Regional Report UT-Martin opens satellite campus in Parsons for under-served adult educ

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OCR Text:
The UT-Martin has opened a satellite campus in Parsons, Tenn.
The 19,300-square-foot Parsons Center was built for $4.1 million on 8 acres to serve Decatur, Benton, Carroll, Perry, Wayne, Hardin and Henderson counties.

Business leaders approached UT-Martin about adding a campus for adult students, says Jason Rushing, director of Parsons Center. They asked us to do it and worked through logistics with us, Rushing says. We offered classes at the local high school in the beginning. The school started with six classes and 18 students in January 2007. It currently has 230 students in 45 classes that are staffed by 67 adjunct professors.

Jim Ayers, president of Parsons-based FirstBank, is offering scholarships of $500 per semester for full-time, traditional students through the Ayers Foundation. Scholarships also are available for adult students who have been out of high school for at least three years. The Ayers Foundation pays 50% of the cost for tuition and books and the school pays 25%. Students who complete a degree program are reimbursed their share.

Tuition is $663 for a three-credit course. Rushing says most students take six courses per semester.

Most residents in Parsons and surrounding areas are not college graduates, Rushing says, driving the need for higher education in the area. Were behind the curve in education and hopefully this will remedy that and drive economic development in the region, he says. ms

DRESDEN ENTERPRISE, Dresden, Tennessee, Wednesday, April 1, 2009

Campus visit

Free tax preparation/filing service offered by certified students

The University of Tennessee at Martin student chapter of the Institute of Management Accountants will partner with the United Way of West Tennessee and the First State Bank of Sharon to sponsor a free federal income tax preparation/filing assistance session.

This event will be held from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., April 4, in the first floor computer lab, Room 124, in the Business Administration Building. Several UT Martin accounting majors, who have passed an IRS tax preparation certification program, and bank employees will perform this free tax preparation and filing service. The Department of Computer Science and Information Systems in the College of Business and Public Affairs will provide the facilities and technical support.

This service is not intended for lengthy or complex tax returns. The primary clients targeted are students who need to file to get excess withholdings refunded and students and other persons who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit. No appointment is necessary. The service is provided on a first-come, first served basis.

For more information, contact Dr. Ken VanVuren, UT Martin assistant professor of accounting, at 731-881-7397.
Saunders is spring featured scholar

Richard L. Saunders, the University of Tennessee at Martin Featured Scholar for spring semester, was honored at a recent reception at Paul Meek Library.

Saunders is currently serving as associate professor of library science. He received a Bachelor of Science in history and a Master of Science in Western American History from Utah State University in 1987 and 1989, respectively. He also completed his MLIS, a professional library credential, at Brigham Young University in 1992. He is currently working on a doctorate in 20th Century U.S. History from the University of Memphis.

Saunders is curator of Special Collections/University Archives and director of the J. Houston Gordon Museum at UT Martin.

Before coming to UT Martin, he worked in the manuscripts section at the University of Utah main library, at Montana State University in Bozeman and in the production side of commercial publishing. He now focuses on special collections library work in the context of West Tennessee’s regional history and genealogy. He has published widely on Yellowstone literature, early Utah printing, Montana history, historian Dale L. Morgan, Tennessee novelist Harry Harrison Kroll and the Civil Rights movements of the 1950s and 60s.

A sample of Saunders’ publications and accomplishments is on display in the Paul Meek Library on the UT Martin campus.

Consortium for Computer Sciences Meeting at Martin

Computer Science and Information Systems professionals from the MidSouth region will attend the annual meeting of the Consortium for Computing Sciences in Colleges (CCSC) meeting at the University of Tennessee at Martin, April 3-4.

The keynote speaker for the conference is Dr. Robert M. Panoff, founder and executive director of Shodor Education Foundation, who will speak on “Computational Thinking Across the Curriculum: The Power and the Peril.” Sessions dedicated to workshops, tutorials and panel discussions will continue throughout the conference. Twenty-two teams of students will compete in a programming contest in Boling University Center, April 3.

At the awards banquet April 3, Dr. Jesse Poore, co-founder of the University of Tennessee-Oak Ridge National Laboratory Joint Institute for Computational Sciences and director of the UT-Oak Ridge National Laboratory Science Alliance, will speak on research opportunities at Oak Ridge National Labs and the Science Alliance.

Dr. Otha Britton, professor of computer science, is the local site chair for the conference; Bob Bradley, instructor of computer science, is the local chair for the student programming contest; and Dr. Jim Clark, Department of Computer Science and Information Systems chair, is serving as vendor/local registration chair.

Dr. Bryan Foltz, assistant professor of information systems, is chairing a panel discussion, and Clark is leading a tutorial session at the conference. Most sessions will be held in the Boling University Center.

For information regarding the conference, visit the CCSC Web site: http://www.ccsc-midsc.org/ or call the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems at 731-881-7573.

SFHS students net scholarships from UTM

Two Obion County students have been awarded scholarships for the 2009-10 academic year to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin, according to Judy Rayburn, director of admissions.

Maeghan Eaves, daughter of Brian and Angela Eaves of South Fulton, will be a freshman. She received the Dean’s Scholarship and the Leaders-in-Residence Award.

Brandt Sisson, son of Mike and Tammy Sisson of South Fulton, will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor’s Award.

Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting UT Martin Office of Student Financial Assistance, 205 Administration Building, UT Martin, Martin, Tenn. 38238.

In-state residents telephone 800-829-UTMI; out-of-state residents should call (731) 881-7040.
‘Genesis: The Scientific Quest for Life’s Origins’ topic April 2

Dr. Robert M. Hazen

Dr. Robert M. Hazen, one of the most versatile scientists active today, will speak in Watkins Auditorium of Boling University Center on the campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin at 7:30 p.m., April 2. His lecture title is “Genesis: The Scientific Quest for Life’s Origins.” In addition to being part of the Academic Speakers Series, sponsored by UT Martin Honors Programs, Hazen will also appear as a Sigma Xi Distinguished Lecturer.

After earning his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in earth science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Hazen completed his doctorate in mineralogy and crystallography at Harvard University. He received a NATO Postdoctoral Fellowship at Cambridge University in England, before returning to the United States and beginning his association with the Carnegie Institution in 1978. Since 1989, he has held joint appointments with the Carnegie Institution and as Clarence Robinson Professor of Earth Science at George Mason University.

Hazen is the author of more than 20 books and more than 330 articles on science, history and music. His works demonstrate an ability to speak to both scholars and the general public. His scholarly works include “Comparative Crystal Chemistry” (1982) and “High-Temperature and High-Pressure Crystal Chemistry” (2000). Some of his books directed to the general audience include “The Breakthrough: The Race for the Supercomputer” (1988), “Why Aren’t Black Holes Black: Unanswered Questions at the Frontiers of Science” (1998), “Science Matters: Achieving Scientific Literacy” (1991), which sold more than 200,000 copies and has been translated into a dozen languages, and, most recently, “Genesis: The Scientific Quest for Life’s Origins” (2005).

Hazen is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and is a former president of the Mineralogical Society of America (2004-05). He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the Mineralogical Society of America Award (1982), the American Chemical Society Ipatiev Prize (1986), the Educational Press Association Award (1992), and the Elizabeth Wood Science Writing Award (1998). In addition, he sits on several boards and committees, many of which strive to expand the scientific knowledge of Americans, including NOVA, Encyclopedia Americana and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Revising Science and Creationism. In addition to his work in the sciences, Hazen is an accomplished professional trumpeter who has performed with numerous ensembles around the world including the Metropolitan, New York City, Boston, and Washington operas, the Bolshoi and Kirov ballets, the Boston and National symphonies and the Orchestre of Paris. He has sat on the board of directors of the National Philharmonic Orchestra since 2003.

“Robert Hazen is truly a Renaissance Man, with great talent in a variety of areas. He is among the most prominent scientists in the United States today, one whose curiosity is evident from the wide variety of his interests,” said Dr. Dan McDonough, Honors Programs director. “We will explore the fruits of his latest work and examine the origins of life. As a member of the committee to revise the National Academy of Sciences standards on evolution, Dr. Hazen has played an important role in the area of evolution and creationism. His thoughts upon these matters should be both enlightening and provocative.”
Partnership produces global ties

During a four-day visit to the Midsouth, Dr. Robert Mackinnon, vice president of the University of New Brunswick Saint John, met with University of Tennessee at Martin chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes and Dr. Paul Crapo, UT Martin Center for Global Studies director, to continue developing ties between their institutions.

Initially formed in 2005, to date this partnership has involved visits by official delegations to both campuses, a UT Martin travel-study program to Saint John, two faculty guest lecturers from UNB Saint John and faculty exchanges between the Departments of English and Nursing.

Future plans include semester-long student exchanges and expansion of departments participating in collaborative projects.

"I think the partnership with UT Martin has been tremendous for both our students and our faculty, as well as the institution," Mackinnon said. "To have that kind of exchange of ideas among partner institutions is really important. It opens up both campuses to a wider world. From a student's point of view, to learn about the South and Tennessee through the eyes of your faculty on our campus — that has been fabulous."

Rakes stressed the importance of the relationship for UT Martin faculty and students, noting Canada is the United States' largest trading partner and that Tennessee and New Brunswick are participants in the recent Southeastern United States-Canada agreement which links states in the eastern U.S. with Canadian provinces.

Concert to feature percussion

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Music percussion studio will perform chamber works at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in Recital Hall 142 of the Fine Arts Building.

Works will include the music of Dr. Scott Roberts, associate professor of music, and Dr. Julie Hill, assistant professor of music, and the grand finale will feature virtuoso percussionist Dr. Dan Moore, vibraphone and electronic percussion specialist from the University of Iowa.

The concert is free and open to the public.

ECCE offers classes

Young Writers Clubhouse course

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (ECCE) is offering Young Writers’ Clubhouse, a series of writing experiences for third-through eighth-graders. The class will be held from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., April 18, at the UT Martin Ripley Center. The fee is $30, which includes a writing notebook and pen. This class is designed to teach children to write creatively, work with writing project teachers and share with their friends. Themes will include monster mysteries and scary suspense; funky fairy tales; crazy creative writing; and writing to, from and about music. Participants should provide their lunch or money to purchase pizza by the slice at each session. To register, contact ECCE at 881-7082 or register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/non_credit_registration.php.

Course for office professionals

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (ECCE) is offering a Star Achievement course for office professionals. This course will be held from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., April 21 and 23. Taught by Katy Crapo, director of degree programs, and Debbie Mount, director of non-degree programs, the Star Achievement Program, from Office Dynamics, meets the development needs of today’s administrative support and office professional staff. It is a four-module series focusing on enhancing business skills, maintaining a positive attitude, building team relationships and developing stellar strategies for success to result in increased productivity and job satisfaction among a group of employees. The registration fee will be $95. To register, contact ECCE at 881-7082 or register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/non_credit_registration.php.

Non-degree course on Microsoft Word

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (ECCE) is offering a non-degree course called Beginning Microsoft Word. This course will be held from 9 a.m.-noon, April 28 and 30. Taught by Doug Bloodworth, UT Martin computer analyst and programmer, students will learn how to create, edit and organize documents, navigate the window and learn about the menu, toolbars, and task panes, margins, page layouts, columns, tables, headers, footers, fonts, paragraphs, editing text, undo and redo commands and clip art. Students will also learn how to get help, print, use backups and security for the 2007 version. The registration fee will be $85. To register, contact ECCE at 881-7082 or register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/non_credit_registration.php.
Business consultant to be at REED Center

The University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REED) Center offers aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners one-on-one consulting each month. The center also offers approximately 20 small-business seminars each year for little or no cost to assist area business people in a variety of decisions.

The next opportunity to get advice on marketing, customer service or cash flow issues from Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant, will be 9 a.m.-4 p.m., April 9.

"Slightly more than six million small businesses or 99.7 percent of all employer firms are considered, by SBA (Small Business Administration) definitions, to be small businesses. Small firms provide 50.4 percent of private sector jobs, and they generate more than half of the U.S. private non-farm gross domestic product," said Hollie Holt, REED Center coordinator. "They are also the nation's most reliable job creation engine. Between 2004 and 2005, small businesses created 78.9 percent of the nation's new jobs. In every state, almost all firms are small, and they provide roughly half the jobs and in some rural states, small firms provide as many as two-thirds of the private-sector jobs."

The UT Martin REED Center is a service of the Horace and Sara Dunagan Chair of Excellence in Banking and the Tom E. Hendrix Chair of Free Enterprise. The REED Center also offers consulting by appointment any time, any day. The consultations are one-on-one, confidential and free. Appointments may be made by contacting the REED Center at 587-REED (7333). The REED Center is located at 406 Lindell St., Martin. For additional services offered by the REED Center, go to www.utm.edu/reed.

County students receive scholarships to attend UTM

Five Weakley County students have been awarded scholarships for the 2009-10 academic year to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin, according to Judy Rayburn, director of admissions.

- Abbie Fuqua, daughter of Phillip and Staci Fuqua of Martin, will be a freshman. She received the Dean's Scholarship.
- Jennifer Gilbertson, daughter of Jerri Gilbertson of Martin and James Murphey, will be a freshman. She received the Dean's Scholarship.
- Riley Moran, daughter of Scott and Debbie Moran of Gleason, will be a freshman. She received the Leaders-in-Residence Award.
- Kayla Simpson, daughter of Dennis and Tami Simpson of Martin, will be a freshman. She received the Dean's Scholarship and the Leaders-in-Residence Award.
- Crockett Stephens, son of Ronal and Cindy Stephens of Palmersville, will be a freshman. He received the Dean's Scholarship.

Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting UT Martin Office of Student Financial Assistance, 205 Administration Building, UT Martin, TN 38238. In-state residents telephone 800-829-UTM1; out-of-state residents should call (731) 881-7040.

Brown Memorial run announced at UTM

The 2009 Brian Brown Memorial 5K and one-mile fun walk is set for April 18.

The event is slated to begin at 9 a.m. at the Elam Center on the University of Tennessee at Martin campus.

Pre-registration for the event, which must be received before Saturday, is $12. Registering the day of the event will cost $15.

Proceeds from the event benefit the Brian Brown Memorial Greenway Project and the UTM SHAPE Club.

For more information contact Laura Brown at 881-7334 or Scott Pun at 881-7316.

Information about the event is also available online at www.utm.edu/departments/cpbs/hhp/SHAPEClub.php.

Course for professionals April 21, 23

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The registration fee will be $95.

To register, contact ECCE at 731-881-7082 or register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/non_credit_registration.php.
History of Native Americans in county is topic of class coming to Humboldt

Have you met an Ofo Indian lately?

Native Americans used the Mississippi River as a major migration route for thousands of years and Gibson County and West Tennessee was inhabited by several Indian nations. As early as 12,000 years ago Native Americans were using the Obion and Forked Deer river systems and populations were dense along the tributaries. These early inhabitants are often portrayed as backwards and nomadic tribes that followed herds from hunting ground to hunting ground. In actuality, permanent villages were established at least 5,000 years ago and by 800 A.D., Gibson County had numerous villages that lined the Obion River and Forked Deer River systems.

Contrary to popular beliefs, Gibson County was well populated and by an advanced civilization of highly skilled astronomers and farmers. They came to this area from South America in a mass migration and the Dhegiha Dakota settled in West Tennessee; they were temple mound builders. Their villages were fortified and laid out according to the lunar and solar cycles.

From 800 A.D. the Ofo or Offagoula occupied most of West Tennessee; the name Offagoula is a Choctaw word defined as “Dog People.” Their own name was Taneksanya or First People though early explorers often called them Monsoupelea.

Like most Indian nations, there are a variety of names used to describe the people. The Choctaw were allies with the Offagoula and French so these two groups introduced the names to the new colonists.

In 1682, Robert de LaSalle explored the entire length of the Mississippi River and stopped in Lauderdale County Tennessee. He found five Chickasaw Indians who told him that the Offagoula had vacated the area in 1650 and had moved into Mississippi near their close relatives, the Biloxi. The Offagoula and Biloxi are both called Sioux nations by the general public, but are actually Dhegiha Dakota. They left West Tennessee and Gibson County for various reasons.

After Columbus arrived in 1492, Indian nations were attempting to stop western expansion and to save their land. Columbus brought with him “Guns, Germs and Steel.” It is estimated that over 70 million Native Americans died from disease and warfare with Europeans from 1492 through today.

The Offagoula lost over half their people to smallpox and constant warfare forced their retreat into Mississippi. The remnant of this great nation was down to one Ofo Indian in 1915, and after her death, the original people of Gibson County were extinct.

Forever gone, there are no Ofo Indians to teach us their culture, language and spirituality. Fortunately, there are relatives like the HoChunk and Dakota still alive today. Their cousins, the Eastern Sioux still occupy parts of South Carolina and Virginia; there you will find the Catawba and Monacan nations. Like so many other great nations “they melted like snowballs before the sun,” as stated by Dragging Canoe, the Cherokee warrior.

If you would like to learn more about the Native Americans of Gibson County, a Native American History class is being offered at the Humboldt Higher Education Center in Humboldt Tennessee. The class is offered through Extended Campus and Continuing Education of the University of Tennessee at Martin. It will be held on Thursday nights from 6 p.m. through 8:45 p.m. in the fall of 2009 (CRN 41155, Section BL1).

The class will be taught by a descendant of the Catawba and Cherokee nations, and a West Tennessee Commissioner of the Tennessee Historical Commission. For more information, contact Brent Cox at 731-881-7539 or at bcox@utm.edu. All students are welcome and there are no prerequisites. Come learn about the First Nations of Tennessee.

-photo and article submitted by Brent Cox
**Dresden Enterprise, Dresden, Tennessee, Wednesday, April 8, 2009**

**Business Consultant at REED Center**

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**Art Sparks Named Among Tennessee's Best Accountants**

For over 30 years, Sparks has dedicated his life to providing quality accounting services. He has been a partner with Alexander Thompson Arnold CPAs since 1980, where he has served in the capacity as a Peer Review board member and chairman of the Oversight Task Force; is on the board of directors and the chairman of the Peer Review Committee for the Tennessee Society of CPAs. He has also served in all offices of the West Tennessee Chapter of TSCPA.

A graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, Sparks is active in his community. He is a past president of Rotary Club and is a Paul Harris Fellow. He's a board member for the Community Foundation of Obion County and served on University of Tennessee's Development Council. He has received the Distinguished Service Award from UT Martin and serves on UT Martin's Alumni Council. He is also UT Martin's Skyhawk Club past president. An active member of the Obion County Chamber of Commerce, he has served as the chamber's board president.

**Students Awarded Scholarships**

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* Riley Moran, daughter of Scott and Debbie Moran of Gleason, will be a freshman. She received the Parents-in-Residence Award.
* Kayla Simpson, daughter of Dennis and Tami Simpson of Martin, will be a freshman. She received the Dean's Scholarship and the Parents-in-Residence Award.
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Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting UT Martin Office of Student Financial Assistance, 205 Administration Building, UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238. In-state residents telephone 800-829-UTM1; out-of-state residents should call (731) 881-7040.
5K and fun walk set for April 18

The University of Tennessee at Martin SHAPE Club will sponsor the 2009 Brian Brown Memorial 5K and 1-mile fun walk, 9 a.m., April 18, in the Elam Center at UT Martin. Proceeds will benefit the Brian Brown Memorial Greenway Project and the UT Martin SHAPE Club. Registration received before April 11 is $12; registration on the day of the race is $15. Make checks payable to: UTM SHAPE Club, 3006 Elam Center, Martin, TN 38237. The course runs through the UT Martin campus. There will be T-shirts, awards and door prizes. For more information, contact Dr. Laura Brown at 881-7334 or Scott Pun at 881-7316 or visit www.utm.edu/departments/ccee/hhp/SHAPEClub.php.

Piano ensemble to perform concert

The University of Tennessee at Martin piano ensemble will present a Romantic Music Concert at 7:30 p.m., April 14, in the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre. The concert will include a wide variety of romantic music for one piano, four hands, and two pianos with four or eight hands. UT Martin students performing are Matthew Damons from Union City; Harold Johnson from Memphis; Andrew Moore from South Fulton; Brandon Whaley from Dresden; and Michael Yandell from Union City. The UT Martin piano ensemble is under the direction of Harris. This concert will be free and open to the public. For more information, contact Harris at 881-7411 or go to www.utm.edu/~elaineh.

BOOK SIGNING AND PERFORMANCE

Dr. Julie Hill, assistant professor of music, will sign her book "Music for Multi-Percussion: A World View," and UT Martin percussion majors will perform selections from the book. 2 to 3:30 p.m. April 21 in the book store at University Tennessee Martin. Free and open to the public.

VOCAL CONCERT

An evening of vocal music performed by students. 7:30 p.m. April 20 in Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre at University Tennessee Martin. Free and open to the public.

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE CONCERT

Featuring the UT Martin Steel Band and guest percussion artist and composer Brian Nozny. 3 p.m. April 19 in the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre, University Tennessee Martin. Free and open to the public.

Bookstore to host events

There will be a performance and book signing for Dr. Julie Hill, University of Tennessee at Martin assistant professor of music, 2-3:30 p.m. April 21 at the university bookstore. Her book, "Music for Multi-Percussion: A World View," is designed as a progression of complex skills required to play multi-percussion. Selections from the 10 percussion solos and two duets will be performed by UT Martin percussion majors. The collection of solos and duets is organized into four categories which focus on specific skill sets.

For more information, call Sam Covington, bookstore manager, at (731) 881-7760.
Morning Edition, April 10, 2009 · When they're not being used to send e-mails or play solitaire, about 50,000 personal computers around the world are engaged in a search — for the world's largest prime number.

Prime numbers — like 2, 3, 5 and 7 — are numbers that are divisible only by the number 1 and by themselves.

The largest prime found to date is nearly 13 million digits long. To get an idea of just how big this prime number is, if you write 10 digits per inch — all 12,978,189 of them — the number would extend for 20.45 miles. The number is currently the world's largest prime. But there's always a larger one to find.

These gargantuan primes fall under a special category known as Mersenne primes, named for a 17th century French theologian who made some predictions about them. (His early predictions ultimately turned out to be wrong.)

Computational Torture

The current reigning champ of Mersenne primes was discovered last summer as part of a program called the Great Internet Mersenne Prime Search, or GIMPS.

Apparently, Mersenne primes are easier to find than other primes, and George Woltman, a software designer in Florida and the man behind GIMPS, has written a free, downloadable program to search for them. But you need a lot of computing power.

"It takes about two or three weeks to test a single number," he says. "And everybody is plugging away, trying to find yet another prime number."

Chris Caldwell, a mathematician at the University of Tennessee, Martin, says that the main obstacle in proving that these numbers are prime is just doing the arithmetic with numbers that are millions of digits long. Caldwell says there is a formula for testing whether a large number is a Mersenne prime, but it's computationally intense.

"Not only do you have to multiply a 13 million-digit number by a 13 million-digit number, but you have to do that about 13 million times," Caldwell says. "And that just takes a tremendous amount of computation."

GIMPS has been plugging away at this for 13 years now, and has found 12 Mersennes so far.

'The Jewels Of Number Theory'

So why are people anxious to find another, larger Mersenne prime? The response from many in the math community is generally the same: because.

"Mersennes, in a way, are kind of like a large diamond," Caldwell explains. When he went to Washington, he says, he took his kids to see the Hope Diamond. That's the 45-carat diamond that sits in a special case in the National Museum of Natural History, usually with crowds around it.

"Nobody there looking at the Hope Diamond ever asks, 'Why did they bother to dig it up?' or 'What is it good for?' — even though it really isn't good for much other than to just hang there and people to look at," Caldwell says. "And in many ways the Mersennes play that same role — that they really are the jewels of number theory."
Diversions

See The Largest Known Prime, All 13 Million Digits
by Andrew Prince

In Depth

- April 10, 2009
  Unearthing The 'Prime' Jewels Of Number Theory

We all think we remember prime numbers from grade school, but just in case your memory is a little hazy, here's a quick refresher.

A prime is a number that can only be divided by two other whole numbers: itself and 1.

So, 1? Not a prime — it can only be divided by 1. You need two divisors to qualify for prime status.

Marked in orange are some of the easy primes — because they don’t take much brain power to figure out:

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<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tr>
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<td>3, 5</td>
<td>2, 4, 5, 7</td>
<td>2, 3, 6, 9</td>
<td>2, 4, 5, 10</td>
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But then, there are the special primes. These numbers come from a variety of simple equations, but present mind-bogglingly large numbers. Finding primes was sort of an elite hobby for some of the early math greats, like Pierre de Fermat, Carl Gauss and Sophie Germain.

But the most celebrated of all primes is the Mersenne — what mathematician Chris Caldwell calls "the jewels of number theory."

Rare, Huge Numbers

Mersenne primes, named after 17th-century mathematician Marin Mersenne, are numbers derived from the simple equation:

$$2^n - 1$$

The number $n$ is a prime, and the result is prime. And what makes the Mersenne primes so interesting is how rare they are. And their gargantuan size.
Currently, a Mersenne prime clocking in at nearly 13 million digits holds the record of being the largest prime number ever found. You can take a look at just a snippet of the number here. But if you want to see all 13 million digits, you can download this whopping 17-megabyte text file. (That's almost 3,500 single-spaced pages in a Word document, at 12-point Times New Roman font.)

And here's a glimpse at how quickly Mersenne's ramp up in size:

\[
\begin{align*}
2^1 - 1 &= 3 \\
2^2 - 1 &= 7 \\
2^3 - 1 &= 31 \\
2^7 - 1 &= 127 \\
2^{13} - 1 &= 8,191 \\
2^{17} - 1 &= 131,071
\end{align*}
\]

Notice that as the value of the number \( n \) — the exponents 2, 3, 5, 7, 13, 17 and 19 in the example above — increases, the value of the Mersenne prime skyrocket. If we plot the value of the Mersenne prime vs. the value of the exponent, here's what the pattern looks like:

And here's an easier way to think of that Mersenne prime at the top right of the chart: It's more than a trillion trillion trillion. You get that number with this equation:
2^{127} - 1

So just using an exponent of 127 gives you that huge number. But the largest Mersenne prime’s exponent is 43,112,609.

To find such a large number is beyond the brain power of anyone. Microsoft Excel can't even calculate any Mersenne prime with an exponent larger than 607. If you try, it gives you a nice #NUM! error — that's Excelese for FAIL.

You need massive computers to do the number crunching. So a team called the Great Internet Mersenne Prime Search, or GIMPS, is farming the computing power out to the Internet. Of the 46 Mersenne primes found so far, GIMPS has discovered 12.

Users can lend their desktop computing power out to a program using a type of software called distributed computing. This type of large-scale marshaling of computing power is not new to the Internet. Other groups, like the Search For Extraterrestrial Intelligence, or SETI@home, use personal computers for data crunching, as does the Folding@home program, based at Stanford University, whose goal is to learn more about how the proteins found in living organisms fold into complex shapes and interact with other biological molecules.

So why bother searching for these primes? Any math geek will tell you that it’s just cool and they’re in it for the chase. But the effort has been reciprocal, too. As they search for these ever-larger primes, they have also been able to contribute important theorems and principles to the field of mathematics.
Art Sparks again recognized among state’s top accountants

Art Sparks, CPA, a partner with Alexander Thompson Arnold CPAs, was recently recognized as one of Tennessee’s Best Accountants by Business TN magazine.

This is the second consecutive year Sparks has received the honor.

Business TN magazine recognized Tennessee’s 54 top accountants in its March/April 2009 issue. The list was compiled with the input of Tennessee businesses and lawyers who utilize accounting services and accountants themselves. After countless hours of interviews and research, Sparks was honored among the top 54 accountants in Tennessee.

The list was compiled by the magazine because experienced CPAs are vital to a business’ growth and success. From business plan to succession strategy, they have a hand in every aspect of a business’ life cycle. For companies in a post-Sarbanes-Oxley world, they are more crucial than ever.

For over 30 years, Sparks has dedicated his life to providing quality accounting services. He has been a partner with Alexander Thompson Arnold CPAs since 1980, where his practice focuses on auditing and quality control systems.

ART SPARKS

He is a former board member for the State Board of Accountancy, is an active member of the American Institute of CPAs, where he has served as a Peer Review Board member and chairman of the Oversight Task Force; and is on the board of directors and the chairman of the Peer Review Committee for the Tennessee Society of CPAs. He has also served in all offices of the West Tennessee Chapter of TSCPA.

A graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin, Sparks is active in the community. He is a past president of Rotary Club and is a Paul Harris Fellow and a board member for the Community Foundation of Obion County. He has served on the University of Tennessee’s Development Council, has received the Distinguished Service Award from UT Martin and serves on UT Martin’s Alumni Council. He is also UT Martin’s Skyhawk Club president.

An active member of the Obion County Chamber of Commerce, he has served as the chamber’s board president.

Alexander Thompson Arnold CPAs is one of the largest accounting and consulting firms in the Mid-South and was named the ninth largest accounting firm in the State of Tennessee by Business TN Magazine in March 2007. Founded in 1946, ATA offers a comprehensive array of tax, audit, accounting, consulting and wealth management services and is a member of the BDO Seidman Alliance.

Firm offices are located in Dyersburg, Fulton, Henderson, Jackson, Martin, McKenzie, Milan, Paris, Trenton and Union City. For more information, call Alexander Thompson Arnold CPAs at 885-3661 or 1-800-273-3240 or visit online at www.atacpa.net.

Spring concert slated for April 19

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Music will host a Percussion Ensemble Concert with the UT Martin Steel Band and guest percussion artist and composer, Brian Nozny at 3 p.m., April 19, in the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre. This event will be free and open to the public. Highlights will include: the second UT Martin Faculty Steel Band performing with Chancellor Tom Rakes; Dr. Jerald Ogg, vice chancellor of academic affairs; Dr. David Coffey, co-interim dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts and Department of History and Philosophy chair; and more than 30 faculty members from across campus. For more information, contact Dr. Julie Hill, assistant professor of music and director of percussion studies, at 881-7403.

SAI Musicale slated for April 19

An international music fraternity for women, Sigma Alpha Iota, will be performing the Sigma Alpha Iota Musicale, at 7:30 p.m., April 19, at the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre at the University of Tennessee at Martin. There will be a variety of performances ranging from choir to small ensembles and instrumental ensembles. Jennifer Reeves, of Trenton, will direct the choir performances and their purpose is to share music with the community. For more information, contact Sherry Adams, Department of Music administrative assistant, at 881-7402. The musicale will be free and open to the public.
SERVING AS INTERN — State Rep. Judy Barker (left) has announced that University of Tennessee at Martin student Brandon Burke is working as an intern in her district office in Union City. Burke recently shadowed Rep. Barker in Nashville and is a junior at UTM majoring in political science. Audrey Jenkins serves as the administrative assistant in Mrs. Barker’s Nashville office. Mrs. Barker represents the 77th State House District in Dyer, Lake and Obion counties.

UTM bookstore hosts music performance, book signing

There will be a performance and book signing for Dr. Julie Hill, assistant professor of music, 2-3:30 p.m., April 21, at the University of Tennessee at Martin bookstore. The book, "Music for Multi-Percussion: A World View," is designed as a progression of complex skills required to play multi-percussion. Selections from the 10 percussion solos and two duets will be performed by UT Martin percussion majors. The collection of solos and duets is organized into four categories which focus on specific skill sets: Category 1: Single instruments (or instrument set); Category 2: Changing implements on a single instrument (or instrument set); Category 3: Multiple instruments and implements; Category 4: Three- and four-way coordination. For more information, call Sam Covington, bookstore manager, at 881-7760.

VTA annual spring art exhibition begins April 14

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts will present a VTA Annual Student Art Exhibition beginning with an opening reception, slated from 5-7 p.m., April 14, in the gallery of the Fine Arts Building on the UT Martin campus. The exhibition features the works of visual arts students from throughout the 2008-09 school year. Students submit artwork in several categories for review by the visual arts faculty for inclusion in the department’s end-of-the-year exhibition. This year’s exhibition categories include: painting, drawing, ceramics and sculpture; graphic design/photography/two-dimensional; and mixed media/fibers/printmaking. Cash awards are given for best of show (overall) and first, second and third place in each category. The exhibition will run through April 27. For more information, contact the UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at 881-7400.
ECCE offers courses for healthcare professionals

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (ECCE) is offering a variety of non-degree health care professional training programs. Available to both working adults interested in a new career and current health care professionals, these programs will help students prepare for the numerous jobs available to health care staff and professionals. UT Martin will offer pharmacy technician, phlebotomy technician, surgical technician, and electrocardiogram (EKG) technician courses beginning in May in Martin, Ripley, and Jackson.

- **EKG Technician Certification Program** Scheduled for 6:30-2:30 p.m., May 18-July 8, at UT Martin (no class May 25). This course will be offered at Jackson State Community College. This comprehensive 50-hour EKG technician certification program prepares students to function as EKG Technicians and to take the American Society of Phlebotomy Technicians (ASPT) Electrocardiograph (EKG) Technician exam and other national certification exams. This course will include important practice and background information on anatomy of the heart and physiology, medical disease processes, medical terminology, medical ethics, legal aspects of patient contact, laboratory assisting, electrocardiography and echocardiography. Additionally, students will practice with equipment and perform hands-on labs including introduction to the function and proper use of the EKG machine, the normal anatomy of the chest wall for proper lead placement, 12-lead placement and other clinical practices. EKG technicians also analyze printed readings of EKG tests, measuring various “cardiac intervals and complexes” and determining normal vs. abnormal EKG. The EKG Technician Certification Program includes a graded final exam to help prepare students for the ASPT-EKG Technician Exam. The fee for this course is $999. Textbooks are included.

- **Phlebotomy Technician Program** Scheduled for 6-9:30 p.m., May 11-July 15, on Mondays and Wednesdays and 9:30-2:30 p.m., May 16, June 6, June 20 and July 11, this course will be held at UT Martin in 6-9:30 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays, and 9:30-2:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays. The fee for this course is $999. Textbooks are included.

- **Pharmacy Technician Program** Scheduled for 6-9:30 p.m., May 12-June 30, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, this course will be offered on the campuses of UT Martin and at the UT Martin Ripley Center, and May 19-July 7, Tuesdays and Thursdays, at Jackson State Community College. This comprehensive 50-hour course will prepare students to enter the pharmacy field and to take the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board’s exam. Technicians work in hospitals, home infusion pharmacies, community pharmacies and other health care settings — working under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. Course content includes medical terminology specific to the pharmacy, reading and interpreting prescriptions and defining drugs by generic and brand names. Students will learn dosage calculations, intravenous flow rates, drug compounding, dose conversions, dispensing of prescriptions, inventory control and billing and reimbursement. The Pharmacy Technician Certification Program includes a graded final exam to help prepare students for the PTCB exam. The fee for this course is $999. Textbooks are included.

- **Surgical Technician Program** Scheduled from 6-9:30 p.m., May 19-July 7 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, this course will be held at Jackson State Community College. This 50-hour course will cover the surgical technician’s role beginning from pre-op preparation, during the operative procedure and finish with postoperative room breakdown. Before an operation, surgical technicians help prepare the operating room by setting up surgical instruments and equipment, sterile drapes and sterile solutions. They assemble both sterile and non-sterile equipment, as well as adjust and check to ensure all equipment is working properly. During surgery, surgical technicians prep and drape patients and assist where necessary. Post surgery, techs prepare and transport the patient to recovery as well as break down the surgical suite and prepare it for the next scheduled operation. This course covers the following key areas: the history of surgery and the role of the surgical technician; introduction to the operating room; the legal aspects of surgery and the surgical technician; policies and guidelines, introduction to patient preparation or back table setup; surgical asepsis and sterilization techniques; surgical pharmacology and anesthesia; and general surgery concepts. It is important to note that the objectives of this class do not include a state or national certification that generally requires at least two years of formal education. The fee for this course is $999. Textbooks are included. Information packets for any of these courses may be picked up at the following locations:
  - Martin - Room 110 Gooch Hall, UT Martin; Ripley - UT Martin Ripley Center, Ripley; Jackson - Room 210 McWherter Center, JSCC, Jackson.

To request an information packet, call UT Martin at 881-7081. To register, contact ECCE at 881-7082 or register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/non_credit_registration.php.
Green
From Page 1

To coincide with City Clean-up Days in Martin, UTM Recycles! will offer another community event day this Saturday to collect recyclables. Kosta said local cub and girl scouts will be there to assist in collection efforts to earn their merit badges. The more they collect, the better chance the scout members having of winning prizes as well.

For those who cannot make it to the event on Saturday in the Graham Stadium parking lot, Kosta said UTM Recycles! offers services from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m. every Monday through Friday. The center even provides local pick-up of materials for area businesses.

The recycle barn accepts paper, cardboard, plastics, scrap metal, aluminum, cell phones, eyeglasses, glass and computers. Reusable items are donated to local charities while recyclable materials are broken down and processed.

“We want to keep everything we can from going to landfills. Many businesses have told me they not only feel more environmentally conscious, they have saved money too in dumpster fees by recycling,” Kosta shared.

The recycle barn is located at the site of the National Guard Armory on Moody Street in Martin. For more information about this weekend’s event or how to utilize the center call Kosta at 881-7640 or email him at dkosta@utm.edu.

Business workshop set for April 23

The Tennessee Small Business Development Center and the University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Center have announced they will provide a training session in Obion County for small businesses in the surrounding area titled “Business Survival in Tough Economic Times.”

“The free training event is designed to address a wide range of steps business owners can take to preserve cash and maintain business operations during the present national economic recession. It is critical for all businesses to fully explore all possible measures to offset reductions in cash flow and bottom line,” said Patrick Geho, Tennessee Small Business Development Center state executive director. The session will be offered in partnership with Obion County Chamber of Commerce and the TSBDC from 11:30-1 p.m., April 23, at the Obion County Industrial Training Facility located at 204 South St. in Union City. To register, go to www.utm.edu/reed or call the REED Center at 587-7333. Seating is limited.

The goal of the REED Center program is to assist business owners through business training and one-on-one business counseling. The program has been assisting existing and start-up businesses in the region since 2005.

Tennessee state historian to speak

Tennessee state historian Walter Durham will speak at the University of Tennessee at Martin, at 7 p.m., April 20, in Watkins Auditorium of Boling University Center. Durham will talk about Tennessee’s westward expansion. He is the author of many articles, reports and 17 books on Tennessee history. The event, sponsored by the Friends of Paul Meek Library and UT Martin, is free and open to the public. For more information, contact 881-7071.

Voice studio recital will be April 20

An evening of vocal music performed by students will be at 7:30 p.m., April 20, in the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre on the campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin. The recital will feature students of Dr. Roberto Mancusi, assistant professor of music, and Dr. Amy Yeung, associate professor of music, who will perform one song each. Delana Easley, lecturer of music, and several student accompanists will accompany the performers on piano. The performance is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Yeung at 881-7408.
BOOK TRAVEL AT UT MARTIN — Vacation and business travel can be planned and booked by University Travel Center World Travel at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Mike Sudzum, a veteran of the travel industry, has joined the staff of the Center for Global Studies, located in 124 Gooch Hall. He can be reached by phone at 881-3581 and email at msudzum@worldtrav.com. Sudzum, a Chicago native, began in the travel industry in 1979 and has held several positions in corporate/leisure travel, domestic and international travel, individual and group travel, meeting and incentive travel planning. Previous jobs include corporate, group travel and sales liaison for several travel agencies in the region. Sudzum attended Triton Jr. College in River Grove, Ill., from 1977-79, specializing in marketing/business administration.

ACADEMIC SPEAKER SERIES — Scientist, Dr. Robert M. Hazen, recently spoke at the University of Tennessee at Martin with the topic, “Genesis: The Scientific Quest for Life’s Origins.” In addition to being part of the Academic Speakers Series, sponsored by UT Martin Honors Programs, Hazen also appeared as a Sigma Xi Distinguished Lecturer. Talking to Hazen at the presentation is Corey Jones, right, a UT Martin student from Linden.

Beginning Microsoft Word offered at UTM

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (ECCE) is offering a non-degree course called Beginning Microsoft Word. This course will be held from 9 a.m.-noon, April 28 and 30.

Taught by Doug Bloodworth, UT Martin computer analyst and programmer, students will learn how to create, edit and organize documents, navigate the window and learn about the menu, toolbars, and task panes, margins, page layouts, columns, tables, headers, footers, fonts, paragraphs, editing text, undo and redo commands and clip art. Students will also learn how to get help, print, use backups and security for the 2007 version. The registration fee will be $85.

To register, contact ECCE at 731-881-7082 or register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/non_credit_registration.php.
UT Martin Army ROTC cadet to participate in national event

An Army ROTC cadet from the University of Tennessee at Martin will join senior U.S. military leaders at a national security seminar to be conducted today through Friday.

Cadet Richard G. Casada of College Grove will travel to historic Lexington, Va., along with key military officials such as Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey and Secretary of the Army Pete Geren.

Casada earned the opportunity to participate in the George C. Marshall ROTC Seminar by being selected as the top Army ROTC cadet at UT Martin. While in Lexington, Casada will have the opportunity to directly interact with the key leaders in attendance and discuss a variety of issues directly bearing on national security.

Casada is scheduled to be commissioned May 9. At that time, he will become an educational delay lieutenant and will attend law school at the University of Tennessee.

The Marshall ROTC Seminar is in its 32nd year of existence. It is named in honor of George C. Marshall, who served as Army chief of staff during World War II. Subsequent to concluding his military career, Marshall served as secretary of state and later as secretary of defense during the Truman administration. His vigorous efforts to help the economies of Europe recover from the ravages of World War II earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953.

Workshops cover interview skills

The University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Center wants to help you with resume and job interview skills workshops in April and May. Anita Allen, certified Dave Ramsey financial counselor, will be the instructor for the free sessions.

- "Reviewing Your Resume" is planned from 1-3 p.m., April 21, at the REED Center, 406 S. Lindell St., Martin. This class will review your resume and offer assistance to enhance your resume and showcase you and your previous work experience. Those attending should bring a copy of their current resume.

- "Job Interviewing Skills" will be offered from 1-3 p.m., May 5, at the REED Center. This seminar is for displaced workers who are seeking employment opportunities. This session will focus on the do's and don'ts of interviewing. Those attending should bring a copy of their current resume.

Contact the REED Center at 587-REED (7333) to make an appointment. The REED Center is located at 406 Lindell St., Martin.

UT Martin night at Pringles Park

Mark your calendar for April 23, UT Martin Night, as the West Tenn Diamond Jaxx host the Mississippi Braves at 7:05 p.m. at Pringles Park in Jackson. All University of Tennessee Martin students, staff, alumni and friends are invited to see the West Tenn Diamond Jaxx minor league baseball team of the Southern League and Double-A affiliate of the Seattle Mariners.

UT Martin Night begins at 5:30 p.m. with entertainment, concourse displays and presentations, and continues during the game with in-between innings events, capped with a post-game fireworks show. Alyson Gilbert, UT Martin alumna, of Jackson, will sing the national anthem. Call Steve Vantrease at (731) 881-7755.

The Commercial Appeal

Sarah Jenkins of Cordova and Michael Gore, Patrick Nugent, Linzie Tedford and Brittany Thompson, all of Memphis, starred in the University of Tennessee at Martin's production of "The Magic Flute," on April 4-5.
Blankenships support UT Martin, it's mission as 'Right Thing to Do'

The University of Tennessee at Martin's role in the economic development of the region and a passion to see the university thrive led Bill and Roberta Blankenship to make a series of gifts in support of the institution and its mission. The Blankenships attended the University of Tennessee Martin Branch, where they met. Bill earned a bachelor of science in agriculture in 1956, and Roberta earned a home economics degree in 1955. They returned to UT Martin for the first time in 50 years to attend their Golden Grad Reunion in August 2005. Shortly afterward, Bill became a member of the UT Martin Development Committee and now serves on The Campaign for Tennessee Steering Committee and the UT Development Council, which is meeting in Martin on April 17-18. Their great-nephew, Joel Howard, graduated from UT Martin in December 2005, and, at that time, they made the first of several unrestricted six-figure gifts to UT Martin. "Chancellor (Tom) Rakes has stated that private support is necessary to attract and retain top students and faculty at UT Martin, and Roberta and I want to give back to help meet this objective — giving back so future students will have the opportunity to be the best they can be," said Bill. "Our gifts have been unrestricted because we have confidence in the leadership at UT Martin and believe they can best determine the needs and priorities for the use of private gifts." As a result of those annual gifts, the Blankenship Undergraduate Research Endowment in the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences was established. Matched by support from the university, collaborative faculty/student research activities are nurtured and encouraged. Income from the endowment provides faculty incentives and student stipends for "real-world" learning opportunities in a close mentoring environment. Other private gifts from the Blankenships have purchased much-needed equipment in the chemistry department; specifically a nuclear magnetic resonance machine that enables students in the pre-health sciences to conduct experiments with state-of-the-art instrumentation, equipping them for graduate and professional school. "One of UT Martin's goals is to 'provide a learning environment that facilitates the total collegiate experience for all students,'" today's goal may not have been written 50 years ago, but certainly the caring and mentoring of students was there when we were students, and it still exists today, and that provides for a great environment for learning," he added. "As Roberta and I look back on the educational experience that UT Martin provided us, we realize it was a learning environment that aided in our business careers and in our lives." Bill was born and raised in Covington and was a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. After obtaining his UT Martin degree, he was accepted in the Navy Officer Candidate School and, on receiving his commission, was assigned to the Commander In Chief Pacific Fleet Staff. He started his business career with Buckeye & Gamble. P & G sold the cellulose business in the early 1990s to an investment group that formed Buckeye Technologies, and Bill was vice president of cotton manufacturing. Roberta, originally from Memphis, was editor of the yearbook and a campus beauty at UT Martin. Both played tennis as students and were coached by former UT Martin women's athletic director, Bettye Giles. Giles, Chancellor Tom Rakes and his wife, Dr. Glenda Rakes, Len Solomon, UT Martin vice chancellor for university advancement, and Charley Deal, UT Martin assistant vice chancellor for alumni relations, attended an alumni reception hosted by the couple in their Sandestin, Fla., home. Following the event, the Blankenships presented the university with a $2 million bequest for The Campaign for Tennessee. "Bill and Roberta have demonstrated a true philanthropic spirit with their generous support for UT Martin," said Chancellor Rakes. "They are exemplary alumni who have stepped up and provided an unusual level of trust in what our faculty and staff do to better serve our stakeholders." "We have been asked in the past why we make contributions to UT," Bill said, "It's just the right thing to do. It took us a while to get involved again with our alma mater, but we are passionate about UT Martin and what it means to the economic growth and development of the region. UT Martin is truly preparing the next generation of leadership."
CDS joins Martin in celebrating Earth Day

No matter how enthusiastic you may be about recycling, chances are you’re not as excited as Russell Sallee. Every Thursday morning Sallee jumps up and down and claps his hands as he gets ready to help sort aluminum and plastics at the University of Tennessee at Martin’s recycling facility.

“I’m happy. I’m happy,” he says, while putting on a pair of plastic gloves and watching as several bags full of aluminum cans are pulled out of the facility into an open space for sorting.

The 38-year-old Sallee is just one of six individuals from Community Development Services — a nonprofit, community-based organization in Martin serving approximately 150 adults with developmental disabilities in Weakley, Henry, Obion, Carroll and Lake counties — who volunteer each week sorting recyclables.

The activity that brings Sallee so much joy is not the only way he and his friends from CDS are going green.

In support of Earth Day, April 22, they decorated more than 200 paper grocery bags to help encourage patrons of the E.W. James & Sons Supermarket in Martin to choose paper instead of plastic.

Sallee and 15 other individuals are a part of the Life Options group at CDS. They colored paper bags every day — coffee in one hand, markers in the other — for several weeks leading up to Earth Day.

“We’re saving the earth,” says Meagan Warren, 25, another member of Life Options, as she shows off the dots and circles she’s drawn on her bag just before heading over to the recycling facility.

Life Options is a program designed to provide more alternatives to individuals at CDS who are older or in need of a more relaxed environment because of their disability, says Gloria Williams, the supervisor of the program.

Participants of Life Options are able to explore their community, take advantage of volunteer opportunities and engage in an exercise program and other learning activities that meet their annual goals at a pace that is comfortable for them, she says.

Members of Life Options also volunteer with Meals on Wheels, delivering meals to approximately 10 different families once or twice a month.

They’re also collecting aluminum pull tabs to donate to the Aktion Club, a Kiwanis International sponsored-program that provides community service opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.

The Aktion Club of Martin has collected more than 1.5 million aluminum can tabs over the last two years for the Ronald McDonald House in Memphis.

The Ronald McDonald House converts the tabs to cash to help provide a free place to stay for families who have children fighting the battle against cancer at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

“I feel so proud when I see the participants of the Life Options program enjoy themselves as they take part in activities assisting others and protecting their environment. I’m also happy to see that businesses and organizations in our community welcome the opportunity to include our Life Options individuals in their endeavors,” CDS custodian manager Dennis Kosta says.

With just one full-time employee and one full-time student worker, Dennis Kosta, custodial manager for UT Martin and the Project Recycle coordinator, says he appreciates the efforts of the Life Options volunteers at the UT Martin recycling facility.

“We need their help,” he says. “We recycled 240 tons last year, and we probably hit close to 400 tons of recycling this year.”

He adds, “We enjoy having them, and working with them because it’s about getting the community involved. We all realize, it takes everybody.”

So why don’t we take our cue from Russell Sallee and get excited about recycling.

You don’t have to jump up and down about it, but you can remember to say, paper please!

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EARTH DAY IN MARTIN — Renee Tharpe of Mansfield (left) and Maxine Matthews of Martin (right) sorting aluminum cans at the UT Martin recycling facility.
HUNTER NAMED OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE – Debbie Hunter, University of Tennessee at Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences administrative specialist, received the non-exempt UT Martin Spring 2009 Outstanding Employee Award recently presented by Chancellor Tom Rakes. The award, which recognizes outstanding service to the university, is presented each fall and spring semester to two employees. Included as part of her nomination were comments such as, “Her people skills are at the top of the list of her most valuable assets. She always takes time for her colleagues and goes to great lengths to be available to students, as she believes them to be our number one priority. The welfare of our students is her passion ... she treats them like members of the family ... referring to them as ‘her kids.’ She has a big heart and exemplifies the ‘campus that cares’ philosophy in that she helps our students have the best collegiate experience possible here at UT Martin.”

MANISS RECEIVES ONLINE HONORS – Dr. Suzanne Maniss, center, of Jackson, University of Tennessee at Martin assistant professor of counseling, recently was honored at the third annual awards ceremony for Online Teachers of the Year at UT Martin. Dr. Tommy Cates, right, UT Martin Online and University Studies director, presented the award. Maniss has taught online classes for several years. “Dr. Maniss was instrumental in moving the counseling major within the MS in Education to the online environment. She works tirelessly to develop courses and prepare them for delivery, and she is excellent in teaching her classes,” said Cates. Also pictured is Dr. Beth Quick, Department of Educational Studies chair.

UT MARTIN RECOGNIZES LOCAL ENGINEERING STUDENT’S SUCCESS – Kramer Nance, left, of Martin, received the Outstanding Engineering Upper Division Student Award at a Department of Engineering luncheon recently held in honor of the award recipients at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Ed Wheeler, interim chair of the Department of Engineering, presented the awards. The Outstanding Engineering Upper Division Student Award is presented to an upper division student in the Department of Engineering who exemplifies outstanding academic and leadership achievements.
MOSELEY NAMED OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE – Bob Moseley, University of Tennessee at Martin Information Technology Services administrator, received the exempt UT Martin Spring 2009 Outstanding Employee Award recently presented by Chancellor Tom Rakes. The award, which recognizes outstanding service to the university, is presented each fall and spring semester to two employees. Included as part of his nomination were comments such as, "He is very knowledgeable about his work and will come to the rescue whether you call, e-mail or just see him around campus. He is faithful to see a project through to the end. Although an exempt staff member, he is willing to crawl under, climb over or remove any obstacles to help out a fellow employee — things not typically in his job description."

BEENE RECEIVES ONLINE HONORS – Deidra Beene, of Henderson, University of Tennessee at Martin adjunct professor of management, recently was honored at the third annual awards ceremony for Online Teachers of the Year at UT Martin. Dr. Tommy Cates, right, UT Martin Online and University Studies director, presented the award. Beene has taught online classes for several years. "Ms. Beene has the reputation for preparing her students to move into more advanced management courses. She is always willing to help her students learn material in ways that they can apply it in their careers," said Cates. Also pictured is Dr. John Overby, Department of Management, Marketing and Political Science chair. Beene is UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer director.

Local Student Recognized at UT Martin Communications Day

MARTIN - The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, "The Voice of the Tennessee Titans." Amanda Rogers, of McKenzie, received the Darrin Devault Public Relations Award. Dr. Jeff Hoyer, associate professor of communications, presented the award.
UTM's Deidra Beene Honored

Deidra Beene, University of Tennessee at Martin adjunct professor of management, recently was honored at the third annual awards ceremony for Online Teachers of the Year at UT Martin. Dr. Tommy Cates, right, UT Martin Online and University Studies director, presented the award. Beene has taught online classes for several years. "Ms. Beene has the reputation for preparing her students to move into more advanced management courses. She is always willing to help her students learn material in ways that they can apply it in their careers," said Cates. Also pictured is Dr. John Overby, Department of Management, Marketing and Political Science chair. Beene is UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer director.
County students receive scholarships

Five Gibson County students have been awarded scholarships for the 2009-2010 academic year to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin, according to Judy Rayburn, director of admissions.

• Elizabeth Landers, daughter of James and Crystal Landers of Trenton, will be a freshman. She received the Dean's Scholarship and the Leaders-in-Residence Award.
• Savannah Lee, daughter of Jeffery and Sharon Lee of Dyer, will be a freshman. She received the Dean's Scholarship.
• Kyle Robinson, son of Norman Robinson of Dyer and Sarah Robinson of Nashville, will be a freshman. He received the Chancellor's Award.
• Ross Smith, son of Lori Grimes and Tony Smith, both of Milan, will be a freshman. He received the Dean's Scholarship.
• Wyatt Turner, son of Betty Turner of Dyer and Joey Turner of Trenton, will be a freshman. He received the UTM McWhorter Scholarship.

Additional information on scholarships and other types of financial assistance is available by contacting UT Martin Office of Student Financial Assistance, 205 Administration Building, UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238. In-state residents telephone 800-829-UTM1; out-of-state residents should call (731) 881-7040.

Students recognized at Online Honors Ceremony

Dr. Suzanne Maniss, center, University of Tennessee at Martin assistant professor of counseling, recently was honored at the third annual awards ceremony for Online Teachers of the Year. Dr. Tommy Cates, right, UT Martin Online and University Studies director, presented the award. Maniss has taught online classes for several years. "Dr. Maniss was instrumental in moving the counseling major within the MS in Education to the online environment. She works tirelessly to develop courses and prepare them for delivery, and she is excellent in teaching her classes," said Cates. Also pictured is Dr. Beth Quick, Department of Educational Studies chair.

Deidra Beene, University of Tennessee at Martin adjunct professor of management, recently was honored at the third annual awards ceremony for Online Teachers of the Year. Dr. Tommy Cates, right, UT Martin Online and University Studies director, presented the award. Beene has taught online classes for several years. "Ms. Beene has the reputation for preparing her students to move into more advanced management courses. She is always willing to help her students learn material in ways that they can apply in their careers," said Cates. Also pictured is Dr. John Overby, Department of Management, Marketing and Political Science chair. Beene is UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer director.
**UTM ECCE offers non-degree courses**

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Continuing Education (ECCE) is offering the following non-degree programs and courses during the month of May:

- **Intermediate Microsoft Word**
  
  Scheduled for 9 a.m. - noon, May 5 and 7, this course will be taught by Doug Bloodworth, UT Martin Information Technology Services administrator. Learn more about the power of tables, mail merges, creating a newsletter, bookmarks, hyperlinks, advanced formatting for a research paper and more. Also learn about working with pictures, shapes, smart-art and clip art. Students will work with Word 2007 and Vista.

- **Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**
  
  Scheduled for 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., May 12-14, this course will focus on the teachings of Dr. Stephen Covey, author and creator of the Seven Habits program. Covey was recognized by “Time” magazine as one of 25 Most Influential Americans. Come to this three-day seminar and learn about these seven essential habits of highly effective people and how to incorporate them into your own life and work. Certified Covey instructor, Stefanis Mundy, will lead this interactive experience. Materials you’ll go home with include: a participant guidebook; 30-day sample planner; participant DVD; and participant audio CD. The registration fee is $249 and includes materials. Cancellations for this seminar must be made 10 business days before the seminar.

To register, please call ECCE at 881-7082 or register online at: www.utm.edu/departments/ecce.

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**Horton to perform senior voice recital**

The University of Tennessee at Martin's Department of Music will present Erin Elise Horton's senior recital at 3 p.m., April 26, at the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre. Horton, a music student from Murfreesboro, will perform songs that include soprano arias and a duet from operas such as “Alcina,” “The Enchantress” and “Lakmé.” Composers Heni Duparc, Georges Bizet and Leo Delibes are featured in the French set. Renaissance pieces of John Dowland, accompanied by classical guitar, and German Lieder by Franz Schubert are also included.

Delena Easley, lecturer of music, will accompany Horton on the piano; Ken Fackler, instructor of English, will provide the guitar accompaniment; and Jeff Moore, a music student from Camp Hill, Pa., will accompany Horton on percussion. This recital will be free and open to the public. For more information, contact Dr. Amy Yeung, associate professor of music, at 881-7408.

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**Diamond Jaxx host UT Martin Night**

April 25 will be UT Martin Night as the West Tennessee Diamond Jaxx host the Mississippi Braves at 7:05 p.m., at Pringles Park in Jackson. Discounted admission tickets, $5 for general admission and $7 for reserved, are available at Boling University Center information desk on the campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

All UT Martin students, staff, alumni and friends are invited to see the West Tenn Diamond Jaxx minor league baseball team of the Southern League and the Double-A affiliate of the Seattle Mariners. UT Martin Night activities will begin at 5:30 p.m., with special entertainment, concourse displays and presentations and continue during the game with in-between inning events and capped with a post-game fireworks show. Alyson Gilbert, UT Martin alumna, of Jackson, will sing the national anthem. For more information about UT Martin Night, contact Steve Vantrease, at 881-7755.

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**Nursing Excellence Day set for Monday**

The UT Martin Nursing Department will present its annual Nursing Excellence Day from 9 a.m. until noon Monday, April 27, in the Watkins Auditorium of the UT Martin University Center. The presenters this year include Carolyn Whitaker, RN who is a nurse practitioner; Col. Angela Odom from the UT Martin ROTC department; and Denise Miller, from Merck Pharmaceuticals, will facilitate a live webcast to introduce the audience to available resources, through Merck Medicus.

Refreshments will be provided. For more information, call the UT Martin Nursing Department at 881-7131.

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**UTM offers travel study of Amazon**

UT Martin will offer an Amazon travel study tour to Brazil from Jan. 4-14, 2010. An informational meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 27, in Brehm Hall room 258 on the UT Martin campus. For more information, contact UT Martin professors Sue Byrd at sbyrde@utm.edu, Bradley Ray at bray@utm.edu or Scott Pun at spun@utm.edu.

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**ATO/St. Jude softball tournament planned**

UT Martin's ATO Fraternity will be hosting a Men and Co-Ed Softball Tournament at Harrison Road Complex on Saturday, April 25. The 5 p.m. entry fee is $200. All proceeds will go to St. Jude’s Children Hospital.

For more information call Clay Searcy (731) 446-7781; Hunter Palmer (731) 441-0129 or Chase Fish (901) 484-9812.

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**David Johnson Chorus to perform**

The David Johnson Chorus, an adult-auditioned chorus originating in Dresden, will perform at 7:30 p.m., April 26, in the Harriet Fulton Performing Arts Theatre on the campus of the University of Tennessee at Martin. David A. Johnson will direct the chorus. This year, the chorus will perform a totally a cappella concert series. The theme of the concert is “From England to Africa.” For more information, contact Gail Crawford, David Johnson Chorus general manager, at 514-0167 or visit www.davidjohnsonchorus.com. This event will be free and open to the public.
Huss: Incoming class of freshmen projected 1 of largest in history

By JOHN BRANNON
Messenger Staff Reporter

Although the incoming freshman class at Obion County Central High School is projected to be one of the biggest yet, the overall student population doesn't show an increase, according to David Huss, director of Obion County School System.

Huss said the freshman class will have a landmark 290 students, “one of the biggest classes Obion Central has seen.”

Huss made that disclosure and others Monday at the Obion County Courthouse, where he briefed the Obion County Commission about two capital improvement projects. The projects are:

• A four-classroom addition at Hillcrest Elementary School and Lake Road Elementary School. The estimated construction cost is $1.62 million.
• An expansion of career technology center at OCCHS and South Fulton High School. The estimated construction cost is $4.25 million.

“The reason for building the career technology centers at Central and South Fulton is not due to student population growth,” he said. “It's due to changes in academics and the requirements for graduation that the state has handed down.”

With the large freshman class projected at 290, the student population at OCCHS next fall will reach almost 1,000. Huss said he's not surprised the freshman class will be so large. “We've known a couple of years that that class is coming up from the feeder schools. We knew there were going to be concerns about having that many freshmen at Central. But the building is big enough to handle that many students.”

The first full day of classes at OCCHS in the 2009-10 school year is Aug. 3.

Classrooms

Huss reported that construction of four-classroom additions at Lake Road and Hillcrest is proceeding on schedule. The target completion date is Aug. 3.

Huss...

(Continued from Page One)
31 but could “slip” by a few days earlier or later.

CTC

Huss reported that the Career Technology Center project is still in the design phase. The last meeting with construction advisory committee is scheduled for the near future. “We are hoping we can break ground on the facilities at Central and South Fulton by this fall,” he said.

The project entails closing the vocational-tech, or Career Technology Center, located at 1700 North Fifth St. in Union City and opening a new one at OCCHS.

Assistant director of schools James Faulkner said the center has been operational about 30 years.

“As such, all those years, some students at Central and South Fulton have been bussed to and from the facility to attend classes,” he said.

The project also calls for a two-classroom addition at South Fulton High School.

Huss said only two classrooms are being added because the size of the SFHS student body can't support (justify) a “full-fledged” technology center.

“But through adjustment in the agriculture — or ‘ag’ — curriculum, we’ll be able to teach a lot of these classes,” he said. “We’ll have the career tech center at Central. Any students at South Fulton who insist on taking those classes are going to be welcome to attend Central. South Fulton already has its ‘ag’ facility. It’s relatively modern, built within the last 10 years. We’ll add two classrooms there for health sciences.”

The new career technology center slated for OCCHS will have its traditional vo-tech courses such as auto body, auto mechanics, welding, carpentry, cosmetology, plus an ‘ag’ facility. “Everything we have at the career technology center now will be moved to Central,” Huss said.

And the ground-breaking date and target date for completion of the OCCHS project are what? “I’m guessing that if we can break ground by fall, I’m hop-
UC School Board honors
3 Teachers of the Year

They are outstanding in their field.
Educators Andrelle Burrus, Robyn Doyle and Joanna Wisener were recognized at a recent Union City School System board of education meeting as the outstanding teachers or Teachers of the Year in their schools.

Mrs. Burrus teaches third grade at Union City Elementary School. Mrs. Doyle is a sixth-grade science teacher at Union City Middle School and Mrs. Wisener teaches Advanced Placement English, English 12 and Gateway English at Union City High School.

“Those outstanding teachers share a belief that all children can learn, and they have the ability to motivate, challenge and encourage our students,” Union City Director of Schools Gary Houston said.

Mrs. Burrus began teaching in the Union City School System 38 years ago and has taught grades first through third in her career. She is a graduate of the former Martin High School and of the University of Tennessee at Martin, where she earned both a bachelor of science degree and a master’s degree.

This is her second Teacher of the Year honor, the first one received while she was informing young minds at the former Central Elementary School in Union City.

The UCES Teacher of the Year is a member of Alpha Delta Kappa teacher sorority, the Union City, Tennessee and National education associations and Martin First Baptist Church.

Mrs. Burrus is the wife of Mike Burrus and they are the parents of two children, Michael and Meredith.

“I enjoy teaching children because every day is different. There is not any place you can work and get more smiles, hugs and acts of appreciation. I esp-

(See Page 12, Col. 5)

UC school...

(Continued from Page One)cially enjoy working with children who do not always understand and seeing the bright smile when they have finally learned what I have taught them. I enjoy my profession more today than yesterday,” Mrs. Burrus says.

Mrs. Doyle has also developed her career as an outstanding educator in the Union City School System. She taught special education classes for seven years and second-grade classes for two years at the former CES and fifth grade at UCES for six years before moving to UCMS as a sixth-grade science teacher.

Mrs. Doyle, who is married to Tim Doyle and is the mother of Bart and Emily, is a 1978 graduate of Obion County Central High School and earned her bachelor’s degree in elementary education, with an endorsement in special education, from UT-Martin. She can also claim a master’s degree in elementary education, plus 30 semester hours.

She has been asked to serve as a mentor teacher and devotes her out-of-school hours to a variety of activities and purposes. She is a member of Union City First United Methodist Church, where she is part of the Joy Ringers handbell choir, and is a member of Philian Review Club and both the Union City and Tennessee education associations.

“I enjoy touching the lives of so many unique individuals and, hopefully, making a difference in their educational experience,” Mrs. Doyle says.

Mrs. Wisener began her career in education as a teacher at Dresden High School and then returned to her alma mater, OCCHS, to teach for a year.

For six years following that, the UCHS Outstanding Teacher, who is married to Clark Wisener, devoted herself to full-time mothering of their daughters, Claire and Leah.

She returned to the classroom at the beginning of the 2006-07 school year, this time as an English teacher at UCHS. In 2008, she was named “Most Influential Teacher” at the Rotary Scholarship Banquet.

Mrs. Wisener is a member of both the National and the Tennessee councils of teachers of English. She attends Union City First United Methodist Church and is a graduate of UT-Martin, where she earned a bachelor of science degree in secondary education.

“I enjoy helping young people realize what they are capable of achieving and encouraging them as they prepare for life beyond high school,” she says.
UT Martin celebrates opening of new center

Community residents and public officials joined University of Tennessee leaders and others on Wednesday to celebrate the new UT Martin Parsons Center.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house drew a crowd to the 19,000-square-foot facility that culminated several years of work.

UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes thanked local officials and commended Nick Dunagan, UT Martin chancellor emeritus, for his hard work. Rakes also thanked community businesses, donors and partners he said were critical to the center's continued success.

Since the summer of 2007, the Ayers Foundation has provided more than $367,500 in scholarship assistance to students attending the Parsons Center.

UT Martin has helped raise more than $1.3 million for the center from community stakeholders in the area. There were also major investments from the city of Parsons and Decatur County.

Those attending were invited to tour the facility, which includes general classroom space, a nursing lab, conference room, computer lab, student lounge, bookstore, science lab, administrative offices, library and distance-learning classroom.

The Messenger, Union City, Tennessee. Friday, April 24, 2009

SF STUDENT HONORED — Kady Elliot (right) of South Fulton received the Nick and Cathy Dunagan Team Spirit Award when the University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The award was presented by Teresa Collard, instructor of communications.

UC STUDENT CHOSEN — The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. Katie Keathley of Union City received the Goodyear Public Relations Scholarship, presented by Jimmy Cagle, director of communications for the local Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. plant in Union City.
Blankenships support UT Martin with gifts

The University of Tennessee at Martin’s role in the economic development of the region and a passion to see the university thrive led Bill and Roberta Blankenship to make a series of gifts in support of the institution and its mission.

The Blankenships attended the former University of Tennessee Martin Branch, where they met. Bill earned a bachelor of science degree in agriculture in 1956 and Roberta graduated with a home economics degree in 1955.

They returned to UT Martin for the first time in 50 years to attend their Golden Grad Reunion in August 2005. Shortly afterward, Bill became a member of the UT Martin Development Committee and now serves on the Campaign for Tennessee Steering Committee and the UT Development Council, which met in Martin April 17-18. Their great-nephew, Joel Howard, graduated from UT Martin in December 2005 and, at that time, they made the first of several unrestricted six-figure gifts to UT Martin.

“Chancellor (Tom) Rakes has stated that private support is necessary to attract and retain top students and faculty at UT Martin, and Roberta and I want to give back to help meet this objective — giving back so future students will have the opportunity to be the best they can be,” Bill said. “Our gifts have been unrestricted because we have confidence in the leadership at UT Martin and believe they can best determine the needs and priorities for the use of private gifts.”

As a result of those annual gifts, the Blankenship Undergraduate Research Endowment in the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences was established. Matched by support from the university, collaborative faculty/student research activities are nurtured and encouraged. Income from the endowment provides faculty incentives and student stipends for “real-world” learning opportunities in a close mentoring environment.

Other private gifts from the Blankenships have purchased much-needed equipment in the chemistry department, specifically a nuclear magnetic resonance machine that enables students in pre-health sciences to conduct experiments with state-of-the-art instrumentation, equipping them for graduate and professional school.

“One of UT Martin’s goals is to provide a learning environment that facilitates the total collegiate experience for all students,” today’s gift may not have been written 50 years ago, but certain the caring and mentoring of students was there when we were students, and it still exists today, and that provides for a great environment for learning,” Bill added. “As Roberta and I look back on the educational experience that UT Martin provided us, we realize it was a learning environment that aided us in our business careers and in our lives.”

Bill was born and reared in Covington and was a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. After obtaining his UT Martin degree, he was accepted in the Navy Officer Candidate School and, on receiving his commission, was assigned to the Commander In Chief Pacific Fleet Staff. He started his business career with Buckeye, a division of Procter & Gamble. P&G sold the cellulose business in the early 1990s to an investment group that formed Buckeye Technologies and Bill was vice president of cotton manufacturing.

Roberta, originally from Memphis, was editor of the yearbook and a campus beauty at UT Martin. Both played tennis as students and were coached by former UT Martin women’s athletic director Bettye Giles.

Ms. Giles: Rakes and his wife, Dr. Glenda Rakes; Len Solomon, UT Martin vice chancellor for university advancement; and Charley Deal, UT Martin assistant vice chancellor for alumni relations, attended an alumni reception hosted by the couple’s Sandestin, Fla., home. Following the event, the Blankenships presented the university with a $2 million bequest for the Campaign for Tennessee.

“Bill and Roberta have demonstrated a true philanthropic spirit with their generous support for UT Martin,” Rakes said. “They are exemplary alumni who have stepped up and provided an unusual level of trust in what our faculty and staff do to better serve our stakeholders.”

“We have been asked in the past why we make contributions to UT,” Bill added. “It’s just the right thing to do. It took us a while to get involved again with our alma mater, but we are passionate about UT Martin and what it means to the economic growth and development of the region. UT Martin is truly preparing the next generation of leadership.”

LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY — The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, “The Voice of the Tennessee Titans.” Joey Anderson, of Martin, received the WLJT-TV Scholarship. Darrell Conner, WLJT-TV/DT director of production, presented the award.
The Tennessee Higher Education Commission honored a University of Tennessee at Martin faculty member for outstanding community service work, April 23, in Nashville. Dr. John Schommer, a mathematics professor, received a Love Community Service Award after being selected from a group of Tennessee college and university nominees.

Schommer, who has taught at UT Martin since 1994, was honored for his work with Habitat for Humanity and the Catholic Diocese of Memphis' Jackson Deanery Development Committee for Social Ministries. Ten individuals, including five faculty/staff members and five students, received the awards during a reception at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission offices.

Awards go to individuals who excel in volunteer work and community service activities. The Tennessee General Assembly created the recognition programs for faculty, staff and students at public and private two- and four-year post-secondary institutions in 1991. In 1993, the General Assembly funded the program by presenting $1,000 cash awards to future recipients.

The awards are named for the late Tennessee Rep. Harold Love, who sponsored legislation to create the recognition program.

"Concern for others clearly defines John Schommer's ongoing volunteer efforts to make our community and our region better places in which to live and work," said Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor. "His unselfish volunteer work is appropriately recognized by this prestigious award."

Schommer began his work with Habitat for Humanity in spring 1999. Since then, his service to the organization includes assisting with home construction, forming and advising a UT Martin student Habitat chapter and serving as board treasurer for the Weakly County Habitat for Humanity affiliate. Possibly his most noteworthy Habitat for Humanity achievement is securing and administering a $25,000 grant for the construction of the local affiliate's first ADA-compliant house.

West Tennessee. Many ecumenical organizations have benefited from the committee's work, and in 2005, Schommer was elected committee chair. Ongoing work with the committee includes trying to solve a common problem experienced by many charitable ministries - assisting needy clients with utility bills.

Schommer expressed "surprise all the way around" at both being nominated and then receiving the award. Reflecting on his own experiences, he urges others to become involved in community service, even if for no better reason than "because it makes you feel good."

"The hard truth, though, is that the deeper you wade into community service, the more challenging, exasperating and frustrating you'll find it," he said. "At the same time, it's also remarkably rewarding to be part of a team solving problems.

"You'll never be busier, and you'll never be happier. You sleep hard, you wake up, and the community is already a better place in which to live, just because you've been working at it."

Besides his degrees in mathematics, Schommer also holds a master's degree in theology. He has served as president of the UT Martin faculty senate and is currently faculty representative for the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.

Schommer's recognition brings the total to 25 students, faculty and staff members from UT Martin recognized by the THEC Love Community Service Awards programs.
SAACS RECYCLES – Members of the University of Tennessee at Martin Chapter of Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society assisted UTM Recycles! at UT Martin four times during the year. In the picture SAACS president Kayla Poindexter presents a $100 check to project coordinators, Dennis Kosta, right, UT Martin director of custodial services, and Dr. Mike McCullough, second from right, UT Martin American Democracy Project coordinator, for a mural that Martin artist, Les MacDiarmid, and UT Martin students will paint at the Recycling Center. Others present in the picture are SAACS faculty adviser Dr. S.K. Airee and members, Kayla Baker, Casey Unger, Ashish Patel, Robert Mitchell and Punam Patel, who are displaying the SAACS poster, "Chemists Celebrate the Earth Day," to highlight their sustainability and green chemistry projects.

LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY – The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, "The Voice of the Tennessee Titans." Jennifer DeYeso, right, of Martin, received the Junior Scholarship. Chara Van Horn, instructor of communications, presented the award.

LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY – The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, "The Voice of the Tennessee Titans." Charlie McIntosh, of Martin, received the Wilson Hall Memorial News Writing Competition Award. Tomi Parrish, instructor of communications, presented the award.
Wright receives 2009 Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award

The Spring 2009 Beth Maloan Outstanding UT Martin Student Employee Award recently was presented to Carrington Wright, a UT Martin Department of Geology, Geography and Physics employee. Wright is a geoscience major and has been employed for three years.

Among his many tasks, Wright of Clarksville, assists with rearrangement of material and laboratories. He is responsible for minor equipment repair and minor carpentry. He assists with the set up and tear down of laboratory experiments and is responsible for general office duties.

According to his supervisor, "working with a multi-disciplinary department with geology, physics and geography demands that Carrington make decisions regarding which job gets done first and take initiative to develop a schedule of events, even in a content area he is not a part of.

Several of his tasks require that he make personal decisions as to the disposition of important documents and resources so that they are available to others upon demand."

Among examples of Wright's contributions to the department include almost single-handedly reorganizing the department's extensive map library, cataloging an extensive Vanderbilt Fossil Collection (a total of 260,000 individual specimens), volunteering for department functions and special events and maintaining department hallway displays. Wright also assists other departments and offices including the Office of University Relations appearing in videos, recruiting marketing pieces and as a Web site featured student.

This award, given every fall and spring semester, is a memorial for Beth Maloan, longtime UT Martin director of budgeting and payroll, who during her years of service, was a strong advocate for student employment. Maloan had a vision that more positions would be developed on campus that would challenge students and make them significant contributors to the university's mission. Recipients of this award exemplify a strong work ethic and commitment to the university, and they receive a $1,000 cash award, an engraved plaque and a nameplate on the perpetual plaque in a place of honor in the Boling University Center.

Contributions to this scholarship award may be made through payroll deduction by employees of UT Martin or by sending a contribution to the Office of Development at UT Martin.

LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY - The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, "The Voice of the Tennessee Titans." Rachel Stephens, of Martin, received the Tennessee Association of Broadcasting Award. Dr. Gary Steinke, professor of communications, presented the award. She also received the Senior Scholarship.
Four claim annual faculty honors

Four University of Tennessee at Martin faculty members were honored with awards for outstanding achievements in scholarship, citizenship, teaching and advising during the recent Honors Day program.

• Dr. Michelle Merwin, Department of Psychology interim chair, received the Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Award. The Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Award of $5,000 was established in 1993 by James R. Cunningham, who attended UT Junior College in the 1930s. It is awarded annually to faculty members who have demonstrated strength in teaching and made a contribution to the teaching profession through scholarly activities, extracurricular achievements and leadership responsibilities.

• Dr. Becky Cox, assistant professor of education, received the University of Tennessee Alumni Association (UTAA) Outstanding Teacher Award. Each year, the UTAA presents awards of $2,000 to faculty members on each of the UT campuses who have been selected as outstanding teachers. Students, alumni and faculty nominate outstanding teachers, who then are evaluated on classroom performance, scholarship and service.

• Stan Sieber, professor of history, received the Outstanding Advisor Award. The Outstanding Advisor Award of $1,000 and a plaque are presented to the faculty member selected for demonstrating a caring attitude toward advisees, availability to advisees, monitoring student progress toward academic and career goals and the ability to engage in developmental advising and other distinctive characteristics. The recipient also is eligible for the national award competition sponsored by the American College Testing Program and the National Academic Advising Association.

• Dr. Desiree McCullough, associate professor of mathematics and statistics, received the Coffey Outstanding Teaching Award. The Coffey Outstanding Teaching Award of $5,000 was established in 1998 by Mai and Charlie Coffey and is awarded annually to a faculty member who demonstrates strength in teaching and contributes to the teaching profession through extracurricular achievements, leadership qualities and scholarly activities.

FACULTY AWARDS PRESENTED — Among faculty members honored with awards for outstanding achievements in scholarship, citizenship, teaching and advising during the recent Honors Day program were, front row, second from left, Dr. Michelle Merwin, Dr. Becky Cox, Stan Sieber; and back row, Dr. Desiree McCullough. They are pictured with Dr. Eric Petren, front row, left, 2008 University of Tennessee Alumni Association (UTAA) Outstanding Teacher Award recipient who made the presentations; Dr. Tom Rakes, back left, UT Martin chancellor; Dr. Frank Black, professor emeritus of educational studies who gave the Honors Day address; and Dr. Jerald Ogg, vice chancellor for academic affairs, right.

LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY — The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, "The Voice of the Tennessee Titans." Josh Weiss, of Germantown, and Erica Miller, of Martin, received the Swafford Public Relations Scholarship. Jeanna Curtis-Swafford, left, director of development and planned giving development, presented the award.
LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY – The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, “The Voice of the Tennessee Titans.” Brent Harris, of Martin, received the Duke Drumm-WCMT/Oldies 95.1 Scholarship. Chris Brinkley, left, presented the award on behalf of WCMT.

STUDENT RECOGNIZED AT UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY – The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, “The Voice of the Tennessee Titans.” Mary Unger, of Martin, received the University Relations Public Relations Workshop. Bud Grimes, director of University Relations, presented the award. Mary Unger also received the Dorothea Norton Scholarship.


Local student recognized at UT Martin Communications Day

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, “The Voice of the Tennessee Titans.” Benita Evans, of Dresden, received the Stewart Byars Excellence in Radio Production Award, presented by Chris Brinkley and Misty Menees, and also the Nanney-Segebarth Scholarship.
UTM Parsons Center brings vision to fruition

Community residents and elected officials joined University of Tennessee leadership and others recently to officially celebrate the new UT Martin Parsons Center. The ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house drew a large crowd to the 19,000 sq. ft. technologically advanced facility that culminated several years of work.

"It is a locally based initiative through which UT Martin partners with area businesses and community leaders, but it's all part of a much greater university picture," said UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes. "Your children, neighbors, friends and maybe even some of you may want to take part in the collegiate experience through UT Martin. You're joining a top-tier master's southern institution, one of the best in the Southeast, right here at home."

"The primary service area is right around us," he added. "It includes not only Decatur, but also surrounding counties. There will be some students from other areas, as well, so this really is a regional effort."

Rakes thanked local officials who initiated the meetings that came to fruition with classes beginning early 2007 at Decatur County Riverside High School and the Parsons Municipal Building to establish the student base. He also commended Nick Dunagan, UT Martin chancellor emeritus, for his work toward developing the project that gained approval of the UT board of trustees and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Rakes pointed to community businesses, donors and partners he said were critical to the center's foundation and continued success.

"Congratulations for having the foresight and vision to invest in educating your citizenry," said Dr. Katie High, University of Tennessee chief of staff. "It will produce a return in human capital that will be incalculable." High commended Jim Ayers for his "remarkable scholarship program designed to increase the level of educational attainment of local citizenry and passion to provide opportunities for those in and around Decatur County."

The Ayers Foundation Scholars Program began in 2000 by providing financial assistance for students to attend any college, university or technical school in Tennessee. Since summer 2007, the Ayers Foundation has provided more than $367,500 in scholarship assistance to students attending the UT Martin Parsons Center.

"The completion of this center is the fulfillment of many people's dreams. When you look at how the community has worked together it should make us all proud to be citizens of Parsons and Decatur County," said Ayers.

"For the past five years that we have been working on this education initiative, I have been amazed at the way our community has pulled together to support this new facility," said Parsons Mayor Tim David Boaz. "With the outpouring of financial support, as well as moral support from the community, it makes me proud to be a part of it. This facility will have a very positive effect on our community to help keep our best and brightest at home. This facility will better prepare our workforce for the jobs for the 21st century."

Decatur County Mayor Jason Scott added, "We are excited about the opening of the college, and very grateful for all the hard work that has gone into making this a reality. UT Martin's presence will greatly benefit Decatur County for many years to come."

UT Martin has helped raise more than $1.3 million for the Parsons Center from community stakeholders in the area. In addition to Jim Ayers' support and leadership, there were also major investments from the city of Parsons and Decatur County.

"We're not only proud of the wonderful grassroots support for this center, but also delighted to have a UT Martin alumnus and hometown talent, Jason Rushing, as the director. He has helped to raise private support, recruited and advised students and hired a tremendously talented group of faculty to teach at the center," said Len Solomon, UT Martin vice chancellor for university advancement.

Those attending were invited to tour the facility, which includes general classroom space, nursing lab, conference room, computer lab, student lounge, bookstore, science lab, administrative offices, library, and distance-learning classroom.

"We're excited and honored to welcome our faculty, staff and students as well as members of the community to the new UT Martin Parsons Center," said Rushing. "This project would not have been possible without the vision and support of both local and university leaders as well as many donors who have given generously to fund the structure, as well as the Ayers Foundation which has provided scholarships for our students."

He added, "We're grateful to everyone who has been involved and supportive and look forward to serving our area for many years to come."

For more information about the Parsons Center and the courses offered, contact Rushing at jrushing@utm.edu or call 731-847-3880.

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Heather French of Oakfield received the Outstanding Nursing Student Award at the 21st annual University of Tennessee Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences Awards Banquet. The award was presented by Dr. Nancy Warren, chair of the Department of Nursing.
Four claim annual faculty honors at University of Tennessee at Martin

Four University of Tennessee at Martin faculty members were honored with awards for outstanding achievements in scholarship, citizenship, teaching and advising during the recent Honors Day program.

Dr. Michelle Merwin, Department of Psychology interim chair, received the Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Award.

The Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Award of $5,000 was established in 1993 by James R. Cunningham, who attended UT Junior College in the 1930s. It is awarded annually to faculty members who have demonstrated strength in teaching and made a contribution to the teaching profession through scholarly activities, extracurricular achievements and leadership responsibilities.

Dr. Becky Cox, assistant professor of education, received the University of Tennessee Alumni Association(UTAA)Outstanding Teacher Award.

Each year, the UTAA presents awards of $2,000 to faculty members on each of the UT campuses who have been selected as outstanding teachers. Students, alumni and faculty nominate outstanding teachers, who are evaluated on classroom performance, scholarship and service.

Stan Sieber, professor of history, received the Outstanding Advisor Award.

The Outstanding Advisor Award of $1,000 and a plaque are presented to the faculty member selected for demonstrating a caring attitude toward advisees, availability to advisees, monitoring student progress toward academic and career goals and the ability to engage in developmental advising and other distinctive characteristics. The recipient also is eligible for the national award competition sponsored by the American College Testing Program and the National Academic Advising Association.

Dr. Desiree McCullough, associate professor of mathematics and statistics, received the Coffey Outstanding Teaching Award.

The Coffey Outstanding Teaching Award of $5,000 was established in 1998 by Mai and Charlie Coffey and is awarded annually to a faculty member who demonstrates strength in teaching and contributes to the teaching profession through extracurricular achievements, leadership qualities and scholarly activities.
Graduation planned for May 9 at UTM

The University of Tennessee at Martin commencement will be May 9, with Jackson Sun president and publisher Roy Heatherly to deliver the commencement address.

The event is set for 11 a.m. in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on campus, where 689 graduates are slated to receive diplomas.

UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes will preside over the exercises and Dr. Jan Simek, University of Tennessee acting president, will confer degrees.

Dr. Jerry Gresham, UT Alumni Association Alumni Distinguished Service Professor, will be the mace bearer, and the processional marshals will be Dr. Kathy Evans, faculty senate president; Jenna Wright, faculty senate vice president; Al Hooten, vice chancellor for finance and administration; and Len Solomons, vice chancellor for university advancement. Delana Easley of Union City, UT Martin accompanist, will perform the processional and recessional.

Immediately following commencement, a reception will be held in Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

Heatherly, formerly the advertising director of The News-Star in Monroe, La., assumed The Sun post on Jan. 7, 2008. He began his career at radio station KKOY/KQSM in Chanute, Kan. He moved to Gannett Co. Inc. in 1980 as a sales representative at The Jackson Sun. He also served as promotions manager and advertising director. In 1991, he was named to the The News-Star post in Monroe.

He is a graduate of the University of Kansas with a bachelor of science degree in journalism. His wife, the former Beth Garland, is a native of Jackson. They have three children.

He serves on several boards, including Jackson-Madison County Chamber of Commerce, the Carl Perkins Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse, West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation, United Way of West Tennessee, Jackson Downtown Development Corporation and the Star Center.

Each UT Martin graduate will receive up to five complimentary tickets to admit his or her guests. Overflow seating will be available with a video and audio feed of the ceremony will be provided in the fieldhouse for all guests without tickets. Graduates can get their tickets at the Grand Finale Senior Walk today and immediately following the student commencement practice later today in the Elam Center.

Tickets for graduating students will remain available in the Office of Academic Records until 5 p.m. May 8.

A limited number of additional complimentary tickets will be available to graduates and to faculty and staff and the general public (up to two per person) on a first-come, first-serve basis while supplies last beginning at 7 a.m. Thursday in the Office of Academic Records on the first floor of the Administration Building. Any tickets not claimed by 5 p.m. May 8 will be distributed to the general public at a designated area outside the Elam Center beginning at 9 a.m. prior to the spring commencement ceremony.

Small business advice offered

UTM Reed Center consulting available

The University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REED) Center offers aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners one-on-one consulting each month. The center also offers approximately 20 small-business seminars each year for little or no cost to assist area business people in a variety of decisions.

The next opportunity to get advice on marketing, customer service or cash flow issues from Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant, will be 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., May 14.

"Slightly more than six million small businesses or 99.7 percent of all employer firms are considered, by SBA (Small Business Administration) definitions, to be small businesses. Small firms provide 50.4- percent of private sector jobs, and they generate more than half of the U.S. private nonfarm gross domestic product," said Hollie Holt, REED Center coordinator. "They are also the nation's most reliable job creation engine. Between 2004 and 2005, small businesses created 78.9-percent of the nation's new jobs. In every state, almost all firms are small, and they provide roughly half the jobs and in some rural states, small firms provide as many as two-thirds of the private-sector jobs."
UT MARTIN COMMUNICATIONS DAY - The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Communications recently held its annual Communications Day to honor the academic and extracurricular accomplishments of communications students. The keynote speaker for the banquet was Mike Keith, "The Voice of the Tennessee Titans." Jackie Bettie of Medina received the M. Sue Kahle Excellence in Leadership Award. Teresa Collard, instructor of communications, presented the award.

RECYCLE MURAL — Dennis Kosta (left) enlisted the help of local mural artist Les MacDiarmid to add color to the new UTM Recycles! barn off of Moody Street in Martin. The recycle barn collects paper, plastics, cardboard, scrap metal and aluminum from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Kosta said his goal is to raise enough awareness and money through recyclables to purchase collection bins to be placed throughout the city of Martin and, eventually, Weakley County.
Sun publisher to address UT Martin graduates May 9

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UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes will preside over the exercises, and Dr. Jan Simek, University of Tennessee acting president, will confer degrees.

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Delana Easley, UT Martin accompanist, will perform the procession and recessional music.

Immediately following commencement, a reception will be hosted in Skyhawk Fieldhouse.

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He also served as promotions manager and advertising director. In 1991, he was named to the The News-Star post in Monroe. He is a graduate of the University of Kansas with a Bachelor of Science in journalism. His wife, the former Beth Garland, is a native of Jackson.

They have three children. He serves on several boards including Jackson Madison County Chamber of Commerce, The Carl Perkins Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse, West Tennessee HealthCare Foundation, United Way of West Tennessee, Jackson Downtown Development Corporation and The Star Center.

Each graduate will receive up to five complimentary tickets to admit his or her guests. Overflow seating with a video and audio feed of the ceremony will be provided in the field house for all guests without tickets.

Tickets for graduating students will remain available in the Office of Academic Records until 5 p.m., May 8.

A limited number of additional complimentary tickets will be available to graduates and to faculty and staff and the general public (up to two per person), on a first-come, first-serve basis while supplies last, beginning at 7 a.m., April 30, in the Office of Academic Records on the first floor of the Administration Building.

Any tickets not claimed by 5 p.m., May 8, will be distributed to the general public at a designated area outside the Elam Center beginning at 9 a.m. prior to the spring commencement ceremony, May 9.

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