible as it is for the animals," Petty said, "it isn't safe for us to have mice, which may carry disease, in places like The Commons where there's so much food."

As of now, most of the glue traps have been removed from The Commons. Plant Operations officials are still looking into alternative methods to exterminate the rodents, Petty said.



LAUREN FONDRIEST / The Vanderbilt Hustler

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# OPINION

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- JARRED AMATO**  
*Sports Editor*
- DARCY NEWELL**  
*Life Editor*

### OUR VIEW

## Consolidation should be considered

Vanderbilt students are used to being leaders; leadership positions in high school may be what got them here. So, naturally, students seek out leadership positions after setting foot on campus. Often, if one is unavailable or does not exist, students feel the best option would be to create a leadership position — one potential cause of the proliferation of student groups on campus.

While not necessarily a problem, as students should be free to do what they want, and a large number of student groups focus on worthy endeavors, the university possesses finite resources. The limited funds available for distribution becomes especially clear when the time to apply for Activity Fee money rolls around each year.

But a new AcFee system, revised by Vanderbilt Student Government this year, may enable the Student Finance Committee to better detect redundancy in the purpose and activities of similar student organizations.

Formerly, a 14-person committee read applications,

conducted interviews of approximately 120 organizations over a three-week period and determined monetary allocations. The new system breaks groups down into five separate divisions that focus on different types of organizations: programming, service, cultural interests, special interests and the arts.

Though a large number of activities improves university image, there may be cases where this attitude breeds inefficiency. One group with increased funding may be able to accomplish more at times than multiple groups dividing that same amount of funding. This new AcFee system, by categorizing groups and dividing them accordingly, will allow groups to examine this issue and consider their options.

Even if all groups decide that this does not apply to them, everyone could benefit from a sincere reflection on their campus role and an examination of whether or not they use university resources effectively.

### COLUMN

## Main-campus improvements would benefit freshmen, upperclassmen

**SEAN TIERNEY**  
*Columnist*

Visit the Baseball Glove Lounge or Central Library during the day and you'll find a disproportionate number of sophomores studying, sleeping or hanging out at these main campus locales. It's not that the Class of 2010 has a stronger work ethic or enjoys spending free time in Sarratt more than any other class — it's that most sophomores live on The Commons.

For years, students who lived on Peabody but had classes on main campus found it convenient to simply say goodbye to their residence halls in the morning and essentially camp out on main campus during the day. Have a one- or two-hour break in between classes? The general consensus is trekking back and forth to and from your room is just not worth it.

As more and more Commons residences open, and the average walk from residence rooms to classrooms lengthens, the number of underclassman Sarratt day-campers can only be expected to increase.

On the opposite side of the coin, fewer upperclassmen are now granted permission to live off campus, which means Sarratt will be the home-away-from-home for fewer off-campus seniors.

The result? A great deal of the students stuck spending their weekdays away from their residence halls and killing time on main campus will be first-years.

If Vanderbilt is truly committed to making the first-year experience as good as it can be, the university cannot focus solely on The Commons. Instead, the university should act to improve the quality of weekday life at main campus hangouts, specifically for those who will be stranded there for large blocks of time.

Rather than just watching how the Class of 2010 uses The Commons and monitoring how the buildings are broken in, the administration must also examine how sophomores use main campus and how this usage has changed as more and more students reside on The Commons.

One such improvement may be to install lockers in Sarratt for first-year students so they don't have to lug around four classes worth of books all day. Sophomores have traditionally complained about this problem, yet it remains unresolved.

It may be time to finally add some pool tables to the Student Life Center for those who don't want to sit around idly. Improving on-campus lunch options would keep morale high among Sarratt day-campers and, of course, would also be appreciated by upperclassmen. Adding more comfortable seating in Rand has already been a big help to the day-campers, but more should be done.

Keeping most daytime events on main campus rather than moving them to The Commons and making Central Library feel less institutional may also help.

In other words, while Vanderbilt invests heavily (and wisely and deservedly) in The Commons in order to improve the first-year experience, these new facilities should not be the be all and end all of its plan. First-year students will spend more time than ever before in central facilities on main campus. No longer will they be able to head back to Branscomb for a quick nap during a 50-minute break or run over to Vandy/Barnard to grab books for their next class.

Sure, The Commons is great when students are there, but when they've got a two-hour break between classes and they're a 15-minute-one-way walk away from their housing, life can be tough. Vanderbilt should be prepared to make the inconvenience of being stranded on main campus as manageable as possible. Main campus life is, and will continue to be, a big part of the first-year experience.

—Sean Tierney is a junior in the College of Arts and Science.



Terrence Nowicki—MCT

### COLUMN

## Abortion, death penalty debates require re-examination

**SOO YANG**  
*Columnist*

Blind adherence to political ideologies is a serious threat to dispassionate, independent critical thought. Not only does such devotion effectively nullify our country's bipartisan political methodology, it discourages us to think rationally and encourages us to vote mindlessly while forcing us to simply accept or reject neatly packaged, pre-synthesized collection of political positions.

However, the fact that those positions are painted with one political color does not necessarily mean they are consistent or even based on sound logic. Amid the ongoing presidential race and the endless culture war, it is important to review the foundation of our political viewpoints.

One example of this flagrant inconsistency that has resulted from ignorance and stubbornness is the anti-abortion and pro-death penalty mindset. With the recent editorial posts regarding abortion and Ron Klein's speech on Monday about capital punishment, a discussion of these two seems very timely.

It is generally accepted that most, but not all, of those who are against abortion are likely to favor the death penalty. However, many others, including myself, who are against both abortion and the death penalty find themselves in neither political party and realize this obvious

contradiction is self-explanatory.

Truthfully, there is no need for exhausting, scholarly research into the complex subtleties and technicalities of what life is and is not, or what is in between. Such extensive analysis is not needed when we can use our common sense and unemotional logic in our own critical thinking to realize these two positions are inconsistent.

We argue against abortion based on our conviction that life begins in the moment of conception and our belief life is non-negotiable and absolute. Although this viewpoint is highly questionable to others, I will use this as the main pretext of my argument.

According to our definition, those criminals on death row have been conceived and are therefore alive, but they also have a moral debt that must be paid through their death. However, the fact that the inmates are unworthy of life does not make them less alive or less human. If anything, those fetuses are physiologically less human although their right to life is more urgent, imperative and deserving. Many will continue to argue the life of an unborn fetus and a life of a mass murderer cannot be equated; one is innocent, and the other guilty.

However, the seemingly moral conviction that one must live and the other cannot is undefined in our absolutist view of life. If we start considering whether the death of a

criminal is just, there is no reason why we should not start considering whether the death of a baby is similarly just. In fact, the notion of social justice involved in the death penalty seems most comparable to the notion of civil justice involved in abortion. The former grants rights to those who feel were victimized by a murderer, and the latter grants rights to those who also feel were victimized by their inability to control their own bodies. In reality, the freedom of ending innocent lives and the freedom of ending convicted lives translate to one act: A termination of life from an unnatural, external agent. Thus, when we extend the pro-life definition to all post-conception humans, the life of a death-row inmate becomes as inviolable and irrefutable as that of an unborn fetus. In short, the pro- and anti-life standpoints come in opposition.

A similar case can be made for the other group where abortion is equated with civil rights, and the death penalty is equated with an uncivil murder. Although there seems to be a contradiction, the same argument cannot be made because the understanding of life is more relativistic. Since abortion is not murder, their anti-capital punishment view is not entirely inconsistent. Along the same lines, one cannot truly argue against their anti-war and pro-stem cell stance. Because the definition of life is of question and

Please see YANG, page 5

### 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. 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. 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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# THE VERDICT

Stand and be judged by the Hustler opinion staff!  
Compiled by Reeve Hamilton

John Waters		Film director has expressed a desire to make a movie on a very worthy subject: disgraced senator and Verdict hero Larry Craig! Cross your fingers!
Britney Spears		Despite losing custody of her children, shaving her head, flashing the world and flopping on TV, her new album is No. 1. There's no accounting for taste.
Fred Thompson		Makes off-screen joke during interview with FOX News he will not be the next President. Maybe his heart is not really in it. Maybe.
Hillary Clinton		Support slips after poor debate performance, which she calls "not (her) best." Luckily for her, she has enough money to shrug and cackle it off.
2007		Now officially the deadliest year for Americans in Iraq, with almost two months left. This increase in fatalities may best be described as a "surge."
Human waste		Florida officials warn of popular new drug: inhaling urine and fecal matter. Kids are shockingly more resourceful than they used to be.
Dollar		Value of U.S. currency has sunk so low that supermodel Gisele refuses to receive it as payment. Like they say, "As Gisele goes, so goes the world."

## YANG: Pondering positions reveals contradictory beliefs

From YANG, page 4  
irresolvable debate, I would rather not delve into this discussion.

I understand I have not been personally affected by a death-row execution or abortion. However, I also understand when we treat abortion as murder, the death penalty must be regarded as another rationalized murder. In fact, the death penalty is a grossly exaggerated case of quid pro quo where life is cheapened, exchanged, assessed and appraised.

The prospect of a life-term is sufficient deterrence, and this "deterrence" associated with capital punishment stains our legal system with a primal sense of vengeance driven by unreasonable fervor, prehistoric instincts and heated emotions. Thus, the morality in question is not whether we are somehow diluting our legal system and reducing the

magnitude of a crime committed by a death-row inmate. Rather, the morality in question is the inconsistency of the pro-life and pro-death mentality. It is entirely moral to resist the culture of death. However, it is entirely immoral to support and oppose two versions of equally justified murder. Unfortunately, none of the major political candidates truly reflect my inclusive understanding of life, and they continue to polarize and politicize this issue. Furthermore, the culture war continues to bring our country into an ideological civil war, and many will cling to beliefs that are contradictory. However, once we begin to truly examine what we believe in, we realize there is room for the middle ground.

—Soo Yang is a freshman in the College of Arts & Science.

# ((OVERHEARD))

on  
insidevandy

### The Motive of Alcohol Braggers Submitted by TheArtificer on Sunday, Nov. 4, 2007 - 18:36

I was heading out of the Towers Quiznos the other night and was holding the door for an approaching cell phone-wielding girl. I overheard one line from her conversation: "I'm going to go get soooo drunk, alone, in my room."

I promptly yelled after her, "Way to keep it classy!" I, along with so many on this campus, have to listen to conversations like these at least three times per day. It's like second-hand smoke. So I asked myself, "Why do people brag about how drunk they got or hope to get?" My solution was rather compelling.

I believe at some point in a person's life (or at many points), one must ask him or herself: "What is my purpose in this life? What is my meaning? What is my principal motivator?"

For the religious, the answer is clear, but for those without religion, the question is weightier. Many of those without religion then create some purpose for their lives. For example, some are driven by a desire to create alternate energy, write a novel or raise a perfect family.

I am not sure if these are true meanings, or if meaning is attainable. It is possible that life is spent constantly trying to find meaning, but these people embrace this journey.

On the other hand, I believe some ask themselves the aforementioned questions and come up dry and empty. They see they have no purpose, meaning nor drive. Depression overwhelms them in that instant.

So what is their path of action at this point? Well, rather than creating a purpose or embarking on the journey, they do the next best thing and determinedly choose to never think of this question, or any such "deep" questions again.

How can one avoid asking these questions or coming to the same empty feelings? The answer lies in the various forms of what I call "losing oneself." For instance, one can constantly engage in the increasingly available media such as video games or television (neither of which is bad, but often they are used to such an extent that they preclude an individual from higher thoughts).

In addition, the individual who has realized his life is without meaning won't have a small, close-knit group of friends because the person would then be subject to potentially deep conversations. Instead, they make many friends and engage in small talk with all of them.

But what is the only guaranteed way you cannot possibly think about the deep questions? Well, of course, you ensure that you physically can't think. What better way to do this than to get "sloshed"?

When one seeks approval, he seeks it from those whom he or she is most like. For instance, a Christian would seek the approval not of atheists, but of other Christians. And the amount of approval the Christian receives from said group is dependent on how well the individual is fulfilling the aims of that crowd.

As I have posited, the one-without-meaning's value system is based on the aim to lose him or herself. Thus, the one-without-meaning seeks to impress others with the same value system and seeks to impress them by showing how well he or she can lose himself or herself. This explains the constant bragging over just how trashed a person gets. "You drank twelve beers AND had seventeen shots of Jack after?" Instantly the individual spoken to is raised to the status of demigod in the speaker's mind.

I am not saying that people who play video games, watch TV or drink (even to the point of drunkenness) have no meaning in their lives and wish to find it. I am simply positing that those who constantly either talk about how drunk they got the night before or how they can't wait to get drunk on the weekend, to the extent that it is a staple of normal conversation, have found no meaning in their lives.

The alcohol bragging is not the only symptom of meaninglessness. Another is the fear of conversation that manifests itself in the form of "Why are you talking about that?" This question occurs whenever one brings up a religious, philosophical or sometimes political topic around the ones-without-meaning.

To those who fear truth, hide behind the trappings and cripple in the presence of thinkers, I urge you to find new value. Your new goal should be to find what you have spent your entire life trying to lose. My hope is that you will no longer find refuge in the approval of others based on your BAC the night before. My hope is that you will begin to live.

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## SPORTS

## Commodores ready to roll

## Men beat Tusculum but barely.

by JARRED AMATO  
Sports Editor

Before anyone puts too much stock in Vanderbilt's 80-79 Monday night exhibition victory over Division II Tusculum at Memorial Gymnasium, keep in mind last season's Sweet 16 squad squeaked past Northern State 98-94 in its opener.

With that said, the Commodores' defensive effort left coach Kevin Stallings scratching his head. Before the game, Stallings said he told his players he was interested to see how they would defend in the second half.

"I didn't know that I was going to spur them on to such greatness," he said sarcastically. "We gave up 54 (points). Stellar."

Vanderbilt will need to be much sharper Saturday night (7 p.m.) when it hosts Austin Peay in its season opener.

"It was a good situation to be put in," he said. "Even though I'm disappointed with the way we performed, I would rather have that to learn from and to be in than to beat somebody by 30 or 40 (points) and not really gain anything from it. From a standpoint of being in a close game, having to execute and make free throws, that was good for us."

After allowing Tusculum to connect on 13 3-pointers and outscore the Commodores by nine points in the second half, Stallings said he hopes his players took notice.

"You can tell them, 'We need to defend better,' but sometimes it takes something like this before they'll really believe you," he said. "I hope this is a good lesson for them and for us."

In addition to its mediocre effort



OLIVER WOLFE / The Vanderbilt Hustler  
Sophomore Jermaine Beal started at shooting guard during the Commodores' surprisingly close 80-79 exhibition victory over Tusculum Monday at Memorial Gym.

on the defensive end, Vanderbilt was also out-rebounded 44-35.

"Yeah, that's a bother," Stallings said. "We've got a couple of guys that don't think they've got any responsibility to rebound. We'll have to do something to address this."

The Commodores saw why there is so much hype surrounding freshman center A.J. Ogilvy. The Aussie poured in 17 points, including an emphatic breakaway dunk that caused the student section to erupt, and he pulled down seven rebounds. He was five for nine from the field and seven for 12 from the foul line.

"He's a good player that has good hands and good instincts

for the game," Stallings said. "He normally makes his foul shots a lot better than he did tonight; I'm sure he had some nerve stuff going on. He'll be a good player, and we're excited about him."

Senior point guard Alex Gordon also scored 17 points, including the game-winning free throw with 2.2 seconds remaining, and grabbed seven rebounds. Senior forwards Alan Metcalfe and Ross Neltner chipped in with 10 points each, while swingman Shan Foster scored six points.

The Commodores were ahead 35-25 after 20 minutes and led by as many as 17 points midway through the second half before Tusculum made its run. ■

## Women have way with Anderson.

by JARRED AMATO  
Sports Editor

Women's basketball coach Melanie Balcomb feels a lot better about her team following its 76-41 exhibition victory over Division II Anderson Monday at Memorial Gym.

While the Commodores beat Cumberland 104-43 last Wednesday, Balcomb said they played a much more complete game on Monday.

"I felt like we finished stronger, and we did a much better job defensively, especially in the second half," she said. "I thought this was a much better effort all-around."

Senior center Liz Sherwood scored a game-high 23 points on nine-for-12 shooting to go along with six rebounds to pace Vanderbilt, which hosts UAB in its season opener on Friday (7 p.m.).

Freshman Jence Rhoads, who started at point guard, had 10 points and six assists, while junior Jen Ripser added 10 points, five steals and four assists.

This year's Commodore squad will have a different identity from the one that won the Southeastern Conference Tournament, and Balcomb said she is excited.

"We're going to be a lot more up-tempo," she said. "I think we have a lot more athleticism and we're physically more tough. Our strength and conditioning coach said it's the most athletic and physical team and mentally tough (one) that we've had since she's been here."



CHRIS PHARE / The Vanderbilt Hustler  
After winning its two exhibition games in convincing fashion, the women's basketball team looks forward to its season opener Friday night at Memorial Gym.

Vanderbilt proved why it forced 28 Anderson turnovers and converted them into 25 points.

The Commodores started slow, leading 16-15 midway through the first half, but rolled off 20 straight points to take a 39-17 advantage at the break.

They did not let up in the second half, outscoring Cumberland 37-24.

As a team, Vanderbilt shot 51 percent from the field and held Cumberland to 34 percent, including 31 percent in the second half. The Commodores also

outrebounded their opponent 36-26 and recorded 17 steals.

"I think they were a lot more focused because there is a game on Friday and they know there's a sense of urgency now," Balcomb said.

Since 10 of the 13 players on the roster are freshmen or sophomores, Balcomb said she expects growing pains.

At the same time, the coach said she is confident that there is enough leadership and experience between Ripser, Sherwood and junior Tina Wirth for the Commodores to be successful.

Friday will provide the first test. ■

## Vandy, Kentucky have interesting history

by ANDREW HARD  
Sports Reporter

Every year in recent memory, the Vanderbilt-Kentucky matchup seems to present some odd twist that dramatically alters the course of one team's season.

The Wildcats won in a shootout featuring more than 1,200 yards of offense in 2006 en route to its Music City Bowl victory. A year earlier a favored Commodore squad saw its bowl hopes come to an end after playing an abysmal first half.

This year's twist? Both teams have winning records coming into the contest for the first time since 1999.

"This is the kind of situation we want to be in, playing an important game in November against a quality opponent," said coach Bobby Johnson. "If you beat them, you've done something."

Beating Kentucky is something this year's senior class has never done. Consider that with the fact Vanderbilt needs to get back on track for a bowl berth, and you have the recipe for one exciting game Saturday afternoon (1 p.m.) at Dudley Field.

"This year we feel like we kind of owe them a little bit," said senior left tackle Chris Williams. "It's one of those games where we feel like if we do what we're supposed to do, we're going to win the game."

A Vanderbilt defense that was lit up by Florida will have to quickly regroup to prepare for an equally high-powered Kentucky offense.

Senior quarterback Andre Woodson was a Heisman candidate until the Wildcats' recent losses, and tailback Rafael Little, who has torched the Commodores the past two years, is expected to return after missing three games due to injury.

"(Woodson) does a great job of knowing where everyone's going to be," Johnson said. "He has a great knack of getting himself out of trouble because he has such a strong arm."

The Commodores have already rebounded from difficult losses this season, and players said they expect Saturday to be no different.

"We have to bounce back. This is a mature team," said senior linebacker Jonathan Goff. "After the Georgia game, that was a tough loss

for us, but we came back, had a great week of practice and played very well against South Carolina. That's just an example of what kind of character this team has."

**FRESHMEN TO STAY REDSHIRTED:** At this point in the season, Johnson is becoming increasingly reluctant to play freshmen for the first time.

Freshmen who sit out the entire season will have four years of eligibility remaining, which is why Johnson will most likely keep them on the bench for the final three games.

"It gets to be that point in the season where you're very reluctant to take a redshirt off a guy," Johnson said. "Fortunately for us, we haven't had a rash of injuries."

Still, some of the first-team players are getting banged up in spots where those freshmen would be valuable.

"We would love to have the luxury of putting those freshmen in, especially in some special teams situations," Johnson said.

Among true freshmen, only Theron Kadri, John Stokes and Austin Monahan have seen playing time, and all did so early in the season.

A few freshmen Johnson has considered playing and even taken to road games include linebacker Chris Marve, tight end Brandon Barden and cornerback Jamie Graham.

"Jamie fits very well (into our future)," Johnson said. "He could be a corner, he could be a safety, and he could be a return guy."

Unfortunately, he'll have to wait until next year to get that chance. Despite the injuries at corner against Miami, Graham was nowhere to be found on any depth chart.

"I'd have tackled him if he tried to get out there," Johnson said.

**OFFENSIVE LINE CONTINUES TO IMPROVE:** Florida's defense was stout in all phases of Saturday's game. But one thing it couldn't do was sack the quarterback.

Vanderbilt's senior-laden offensive line has been solid, and keeping quarterback Mackenzi Adams on his feet the entire game reflects that. Yet, they aren't satisfied with their performance.

"We still haven't played a game as well as we should have," Williams said. "We've still



PAUL LEVY / VU Media Relations  
Vanderbilt's seniors have never beaten Kentucky. Linebacker Jonathan Goff hopes to change that Saturday when the Wildcats come to town.

made way too many mistakes, too many mental mistakes, motion penalties, things like that."

Kentucky gives up an average of 193 rushing yards per game, which means there is a good chance for the offensive line to put together a

strong performance on Saturday.

"The best game we've played so far is probably South Carolina, but even still we haven't played nearly up to our potential," Williams said. ■

# Tigers turn tide on former coach

by DAVID RUTZ  
Sports Reporter

Louisiana State got their revenge on Alabama coach Nick Saban. More importantly, the No. 2 Tigers took sole possession of first place in the Southeastern Conference Western Division and remained in contention for the national championship, rallying to beat the No. 17 Crimson Tide, 41-34.

Saban coached LSU for five seasons, winning a national championship in 2003. He left Baton Rouge for the National Football League before accepting the head coaching position at Alabama, one of LSU's archrivals.

Though this game was already crucial to LSU's postseason aspirations, there was also an added desire to beat their former coach. A telling image was a picture of Saban hung on LSU's campus during the week; students donated money to charity so they could throw darts at it.

After two ties and three lead changes, Alabama (6-3, 4-2 SEC) took a 34-27 lead in the fourth quarter when Javier Arenas returned a punt for a touchdown. LSU quarterback Matt Flynn calmly engineered a scoring drive to tie the game with a touchdown pass to Early Doucet.

The Tigers (8-1, 5-1 SEC) forced quarterback John Parker Wilson to fumble on Alabama's ensuing drive and recovered the ball at the Alabama 3-yard line. Running back Jacob Hester rumbled in for a score to clinch the Tiger victory.

LSU has shown a definite flair for the dramatic this season. Their last three wins have been decided by late-game touchdowns.

**SOUTH CAROLINA SLIDE:** South Carolina's season-long inability

to stop the run came to a head in a 48-36 loss to Arkansas. The reeling Gamecocks (6-4, 3-4 SEC) gave up an astounding 541 yards rushing to the Razorbacks for their third straight loss.

Darren McFadden tied an SEC record with 321 rushing yards and a touchdown, while Felix Jones added 163 yards and three touchdowns for Arkansas (6-3, 2-3 SEC).

South Carolina was in first place in the SEC East before losing to Vanderbilt on Oct. 20. That started a downward spiral which has seen them tumble in the rankings and the SEC East standings.

**SEC BOWLERS:** Eleven of 12 SEC teams can conceivably play in the postseason, a testament to the conference's strength.

Nine schools have already earned bowl eligibility, and Vanderbilt and Mississippi State need just one win each. Only Ole Miss, which has a losing record, will surely not play in a bowl this season.

This puts a crimp in Vanderbilt's plans, as the SEC has only eight automatic bowl tie-ins. The Commodores could be left out even if they do become eligible.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Tennessee had its smallest home crowd since Neyland Stadium expanded for its win over Louisiana-Lafayette, but they still drew over 96,000 fans. ... With a 196-yard rushing performance against Troy, Georgia's Knowshon Moreno joined the legendary Herschel Walker as the only Bulldogs to rush for 1,000 yards as a freshman. ... Ole Miss scored its most points in three years in a 38-31 victory over Northwestern State. ... Florida is 0-3 when quarterback Tim Tebow rushes and passes for less than four touchdowns. ... Auburn has not let an opponent in the end zone for eight straight quarters. ■

## COLUMN

# Why no one cares about the NBA ... again

ALEX BARD  
Guest Columnist

You might be surprised to realize the NBA season began last week. Chances are you were busy doing something more productive, like that econ problem set or watching "A Shot of Love with Tila Tequila" to know or care that professional basketball is back again.

Analysts explain the NBA's hurting popularity with the Tim Donaghy refereeing scandal and the Isiah Thomas and Madison Square Garden sexual harassment suit, but these are not the main issues here. Most people who actually know and followed these stories are the people who already care about the NBA. The troubles of injury, the players' passion for the game and the "boring" dominance of back-to-back champs are the real causes for NBA obscurity.

While injuries happen often, none will make more of an impact that Greg Oden's season-ending surgery. The beginning of Oden's and fellow rookie Kevin Durant's decade-long rivalry was supposed to be one of the biggest attractions of the new season. Oden's injury,

coupled with the Seattle SuperSonics' (and thus Oden's) move to Oklahoma City, has eliminated the hope of a strong young rivalry to spark national attention.

For those lucky enough to avoid injury, NBA players lack the passion or determination throughout the 82-game regular season, or so it seems on television, and frankly, that's all viewers care about.

Vandy's upset of No. 1 Florida last year inspired more energy and excitement than any NBA game last season. In addition, the UNC/Duke rivalry has no match in the NBA, as analysts discussed Kobe and Shaq's fist bump as the Christmas showdown fizzled more than an old bottle of Andre.

In comparison with the intensity of football every Sunday or the tension and excitement of the baseball playoffs, the NBA's regular season can be summarized as bland to non-diehard. The NBA is losing viewership because until the playoffs in May, the league is plagued by stale play and a severe lack of team chemistry — two aspects of basketball embraced by the college version.

Finally, when considering the NBA, many look to its champion as the best example

or model for the league. Unfortunately, the San Antonio Spurs are a model of everything people don't want in a champion. They have a star (Tim Duncan) who doesn't make controversial comments or actions, and worst of all, does the little things, not just the scoring, for his team.

The Spurs have enough international guys to seat a United Nations General Assembly or at least make up the Security Council. They don't draft college stars who generate a new fan base from their faithful student sections. And lastly, they win games easily without huge dunks, fast breaks or 50-point games from individual players. Simply put, the Spurs are boring.

It's funny to think the NBA, a dream of every child who picked up a basketball growing up, is now being left in the dust by basketball fans nationwide. Play is slow, methodical, and lacking the improvisation or physicality (in the eyes of the fans) seen at the college level now.

The number of true NBA fans is dwindling by the year, and it looks like, despite the superstar talent that the league is marketing, this year will be another year of indifference. And most likely another title for the Spurs. ■

## SEC POWER RANKINGS

Compiled by Eric Silver



### 1. LSU 8-1 (5-1 SEC)

Cardiac kids keep on finding ways to win, beating Alabama with just over a minute left to stay in the title race.



### 2. Georgia 7-2 (4-2)

Can the Bulldogs hold on to win the SEC East? After their iffy showing against Troy last week, maybe not.



### 3. Auburn 7-3 (4-2)

Last Saturday's romp of Tennessee Tech was just a warm up for this Saturday's tilt against Georgia, which could be the closest SEC game of the week.



### 4. Florida 6-3 (4-3)

Sure, they may be out of the national title hunt, but Tim Tebow and company are for real. Just ask Vanderbilt's defense.



### 5. Alabama 6-3 (4-2)

Louisiana's public enemy No. 1 (Nick Saban) almost squeaked out a win in front of the home crowd, but the Tide lost a heartbreaker after John Parker Wilson fumbled late.



### 6. Tennessee 6-3 (3-2)

The Volunteers beat Louisiana-Lafayette, even without head case LaMarcus Coker. They had better figure out a way to stop McFadden this week.



### 7. South Carolina 6-3 (3-4)

Finally, the Gamecock offense figured it out, but this time, it was the defense that blew it, giving up a ridiculous 321 yards to Darren McFadden. Ouch.



### 8. Arkansas 6-3 (2-3)

Last week we said Darren McFadden would have to rush for more than the 61 yards if the Razorbacks wanted to beat South Carolina. Is 321 good enough?



### 9. Kentucky 6-3 (2-3)

Coming off a bye week after an ugly loss to Mississippi State, the Wildcats will be fired up to salvage their season this Saturday at Vandy.



### 10. Mississippi State 5-4 (2-3)

The Bulldogs are making a case to play in a bowl game this year, even though their leading passer has thrown for only 702 yards.



### 11. Vanderbilt 5-4 (2-4)

Saturday's game against Kentucky may determine if Vanderbilt will play in the postseason for the first time in 25 years.



### 12. Ole Miss 3-7 (0-6)

Hey, they finally won! Oh, wait, that was against division I-AA Northwestern State. Good luck in your next game against LSU, fellas.



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6	7	4	9	3	8	1	5	2
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- ACROSS**  
 1 Nocturnal raptors  
 5 "... It's Cold Outside"  
 9 Brown pigment  
 14 Tiniest bit  
 15 Curved molding  
 16 Actress Shearer  
 17 Lowest pinochle card  
 18 "Wild at Heart" star Laura  
 19 Panache  
 20 Going in  
 22 Beef source  
 23 Esteem  
 24 Physical magnitude  
 25 Language suffix  
 26 Sat in on  
 30 Exhausted  
 33 Attempted  
 34 Time period  
 35 Towel word  
 36 Hat attachments  
 37 No problem  
 38 Actor Wallach  
 39 Conclusive  
 40 Trading centers  
 41 Caries spotters  
 43 Links standard  
 44 Eye part  
 45 Eton and Peter Pan  
 49 Truthful  
 52 Rigid disciplinarian  
 53 Stop a rocket shot  
 54 Clan division  
 55 Leprechaun's land  
 56 Alpine song  
 57 On the waves  
 58 ERA or RBI  
 59 Squalid  
 60 Jung or Sagan  
 61 Beach hues
- DOWN**  
 1 Title holder  
 2 Gripe  
 3 Fuzzy collections  
 4 Rises sharply  
 5 Dress part  
 6 Go-between

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 43 Way in  
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