

the current

the student newspaper of MCKC-Longview

December 2009

Lady Scouts basketball starts big



Uno Yi/The Current
 Khun Penn Valley's women's basketball team includes Leah Smith, Brittney Miller, Treana Cason, Candice Akers, LaMonica Howard, Tre'Nesha Clark, Shekera Haynes, LaMetria Jackson, Rician Walker, Tyeila Gant, Jessica Dale, Tori Blyth, Laurel Wichmann, Austyn Hildebrandt, and Jessica Williams. The team lost to nationally ranked JCCC and to KCKCC, but defeated Haskell.

Cross country 27th in nation



Marcus Sunde/The Current

Cross country runners Daisy Chavez, Stevie Katzer, Kristin Kolasa, Emily Parsons, and Jaimie Paige

Longview's cross country team placed 27th at Nationals on Saturday in Peoria, Ill. Sophomore Daisy Chavez was 105th individually. The team also includes 2008 Coaches Academic All American Stevie Katzer and freshmen Jaimie Page, Emily Parsons and Kristin Kolasa.

~Marcus Sunde

3 Gay Straight Alliance works for awareness.

4 Break gives students much-needed rest.

5 Poets Down There win Longview's Battle of the Bands

6 Phi Theta Kappa Takes on hunger with OxFam dinner

8 Rick Wirt wants to "End the Fed"

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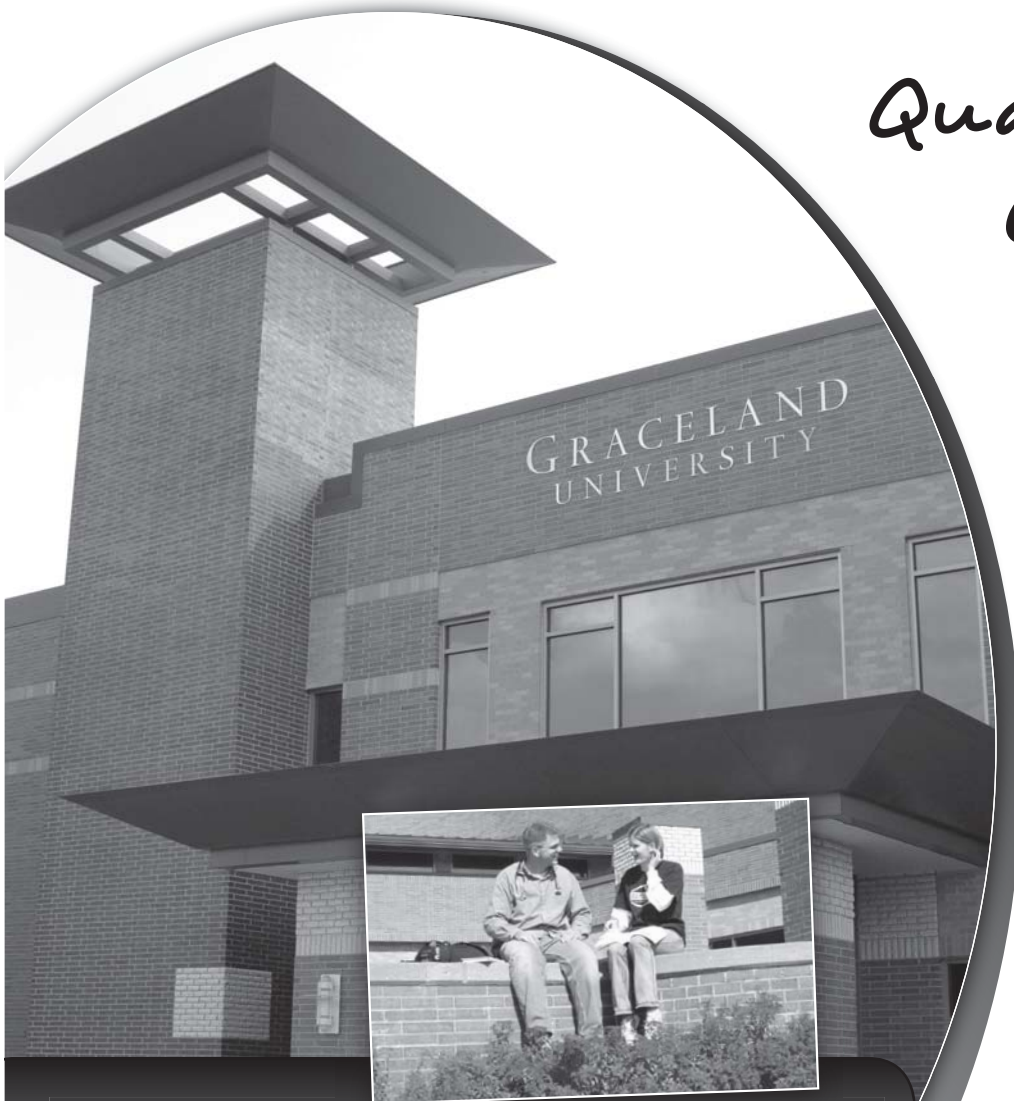
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LV HOSTS SAFEZONE WORKSHOPS

by Dalton Gossett

MCC-Longview held SafeZone workshops for individuals seeking to learn about the lives of gay people and acceptance of the gay culture.

SafeZone is a nationwide program consisting of hundreds of colleges participating to fight homophobia and improve any negative connotations associated with homosexuals.

History instructor Angela Bahner and Campus Life and Leadership coordinator Kim Prosak instructed these

workshops, held in the Private Dining Room in the Campus Center November 18 and 20.

According to Prosak, two smaller courses were offered: 101 and 102. Course 101 dealt mainly with the vocabulary affiliated with gay people. Course 102 discusses the complete understanding of the lifestyle and how to be an ally. This workshop is a condensed version of these two courses.

"This is the first time this has been offered to faculty and staff," Prosak says. Students were also welcomed.

Mako Blevens, admissions coordinator at Longview, said she was interested in attending one of the workshops. She used to be involved in QSA, which meant "Queer-Straight Alliance."

"I got involved because of friends and professors involved in the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) community," she said. Her main motive in attending the course is to learn more about the community. "If people attend, they are open to the idea of LGBT," Blevens says. She also stat-

ed that the success rate of these workshops depend on attendance. She describes herself as "all about diversity."

Bahner said the program uses visible symbols to be easily recognized. The symbol used most often is an upside-down rainbow triangle. "It comes from Nazi concentration camps. Instead of the usual yellow star, they would give the gay Jews pink stars." The star symbol is used to represent oppression.

Bahner said that the workshop's goal is to promote "equal rights for everyone."

Gay Straight Alliance supports LV students

by DALTON GOSSETT

MCC-Longview's Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) has made much progress this year. Advisors Casey Reid and Angela Bahner lead the group of students in an effort to rid the campus of homophobia and create a safe environment while sharing the students' stories of living the lifestyle.

The group was established years ago, yet did not survive. "We restarted in Spring 2008," Reid says. "Two students had class with Dr. Bahner and came to us." Reid also mentioned that our culture generally has a lot of hostility

towards homosexuals. According to Bahner, Longview's GSA "deals with discrimination. It goes with the SafeZone mission." SafeZone is a diversity initiative on campus. Students, such as Jennifer Smart and Dez Traylor, are active in the group and have high hopes for the future of the GSA.

Smart, an open bisexual and vice president of the group, said that members seek other "people with the same mindset." The goal for GSA is to "get things done this year." In the past, the group has not been as productive and active as they have been this year.

Traylor joined GSA at the begin-

ning of the semester. She openly tells the story of her coming out at age 11. "My dad got angry and disowned me, doesn't really talk to me anymore. My mom was mad at first, but doesn't really care now." Although people may judge, Traylor simply responds, "I don't care." Her role in the group is the "face," which includes designing flyers.

GSA has made multiple efforts to reach out to those who do not belong to or support the group through public events. They will be sponsoring a prom in Spring 2010 and hold bake sales occasionally between now

and then. "We participated in 'Out in Westport,'" Reid said. They also had a table at Club Week.

The group is close and "flamboyant, rowdy and chatty," according to Smart and "eccentric and diverse," according to Traylor. Movie nights to promote group bonding also take place.

All four hope for the best for Longview's GSA. "It's taken off," Reid said. With support from other gay students in a non-volatile environment, Reid said the group desires to "just have fun." Bahner said, "Our presence is to educate people and myths about gay people."

STUDENTS HONOR VETERANS DAY

by ADAM CONDER

Paper stars bearing the names of soldiers who have fought in any war from World War I to Iraq plastered the walls of the cafeteria in the Campus Center on November 11 for Veterans Day. Dozens of students leapt on this opportunity to feel pride in their country and remember someone they knew by writing a name on one of the stars. The booth which offered the paper stars also gave away patriotic rice crispy treats. These treats had American flags painted on top.

Derek Cox, 19, remembered his uncle, Daniel Cox. Dan fought in Vietnam. While on guard he was viciously stabbed in his stomach and was burdened with a large scar for the rest of his life.

Cynthia Gonzalez, who manned the booth, said "the reason to

honor them is for their sacrifices and for keeping us safe. They leave their families and go to war."

Britt Blurton, sophomore, remembered her professor Mark Johnson. "He was a green beret and was in the military for a long time, like 30 years" said Blurton "Johnson became a motivational speaker."

Victoria Hale, another sophomore, wrote Jim Sutner on her star. Sutner was her neighbor who had fought in World War II and was stationed in Iwo Jima.

A sense of pride was felt in the students who wrote a name on a star and by those manning the booth. Gonzalez said "it is important to remember the patriots." Near the end of the event stars covered almost every surface of wall behind the booth.

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POST-HOLIDAY BOOT CAMP CURES GUILT

by DALTON GOSSETT

Longview Rec Center hosted a Day After Thanksgiving Boot Camp on November 27 at 11 a.m. Led by Ryan Layman, fitness specialist, the intense cardio course is designed to burn off excess calories from the prior day's meals and give back to the community with a small charity food drive.

Justin Kincaid, an automotive student at Longview, said he visits the gym regularly, but overeats during the

holidays, like most Americans.

"Although I do watch my health and weight," Kincaid said, "I do gorge on Thanksgiving dinner. It is worth the extra calories." He said he is interested in attending a course like this to help rid him of the Thanksgiving calories.

Stephanie Sytkowski, a new student at Longview, is a self-proclaimed over-eater who said she does not work out.

"I basically eat whatever I want and sleep on Thanksgiving. It is kind

of a tradition in my family to do that," she said. "I would try to go to the course if I had time or energy."

Layman offers advice to those not able to attend the event. According to Layman, there are goals to have good habits. These include creating a plan for yourself, which means determining goals and thinking of ways to achieve them, and rewarding yourself with a "cheat meal" every now and then.

The instructor and fellow attendees hope for good attendance.

"This may be a good option for students to try, as we intend on continuing to run Boot Camps throughout the winter months," Layman said. He hopes to "create awareness for health and wellness and help the student body live healthier lifestyles."

The cost of the 45-minute workout is \$5.00 for each participant. Membership to the Recreation Center is not required for the course.

Break gives students much-needed rest

by DALTON GOSSETT

Christmas break is approaching, and students are ready to break free from classes and homework for three weeks of calm and holiday cheer.

Bailey Swanson, Caitlyn Minick and Jessica Tryon are ready to escape campus and have rest and relaxation at home.

"I have had so much to do this semester. I cannot wait for it to be over and go home and sleep in finally," Swanson said. "I am pretty excited to see my boyfriend for the holidays since he lives three hours away." Her family has the typical American tradition of making and decorating cookies for the occasion as well, she said.

Minick has other plans besides

staying at home in Kansas City.

"I am going on a ski trip to Colorado with my family," she said. "We will be in-town for Christmas but will leave shortly after. Whenever I leave town and get away from all the chaos, it feels like a breath of fresh air." She also said she feels like the break is long enough.

Tryon plans to work, but still enjoy the holidays.

"I will at least be saving up money for next semester during the off-time," she says, "but I will make the best of the time I have with my family and not being in school." She plans to stay at home as much as possible.

Classes officially end on December 15 and next semester begins on January 7.

PIE DAY SATISFIES STUDENTS

by DALTON GOSSETT

Campus Life and Leadership at MCC-Longview sponsored a Pie Day sale in the Campus Center cafe on November 24. It gave people a glimpse of Thanksgiving dinner a few days prior to the holiday.

Pie slices were on sale for a dollar, distributed by Kallie Alexander and Cinthia Gonzalez. Proceeds of \$275 were donate to City Union Mission.

According to Gonzalez, one of

the purposes in holding the pie sale was to have an event before Thanksgiving break. "So far so good," Alexander said regarding pie sales at the time. Following that statement, a student ordered 15 slices of pie.

Student Donald Breese quietly ate a dollar piece of pie in the cafeteria. "It is good apple pie," he said.

The sale offered five different varieties-cherry, pecan, pumpkin, chocolate and apple.

DOOZENS WAKES UP RAIN TREE

by ADAM CONDER

The first thing to be noticed when walking through the doors of Doozens is the strong aroma of coffee beans. Doozens was founded in 2007 by Susan Van Duesen, mother of five. She prides herself on the welcoming, family-like atmosphere that her coffee shop produces.

"We're a family. Our house is like Doozens," she said. Doozens is in the Raintree Shopping Center between Ward Rd and Raintree Rd.

Van Duesen started Doozens because she's always loved coffee. "Do what you love, what you're passionate about," she said. Her passion is for coffee.

Doozens regularly draw in crowds as a result of their jam sessions. During these anyone who wants to play can. Longview student Jesse Hamer said, "It's like a training ground for new musicians." The jam sessions allow people to get over their nerves.

"It's a good opportunity for people to get experience for playing in front of crowds," said musician David Tourtellot.

Not only do they have regular jam sessions, but also an art gallery in the store. The art is supplied by local artists and they are accepting art work. "We're trying to push it more. Anybody who'd like to get their art work up can call (816) 537-0800," she said.

Of course a coffee shop would be nothing without a good cup of coffee. Just last year a Starbucks near Doozens closed down. Van Duesen said enthusiastically, "We outlasted Starbucks." Tourtellot said that people enjoy supporting local businesses. It doesn't hurt to have a good cup of coffee, either. Hamer described the coffee as a "classy brew."

Doozens has become a sort of hangout for those in Raintree, supplying good coffee, shots of culture, and entertainment.

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Poets Down There win Battle of the Bands

by RICK WIRT

The glorified rock tradition of aspiring musicians contesting for new fans and a merited victory in a Battle of the Bands continued at MCC Longview's Lakeside Café on November 23. The event had a considerable turn out despite the early starting time, which may have conflicted with some would-be attendees' class schedules.

Standing as evidence for the success of the show, listeners patiently awaited upcoming routines in between performances and students smoking outside were studious in their effort to return before missing a single introduction. The approving audience happily remained as the show banged on to its decisive conclusion with the panel's verdict and a modest prize for the winners.

Longview student Jonathan Goforth said, "I was pretty happy with it, there were a good variety of bands.

It was a good show."

Andrew, guitarist and singer for Beyond Barred Windows, gave his humble evaluation of their performance, "I'd say the set was pretty rough. We had some technical problems, but I think we did pretty well."

Longview Student Jesse Hamer said, "I was impressed by the sound quality and the lighting effects, they really went all out."

The ranking



Poets Down There Emma Jo and Kyle Scheel

Danielle Fulmer/*The Current*

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Phi Theta Kappa takes on Hunger

by KELLY LEAR

Phi Theta Kappa hosted the Oxfam Hunger 4 Change dinner on November 21, 2009. Guests paid \$3 or three canned goods to enter.

Oxfam is an international relief and development program to create lasting solutions for hunger, poverty and injustice.

Guests were seated to represent the three classes of hunger. The lower class was seated on the floor and given one scoop of potatoes and unlimited water. The middle of the road was seated in tables and received more food, but no meat. The upper class was given meat, bread, salad and dessert.

"I thought it was a joke being played

on me. I wasn't thinking that I get to eat this great meal, but I thought, 'What made me so special?'" said participant Jakobb Baldwin, who sat on the ground with the poor class, and during the middle was chosen to move to the upper class table.

A representative of Harvesters was at the event to talk about hunger in Kansas City.

"Remember, there is no shortage of food, but there is a lack of means of food for some people. Donating to Harvesters helps those people get that food."

The event was very successful, raising money for Harvesters while students became more aware of the different types of hunger levels.

KNOT YOUR AVERAGE DAY HELPS RELAX STUDENTS

by STEVEN POLLARD

Campus life and leadership and the counseling office held their traditional relaxation day in December. The event is held to help students relax before the stressful week of finals, said Kim Prosak, campus life and leadership coordinator.

Before massages, students knot blankets to be given to Hope House, a non-profit shelter for battered women. Making the blankets puts people almost in to a meditative state, with the process of doing something repetitive with their hands, said Jim McGraw, Longview counselor.

"This is the most stressful time of the year because of demands on stu-

dents, Like papers coming due. People are more susceptible of getting sick of burned out," he said. With the added stress from finals, McGraw, along with the other counselors and campus leadership, hope that they can help students through this difficult time.

"We think events like this are very important. To give students some tools to take care of stress," said McGraw.

"Some students will get stressed and need something like this," said Longview student LaTasha Lasker. Although this event only happens once a semester, there is a relaxation room in Campus Center room 245. "Students can go there any time they want," said McGraw. There is also material about stress management and tips available.

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Opinion

RICK WIRT

End the Fed

Our livelihood, liberty, and national identity may be in jeopardy if we don't act soon. This is the warning of two-time presidential candidate U.S. Rep. Ron Paul (TX-14) in his latest book, "End the Fed." Paul cites the inflationary actions of the Federal Reserve Bank as the source for our present economic recession and predicts things are going to get much worse.

The Federal Reserve, Paul says, has led an ignorant Congress to "behave like college students on spring break who are using their parents' credit cards with no limit." This seemingly unlimited line of credit augments government by allowing Congress to engage in costly wars, produce expensive government programs, and bail out their friends on Wall Street.

The Fed, as it is known in business circles, drastically inflates the money supply through the vehicle of fractional reserve banking, which requires banks to hold only a small percentage of their customer's deposits as they loan out the remainder. It may also alter the money supply through its open market operations, buying and selling treasury securities, and with the discount rate it charges banks for borrowing money from it.

Since the Fed was created in 1913, the purchasing power of the dollar has dropped by 95 percent. "When the Fed lowers interest rates below their natural level on a market, it has the effect of expanding investment beyond a sustainable level," Paul wrote. "The lower interest rates are creating no new capital; they are merely distorting the signals borrowers use to assess risk," he said. Through these actions, Paul argues, the Fed enhances the business cycle, producing and prolonging recessions in the economy.

As the Fed creates new money out of thin air, the value of the dollar depreciates, which is essentially a tax favoring the elite at the expense of average citizens because the money they hold loses some of its purchasing power. Paul said, "The early users of the money are the beneficiaries; the government, the banks, and the large corporations."

Paul argues that the only way for a society to be free is for it to have money of intrinsic value. This is impossible with an economy based on central banking. Central banking and the control of money that it lends to government are absolutely necessary for an authoritarian government to operate, and are absolutely unnecessary for a free democratic society. The fifth plank of the Communist manifesto articulates the economic system of the United States very well: "Centralization of credit in the banks of the state, by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly." Freedom and central banking are incompatible.

Our own Thomas Jefferson actively opposed central banking in

the United States, he wrote, "The Central Bank is an institution of the most deadly hostility existing against the principles and form of our Constitution... if the American people allow private banks to control the issuance of their currency, first by inflation and then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around them will deprive the people of all their property until their children will wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered."

The Federal Reserve Bank is a semi-independent agency that is, in fact, owned and partially operated by private national banks. One major issue that Paul cites in the management of The Fed's enormous power is that its most important actions are secretive and are unknown even to the members of Congress who are supposed to keep it in check. Currently, Paul is trying to pass a bill in the House of Representatives called The Federal Reserve Transparency Act, which would allow Congress to audit the Fed. The bill has 307 co-sponsors, including Emanuel Cleaver (MO-5).

Paul calls for massive reform to our economic system. He wants to eliminate the Fed from the picture and replace our fiat dollar (paper money) with a commodity currency that is backed by gold. Paul sees his ambition to be a conservative one, as the constitution specifically outlines gold and silver to be the only legal tender and is silent on central banking. Although, some may reasonably dispute this interpretation of the Constitution. In his book he references Article 4 section 10 to support his supposition that only gold and silver can be used as legal tender, but this section of the constitution addresses limitations of the power of states, not the federal government.

With a commodity currency, like gold, inflation would be severely limited, since gold cannot be printed as paper can. Therefore, our federal government would also be limited in the money it can spend on useless wars and government programs. Consumers

may see the benefits of a healthy economy without the looming threat of an economic meltdown caused by fictitious investment and the resulting bubbles in the market. Banks would be limited in their lending practices because they could not use customer deposits to loan money. Large corporations would be responsible for their mistakes, without the possibility of government bailout through central banking powers.

It is evident that both the citizens and government officials of the U.S. are addicted to credit as the national debt climbs past a record high \$12 trillion. If Paul's plan for gold backed currency is to become a reality, the U.S. will have to go cold turkey on credit because banks would no longer be able to create money to lend through the fractional reserve system. Ending fractional reserve banking would turn our economic system upside down and the initial results would likely be devastating to business in America, but if Paul is right, the alternative of making no changes would be far more destructive.

