SPORTS:
Marriage between the Dores and the Bears tumultuous.
See page 4

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www.lnsideVandy.com =

CALENDAR

TODAY
• Martin Luther King Jr. Day



FRANCIS MILLER / LIFE Magazin

To honor the civil rights activist, The Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Series will run throughout the week with lectures and panels highlighting King's legacy and the history of the civil rights movement. Tonight, Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee member Bob Moses and Congress of Racial Equality member Rita Bender will deliver the keynote address on "The Deliberate Denial of Education," starting at 6 p.m. in Benton Chapel. A candlelight vigil will be held following the speech in honor of King and civil rights activists.

 Spring dance class registration starts



MARTIN O'CONNOR / VU Media Relations

Register for classes with the Vanderbilt Dance Program in the Sarratt Student Center Lobby from noon to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday. For a list of classes, go to http://www.vanderbilt.edu/dance/

THURSDAY, JAN. 21 "Leveling the Playing Field, Helping Poor Children Succeed" Geoffrey Canada, president and CEO of Harlem Children's Zone will speak about what he believes is necessary to change the lives of inner-city children. As part of the Chancellor's Lecture Series, the speech will begin at 4 p.m. at Benton Chapel and will be followed by a complimentary reception.

"Urinetown: The Musical" Vanderbilt OffBroadway's student-run production of Greg Kotis' award-winning musical premieres Thursday night, with additional shows Friday and

premieres Thursday night, with additional shows Friday and Saturday night. Beginning at 8 p.m. each night at Blair School of Music's Ingram Hall, admission is \$5 for the public and free for undergraduates.

IN THIS ISSUE

OPINION: MLK should be honored with a day of service. See page 4

WEATHER
WEATHER.COM
TODAY



Partly Cloudy

Going, going, Greek



JUSTIN MENESTRINA / The Vanderbilt Hustler

New members of Alpha Chi Omega circle up and begin to get to know their new sisters and sorority's cheers at Sunday's Panhellenic Bid Day.

At the end of a weeklong recruitment, Vanderbilt's fraternities and sororities have welcomed their newest members. Of the 520 women who began the process, 418 received bids on Sunday, while 252 men joined Interfraternity Council fraternities.

fraternities.

"It was really fun," said new Delta Delta Delta member McCallen Moser. "It's a little stressful, seeing where you're accepted back to, but overall I had a really good experience

MORE ON

InsideVandy.com

To view photo slideshows of

both Panhellenic and Interfraternity Council Bid Days,

go to InsideVandy.com.

with it."



JUSTIN MENESTRINA / The Vanderbilt Hustler

New Kappa Delta members Cozy Ruan and Ellen Reat celebrate after receiving their bids.



JUSTIN MENESTRINA / The Vanderbilt Hustler

New fraternity members gathered in Sarratt Cinema Saturday evening to receive their bids at the end of the first formal Interfraternity Council recruitment process.

Potential candidates take first step toward VSG presidency



Susan Gleiser and Andrew Morse



Lee Redinoff and Lori Murphy



Aysha Mallk and Theo Samets

by SARA GAST Senior Reporter

Three pairs of students attended Vanderbilt Student Government's information session for presidential candidates Sunday night, unofficially presenting themselves as contenders to be the next leaders of the student body.

Current Speaker of the Senate Aysha Malik and Executive Adviser Theo Samets, Engineering Senator Andrew Morse and Programming Director Susan Gleiser, and Vice President Lori Murphy and Treasurer Lee Pedinoff were present at the meeting to hear the official rules and deadlines as they prepared for their campaigns as presidents

Please see **VSG**, page 3



Check InsideVandy.com throughout the week for more in-depth VSG election coverage.

Web site ranks Vanderbilt second hottest school of the decade

by CONRAD GOERINGER

Contributing Reporter

Only one school was hotter than Vanderbilt in the 2000s. Ranking behind the University of Southern California, Vanderbilt placed second in The Daily Beast's list of the hottest colleges of the decade.

The Daily Beast, Tina Brown's news outlet, ranked schools based on admissions statistics, financial aid packages and campus amenities.

The Daily Beast attributed Vanderbilt's

recent increase in selectivity, merit-aid packages and the construction of The Commons as being major factors in its ranking. The implementation of a need-blind admissions process and a guarantee of meeting 100 percent of a family's demonstrated financial need made Vanderbilt accessible to more talented students, and the construction of The Commons in 2007 fostered a 30 percent increase in applications the following year.

"This Almost Ivy is the quintessential Please see **VANDY RANKING**, page 3

THEN AND NOW

Number of applications

8,890 (2000)

21,500 (projected 2010)

Percent admitted

55.1% (2000)

20% (2009)

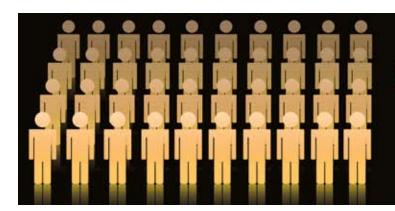
Yield (percent enrolled)

33.5% (2000)

41% (2009)

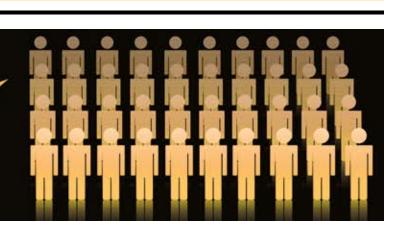
Diversity (number who selfidentified as minorities) 17.4% (2000)

28.5% (2009)



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CORRECTION

In the Friday, Jan. 15 issue of The Hustler, Sam Betten was mentioned as a member of Phi Kappa Psi. Betten is a Phi Kappa Sigma. The Hustler regrets this error.

CRIME LOG

compiled by AMANDA NIEMAN

Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2:48 p.m.

A GPS was stolen from a vehicle in South Garage.

Wednesday, Jan. 13, 4:05 p.m.

Money was stolen from Vanderbilt University Hospital.

Wednesday, Jan. 13, 8:00 p.m.

A car was pulled over at the intersection of Pierce Avenue and 24th Avenue South. The vehicle did not have any headlights on, and the driver's license was suspended.

Around the Loop

compiled by LAURA DOLBOW

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO COME TO VANDERBILT?



"It was the best school in the South, and it was the best school I got into."

-Cayla Mackey, Class of 2012



"Vandy has strong academics with a good mix of sports as well. It's also a good distance from home."

-Chelsea Hollenkamp, **Class of 2012**



"First because it was close to home, and it is the best academic school in the Southeast."

-Matthew Taylor, Class of 2012



"It's a good distance from Atlanta, and also a good mix of academics and social life."

—Kalie Deutsch, Class of 2012

SERVICE GUIDE

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

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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 are available in Sarratt 130 during business hours.

Who is: STEVE PATE

TEACHES: Managerial Studies ATTENDED: B.S., M.S., Ph.D. in mathematics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

M.B.A., University of Chicago

HOW MANY WORDS PER MINUTE DO YOU READ? If it is a novel that's straightforward, then about 4,000 words a minute.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS?

In the early '90s the world's fastest reader was listed, but the year that I broke the record, the editors no longer wanted to have this title in the book.

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU DO TO PREPARE FOR SPEED READING?

I like to see how the text is laid out. Books with many pictures are harder to read.

DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS ON HOW TO SPEED READ?

It's easy to say, but hard to do. Do not sub-vocalize. Pick some syllable, as a kid mine was "no" and repeat it to yourself as you read. This will prevent you from saying the words in the book, and you will move along much faster.

compiled by FRANCESCA AMIKER

SNAPSHOT

Blue and White Formal



ZAC HARDY / The Vanderhilt Hustler

Britany Jenkins and Kembrap Nelson dance it up at the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Blue and White Formal in Alumni Hall on Saturday.



Geoffrey Canada

President & CEO. Harlem Children's Zone

Thursday, January 21, 2010 Lecture 4 p.m. • Reception 5 p.m. • Benton Chapel

eoffrey Canada is the founder of the Harlem Children's Zone. His revolutionary idea that helping impoverished youth beat the odds against them means changing the entire character of their schools, families, and neighborhoods has been replicated with success by communities across the country. He is the author of Fist Stick Knife Gun: A Personal History of Violence in America and Reaching Up for Manhood, a

manifesto of hope for boys born in the inner city.



This lecture begins at 4 p.m. and is followed by a complimentary reception at 5 p.m. in Benton Chapel, Divinity School. Parking is available in Terrace Place Garage (21st Avenue, South at 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 refer to www.vanderbilt.edu/chancellor/cls, email cls@vanderbilt.edu, or call 343-2574.

CHanceller's **Lecture series** 2009/2010



The Vanderbilt Hustler

Chipotle to join Taste of Nashville

by MALVI SAVANI

Contributing Reporter

With strong student support in the form of Facebook groups and e-mails, the Chipotle Mexican Grill on West End Avenue will join Vanderbilt Dining's Taste of Nashville program this semester. The restaurant, which opened on Nov. 13, has already completed the Taste of Nashville application.

"We are now at the mercy of Vanderbilt Dining," said Ryan Dickerson, who works with Chipotle's Southeast marketing team.

"Chipotle is on the top of everyone's list right now" said Camp Howard, director of Vanderbilt Dining.

Chipotle, a Mexican quickservice restaurant, will most likely compete with the Qdoba Mexican Grill on West End Avenue, a similar restaurant that joined Taste of Nashville roughly three years ago.

"(Chipotle) would more than likely affect (Qdoba's) business," Howard said.

In order to qualify for the Taste of Nashville program, diningestablishmentsmustbe 10 minutes walking distance from central campus or within

a 10-minute delivery radius of the campus. Restaurants are required to give 10 percent of Taste of Nashville profits to Vanderbilt. Numerous restaurants that are a part of the program rave about the benefits.

"I'm satisfied with it," said Kesha Demonbreun, the manager of Schlotzsky's Deli on West End Avenue. "I don't really see any cons of (Taste of Nashville) since it helps business. A lot of students are very excited when they find out that the card works here."

Glen Smith, manager of Noshville Delicatessen on Broadway, agreed.

"It's a great program for independent restaurantsof Davidson County to get together, and it helps promote business," Smith said.

Although Jack Baum, the manager of Chili's on West End Avenue said he loved the Taste of Nashville program and the benefits of Vanderbilt student business he expressed frustration over the "obnoxious Vanderbilt students that don't understand the rules" associated with the plan, including the fact that they're not allowed to get gift cards with the plan.



Even though it only opened two months ago, the Chipotle on West End Avenue is ready to be part of the Taste of Nashville program, which would allow Vanderbilt students to use their Meal Money at the restaurant.

Taste of Nashville, which in ago with only four participant itself is unique for a college

restaurants. Now the program campus, began four years has matured to 25 restaurants dining to fast food. Howard said he would still like the each year. ■

ranging from high-class program to grow by adding one or two new restaurants

VSG: Teams offer different perspectives on leadership

From **VSG**, page 1

and vice presidents, respectively. Attorney General Tyler Boyd moderated the session, which was also attended by other members of the VSG executive board, including President Wyatt Smith.

"It's an exciting time ... to start looking for new leadership," said Smith, who advised potential candidates to "keep in mind the best interests of the student body" and keep a "high level of integrity" throughout their campaigns in order to live up to the expectations of students.

Campaigns will officially begin on Thursday, Jan. 21, at 8 p.m. A primary to narrow down the race to two tickets will run from Jan. 27 at 8 a.m. to Jan. 28 at noon, with the final election beginning on Feb. 3 at 8 a.m. and ending on Feb.

Many of the potential candidates described their ticket as providing a unique position. Morse and Gleiser said their distance from the executive board gave them a "bird's-eye view" of how VSG works and what the student body

"(VSG) has great strengths and weaknesses," Gleiser said. "Our ability to see it from a step back is a great strength." She also expressed her and Morse's passion for VSG and their hope to "utilize every student's voice."

"We want VSG to be an advocacy group," she said.



JUSTIN MENESTRINA / The Vanderbilt Hustler

Presidential candidate Andrew Morse looks over the rules for the campaign as the three pairs of candidates meet to officially delcare their presidency.

Murphy and Pedinoff, on the other hand, said their combined six years of experience is the element that gives them a "unique perspective" on student

"We're running for president and vice president because we believe we are best suited to provide services and support for students and lobby for them," Murphy said. "We see what makes students tick and know how to successfully represent the student body."

Murphy also noted her plans to continue the work she and Smith started

over the past year.

"We want to expand on that success and improve the organization each day we're in office," she said.

Malik said the roles she and Samets have held over their time at Vanderbilt have given them insight into students' needs, both now and in the future.

"I love this university, and I only want to be able to give back," Malik said, a thought Samets echoed.

"We want to commit to provide services that students want and need," Samets said. "That will be our focus." ■

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VANDY RANKING: Commons, financial aid entice applicants

From **VANDY RANKING**, page 1

example of the supply/demand crunch of the 2000s," wrote Kathleen Kingsbury, author of the post. Over the past 10 years, the percent of applicants admitted has shot down, going from 55.1 percent in 2000 to 20 percent for the current freshman class.

Vice Provost for Enrollment and Dean of Admissions Douglas Christiansen agreed, saying Vanderbilt's No. 2 ranking is a measure of demand. This year, the admissions office is expected to receive approximately 12,600 more applications than in 2000. As a natural result of selectivity, the caliber of students admitted has also increased.

Christiansen said that even more important than statistics is the student experience.

"All these things are wonderful," he said. "But I believe the biggest driver is the solid academic experience students are having."

With faculty members who are top experts in their fields but who also focus on undergraduate learning, students receive a world-class education.

"Vanderbilt could not have success without substance," Christiansen said.

Sophomore Ethan Messenger, an economics major from Milford, Mass., said he was attracted to Vanderbilt because of its academics and size, despite considering liberal arts colleges including Bowdoin, Colgate and Washington

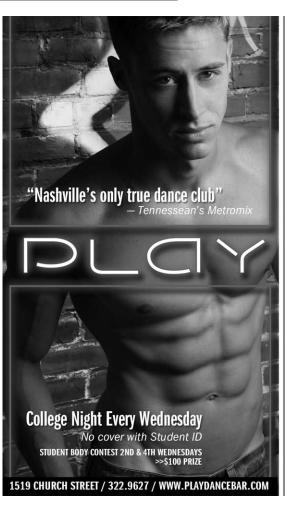
"(Vanderbilt) is large enough that it becomes a different experience from high school, but also not so large that one becomes lost in the numbers," he said.

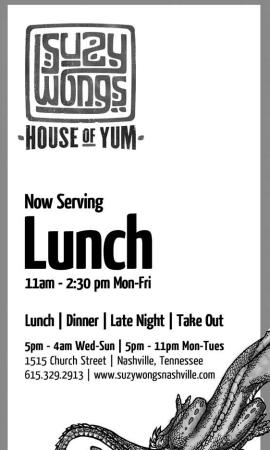
Yet others are drawn to the university for research opportunities.

"It is my second semester here, and I am already getting experience in a lab performing cutting edge research," said sophomore transfer Ravi Nath, a biology major from Centreville, Va. "There are so many opportunities here."

"As far as if I am happy with my choice, I couldn't be happier," Messenger said.

Hannah Twillman contributed reporting to this article.





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COLUMN

Vanderbilt University is dead



MIKE WARREN Columnist

I'm not sure when the and sports. Commodore's progeny officially kicked the bucket. It may have been dying since before my freshman year, but it's probably been somewhere in the last three and a half years that the university went to see the big ivory tower in the sky.

There will still be something that calls itself "Vanderbilt University." It's too good a name to be thrown

on the ash heap of history. But don't believe for a second that it's the same great university.

You see, Vanderbilt used to be a unique and special place. More prestigious than Wake Forest, more fun than Duke, less douchey than Emory, Vanderbilt defined itself by its students, who were smart, driven and personable. More than 20 years ago, students began a world-class service organization called Alternative Spring Break that has become a staple on college campuses across the country. The Vanderbilt University Sailing Club, one of the oldest student organizations on campus, is student-run and has an alumnibased steering committee. How many southern universities this far from the ocean can boast a sailing club?

Then there's our Greek life, the bane of every Vanderbilt administrator's existence. As a fraternity member myself, I can attest to the fact that Greek life is wild, crazy fun, once the center of social life and some level of debauchery. It's also, in general, a positive force on this campus. The academic standards set by the student-run governing councils mean Greeks have better GPAs than the general student average. Greeks are leaders in student government, student media and ASB. Our Greeks go on to be some of the most successful Vanderbilt alumni in business, politics

But Vanderbilt is slowly making Greek life obsolete. The freshmen are housed as far away from Greek Row as possible, and it's a wonder they find it at all, since campus tours ignore that area west of Alumni Lawn, and guides are instructed to deflect questions about fraternities and sororities. Administrators have taken advantage of isolated incidents to threaten kicking all fraternities and sororities off campus. They'd rather plan our social lives for us, sticking us together in our freshman dorms to foster an empty, meaningless camaraderie that has nothing to do with students or with Vanderbilt.

When the university rids itself of Greek life, it won't just lose the headache of dealing with nagging helicopter parents and overblown news reports. Vanderbilt will lose a great chunk of its leadership class. It will lose donations from alumni. Most importantly, it will lose a major part of Vanderbilt's character, the sort of social glue that pervades campus and makes ASB and the Sailing Club possible. Unique and innovative ideas like these don't come from geeks playing Halo in their rooms or from clean, tolerant university-planned activities. They come from the sort of individuals who socialize with others, who become a part of something more important than themselves. Greek life creates an environment where students can be in charge. What we're getting instead are Commons-programmed robots and video game-

The writing's on the wall, so it might as well be so. Greek life is dead at this university, and so with it goes the university.

-Mike Warren is a senior in the College of Arts and Science. He can be reached at michael.r.warren@ vanderbilt.edu.

At a Glance: InsideVandy Blogs

QUICK SHOTS

'Up in the Air': The stomach punch movie BY KATHERINE MILLER

I know I'm late to the game on this one, but I saw "Up in the Air," and it kind of found my heart, nudged it gently, threw a friendly arm around it and then knifed it.

"Up in the Air" revolves around the idea that all things can be made more efficient, can be improved upon — the difficulty comes with confronting the realities of all that efficiency. That's abstract. So, "Up in the Air" is about these people who try to organize and edit their lives into one simple circuit, but then have to deal with life's lack of science. Still abstract. "Up in the Air" is a stomach punch of a movie. When everybody figures out they've been doing everything wrong, well, it's too late.

An American abroad returns



COSTANTINO Columnist

Florence. Like everyone who studies abroad, I had the time of my life. If you go to Italy and you don't enjoy yourself, you're an idiot. It's a place where life isn't stressful, the food is good, the wine is plentiful. I was blissful for four months straight, and I panicked at the thought of

And then I remembered that coming home meant coming back to Vanderbilt. This place rocks. Some girl from Northwestern had such a great time visiting here this fall that she wrote an article in their school paper proclaiming her loyalty to the Dores and the lameness of Northwestern.

Even in Italy, living la dolce vita, I missed life here. In Florence, there are no Munchie Marts, there's no tailgating, there's no beer pong. And I'll be honest, I even missed the classes here. There's no quaint collegiate feel from circuitous brick paths and scarily dark and deserted libraries in Florence, and I missed worrying about whether or not my paper would be well received by a

Plus, I have a lot of great friends here. It's been nice to be back at Vanderbilt and really know the people I spend time with. When I tell a story, they know the people I'm talking about or the weird bar downtown I'm referencing. My friends here even know me well enough to know about

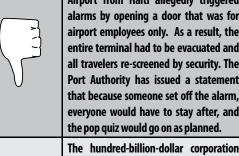
my serious fear of stray hairs, so they don't even blink when I cringe at them. Let me tell you, my friends in Florence never quite adjusted to that adorable character quirk, and it made for some uncomfortable situations.

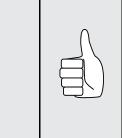
I haven't scratched the beer pong itch yet, but I am glad to be back on campus. Life at Vanderbilt really is top of the line, but I still have a few reservations that make me miss Florence. I spent this week flirting with freshman girls so they'd join my sorority, and I have to say that you young ladies are not as good at it as Italian men. My first brookie was really fantastic, but it wasn't as good as gelato. I walked to Hillsboro Village this morning, and it was cute the whole way. I passed through our lovely campus and ended up at a tasty restaurant, but it wasn't like walking to lunch in Florence.

Basically, my life has gotten way less glamorous now that I'm home. If I were in Florence, running errands would mean going to the specialized market that's been in the same spot since forever and passing through alleys Dante wandered through. Here I drive an old, beige Volvo station wagon to Wal-Mart. Don't think I'm complaining — I'm glad to be back in the land of free ice water and a vibrant economy, but people are dead wrong when they say the hardest adjustment after studying abroad is the jet lag.

-Claire Costantino is a junior in the College of Arts and Science. She can be reached at claire.v.costantino@vanderbilt.edu.

THE VERDICT Stand and be judged by the Hustler opinion staff! Compiled by Peter Nygaard **Emergency** A man who flew into JFK International Alarms Airport from Haiti allegedly triggered





Google

Coverage

Photoshop

Jose Offerman

The hundred-billion-dollar corporation announced via blog that if the Chinese government did not discontinue its censorship and blacklisting of Web sites, they would shut down the country's version, Google.cn. The Chinese government did not comment on the issue because all of the news sites where they could have possibly found out about this story are currently blacklisted.

Haiti Media

There will be plenty of time to showcase all of the tear-jerkingly inspirational stories about brave souls taking action in a few weeks when the victims are beginning to piece their lives back together. In the meantime, let the world mourn a little before you try to put a positive spin on any part of it.



Spanish lawmaker Gaspar Llamazares recently came forward, claiming the FBI digitally altered a photo of him to create an image of what Osama Bin Laden may look like today. By informing the FBI of the situation, Mr. Llamazares is totally missing out on a golden opportunity to turn himself in. That's G4 money.



Mark McGwire wasn't the only former MLB player making headlines this week. The former All-Star took a swing at the umpire during a Dominican winter league game while protesting a call. News of this incident was particularly shocking to the owner of Offerman's team who never expected this type of behavior when they hired him ... two years after he charged the mound with his bat in hand and assaulted the pitcher with it.

LETTER

To the Editor:

In 2009, President Barack Obama called for American citizens to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day with a day of service. Fueled by Obama's commitment to King's legacy, Americans participated in more than 13,000 service projects across the country, an increase of 8,000 projects from 2008.

The Vanderbilt community should value the president's declaration by allowing students a day off of classes to participate in service and reflect on the works of Dr. King. Of the top 20 universities, only two hold classes - Vanderbilt and Notre Dame. I believe Vanderbilt should join the majority of the top 20 universities by suspending classes on this national holiday.

Canceling classes on MLK Day is not about being able to sleep in or party on Sunday night; rather, it would provide an opportunity for students to honor the memory and accomplishments of Dr. King through attendance of lectures, marches and rallies, or completion of a service project within the Nashville community. Each year Nashville holds a Martin Luther King Jr. March on Jefferson Street, which is attended by community members and Nashville-area college students in large numbers. However, due to scheduled classes and organizational commitments, many Vanderbilt students wishing to participate are hindered from doing so. In addition, Vanderbilt is offering several lectures throughout the week to commemorate Dr. King's legacy; however, the majority occur at times when most students are in classes.

It is time for Vanderbilt to embrace Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This day is ideal for a university such as Vanderbilt, which prides itself on diversity and service-learning and which offers courses exploring the works of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It is thus imperative to honor this day. Students, faculty and staff alike should have the opportunity to honor King's dream.

> Alexa Marcotte Senior Peabody



OPINION POLICY

The Vanderbilt Hustler opinion page 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 InsideVandy.com.

Letters must be submitted either in person by the author to the Hustler office or via e-mail to opinion@insidevandy.com. Letters via e-mail must come from

a Vanderbilt e-mail address where the identity of the sender is clear. 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

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

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 hustler. news@insidevandy.com. You may also report them by telephone to the news line at (615) 322-2424.

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Commodores and Bears: A rocky relationship, but one that can work

by DAVID RUTZ Sports Reporter

The Chicago Bears don't need sniggering reminders they have five players from the Vanderbilt Commodores on their roster. They're the ones who traded for and drafted Jay Cutler, Earl Bennett, Chris Williams, Hunter Hillenmeyer and D.J. Moore, who all, with the exception of Moore, played prominent roles on this season's team. It's a strange marriage between a college never known as a football powerhouse and an NFL franchise with a rich history.

"Has any other NFL team ever started three former Vanderbilt players on offense?" my brother-in-law asked me. I didn't look it up, but I don't imagine there was.

Circumstances have changed for both teams lately. Vanderbilt's seen an upsurge in its football program in the last few seasons, while the Bears are a shadow of the dominant force they were

But there are plenty of reasons our Commodore alumni can and will be instrumental in making Da Bears a playoff team again, and much of the proof lies in the pudding of a profoundly disappointing 7-9 season.

The tale starts and ends with the mercurial, brash Jay Cutler, the quarterback with tons of talent and plenty of growing up to do.

With the third-most touchdown passes (27) in Bears history but also the most interceptions in the NFL (26), Cutler's 2009 season was a study in the highs and lows of gunslinging: that brand of quarterbacking that's alternately thrilling and

Plenty of upside to that mindset: Cutler is one of the most physically gifted quarterbacks in the league, justifying the confidence in his arm to make throws where others might take the sack.

But also plenty of downside: Four games where No. 6 tossed at least three picks knifed a struggling Bears offense. The result was a lot of points left on the field and a lot of facepalms from Chicago fans.

What, then, to make of his volatile first season



JOHN RUSSELL / VU Meadi Relations

Vanderbilt alumni Earl Bennett and Jay Cutler look to emulate their collegiate success with the storied Chicago Bears.

in the Windy City? Any season that comes up short of the playoffs for a legitimate franchise certainly doesn't qualify as a success, and Cutler's inconsistency was a big part of the

The good thing is Cutler didn't try to deny this, and there was development as the season wore on for a quarterback who people tend to forget is just 26 years old.

Cutler threw eight touchdown passes in the last two games: victories over the NFC North champion Vikings and the pitiful Lions. A modest winning streak to end the season, sure,

and a tease to Bears fans: Where was this all season? Well, it was there at the end, and that was something to build on.

Along with Cutler's roller coaster ride, the NFL got a more proper introduction in 2009 to Earl Bennett, who became a dynamic part of the Chicago offense with the arrival of his old college friend. After registering zero catches in his rookie season, Bennett caught 54 passes for 717 yards.

Like Cutler, he played his best at the end of the season, catching his first two career touchdown passes in victories over St. Louis and Minnesota in November and December and returning a punt for a touchdown for Chicago's lone points in a lateseason loss at Baltimore. Bennett doesn't have the kind of breaking speed to stretch a defense, but he's become a more disciplined route-runner, has great hands and has such a close relationship with his quarterback that his role as a possession receiver is and will continue to be invaluable.

Big Chris Williams, a firstround offensive lineman pick in 2008, got better and better as the season wore on, capped by his terrific performance at left tackle against the fearsome Vikings pass rush on Monday Night Football on Dec. 28. Cutler was barely touched all night.

And Hunter Hillenmeyer, who early in the season feared being released, was a steadying force at middle linebacker after Brian Urlacher was lost for the year to injury. He's no speed demon, but Hillenmeyer's a very smart player and surehanded tackler.

That's how it is with Vanderbilt

players. They're not going to be machines. They're generally not going to be the caliber of players from Alabama, USC or Texas. The key is to focus on what they bring to the table rather than what they're lacking,

So the fates of nearly half of Vanderbilt's NFL products and the hopes of one of the NFL's proudest teams are very much intertwined. 2009 gave glimmers of hope it can be a successful relationship, if not always a smooth one.

Not a marriage made in heaven, but a union that can work, for better or worse, for playoffs or an early offseason, through injury and in health.

Norman storms his way to All-American status

by DAVID NAMM Sports Editor

Even though he hasn't played a game in almost two months, Vanderbilt freshman running back Warren Norman is still running past his competition. The standout season he put together for an otherwise disappointing 2-10 Vanderbilt squad is still garnering accolades, as Norman was named a First-Team Freshman All-American by the American Football Coaches Association, an honor capping postseason recognition of the Commodores' most dynamic offensive threat. Norman received similar honors from The Sporting News, Rivals.com and Scout.com.

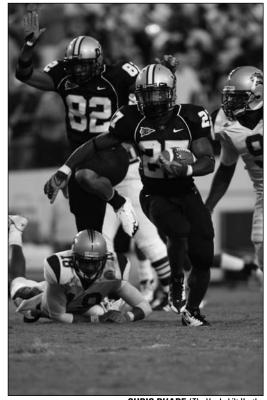
"Warren put together a fantastic season for the Commodores, one that will be remembered for years to come," said Vanderbilt head coach Bobby Johnson on the news of Norman's recognition. "Warren came into the program wanting to do everything he could to help our team, and his mindset and determination never wavered.

"All the accomplishments are a tremendous credit to an outstanding and very deserving young man."

In a campaign that included very little firepower and explosive plays, Norman almost singlehandedly kept the Commodores in contention, scoring seven total touchdowns including a Southeastern Conference record-tying three kickoffs returned for scores. His 1,941 total yards on the season also set a conference mark, surpassing former Georgia great Herschel Walker.

Improvement necessary: As the seasonending polls and future projections were turned in during the aftermath of the 2009 college football season, it is safe to say many did not favor the Commodores. Not surprisingly, ESPN ranked Vanderbilt as the SEC's worst team and — outside of the aforementioned Norman — did not see many bright spots for the program moving forward. As Chris Low, ESPN's SEC beat reporter and blogger, said, "The defense played respectably for most of the season, but ... the Commodores have to find a way to improve their passing game."

Bobby Johnson and company look to spur competition in that area with the signing of junior college transfer Jordan Rodgers. Rodgers, the younger brother of famed Green Bay Packers signal caller Aaron Rodgers, comes from Butte College in California with a solid reputation; however, when he will actually take the field for



CHRIS PHARE / The Vanderbilt Hustler A standout freshman season by tailback sensation Warren Norman continues to pay dividends.

Vanderbilt remains to be seen. Since secondary NCAA recruitment violations were committed in signing Rodgers, his ability to compete with incumbent starter and redshirt sophomore Larry Smith may be hindered by disciplinary action. The Commodores did self-report these violations, though, which may lessen the penalty.

Lewis, Welch to Combine: Senior cornerback Myron Lewis and offensive tackle Thomas Welch have been invited to participate in the 2010 NFL Combine, where noteworthy professional prospects gather in the league's glorified talent evaluation mecca. Lewis, a second-team All-SEC selection, recorded four interceptions in his follow-up to an outstanding junior year where he registered five picks and recorded five sacks. He also has prototype size (listed at 6-feet-2-inches, 205 lbs.), which will certainly help his April draft status.

Welch, the team's most consistent offensive lineman, can now turn his conversion from tight end to lineman into a chance at the NFL. The NFL Combine will be held Feb. 24 until March 2 in Indianapolis, Ind., with the 2010 NFL Draft starting on April 22. ■

Men's tennis opens 2010 with back-to-back sweeps

by ERIC SINGLE Asst Sports Editor

The Commodores could not have asked for a better performance to start their spring

Vanderbilt did not lose a set in 18 matches on Saturday, compiling a 6-0 doubles record and a 12-0 singles record on their way to consecutive sweeps of Belmont University and University of Tennessee-Chattanooga. Senior Scott Lieberman defeated Stephen Crofford, 7-5, 7-5, in the final singles match of the doubleheader to preserve a spotless opening day at Currey Tennis Center.

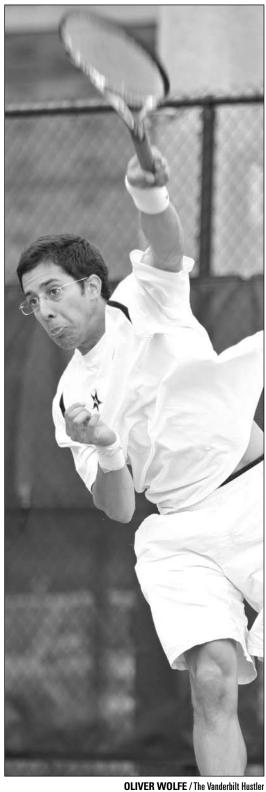
The 57th-ranked doubles team of senior Vijay Paul and junior Bryant Salcedo lost only five games on the day, defeating Felipe Cirne Lima and Bruno Silva of Belmont, 8-2, and following up in the afternoon with an 8-3 victory over Chattanooga's Sam Parfitt and Stephen Crofford. Paul and Salcedo also won two singles matches each for the Commodores.

The team that saw none of its members finish in the top 100 in the final rankings of the 2009 season received strong performances from all three of its nationally ranked singles players on Saturday. In addition to No. 71 Paul's work, 29th-ranked freshman Ryan Lipman defeated Joao Paoliello of Belmont, 6-4, 6-2, and sophomore Charlie Jones backed up his No. 53 ranking with a victory over Chattanooga's Chris Smith, 6-4, 6-4.

Lipman, the only freshman on the team, extended his singles record in his first year at Vanderbilt to 11-3, bringing himself level with junior Alex Zotov and Charlie Jones for the team lead in wins. In the fall, he posted a 3-2 record against nationally ranked opponents.

The 55th-ranked Commodores faced only one tiebreaker all day, against Chattanooga. Junior Andy Pulido and senior James Moye defeated Roberto Vieira and Jackson Tresnan, 9-8 (7-1) after rallying to force the tiebreaker in the final doubles match of the day.

Vanderbilt travels to Raleigh next weekend and will play North Carolina State on Friday and Michigan on Saturday. Their next home match is on Feb. 5 against Northwestern. ■



No. 2 singles player Vijay Paul won a doubles and singles match in each of Vanderbilt's overall victories this weekend.

Commodores best South Carolina

by DAVID NAMM

Sports Editor

As the first half drew to a close, South Carolina scoring sensation Devan Downey sliced through a stunned and silenced Vanderbilt defense. The senior guard's nifty lay-in around a crowd of Commodores drew the Gamecocks to within six points of their conference rivals. It was apparent then that Downey would not let his team go down without a fight

In the end, though, it was Vanderbilt (14-

3, 3-0 Southeastern Conference) — and junior center A.J. Ogilvy — who delivered the knockout punch.

Ogilvy scored 18 of his team-high 22 points in the second half, as the Commodores gradually willed their way to a highly contested 89-79 win in Columbia, S.C., over the Gamecocks (11-6, 2-1). This victory came in spite of Downey's best efforts, as his season-high 35 points kept South Carolina close for the majority of the contest.

"Downey was sensational," said Vanderbilt coach Kevin Stallings. "We were fortunate he had a good game ... and we won."

Two huge reasons for the Commodores leaving South Carolina with an eight-game winning streak and an

unblemished record in conference play were their shooting efficiency and rebounding advantages. Vanderbilt shot over 61 percent from the floor on the night and out-rebounded the Gamecocks 39-24, with Ogilvy and redshirt sophomore forward Andre Walker both registering nine boards to lead the team. Four Commodores — led by Ogilvy — scored in double figures, with sophomore forward Jeffrey Taylor (16 points) and guards John Jenkins and Jermaine Beal (10 points apiece) consistently testing the South Carolina defense.

"It was an interesting game much like we thought it would be," Stallings said. "They tried to

get after our pressure. At times we were successful, and when we were, that's how we got control of the

"Rebounding was key. We were assertive on the boards. That was big because when we did miss, we got a few back."

Indeed, 13 of Vanderbilt's rebounds came on the offensive end of the floor, giving the Commodores plenty of opportunities to establish an insurmountable lead over Downey and Co. The Gamecock disadvantage on the boards stems not only from the loss of dominant big man Dominique

Archie, but also — according to South Carolina head coach Darrin Horn — from a lack of concentration and

effort on defense.

"It starts on the defensive end," Horn said. "You won't beat anyone when they shoot 61 percent against you. There were things we did well and spots we played with the energy and aggressiveness we need to have, but it

"Collectively we weren't good defensively tonight to give ourselves a chance to win."

bottom line.

wasn't enough. That's the

Vanderbilt, on the other hand, was able to force the Gamecocks into ill-advised shots and ball-handling mistakes, with the South Carolina starting backcourt committing 10 turnovers, and the team overall shooting under 44 percent from the field. The Commodores are now in

the middle of their week off from conference play and resume their SEC slate on Saturday at Memorial Gymnasium in their bout against Auburn, where Vanderbilt looks to take their win streak to nine.

CHRIS HONIBALL / The Vanderbilt Hustler

Jeffery Taylor (44) continues to be an offensive

threat for the Commodores, as he poured in 16

points in Vanderbilt's 89-79 victory over USC.

"We talked about at the beginning of the week how good we'd feel on Sunday if we could get two road wins," Stallings said. "Now we'll hopefully get to experience that tomorrow. It was big. Any road win in this league is a great win. It's always going to be a hard-fought win because the teams are too good, and the coaches are too good. We're very happy to have won and have (had) such a good week"



The fine line between greatness and frustration

by ERIC SINGLE

Asst Sports Editor

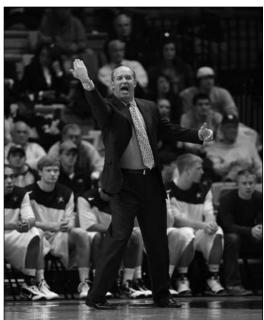
So January's halfway done, and Vanderbilt is 14-3 overall with a shiny clean 3-0 record in Southeastern Conference play. After winning a track meet with Florida in their SEC opener, the Commodores absolutely stole a win over Alabama in Tuscaloosa and followed it up three days later with a solid road win they had to have in South Carolina.

In all three games, the Commodores took staggering haymakers from three exceptional guards in Kenny Boynton, Mikhail Torrance and Devan Downey, and in all three games the Commodores absorbed the blows, held their patience and struck back when their opponents ran out of gas. The Commodores have proved they are capable and more than happy to beat teams at their own style of game, and they have three tough wins they should be very proud of.

So why am I so nervous?

The 2009-2010 Commodores are toeing a thin line between scary good and frustratingly okay, and with road trips to Tennessee and Kentucky right before February, we're going to find out real quick on which side of that line they belong.

That answer may very well boil down to who steps up and shows ownership of the paint. A.J. Ogilvy is just starting to return to the 20-point, 10-rebound center he



ZAC HARDY / The Vanderbilt Hustler

Coach Kevin Stallings led his Commodores to a perfect start in SEC play, but he and Vanderbilt will be tested as conferece play continues.

is expected to be, but he needs to step up the strength with which he takes the ball inside if he wants to take games over with the dominating resolve he really hasn't shown all season. Ogilvy has struggled to finish after contact all year, whether or not a foul is actually called on the play, and that detail shouldn't matter for an All-SEC player.

It certainly hasn't mattered for Festus Ezeli, who has shifted the momentum of several games so far while spelling Ogilvy at center. Ezeli has rebounded and defended inside with authority all season, and he can be relied upon to stop a rally with an emphatic block or punctuate a Vanderbilt run with a put-back slam. But this aggressiveness has led to chronic foul trouble, which puts the pressure on Ogilvy and Steve Tchiengang to take more of his minutes than coach Kevin Stallings would probably prefer.

Depth — at all five positions, not just down low with Ogilvy, Ezeli and Tchiengang — is quite a luxury, and it is what makes Vanderbilt such a dangerous matchup for so many teams. As a result, for example, Andre Walker has virtually hidden among the trees at power forward all year and has quietly become a key player at both ends of the floor. Don't be surprised if he steps into the spotlight to drop a double-double or two in late February or early March when the team sorely needs one.

But the Commodores' depth has worked against them, too. Many times it's tough to determine which player out of three or four options is hot and which lineups are clicking on a given night, and so far in SEC play the Commodores' opponents have taken those first uncertain minutes and capitalized, building early leads with their solid shooting and forcing Vanderbilt to work from behind in the first half. With the right combination out of the group of Jermaine Beal, John Jenkins, Brad Tinsley and Jeffery Taylor playing on the perimeter, Vanderbilt is tough to stop. The burning question is how much time John Wall and Eric Bledsoe will give Coach Stallings to determine that combination in two weeks in Lexington.

I'm still nervous about a lot of things. Who's going to take the last shot in the next close conference game? How many threes do we need to hit to be able to run with the best teams on the schedule? Which free throw shooting performance was an aberration, the 84 percent effort against Missouri or the 54 percent showing against Alabama? There is a terrifying amount of information about this team that is still up in the air. However, I am confident we haven't seen anything close to the Commodores' best game of the year. Which should make the rest of the SEC very, very nervous.

Was that you with your friends supporting Dance Marathon? ... Take a peek at p. 219

Were you wearing black and gold at ESPN's Game Day?

Did you hang out in front of the Rites of Spring stage? ... Flip to p. 249

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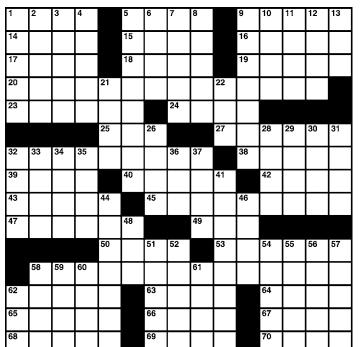
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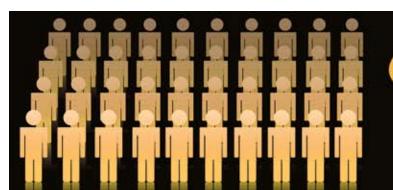
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