Teachers study new classroom practices

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The local affiliate site of the National Writing Project, the West Tennessee Writing Project, housed in the Department of English at the University of Tennessee Martin, held its invitational summer institute on May 16 and June 8-July 2, with 11 teachers participating for six hours of graduate credit in English.

The group will meet for three follow-up sessions in the coming school year.

The West Tennessee Writing Project is offering an open workshop on Sept. 12 for all grades and all subjects on the campus of UT Martin. The workshop will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. with lunch included in the registration cost. Visit the Web site, www.utm.edu/wtwp, e-mail project director David Carothers at dcarothers@utm.edu or call (731) 881-7290.

Jacobs receives scholarship for UT Martin

T-G STAFF REPORTS

Cody Jacobs, a Carroll County student, has been awarded a scholarship for the 2009-2010 academic year to attend the University of Tennessee at Martin, according to Judy Rayburn, director of admissions.

Jacobs, son of Cindy and Keith Templin of Westport, and Ken Jacobs of Shelbyville, will be a freshman.

He received the University of Tennessee Alumni Association Valedictorian Recognition 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.
Local residents receive degrees from UT Martin

Several McNairy County residents were among students who received degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin during the recent spring commencement held in Kathleen and Tom Elam Center on the UT Martin campus.

The students receiving undergraduate degrees were:
* Adamsville — Robyn Honor Daniel; Holly Renee Spencer; Tiffany Ann Greene;
* Bethel Springs — Lacie Dawn Hill; Marsha Parsons;
** Guys — Kaye Janeen Howard;
* Michie — Pamela A. Horner;
Adam Daniel Ledlow; Wendy K. Pitting;
** Ramer — Joyce Kirk Strickland;
* Selmer — Joshua R. Steele;
Brandi Marie Adams; Jenny Lynn Drumright; Melissa Wakefield Carroll; Donald Kirk Linam;
Kirby Lyne Redmon; Brooks Lee Weatherford; Christopher Blake Carroll.

The students receiving graduate degrees were:
* Guys — Daniel Eric Holcombe;
* Selmer — Robert Rhodes Platt.

Roy Heathery, Jackson Sun president and publisher, was the commencement speaker. UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Tom Rakes presided over the exercises, and Dr. Jan Simek, University of Tennessee acting president, conferred degrees.

UTM West Tennessee Writing Project Sept. 12

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“Teachers who attend NWP summer institutes return to their classrooms with new strategies for teaching writing and with experience using digital tools,” said Sharon J. Washington, NWP executive director. “Eighty percent of Americans believe there is a greater need now than 20 years ago for a person to be able to write well in order to succeed. Summer institutes are one of many writing project programs that address this need.”

National research studies confirm significant gains in writing performance among students whose teachers participate in NWP programs.

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Participating teachers had many positive things to say about WTWP’s 2009 Summer Institute. Clara Talley, fourth and fifth grade teacher at Immaculate Conception Cathedral School in Memphis, says, “I spent my days with talented teachers and writers who are making a difference in the lives of their students. I was given ways to help all my students be more successful. I moved down the road in my journey to be a better teacher and writer.”

Shannon Lyon, ninth grade teacher at Obion County Central High School, states, “What I am taking with me is the desire to get published. I’m never going to jump out of an airplane or any other such type of daredevil thing, but I cannot be a chicken anymore about my writing.”

Kristy Dowden, fourth grade teacher at Union City Elementary, added, “The West Tennessee Writing Project is the best professional development I have received.”

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The National Writing Project is the most significant coordinated effort to improve writing in America. NWP sites serve more than 153,000 participants annually. NWP continues to add new sites each year with the goal of placing the writing project within reach of every teacher in America. Through its professional development model, NWP develops the leadership, programs, and research needed for teachers to help students become successful writers and learners.
Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory serves region’s veterinarians, producers, residents

The West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, located on the UT Martin campus, is beginning its second year of operation, and the lab’s staff will continue its work providing a list of services in support of animal disease diagnosis and regulatory activities.

The facility functions as part of a statewide animal health network and also serves to further diversify and support the development of the livestock industry in West Tennessee.


“The goal of the diagnostic lab is to serve the veterinarians, producers and people of West Tennessee,” said Roberts. “I believe the diagnostic lab can have a real benefit to the people of West Tennessee and encourage them to take advantage of it if they have a need.”

A partnership between the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and UT Martin establishing the diagnostic lab was made possible by the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program, established in 2005 by Bredesen and supported by the Tennessee General Assembly. The goal of the TAEP is to help improve animal health and livestock production and to encourage farm diversification in Tennessee.

The West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory functions as a satellite facility of C.E. Kord Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory operated by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture in Nashville. Another regional laboratory operating independently is located at University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine in Knoxville.

The 2,200 sq. ft. facility provides post-mortem tissue collection services only. Samples are shipped overnight to Kord laboratory, where all definitive diagnoses are made by state veterinary pathologists. Veterinarians, producers and West Tennessee residents may submit animals to the facility for necropsies.

Animals do not have to be referred by a veterinarian. The owner will be strongly advised to list a veterinarian where the pathology report may be sent. In this way, a valid client-patient relationship will be maintained by the veterinarian and client. No recommendations for preventative health measures or disease control will be made by the employees of the satellite laboratory, reflecting the policy that the local practitioner that has visited the farm and is familiar with the management practices is best positioned to advise the owner.

There is no charge for necropsy of agricultural animals. State law defines those animals exempt from fees as being raised for food or fiber, and also exempts horses. On all other animals, the basic fee structure of C.E. Kord will be followed. There is a fee of $35 for necropsies of companion animals. The fee is $60 if toxicology samples are submitted with the necropsy.

No live animals will be accepted for necropsy, and euthanasia will not be performed on the premises.

Lab hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. An appointment is not required to submit an animal to the lab, but an advance phone call is helpful. Animals also may be submitted to the lab on weekends, however, necropsies will not be performed until the following Monday. For more information about the West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, contact Roberts at 731-881-1071.

Westview Key Club Scholarship Winners

Martin Kiwanis Club president, Sue Lasky, is pictured with this year’s Westview Key Club Scholarship winners Megan Beard and Abbie Fuqua. Megan and Abbie, who will attend UT Martin this fall, were each awarded a $500 scholarship. They received their scholarships in recognition of their outstanding community service through the Kiwanis sponsored Key Club of Westview High School. Each year, the Martin Kiwanis Club awards a scholarship to an outstanding Key Club senior. This coming year’s seniors are encouraged to apply for the scholarship. For more information about the Martin Kiwanis Club and its service to the youngsters of Weakley County, visit the club website at www.martinkiwanisclub.org.
UT Martin has earned ‘Best in the Southeast’ designation since recognition initiated

The University of Tennessee at Martin has again earned the designation as one of the best colleges and universities in the Southeast, according to The Princeton Review for 2010. The New York-City based education services company selected the school as one of 141 institutions it recommends in its “Best in the Southeast” section on its Web site feature, “2010 Best Colleges: Region by Region.”

UT Martin has earned the designation for seven consecutive years. Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, said the designation is further evidence that the university provides a high-quality learning experience for students. “Our students are among our best sponsors, and we appreciate being designated as among the Best in the Southeast,” Rakes said.

“We chose UT Martin and the other terrific schools we recommend as our ‘regional best’ colleges primarily for their excellent academic programs,” said Robert Franek, Princeton Review’s vice president of publishing. “We also work to have our roster of ‘regional best’ colleges feature a range of institutions by size, selectivity, character and locale. We choose the schools based on institutional data we collect from several hundred schools in each region, our visits to schools over the years and the opinions of independent and high school-based college advisors whose recommendations we invite.” He added, “We also take into account what each school’s customers - their students - report to us about their campus experiences at them on our 80-question student survey.”

The 141 colleges The Princeton Review chose for its “Best in the Southeast” designations are located in 12 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. The Princeton Review also designated 218 colleges in the Northeast, 123 in the West, and 158 in the Midwest as best in their locales. The 640 colleges named regional best(s) represent about 25 percent (one out of four) of the nation’s 2,500 four-year colleges.

The Princeton Review does not rank the colleges in its 2010 Best Colleges Region by Region Web site section. The Princeton Review survey for this project asks students to rate their own schools on several issues - from the accessibility of their professors to quality of the campus food - and answer questions about themselves, their fellow students and their campus life.

About campus life, one student said, “UTM has enough organizations on campus that everyone has the opportunity to meet students that share common interests and therefore feel more connected to the school.” While “most students here come from rural areas,” the campus also draws “a mixture of urban students. You’ll also find...” international students,” another student commented.

The Princeton Review (www.PrincetonReview.com) is known for its tutoring and classroom test preparation courses, books, and college and graduate school admission services. Its corporate headquarters is in Framingham, Massachusetts, and editorial offices are in New York City. It is not affiliated with Princeton University, and it is not a magazine.

Byrd president-elect of American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences

Dr. Sue Byrd

Dr. Sue Byrd, University of Tennessee at Martin Family and Consumer Sciences professor, was named 2009-2010 president-elect of the American Association of Family & Consumer Sciences at the recent AAFCS 100th Annual Conference and Expo in Knoxville.

“It is an honor to have been elected to this position by my colleagues and to have the opportunity to serve AAFCS and the profession. During these times when many families are struggling to make ends meet, it is important that family and consumer sciences professionals use their expertise to provide information that can help individuals, families and communities make informed decisions for an improved quality of life,” said Byrd. “AAFCS plays a vital role in empowering these professionals with research-based information to carry out this important mission. It is exciting to be a part of the leadership of AAFCS to support FCS professionals and move AAFCS forward into its second century as a leader in addressing issues of importance to individuals, families and communities.”

An active and longtime AAFCS member, Byrd, Certified in Family and Consumer Sciences (CFCS), has served in numerous leadership positions at the national and affiliate levels. At the national level, she has been an AAFCS Council for Certification member, Community of Colleges, Universities, and Research leader, accreditation site visitor, Communities Coordinating Team member, Nominating Committee member and Higher Education Unit secretary. At the affiliate level, Byrd’s roles have included vice president for cooperative relations, vice president for external affairs, board member and president.

Byrd has published a variety of scholarly articles and presented at state, national and international events. She recently presented “The Magnificent Textiles of China: Indigo Dyeing and Tie-Dyeing Examined” during the Community of Apparel, Textiles, and Design Juried Showcase and Exhibition at the Annual Conference in Knoxville. To support her research in apparel and textiles, she has also received a number of grants, including a faculty research grant to study minority cultures in China.

In honor of her contributions to family and consumer sciences, Byrd has received the AAFCS and Tennessee Affiliate Leaders Awards; University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Family and Consumer Sciences Pat and Joe Johnson Faculty Development Award; Cunningham Outstanding Teacher/Scholar Award; and Tennessee Affiliate District A Award.
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New UTM online degree available

An online Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a major in management will be offered for the first time by the University of Tennessee at Martin.

It is one of only four AACSB-accredited online BSBA in management programs in the nation and is targeting business professionals who want to advance their careers by expanding their knowledge and expertise while obtaining a degree.

Joining a growing list of master’s programs and the Bachelor of University Studies offered through UT Online, all degree requirements for the BSBA in management may be completed online.

The program coursework and course materials are accessible online, 24/7, with discussion, email, chat, assignments, examinations and Web-conferencing capability. Students have access to free tech support through UT Martin’s Help Desk, 731-881-7900, each day until midnight CST.

The program is accredited by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Total minimum hours required is 120. The time required to complete the degree will depend on the number of program appropriate college credits that a person has earned. The new degree will offer potential students an additional avenue through which they can complete a professionally accredited business degree.

For more information about the online BSBA or UT Online master’s programs in education, agriculture and natural resources systems management, engineering management, family and consumer sciences and business administration, call UT Online, toll-free, at 1-866-587-7589 or visit http://utonline.tennessee.edu.
UTM is named ‘Best in South’

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Open workshop slated September 12

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Obion County School System welcomes new employees to 2009-10 school system

BETH MCMANUS
Beth McManus of Union City will teach Spanish II at OCCHS and will be the Foreign Language Club sponsor.

A graduate of UCHS, she earned a bachelor of science degree in education, with a major in secondary Spanish education, from UTM. She took part in a required immersion program in Guanajuato, Mexico, at the University of Guanajuato, Escuela de Idiomas (School of Languages). She lived with a host family there for four weeks in July 2007 and in July 2008.

She is married to Craig McManus and is the mother of Jessica Omohundo and Bryan Omohundo, both of Murfreesboro, Amanda McManus and Josh McManus of Union City and Larkin Austin of Union City.

She enjoys traveling to Spanish-speaking countries, reading, music, singing in the church choir at Union City Second Baptist Church and family time.

Before returning to college to complete her degree, she worked in retail management for 20 years.

JENNIFER PATE
Jennifer Pate of Union City will be teaching in the Comprehensive Developmental Center at Lake Road School. She is a graduate of Union City High School and earned a bachelor of science degree in education from UTM and a master’s degree in education with an emphasis on special education from Bethel College in McKenzie.

She is the daughter of Dale and Margaret Pate and attends Crosswind Church in Union City.

She has previously taught third and fourth grades in the Gibson County School District at the Rutherford campus.

PHILLIP DARNALL
Phillip Darnall of Rives is an OCCHS graduate who earned his degree from UTM, majoring in agriculture science with a minor in political science.

(See Page 12, Col. 1)

PHILIP DARNALL
He will be teaching agriculture and will be FFA advisor at SFH/MS.

He is married to Miranda Darnall and is the father of Addison Darnall.

He has previously been employed in management at Walmart in Union City.

CATHY KENDALL
Cathy Kendall of South Fulton will be librarian at Ridgemont Elementary School.

An SFHS graduate, she received her bachelor’s degree and master’s degree from UTM.

She is a member of Tennessee Association of School Librarians and is the West Tennessee area representative; of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society; and of Tennessee Education Association. She has previously taught at Fayette County, Montgomery County and other Obion County schools.

LENISE GREEN
Lenise Green of Troy is a special education teacher at OCCHS, instructing students in classes and in workskills class. She is an OCCHS graduate and at UTM graduate who earned a master’s degree in special education. She is the mother of John Michael Green, 17, and a senior at OCCHS, and Cameron Green, 13 and an eighth-grader at Hillcrest.

She enjoys gardening and walking and has previously worked at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. in Union City, and began her educational career at OCCHS in 2008.

LAURA ROBINSON
Laura Robinson of Hornbeak will be teaching third grade at Hillcrest Elementary School. She is an OCCHS and a UTM graduate and has a degree in elementary education (K-6).

She is married to Josh Robinson.

NATALIE HUEBNER
Natalie Huebner of Union City will be teaching first grade at Hillcrest. She is a graduate of OCCHS and of UTM, where she earned a degree in elementary education (K-6). She is a member of Troy First Baptist Church and is married to Karl Huebner.

She has been a teacher of reading and language arts in sixth grade level at Union City Middle School.

JUSTIN TRUETT
Justin Truett of Troy will be Hillcrest’s new head football coach and will teach physical education classes for all levels at the school.

He is a graduate of Huntington High School and UTM, where he earned his degree in physical education for all grade levels.

MADDIE CARRINGTON
Maddie Carrington of Woodland Mills will teach Title/Reading Recovery classes at South Fulton Elementary School. She is a graduate of South Fulton High School and UTM, where she earned her degree in K-6 elementary education.

She is a member of Crosswind Church.
LYLE LARUE
Lyle LaRue of the Nance community near Friendship will be teaching biology and freshman studies at OCCHS and serving as the head girls’ basketball coach. He is married to Connie and is the father of Noah, 6 years old; Eden, 4 years old; and Seth, 22 months old. He enjoys sports and has previously taught at Crockett County, Dyer County and Martin’s Westview high schools.
He is a graduate of Dyer County High School and UT Martin, where he earned a master’s degree.

DEBRA STRINGER
Debra Stringer of Martin will be teaching Algebra I at OCCHS. She is a graduate of Westview High School in Martin and of UT Martin and is the wife of Rick Stringer. They are the parents of adult children Angelique Levister, Aaron Stringer and Adam Stringer and she has previously taught at Martin Middle School, UT Martin and Dresden High School. She is a member of Central Baptist Church in Martin and is an independent Mary Kay Beauty Consultant.

NICK LUCAS
Nick Lucas of Martin will teach agriculture classes at OCCHS. He is a graduate of McEwen High School and of the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he majored in agriculture education.
He enjoys hunting and fishing and farm work and is a member of Martin First Baptist Church. He has previously been employed at Winfield Solutions.

KEVIN DOBBINS
Kevin Dobbins of Troy will be teaching eighth-grade math and will be an assistant football coach at Hillcrest Elementary School in Troy. He is an OCCHS graduate and received a bachelor’s degree in education from UT Martin.
He is married to Annette Dobbins and is the father of 11-year-old Andrew Dobbins. Hunting and fishing are his hobbies and he is a deacon at Troy Church of Christ.
He has previously been employed as a lumber inspector for 15 years.

GEORGE LEAKE
George Leake of Troy is the new assistant principal at UCES. He is a graduate of OCCHS and UT Martin, where he earned both a bachelor’s degree in education and a master’s degree in administration and supervision.
He is married to Shiloh Leake and is the father of Kail, 4, and Anna Frances, who is 9 months old.
He is a member of Troy United Methodist Church and Troy Lions Club and enjoys golf, waterfowl hunting, softball and basketball.
He has previously been a reading/language arts teacher at Black Oak Elementary School in Hornbeak.

EDDIE SUITER
Eddie Suiter of Union City will be teaching English I at UCHS and coaching girls’ basketball and cross country. He is a graduate of Westview High School in Martin and of UT Martin, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in English education and a master’s degree in education.
He is the father of Will, 8; Abby, 6; and Maggie, who is 4 years old.
He has previously taught at OCCHS, Spring Hill High School and Fulton City High School in Kentucky.

NICK MARKLE
Nick Markle of Martin is teaching U.S. History, World Geography and Honors World Geography at UCHS. He is also an assistant football coach.
He is a graduate of Fayette Academy in Somerville and UT Martin, where he claimed a bachelor of science degree in secondary education with an emphasis on history.
He is an avid golfer and has coached football at both Fayette Academy and UCHS.

YOUREE MADDOX
Youree Maddox of Martin will be a 180 educational assistant at UCHS. (See Page 12, Col. 4)

Union City …
(Continued from Page Nine)
She is a UCHS graduate and earned her degree in fashion merchandising from UT Martin. She enjoys shopping, cooking, sewing and spending time with family and has already had experience in the school system, working as a substitute teacher last year.
She is the mother of Maddox TéDan Harrold.
Lee Ussery of Martin is beginning a new school year teaching sixth and seventh-grade language arts at UCMS and is serving as the school’s assistant girls’ basketball coach.

He is a graduate of Greenbrier High School and UTM, where he earned a bachelor of science degree in social work.

He is married to Stacey Ussery and is the father of Becca Ussery, who is 12 years old.

He enjoys fast pitch softball and UT football.

An online bachelor of science program in business administration with a major in management will be offered by the University of Tennessee Martin. It is one of four AACSB-accredited online BSBA in management programs in the nation and is targeting business professionals who want to advance their careers by expanding their knowledge and expertise while obtaining a degree, according to a news release.

Total minimum hours required is 120. The coursework and course materials are accessible online, with discussion, e-mail, chat, assignments, examinations and Web-conferencing capability. Students have access to free tech support through UT Martin’s Help Desk, (731) 881-7900, each day until midnight CST.

The program is accredited by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the news release continues.

For more information about the online BSBA or UT Online master’s programs in education, agriculture and natural resources systems management, engineering management, family and consumer sciences, and business administration, call toll-free, (866) 587-7589, or visit utonline.tennessee.edu.

Program focuses on women leaders

The University of Tennessee Martin’s WestStar leadership program, the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development/Business Enterprise Resource Office and Tennessee Economic Council on Women sponsored a women business owners opportunities conference in Jackson called “Building Blocks for Success.” Local attendees included Dee Henderson, Jackson State Community College’s executive director for institutional advancement, Brandi Wilson of Charter Business and Lisa Silver of Elmcroft Assisted Living.
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Just 17 percent believe that when students graduate from high school they have the writing skills they need for college, and 75 percent say that our K-12 education system should put more emphasis on the teaching of writing.

"Teachers who attend NWP summer institutes return to their classrooms with new strategies for teaching writing and with experience using digital tools," said Sharon J. Washington, NWP executive director.

National research studies confirm significant gains in writing performance among students whose teachers participate in NWP programs.

The local affiliate site of the National Writing Project, the West Tennessee Writing Project, held its invitational summer institute on May 16 and June 8-23, with 11 teachers participating for six hours of graduate credit in English. The group will meet for three follow-up sessions in the coming school year.

Participating teachers had many positive things to say about WTP's 2009 Summer Institute.

Clara Talley, fourth and fifth grade teacher at Immaculate Conception Cathedral School in Memphis, says, "I spent my days with talented teachers and writers who are making a difference in the lives of their students. I was given ways to help all my students be more successful. I moved down the road in my journey to be a better teacher and writer."

Shannon Lyon, ninth grade teacher at Obion County Central High School, states, "What I am taking with me is the desire to get published. I'm never going to jump out of an airplane or any other type of daredevil thing, but I cannot be a chicken anymore about my writing."

Kristy Dowden, fourth grade teacher at Union City Elementary, added, "The West Tennessee Writing Project is the best professional development I have received."

The West Tennessee Writing Project is offering an open workshop on Sept. 12 from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. for all grades and all subjects on the campus of UT Martin. The title of the workshop is "Control+Shift: Cross-Curricular Writing with Technology." For more information, visit the Web site, www.utm.edu/wtwp, email project director David Carithers at dcarithers@utm.edu or call 731-881-7290.

Soybean Festival pageants Sept. 5

The annual Tennessee Soybean Festival is offering girls the opportunity to participate in the upcoming Tennessee Soybean Festival pageants. The University of Tennessee Federal Credit Union is sponsoring the pageants.

Girls 0-21 years of age are invited to participate in the pageants, Sept. 5, during the festival. Pageants begin at 10 a.m. in the Student Life Center at the University of Tennessee at Martin located at 199 Moody St. The deadline to register is Sept. 1.

The pageant lineup includes the following: Baby Miss Soybean (0-1 year old), 10 a.m.; Tiny Miss Soybean (2-3 years old), 10:45 a.m.; Petite Miss Soybean (4-5 years old), 11:30 a.m.; Little Miss Soybean (6-9 years old), 1 p.m.; Junior Miss Soybean (10-12 years old), 2:30 p.m.; Teen Miss Soybean (13-15 years old), 3:30 p.m.; and Miss Soybean (16-21 years old), 4:30 p.m. All pageants will have one queen and four alternates.

A $30 non-refundable entry fee is required with the application. Make check payable to the Tennessee Soybean Festival.

Mail fee and application to: Tennessee Soybean Pageant, 406 S. Lindell St., Martin, TN 38237 or deliver to the REED Center.

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Applications for pageants are available at these locations: Martin - UT Federal Credit Union, Lana's Boutique & Bridal, Sugar and Spice, UT Martin Student Life Center and Martin City Hall; Union City - Joan's; Milan - Special Occasions; Jackson - Bonnie's Boutique. To receive an application online, go to www.tssoybeanfestival.org.
Holder joins Sungardhe Steering committee

Larry Holder, University of Tennessee at Martin's Information Technology Services database administrator, recently was appointed to the global SunGard Higher Education (SGHE) Steering Committee for its Community Source Initiative.

SGHE is the owner of the Banner student information system software that UT Martin has been using since 1997, and which is now the common software product for all public universities across Tennessee.

Initially announced at the March 2009 Summit in Philadelphia, the steering committee has been pursuing the goal of providing a process for individual universities to submit custom enhancements for inclusion in the baseline Banner product, using Open Source as a model.

Open Source enables software design and development to extend beyond the personnel and resources of a particular company such as SGHE, and is responsible for a significant number of software products that people enjoy today, particularly on the Internet.

In conjunction with the steering committee, the Functional and Technical Review Boards have started to review the 20-plus submissions that focus on the Banner student, financial aid and accounts receivable areas from participating institutions.

The intent is to select a few simple modifications for the first release as a means to learn and test the community sourcing process.

Holder was simultaneously asked to serve as the lead on the Technical Review Board by Jack Kramer, SGHE vice president, as a result of his many years of active involvement and service in the area of technical support among universities using the Banner software.

Holder is internationally recognized for his contributions to the Information Technology community that provides Banner support at hundreds of universities around the world, and is also a key contributor to the ongoing implementation of Banner among the other UT schools in Knoxville, Chattanooga and Memphis.

"It is an honor to be asked to serve on both the steering and technical review committees," said Holder.

"The initiative is the culmination of many years of dialog between the user community and SunGard, and I look forward to seeing the first custom enhancements incorporated into the Banner product. It is also a honor to represent the University of Tennessee at Martin, my alma mater, in this manner."

Holder is the son of Dr. Lee Holder, who founded the College of Allied Health at the UT Health Science Center in 1971 under then-chancellor Joe Johnson. He credits his father with fostering the desire to join and serve the UT system, as well as to become involved in global community initiatives within his profession.
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UT Martin, Union University listed among the top by Princeton Review

The University of Tennessee at Martin and Union University in Jackson are among five colleges in West Tennessee to be listed among the 141 Best Southeastern Colleges by The Princeton Review.

The New York City-based education services company selected the schools as two of 141 institutions it recommends in its "Best in the Southeast" section on its Web site feature, "2010 Best Colleges: Region by Region."

UT Martin has earned the designation for seven consecutive years. Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, said the designation is further evidence that the university provides a high-quality learning experience for students.

“Our students are among our best sponsors and we appreciate being designated as among the Best in the Southeast,” Rakes said.

“We chose UT Martin and Union University and the other terrific schools we recommend as our ‘regional best’ colleges primarily for their excellent academic programs,” said Robert Frank, Princeton Review’s vice president of publishing. “We also work to have our roster of ‘regional best’ colleges feature a range of institutions by size, selectivity, character and locale. We choose the schools based on institutional data we collect from several hundred schools in each region, our visits to schools over the years and the opinions of independent and high school-based college advisors whose recommendations we invite.

“We also take into account what each school’s customers — their students — report to us about their campus experiences at them on our 80-question student survey,” he added.

Union University President David S. Dockery said, “We are grateful for the recognition by The Princeton Review, which is an indication of the quality of the education students receive at Union. Our outstanding faculty, staff and students are committed to excellence and deserve the credit for such honors as this.”

The 141 colleges The Princeton Review chose for its “Best in the Southeast” designations are located in 12 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

The Princeton Review also designated 218 colleges in the Northeast, 123 in the West and 158 in the Midwest as best in their locales. The 640 colleges named regional best(s) represent about 25 percent (one out of four) of the nation’s 2,500 four-year colleges.

The Princeton Review does not rank the colleges in its 2010 Best Colleges Region by Region Web site section. The Princeton Review survey for this project asks students to rate their own schools on several issues — from the accessibility of their professors to quality of the campus food — and answer questions about themselves, their fellow students and their campus life.

The Princeton Review (www.PrincetonReview.com) is known for its tutoring and classroom test preparation courses, books, and college and graduate school admission services. Its corporate headquarters is in Framingham, Mass., and editorial offices are in New York City.

It is not affiliated with Princeton University and it is not a magazine.
FROM BARN TO CROWN — Obion County Fairest of the Fair Katherine Adelyn Parker (second from left) of Union City joked on stage Monday night that her fellow contestants in the Fairest of the Fair pageant smell a lot better than what she is accustomed to at the fair — since she's typically in the livestock barn. Miss Parker, 18, won the coveted title in her first-ever beauty pageant. She is the daughter of Nick and Julie Parker and is a student at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Her court includes first maid Rebecca Lauren Easley (left) of Union City, 17, daughter of John and Delana Easley and a senior at Union City High School; second maid Jordan Brooke Jones (second from right) of Kenton, 18, daughter of Greg and Kim Jones and a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin; and third maid Olivia Brooke Bechum of Union City, 17, daughter of Dr. Steve Bechum and a senior at UCHS.

DRESDEN ENTERPRISE, Dresden, Tennessee, Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Flowers elected secretary of Tennessee STEM

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Dr. Jack Rheoton, professor of science education and director of the Center of Excellence for Mathematics and Science Education at East Tennessee State University, is council chair. Dr. Rick Vannosdall, director of the Tennessee Mathematics, Science and Technology Education Center at Middle Tennessee State University, is vice chair. The council has representatives from UT Chattanooga, Tennessee Tech, Union University, Pellissippi State Community College, Tennessee Scholars, the Tennessee Business Roundtable, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Science Teachers Association, the Science Matters Network, Tennessee Mathematics Teachers Association, and others.
Holder joins SunGard Steering Committee

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REED Center makes it easy to get business advice you need

Take advantage of the next opportunity to get one-on-one business consulting from Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant. Acree will be at the University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REED) Center, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., August 19. He will be available to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners with advice on a business plan, financing options, marketing, customer service, cash flow and other issues.

The UT Martin REED Center is a service of the Horace and Sara Dunagan Chair of Excellence in Banking and the Tom 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 731-587-REED (7333). The REED Center is located at 406 Lindell Street, Martin. For additional services offered by the REED Center, go to www.utm.edu/reed.

High school bands ‘Tune Up’ for marching season at UTM

Several area high school bands will receive hands-on instruction to help prepare their fall marching percussion music at Drumline "Tune-up Day" at the University of Tennessee at Martin. Dr. Julie Hill, UT Martin assistant professor of music and director of percussion studies, will be the instructor for the session that is slated August 29, in the Fine Arts Building. Guest artist will be Drum Corps Hall of Fame Inductee, James Campbell.

For more information, contact Hill at 731-881-7418 or jhill@utm.edu.
Teachers study research, effective classroom practices during summer institute

More than 3,000 kindergarten through college teachers across the country dedicated four weeks of their summer break to learning new strategies to improve their students’ writing skills.

The teachers studied the latest research and effective classroom practices in summer institutes at more than 200 National Writing Project (NWP) sites on college campuses in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The majority of Americans view good writing skills as essential to success in college and the workplace, according to a recent national public opinion survey, Writing, a National Pastime, Takes New Forms, by the research firm Belden Russonello & Stewart. However, they fear that public schools and children are falling behind. Just 17 percent believe that when students graduate from high school they have the writing skills they need for college and 75 percent say that our K-12 education system should put more emphasis on the teaching of writing.

“Teachers who attend NWP summer institutes return to their classrooms with new strategies for teaching writing and with experience using digital tools,” said Sharon J. Washington, NWP executive director. “Eighty percent of Americans believe there is a greater need now than 20 years ago for a person to be able to write well in order to succeed. Summer institutes are one of many writing project programs that address this need.”

National research studies confirm significant gains in writing performance among students whose teachers participate in NWP programs.

The local affiliate site of the National Writing Project, the West Tennessee Writing Project (housed in the Department of English at the University of Tennessee at Martin), held its invitational summer institute on May 16 and June 8-July 2, with 11 teachers participating for six hours of graduate credit in English. The group will meet for three follow-up sessions in the coming school year.

Participating teachers had many positive things to say about WTWP’s 2009 Summer Institute.

Shannon Lyon, ninth-grade teacher at Obion County Central High School, said, “What I am taking with me is the desire to get published. I’m never going to jump out of an airplane or any other such type of daredevil thing, but I cannot be a chicken anymore about my writing.”

Kristy Dowden, fourth-grade teacher at Union City Elementary, added, “The West Tennessee Writing Project is the best professional development I have received.”

The West Tennessee Writing Project is offering an open workshop on Sept. 12 for all grades and all subjects on the campus of UT Martin. The title of the workshop is “Control+Shift: Cross-Curricular Writing with Technology” and it will be held from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., with lunch included in the registration cost. For more information on this workshop or other WTWP programs, visit the Web site www.utm.edu/wtwp, e-mail project director David Carithers at dcarithers@utm.edu or call (731) 881-7290.

UC native Passmore a fit for Vandy post

Vanderbilt Vice Chancellors David Williams and Susie Stalcup have jointly named veteran senior development officer and Union City native Christy Passmore as Executive Director of Athletics Development and National Commodore Club.

Passmore, who has served as the interim director the past year, has already assumed her duties.

“This opportunity is challenging and especially exciting for me,” Passmore says. “I have a clear understanding of the goals this university has for its athletics program and believe a strong development program will play a key role toward achieving them. It is really thrilling for me to be part of this program that puts forth such an extraordinary effort on behalf of these amazing student-athletes to enable them to compete athletically and academically.

Williams, who has guided Commodore athletics to new heights during his six years of supervision, is pleased to have Passmore on his team.

“Christy Passmore brings many needed and important skills and experiences to Commodore athletics,” he says. “Perhaps first and foremost, her addition brings stability to this key position. Her long-time association with Vanderbilt administration, alumni and friends means she can hit the ground running. She knows Vanderbilt and she knows development and that matters to our student-athletes as we strive for all-around excellence.”

A native of UC, Christy earned a degree in early childhood education in 1978 from the UT Martin and spent three years as a classroom teacher.

She gained her first fundraising experience working in several Tennessee political campaigns and in Washington, D.C.

In 1985, she joined the American Heart Association in Nashville and was subsequently promoted to a position at the organization’s national center in Dallas, managing the national volunteer board of directors.

Passmore began her career at Vanderbilt in 1990, and since then has held senior positions throughout the university.

Christy’s first position was as chief development officer for the School of Nursing.

In 1994, she became a major gift officer for the Medical Center, with a focus that included the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences.

She was promoted to executive director/campaign director for Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital development in August 1998, with primary responsibility for raising $50 million for a new freestanding children’s hospital. That campaign launched in April 1999 and reached its goal in March 2000.

She was named assistant vice chancellor in 2001 and then associate vice chancellor in 2002, with primary responsibility for the university’s comprehensive “Shape the Future” campaign, as well as week-to-week management of the chancellor’s time and schedule for development and campaign purposes.

The “Shape the Future” campaign was publicly launched in April 2003.

Vanderbilt Athletics development oversight and management was added to her portfolio in 2005, with lead responsibility for managing a $25 million campaign to increase the endowment of athletics.

Almost $19 million has been committed in gifts, pledges and documented bequests toward the endowment goal.
HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE — The Obion County Ministerial Fellowship awarded its first scholarships Friday night at Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church in Union City as part of the community Eighth of August celebration. Thomas Turner (center) is the son of Regina Turner of Union City and James Davis of Nashville and will be attending the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Ariel Smith is the daughter of Davie Smith and Ruby Payne of Union City and will be attending the University of Tennessee at Martin. The Union City High School graduates received a $250 scholarship each to help finance their higher education goals. On hand to make the presentation were (from left) the Revs. Eugene Coleman, A.E. McCadney and Curtis McLendon.

Art exhibition slated for Sept. 9-12

The University of Tennessee at Martin Visual Arts Society will again sponsor the Soybean Festival Art Exhibition.

Co-sponsor is the Arts Co-op Gallery, located on Lindell Street in downtown Martin, where the exhibition will be housed from 2-9 p.m. Sept. 9-12.

The Soybean Festival Art Exhibition is a regular part of soybean festivities with cash awards sponsored by the Visual Arts Society, a student honor society that helps to promote the visual arts on the UT Martin campus and throughout the community.

UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts faculty will select pieces to be included in the exhibition. During the festival, individuals may submit their vote for first-, second- and third-place awards. Cash awards will be $100 for first, $75 for second and $50 for third. Announcement of awards will be made at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 11.

Entry forms are available at the UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts, the C.E. Weldon Public Library, the Apple Barrel and the Arts Co-op Gallery in Martin.

For more information, contact the UT Martin Department of Visual and Theatre Arts at (731) 881-7400.
UT Martin names local students to summer semester dean's list

The outstanding academic achievements of undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee at Martin have been honored with publication of the Summer 2009 Dean's Lists for the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, College of Business and Global Affairs, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, College of Engineering and Natural Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

Local students honored on Summer 2009 Dean's List are:

- Dresden
  - Debra J. Barker - Honors, Amy M. Bell - High Honors, Joseph E. Crawford - High Honors and Sunni C. Jackson - Highest Honors
- Gleason
  - Christine E. Herndon - Highest Honors
- Greenfield
  - Barbara A. Bridgewater - Highest Honors and Emily L. Medling - High Honors
- Martin

To be eligible for dean's list recognition at UT Martin, a student must take at least 12 hours of credit (pass-fail courses are not included) and achieve a 3.2 (B) grade point average based on a 4.0 scale. Students can make the dean's list with honors (3.2 through 3.49), high honors (3.5 through 3.79) or highest honors (3.8 through 4.0).

UT Martin is a comprehensive public university that maintains an excellent reputation for its high-quality undergraduate programs, its beautiful campus and caring professors.

There's still time to register

There is still time to complete the admissions process to enroll for fall classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The first day of classes is Aug. 31, with fees due Aug. 25. Students may contact the Office of Admissions at UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238, e-mail admitme@utm.edu, or call 731-881-7020 or 1-800-829-UTM1 for more information. Students can apply online at www.utm.edu.

Freshmen are encouraged to attend First-Year Initiative, Aug. 27-30. During the week, students will learn their way around the campus, receive information about services, participate in campus activities, meet campus leaders and complete classroom experiences designed to strengthen study habits, sharpen money management and other skills.
LOCAL FARMERS - Area farmers were among those who took advantage of the recent eighth annual Mid-South Ag Finance Conference at the University of Tennessee at Martin. More than 180 lenders, producers and service providers attended this program offered through the UT Martin Dunagan Chair of Excellence in Banking. Internationally known speaker, Dr. David Kohl, was the featured presenter and provided conference participants with practical information about profitability, agricultural/economic trends, crop and trade and risk management. Pictured are, from left, front row, Tom Brock, Jimbo Davis, Gary Hall, Keith Fowler, Keith Hulme, Karen Hulme, Ty McConnell; second row, Kenneth Callewell, R.D. Robinson, Billy Barklow, Greg Nanney, Jeff Morris; third row, Mark Cooper, Chris Brundige and John McConnell.

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The Tennessee STEM Education Leadership Council is made up of leaders from higher education and other organizations who are interested and invested in furthering STEM education in Tennessee.

Dr. Jack Rhoton, professor of science education and director of the Center of Excellence for Mathematics and Science Education at East Tennessee State University, is council chair.

Dr. Rick Vanosdall, director of the Tennessee Mathematics, Science and Technology Education Center at Middle Tennessee State University, is vice chair.

The council has representatives from UT Chattanooga, Tennessee Tech, Union University, Pellissippi State Community College, Tennessee Scholars, the Tennessee Business Roundtable, the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Science Teachers Association, the Science Matters Network, Tennessee Mathematics Teachers Association, and others.

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Guest artist will be Drum Corps Hall of Fame Inductee, James Campbell.

For more information, contact Hill at 731-881-7418 or jhill@utm.edu.
Learn new skill, pursue an interest

Fall classes offered by the University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies offer area residents the opportunity to learn new skills and pursue new interests. Classes get underway in September in Martin.

A Concealed Handgun Carry Class, eight-hours, is scheduled 5-9 p.m., Sept. 24 and 25. The instructor will be Cecil Clements, state certified handgun instructor. The fee is $75.

Each student must be at least 21 years of age and provide a handgun, pen, pencil, paper, 50 rounds of ammunition for range instruction, safety glasses and hearing protection.

Beginning Excel will be taught by Doug Bloodworth, UT Martin analyst and programmer, 9 a.m.-noon, Tuesday and Thursday, Sept. 29 and Oct. 31. The fee is $85.

Participants will learn to build useful spreadsheets using easy-to-use techniques.

They also will receive instruction about functions, managing files, moving and copying, formatting, sample worksheets, multiple worksheets, graphs, drawing tools for special emphasis, hints, tips and backups. Finally, they will work with the new Excel 2007 and Vista.

Digital Photography Part I—Camera Operation/Basic Photographic Skills will be taught by Dr. Tom Gallien, 6:30-9 p.m., Tuesdays, Sept. 22.

This course is designed to make digital photography less intimidating. It will also help participants better understand all the settings and controls on their camera and show them how to make better photographs using the new digital technology.

Whether participants just want to make family snapshots or have a true creative side, this course will help each feel more competent in making good photos in any situation.

Proper photographic exposure, composition and use of the camera's histogram will be discussed.

Students should take a digital camera and questions to class along with the camera's instruction manual if available. They may also want to take a small notebook for notetaking. Printed and email handouts will supplement the presentations.

Even though this course is primarily for novice digital photographers, solutions and ideas for photographers with intermediate skills can also be discussed. Gallien will utilize email evaluation and critiques of images during the course.

This introductory course is a springboard for the follow-up Intermediate/Advanced skills course.

Making Sense of the ACT will be offered for students to prepare for the Oct. 24 test, 9 a.m.-noon, Saturdays, Sept. 12 and Oct. 3, with Ron Ramage as the instructor and a fee of $65, plus the book. There is a class limit of 20 students.

Making the highest score possible on the ACT Test really makes sense these days. This course will help students plan a strategy to make the highest score on the test.

The course is designed for first-time test takers as well as seasoned veterans. Students will be using The Real ACT Prep Guide and should take the book to the first class meeting. The cost of the text is not included in the registration fee. The book may be purchased on the UT Martin campus at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 731-881-7760.

To register call the UT Martin Office of ECOS at 731-881-7082. Register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/ecce/courses_nondegree.php
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Girls from birth to age 21 years of age are invited to participate in the pageants on Sept. 5 during the festival. Pageants begin at 10 a.m. in the Student Life Center at the University of Tennessee at Martin, located at 199 Moody St. The deadline to register is Sept. 1.

The pageant lineup includes the following: Baby Miss Soybean (birth to 1 year old), 10 a.m.; Tiny Miss Soybean (2-3 years old), 10:45; Petite Miss Soybean (4-5 years old), 11:30; Little Miss Soybean (6-9 years old), 1 p.m.; Junior Miss Soybean (10-12 years old), 2:30; Teen Miss Soybean (13-15 years old), 3:30; and Miss Soybean (16-21 years old), 4:30. All pageants will have one queen and four alternates.

A $30 non-refundable entry fee is required with the application. Make check payable to the Tennessee Soybean Festival. Mail fee and application to: Tennessee Soybean Pageant, 406 South Lindell St., Martin, TN 38237 or deliver to the REED Center. There will be no registration at the door. For more information, call (731) 587-7333.

Applications for pageants are available at these locations: Martin — UT Federal Credit Union; Lana’s Boutique & Bridal; Sugar and Spice, UT Martin Student Life Center and Martin City Hall; Union City — Joann’s; Milan — Special Occasions; and Jackson — Bonnie’s Boutique.

To receive an application online, go to www.tnsoybeanfestival.org.

It’s not too late to register at UTM

There is still time to complete the admissions process to enroll for fall classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

The first day of classes is Aug. 31, with fees due Aug. 25. Students may contact the Office of Admissions at UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238; e-mail admitme@utm.edu; or call (731) 881-7020 or 1-800-829-UTMI for more information. Students can apply online at www.utm.edu.

Freshmen are encouraged to attend First-Year Initiative Aug. 27-30. During the week, students will learn their way around the campus, receive information about services, participate in campus activities, meet campus leaders and complete classroom experiences designed to strengthen study habits, sharpen money management and other skills.

Soybean Festival Pageants coming up

The annual Tennessee Soybean Festival offers girls the chance to be in the Tennessee Soybean Festival pageants. The University of Tennessee Federal Credit Union is the pageant sponsor.

Girls from babies to 21 years of age are invited to participate in the pageants Sept. 5. Pageants begin at 10 a.m. in the Student Life Center at the University of Tennessee at Martin, 199 Moody St. The deadline to register is Sept. 1.

The pageant lineup includes the following: Baby Miss Soybean, to age 1, 10 a.m.; Tiny Miss Soybean, 2-3 years, 10:45 a.m.; Petite Miss Soybean, 4-5 years, 11:30 a.m.; Little Miss Soybean, 6-9 years, 1 p.m.; Junior Miss Soybean, 10-12 years, 2:30 p.m.; Teen Miss Soybean, 13-15 years, 3:30 p.m.; and Miss Soybean, 16-21 years, 4:30 p.m. All pageants will have one queen and four alternates.

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On a quest for knowledge

80-year-old student will receive second academic degree today

SELMA — Elizabeth Stovall’s bachelor’s degree that she received at age 74 hangs in a frame in her kitchen and is one of her most prized possessions, she said.

“Told people that’s the most expensive thing hanging in my house,” she laughed. “It took a long time to get that.”

But that didn’t stop her from going back to school that same year to get another academic degree. Stovall, now 80, will graduate today with a master of arts degree in liberal studies from the Jackson State Community College campus of the University of Memphis.

She was a full-time student and also took online courses.

“It’s never too late to go back to school,” Stovall said. “Just like the NAACP says, a mind is a terrible thing to waste. It really is.

“If you live in America, you cannot afford to be illiterate,” she said. “Education is something a lot of people take for granted, but with education comes freedom. Who knows? I might decide to go back and get my doctorate degree.”

The benefits

Jean Moore Ashmore, director of the Jackson center for the University of Memphis, said Stovall is one of the oldest to graduate from the school.

“Ms. Stovall can serve as an inspiration to us all,” Ashmore said. “Anyone who believes they are too old to go back to school, or has anxiety about being in the classroom with younger students, can be reassured by the good experience she has had.

“She enjoyed her coursework, made new friends and has applied her knowledge to personal as well as community service projects.

“Miss Elizabeth has demonstrated that learning touches all parts of our lives, both inside and out of the classroom, and has shown us that there is always something new for us all to learn.” Ashmore said.

Stovall’s daughter, Denise King, said her mother taught her that age can never be an excuse when it comes to accomplishing your goals.

“Your mind still works just as good at 50 or 80,” King said. She began college classes as an adult, too.

“I think it’s wonderful that we had the opportunity right here in McNairy County to accomplish that,” Stovall said. “We’re just elated that my mother has come this far. ‘Who knows what she’ll do next’ King laughed. “Nothing would surprise me.”

Her history

Stovall, a mother of two who worked in retail and bookkeeping for several years, said her goal is to help people with health problems such as her oldest daughter, who struggles with anxiety.

“I want to get her out of the house more, whether it’s out to eat at a restaurant or to Wal-Mart for some shopping,” Stovall said. “It’s not good for any of us to sit at home.”

Stovall, who walks two miles every day, has to stay busy, she said. Enrolling in college was a dream of hers since she was a teenager growing up on a 600-acre farm her parents owned in Hickory Flat, Miss.

“I came up in a time when the emphasis was on the boys getting their education,” Stovall said. “There were seven children in my family, three boys and four girls, including me. My dad really encouraged my brothers to go to college, and for the girls, he was like, ‘You should be smart enough to find someone who has an education to take care of you.’

“So, Stovall focused on learning how to cook, sew and tailor clothes.

“At that time, I used to say, ‘When I grow up, I want to work in a department store, so I can have pretty clothes,’” she said.

Stovall became a homemaker before landing her first job. She was married by age 18 and had her first child when she was 19.

Her husband was a student at the University of Houston until he left to serve in the military during World War II. He later started a flooring and tiling business.

Please see GRADUATE, 4D

Graduate

Continued from cover

Business, for which Stovall learned how to do bookkeeping and customer service.

But nothing could beat a good book, she said.

“I love to read,” Stovall said. “Three weeks before my dad died, he told me, ‘I kind of let you down, because you always had a thirst for knowledge.’ But one thing I learned is that if you do have a thirst for knowledge, you don’t have to attend college classes to be educated. You can read books, watch the news and just know what’s going on in the world.”

Stovall will never forget the day she took her granddaughter to register for classes at the University of Tennessee Martin campus in Selmer.

“We visited with an admissions counselor there for about 30 minutes, and just as we were about to leave, he looked at me and said, ‘What about you?’” Stovall said. “It was like he had read my mind. God truly works through people.”

Stovall went home and gave college some thought. The next morning, she enrolled for the fall 1999 semester.

“My granddaughter and I enrolled the same semester, and then her mother enrolled that same very semester,” Stovall said. “We actually had some classes together, too.”

Her granddaughter, Elizabeth Smith, said they took an English and psychology course together.

“I thought it was neat to be in the same class as my grandmother,” Smith said. “We would share notes.”

When she first began college, Stovall said, she was nervous and didn’t know what to expect. But her classmates immediately made her feel welcome, she said.

“They always called me Miss Elizabeth,” Stovall said. “I kind of just fit in with them. I was a student all the way. I dissected rats, took physical education courses. I did not chicken out on anything.”
“If we had to get on the floor and stretch, I did it,” she said. “I didn’t cut any corners.”

Her hardest classes were biology and algebra, while political science and law were her favorites.

“I’ve always had a passion for law,” Stovall said. “One thing I can say about law is that it’s not worth the paper it’s written on if it doesn’t apply to everyone equally.”

After Stovall received her undergraduate degree in May 2004, relatives made her a scrapbook with pictures of her in cap and gown and inspirational messages that read “Way to go!” and “Reach for the stars.”

Smith said her grandmother graduated before she did.

“And then she started her master’s before I even finished my bachelor’s,” Smith said.

Stovall started work on her master’s degree in the fall of 2004. But because of her involvement with the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability as a consumer advocate, Stovall stopped taking classes briefly to help set health policies and rules for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

When she returned to school, she decided to write a research paper on the assessment of home health care for residents of West Tennessee.

“I was very interested in this because my husband had a heart attack in the ’70s,” Stovall said. “He was in and out of the hospital several times. At the time, we didn’t have many choices for health care for him. He could either go to a nursing home or be cared for by family, but there was no insurance coverage on any of that. I thought there had to be a better way to do this.”

Her husband never worked again after he had a heart attack. Stovall took a job with a department store to support her family. Her husband died at 49. She was 42.

“After that, there was a void in my life, but I had to work through it,” Stovall said. “If you give up on life, it’ll give up on you. I’ve done a lot. I have nothing to complain about, and I really feel like I can do just about anything I want to.”

Visit jacksonsun.com and share your thoughts.

— Ashley Anthony, (731) 425-9631
Amanda Belew is Henry County Fair’s fairest for 2009

Flanked by her court, Amanda Belew was chosen as the 2009 Henry County Fairest of the Fair Saturday night. She is the 18-year-old daughter of Monte and Beth Belew and will be a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin this fall. Pictured from left are third maid Samantha Lindley, 17, daughter of Bill and Melissa Lindley; first maid Madison Boyd, 16, daughter of Tim and Vickie Boyd; Amanda; second maid Katie Williams, 16, daughter of Hank and Mary Jane Williams; and fourth maid Rikkiley Moody, 17, daughter of Rick and Lisa Moody. Schedules reviews beginning at 6:30 tonight in the Enoch building at the Henry County Fairgrounds include the Junior King and Queen, Little Miss and Miss Preteen.

Reed center makes it easy to get business advice you need

Take advantage of the next opportunity to get one-on-one business consulting from Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant.

Acree will be at the University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REEED) Center, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Aug. 19.

He will be available to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners with advice on a business plan, financing options, marketing, customer service, cash flow and other issues.

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 731-587-REED (7333).

The REED Center is located at 406 Lindell St., Martin, TN 38237. For additional services offered by the REED Center, go to www.utm.edu/reed.
UTM staff winners in digital media contest

University of Tennessee at Martin director of the Instructional Technology Center and Web Services Steve Holt and Tim Hacker, UT Martin instructor of English, recently won the faculty service-learning category of a regional digital media tournament.

In the spring, UT Martin joined universities across the state and around the southeast in the Digital Media Sandbox Consortium Governor’s Challenge Academic Media Tournament. Participating institutions included campuses all across Tennessee, as well as campuses from Georgia, Texas, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky and Washington.

Faculty and students from all campuses competed in six categories (faculty course concepts, faculty features, faculty service-learning, student course concepts, student features, and student service-learning). UT Martin selected campus winners in three of the six categories to advance to regional competition, where Holt and Hacker’s entry in the tournament was selected as the winner in the faculty service-learning category.

Digital media files in all categories were judged by a collection of judges from all over the world, who were identified and selected by using social media tools such as Facebook and Google Docs. The Digital Media Sandbox Consortium Governor’s Challenge Academic Media Tournament files were hosted this year by East Tennessee State University on its iTunesU site.

“I hope to generate more interest in participation from our students and faculty in the next tournament, which is being rolled out this fall,” said Holt.

The Digital Media Sandbox Consortium Web site can be found at www.tnsandbox.com. ETSU’s iTunes Web site, which contains the entries for the spring 2009 tournament, can be found at www.etsu.edu/itunes.

Local students included on UTM Dean’s List

The outstanding academic achievements of undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee at Martin have been honored with publication of the Summer 2009 Dean’s Lists for the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, College of Business and Global Affairs, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, College of Engineering and Natural Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

Local students on the Dean’s list include Heather M. Pfeuffer, Fulton, highest honors; Rachel J. Wynn, Fulton, highest honors; Daniel C. Naughton, Hickman, highest honor.

To be eligible for dean’s list recognition at UT Martin, a student must take at least 12 hours of credit (pass-fail courses are not included) and achieve a 3.2 (B) grade point average based on a 4.0 scale. Students can make the dean’s list with honors (3.2 through 3.49), high honors (3.5 through 3.79) or highest honors (3.8 through 4.0).
UT Martin Names Local Students to Summer Semester Dean's List

MARTIN - The outstanding academic achievements of undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee at Martin have been honored with publication of the Summer 2009 Dean's Lists for the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, College of Business and Global Affairs, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, College of Engineering and Natural Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

To be eligible for dean's list recognition at UT Martin, a student must take at least 12 hours of credit (pass-fail courses are not included) and achieve a 3.2 (B) grade point average based on a 4.0 scale. Students can make the dean's list with honors (3.2 through 3.49), high honors (3.5 through 3.79) or highest honors (3.8 through 4.0).

UT Martin is a comprehensive public university that maintains an excellent reputation for its high-quality undergraduate programs, its beautiful campus and caring professors.

Those making the Dean's List from this area are: Randall D. Segraves, Bruarton, Honors; Christine E. Herndon, Gleason, Highest Honors; Amanda L. Sneed, Hollow Rock. Honors; Kelsey C. Schweitzer, McKenzie, Highest Honors.

Three students from Fulton County, Ky., have been named to the Dean's List for the summer semester at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The honorees, listed by hometown, include:

Humboldt Chronicle, Wednesday, August 19, 2009

UTM designated "Best"

The University of Tennessee at Martin has again earned the designation as one of the best colleges and universities in the Southeast, according to The Princeton Review for 2010. The New York City-based education services company selected the school as one of 141 institutions it recommends in its "Best in the Southeast" section on its Web site feature, "2010 Best Colleges: Region by Region."

UT Martin has earned the designation for seven consecutive years, Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, said the designation is further evidence that the university provides a high-quality learning experience for students. "Our students are among our best sponsors, and we appreciate being designated as among the Best in the Southeast," Rakes said.

"We chose UT Martin and the other terrific schools we recommend as our 'regional best' colleges primarily for their excellent academic programs," said Robert Franek, Princeton Review's vice president of publishing. "We also work to have our roster of 'regional best' colleges feature a range of institutions by size, selectivity, character and locale. We choose the schools based on institutional data we collect from several hundred schools in each region, our visits to schools over the years and the opinions of independent and high school-based college advisors whose recommendations we invite." He added, "We also take into account what each school's customers - their students - report to us about their campus experiences at them on our 80-question student survey."

The 141 colleges The Princeton Review chose for its "Best in the Southeast" designations are located in 12 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. The Princeton Review also designated 218 colleges in the Northeast, 123 in the West, and 158 in the Midwest as best in their locales. The 640 colleges named regional best(s) represent about 25-percent of the nation's 2,500 four-year colleges.

The Princeton Review does not rank the colleges in its 2010 Best Colleges Region by Region Web site section. The Princeton Review survey for this project asks students to rate their own schools on several issues - from the accessibility of their professors to quality of the campus food - and answer questions about themselves, their fellow students and their campus life.

The Princeton Review (www.PrincetonReview.com) is known for its tutoring and classroom test preparation courses, books, and college and graduate school admission services.
Fall classes offer opportunity to learn new skills

Fall classes offered by the University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies will offer area residents the opportunity to learn new skills and pursue new interests.

Classes get underway in September in Martin.

The eight-hour "Concealed Handgun Carry Class" is planned for 5-9 p.m. Sept. 24 and 25. The instructor will be Cecil Clements, a state-certified handgun instructor. The fee is $75.

This handgun safety class will provide the student with the minimum requirements mandated by the state. The use, operation and cleaning of the handgun will be covered. The first evening will be devoted to classroom instruction and the second evening will be the firing range instruction. The student must score at least 70 percent on the firing range qualification and 70 percent on the written exam.

The successful completion of this course will allow the student to apply for a concealed weapons permit from the State of Tennessee. Each student must be at least 21 years of age and provide a handgun, pen, pencil, paper, 50 rounds of ammunition for range instruction, safety glasses and hearing protection.

"Beginning Excel" will be taught by Doug Bloodworth, UT Martin analyst and programmer, from 9 a.m.-noon Sept. 29 and Oct. 31. The fee is $85. Participants will learn to build useful spreadsheets using easy-to-use techniques.

They also will receive instruction about functions, managing files, moving and copying, formatting, sample worksheets, multiple worksheets, graphs, drawing tools for special emphasis, hints, tips and backups. Finally, they will work with the new Excel 2007 and Vista.

"Digital Photography Part I: Camera Operation/Basic Photographic Skills" will be taught by Dr. Tom Gallien from 6:30-9 p.m. on Tuesdays from Sept. 1-22. The fee is $75. This course is designed to make digital photography less intimidating. It will also help participants better understand all the settings and controls on their camera and show them how to make better photographs using the new digital technology.

Proper photographic exposure, composition and use of the camera's histogram will be discussed. Students should take a digital camera and questions to class along with the camera's instruction manual if available. They may also want to take a small notebook for notetaking. Printed and e-mail handouts will supplement the presentations. Even though this course is primarily for novice digital photographers, solutions and ideas for photographers with intermediate skills can also be discussed.

Gallien will utilize e-mail evaluation and critique of images during the course.

This introductory photography course is a springboard for the follow-up intermediate/advanced skills course.

"Making Sense of the ACT" will be offered for students to prepare for the Oct. 24 test 9 a.m.-noon Saturdays from Sept. 12-Oct. 3, with Ron Ramage as the instructor and a fee of $65, plus the book. There is a class limit of 20 students.

This course will help students plan a strategy to make the highest score on the test. The course is designed for first-time test takers as well as seasoned veterans. Students will be using "The Real ACT Prep Guide" and should take the book to the first class meeting. The cost of the text is not included in the registration fee. The book may be purchased on the UT Martin campus at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore.

To register for classes, call the UT Martin Office of ECOS at (731) 881-7082.

Participants may also register online at http://www.utk.edu/departments/ccce/courses_non-degree.php.

Pictured at the ribbon-cutting and grand opening of the University of Tennessee at Martin McTurtle County Center/Selmer (from L-R) are former Selmer Alderman Maurice Hamm, Selmer Mayor David Robinson; 71st District State Rep. Vance Dennis; 26th District State Sen. Dolores Gresham; UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes; Center Director Deidra Beene; University of Tennessee Interim President Jan Simek; McNairy County Mayor Jai Templeton; 82nd District State Rep. Craig Fitzhugh; 73rd District State Rep. Jimmy Eldridge; and Jerry Hartsfiled, principal, TLM Associates, Inc., Jackson.
By RUSSELL INGLE
Staff Writer

Nothing touts a community's commitment to education more than its efforts to properly maintain and, when needed, expand or build the facilities necessary to facilitate quality learning. In the midst of an economic downturn that has many local officials scrambling to recruit or relocate the next "big" employer, providing a top-notch education has and will remain at the top of the agenda.

For local leaders the commitment to education extends well beyond the Pre-K through 12 grade levels. Though McNairy County consistently ranks amongst the state's top school programs, earning an education at the "next" level is just as important. County leaders efforts to provide a higher learning experience came to fruition in 1997 when leaders such as then Selmer Mayor Jimmy Whittington reached an agreement with UT Martin that would result in the university managing a new McNairy County Center of Higher Education. The facility, which was constructed with local funds, opened its doors in the summer of 1998.

Since the facility first opened, approximately 164 students have received their undergraduate degree. Selmer resident Elizabeth Stovall is among the students to receive a degree. Stovall enrolled at the UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer campus in 1999. In 2004, at the ripe young age of 74, she received her bachelor's degree. Successes such as Stovall's have prompted state and local university officials to expand the local facility. Even in a down economy, the need to promote education remains a priority.

In 2003 the campus received the necessary funding to add additional classrooms. Thanks to the efforts of former State Representative Randy Rinks and former Senator John Wilder, a grant totaling $500,000 was awarded to the local facility, which

See SCHOOLS, Page 2A

display. The hallway that joins the new addition to the facility features several paintings by art instructor George Souder. Souder, who teaches art at McNairy Central High School and the UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer Campus, donated the pieces to the center.

Starting this fall, the new classrooms will be open to students. Several of the officials in attendance said they hoped this was the first of many expansion projects for the university. For more information about the center and the courses offered, call 646-1636.

Wax on Wax off
Summer vacation is over and McNairy County students are officially back in class. But before they sharpened a pencil or opened a text book, thousands of man hours were put in by more than 30 custodians and grounds keepers to insure students and faculty alike would return to a clean and ready school.

One of the bigger projects undertaken by custodians was the stripping and re-waxing of all school floors. It may sound like a simple job, but when you take into consideration the size of each school and the fact that each and every desk and piece of furniture had to be removed and put back in place, the job suddenly becomes a major undertaking.

Other jobs included routine cleaning and maintenance, and occasionally the discovery and repair of a major water leak. Regardless of the task though, McNairy County Director of Schools Charlie Miskelly says the schools were ready and waiting for the students when it was time for them to return.

Our exceptional staff goes well beyond just the teachers and administrators," said Miskelly. "The school system has a wonderful staff of employees that takes care of each school and insure they stay in wonderful condition. We could not make it without them."

Additional classrooms
Miskelly said that the current building project at Bethel Springs Elementary is going according to plan. Once the project is complete the school will have six new classrooms, four 3rd grade classes and two Jr. High classes. Miskelly says the expansion should be completed by the end of the first semester.

Bethel Springs Elementary isn't the only school that is going through growing pains. Miskelly says the construction of four new classrooms at Ramer Elementary School will begin in the fall. Miskelly said the additional classrooms will create more room and opportunities for students.

Miskelly said the school board works diligently to insure each school has what it needs to take care of students. He said Michie
The new addition at the UT Martin McNairy/Selmer Campus features new classrooms and an art studio. The adjoining hallway (above) is decorated with paintings donated by local artist and instructor George Souders. In addition to the expansion project at UT Martin, all local schools spent the summer working to upkeep and repair their facilities prior to the students returning to class. Selmer Middle School custodian David Taylor (middle) was one of more that 30 employees that worked to get schools ready.

The Gazette, Trenton, Tennessee

There’s still time to register for UTM fall classes

There is still time to complete the admissions process to enroll for fall classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

The first day of classes is August 31, with fees due August 25. Students may contact the Office of Admissions at UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238, e-mail admissions@utm.edu, or call 731-881-7026 or 1-800-829-UTM1 for more information. Students can apply online at www.utm.edu. Freshmen are encouraged to attend First-Year Initiative, August 27-30. During the week, students will learn their way around the campus, receive information about services, participate in campus activities, meet campus leaders and complete classroom experiences designed to strengthen study habits, sharpen money management and other skills.

UTM to offer social work class at Humboldt Aug. 31-Dec. 11

The University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies will offer a social work class, SW 325/Child Welfare, a three-credit-hour course, this fall at the Humboldt Higher Education Center. Amy Hayes McLean will be the instructor for the class, 6-8:45 p.m., Tuesdays, August 31-December 11.

Students will pay a one-time application fee of $30. Tuition will be $702.

For more information, call ECOS at 731-881-7080 or go to www.utm.edu/ecos.
Medical Billing, Coding class offered at UT Martin McNairy Campus

From STAFF REPORTS

Persons interested in medical billing and coding can take advantage of a course at the University of Tennessee at Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer. Medical Billing and Coding will be offered from 6-9:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, Sept. 29-Dec. 15. There will be no class Oct. 20 and Nov. 27. The cost is $1,499 including books.

Medical billing and coding professionals keep records, calculate patient charges and review files. Duties include: reviewing records; calculating charges for a patient’s procedure and service and preparing itemized statements and submitting claims to third-party payers. Medical coders are responsible for the collection of physician charges and patient data to ensure that claims are submitted to insurance carriers accurately and in the most efficient and expedient manner. Additionally, medical coders determine codes for physician procedures and diagnosis — using ICD-9 (International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision, Clinical Modification) and CPT-4 (Current Procedural Terminology) coding protocols — for third-party billing purposes.

This 70-hour course offers the skills needed to solve insurance billing problems, how to manually file claims (using the CPT and ICD-9 manual), complete common insurance forms, trace delinquent claims (explanation of benefits) and use generic forms (CMS 1500) to streamline billing procedures.

To receive an information packet, call the UT Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies (ECOS) at 731-881-7082. Register online at http://www.utm.edu/departments/cce/courses_nondegree.php

UTM names local students to summer semester Dean’s List

The outstanding academic achievements of undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee at Martin have been honored with publication of the Summer 2009 Dean’s Lists for the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, College of Business and Global Affairs, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, College of Engineering and Natural Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

To be eligible for dean’s list recognition at UT Martin, a student must take at least 12 hours of credit (pass-fail courses are not included) and achieve a 3.2 (B) grade point average based on a 4.0 scale. Students can make the dean’s list with honors (3.2 through 3.49), high honors (3.50 through 3.79) or highest honors (3.80 through 4.0).

Weakley County students achieving dean’s list recognition include:

Dresden - Debra J. Barker with honors, Amy M. Bell with high honors, Joseph E. Crawford with high honors, Sunni C. Jackson with highest honors;
Gleason - Christine E. Henderson with highest honors;
Greenfield - Barbara A. Bridgewater with highest honors, Emily L. Medling with high honors;
Martin - Kayla J. Brockwell with highest honors, Kevin E. Burdette with high honors, Stacy L. Connor with high honors, Dana M. Elliott with high honors, Sarah R. Hunter with highest honors, Lindsey B. Kennedy with highest honors, Brandon H. Pate with highest honors, Jason B. Quick with honors, Karli E. Smith with honors, Regina F. Vanceleave with honors, Mallory K. Williams with highest honors.

Still time to register for fall classes

There is still time to complete the admissions process to enroll for fall classes at the University of Tennessee at Martin. The first day of classes is August 31, with fees due August 25. Students may contact the Office of Admissions at UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238, e-mail admitme@utm.edu, or call 731-881-7020 or 1-800-829-UTM1 for more information. Students can apply online at www.utm.edu.

Freshmen are encouraged to attend First-Year Initiative, August 27-30. During the week, students will learn their way around the campus, receive information about services, participate in campus activities, meet campus leaders and complete classroom experience designed to strengthen study habits, sharpen money management and other skills.
Children, youth will find fun at 16th Annual Tennessee Soybean Festival

A talent show and musical contests, parade, street fair, pet show and carnival, all scheduled with children and youth in mind, are planned during the 16th Annual Tennessee Soybean Festival, September 5-13, in Martin.

The ninth annual Soybean Festival Pageant is slated for September 5 at the University of Tennessee at Martin Student Life Center. The pageant begins at 10 a.m. and will include categories for ages 0 to 19 years. It is sponsored by UT Federal Credit Union. Call 731-587-2507 or 731-587-7333 for more information.

The fifth annual Soybean Festival Talent Contest, with categories for contestants ages 8 and younger, 9-12, 13-21 and 22 and older, will be September 7, on the downtown stage. The junior competition will be at 6 p.m. The competition serves as a Mid-South Fair Preliminary Contest for participants ages 13-21, who compete at 7 p.m., along with those 22 and older. The contest is sponsored by the Westview Key Club and WCMT. Call Linda Ramsey, at 731-587-5549, for more information.

The Tennessee Soybean Festival Parade will begin at 6:30 p.m., September 8, in the parking lot of Graham Stadium at UT Martin. The parade, with entry fee required and prizes awarded, is sponsored by First State Bank. Call Jeff Capps or Regina Vickers, at 731-587-9561, for more information.

Also popular with children and youth is the carnival with food, entertainment and craft vendors beginning at 5 p.m., September 8, downtown, and continuing through Saturday night.

The School Children’s Street Fair will be sponsored by Union City Coca-Cola Bottling Company and Volunteer Community Hospital will sponsor lunch. The event will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., September 11, in downtown Martin. From 9 a.m. until closing, the Friends of the Library Used Book Sale is scheduled at C.E. Weldon Library. Dippin' Dots ice cream will be available for purchase. Roberta Peacock can be reached at 731-587-3148 for more information.

and performers in the park, Wade, 731-587-5893. A bicycle rodeo is planned September 13, with registration at 1:30 p.m. and events at 2 p.m. at the recreation complex. Sponsors are the Martin Optimist Club and the Martin Pilot Club. Call Steve Vantrease, 731-881-7766, for more information.

Course helps teachers communicate

“Spanish for the Classroom,” a course for teachers that covers the essential Spanish they need to know to communicate effectively with Spanish-speaking students and parents, will be offered by the University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies.

This course does not include long vocabulary lists or complex grammar rules. Instead it uses games and stories to make learning easy. Teachers can even earn renewal points for recertification.

The course is part of UT Martin’s growing catalog of more than 300 non-degree, instructor-facilitated online courses. Through well-crafted lessons, expert online instruction, and interaction with fellow students, participants in these courses gain valuable knowledge at their convenience. They have the flexibility to study at their own pace combined with enough structure and support to complete the course. And they can access the classroom 24/7 from anywhere with an Internet connection.

New sessions of each course run every month. They last six weeks, with two new lessons being released weekly (for a total of 12). The courses are entirely Web-based with comprehensive lessons, quizzes, and assignments. An instructor facilitates every course, pacing learners, answering questions, giving feedback and facilitating discussions.

To learn more, visit the online instructor center at www.utm.edu/departments/cece/online-courses.php and select ed2go.
Community residents and elected officials joined University of Tennessee leadership and others today to officially celebrate completion of a UT Martin McNairy County Center/Selmer expansion project.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening celebration drew a large crowd to the facility that was originally constructed in 1997.

The expansion was funded by a one-time $500,000 state appropriation in a joint venture with the city of Selmer and McNairy County and each contributing $60,000.

Dr. Jan Sinek, University of Tennessee interim president, said that the university and all of its parts is a better university today than it’s ever been.

He later added, “This center represents, I think, the very essence of the statewide mission of the University of Tennessee. It brings together all of our strategic priorities, facilitating especially student access and student success. These are the foremost goals of the university today and provide outreach to all Tennesseans. The outreach here will provide expanded educational opportunities for people in this part of the state.”

Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, thanked all who made the center and the recent expansion possible. “And even in tough times, growth is still available,” he said of the center’s expansion.

“It (growth) still happens, and the state finds a way to support what we do.” He added, “The faculty love to be here. They love to be involved with what’s going on here. We have some good full-time folks here as well, and we feel like we’re part of what’s going on in Selmer.”

26th District State Sen. Dolores Gresham said that an important principle has contributed to the center’s success. “Feed them, and they will come,” she said. “There is this hunger for education here, and I appreciate the leadership of the University of Tennessee for acknowledging that hunger.”

82nd District State Rep. Craig Fitzhugh added, “Education is not a quick fix. It is not something that happens overnight, but it is the only fix. You understand it here, and you’ve seen by this center, the success of this center over a 10-year period and now the huge expansion, that people in this city and this county know what education’s all about.”

73rd District State Rep. Jimmy Eldridge noted, “Education is so important in Tennessee. It’s a root. It’s a foundation of the growth of Tennessee.”

Referring to the center expansion, and thanking the University of Tennessee for the expansion, he said, “It’s going to be great for not only McNairy County, but all of West Tennessee …”

Beginning this fall, the 4,330-square-foot expansion will provide four additional classrooms and office space. The center, located at 1269 Tennessee Ave., Selmer, originally opened in 1998 as the first of four UT Martin extended-campus sites.

McNairy County Mayor Jai Templeton also thanked all who made the center possible and noted the cooperation among elected officials.

He also acknowledged the students who take advantage of the center’s opportunities. “… This is a wonderful place for a fresh start and a new beginning, right here in McNairy County, Tennessee, and in Selmer, and I’m grateful to them.”

Along with the area’s work force, he described the center as “the crown
and the Higher Education Committee and said, "I also want to tell you that the reason I come here every day is because people's lives are changed for the better here at this center."

She told of an education graduate from the center who recently was hired as a teacher. "He is now Mr. (Jonathan) Hooper to 90 fifth graders at Bemis Intermediate School. This is why I come to work every day -- to witness successes like the one I just related to you."

In 1997, UT Martin and local officials approved an agreement for the university to manage a new McNairy County Center of Higher Education that was constructed with local funds. UT Martin agreed to certain financial commitments, including funding for a one quarter-time coordinator, some operating funds and university assistance in raising private monies to fund some equipment purchases.

In 2006, a pavilion was constructed with donor funds and student activity fees. In 2007, a $75,000 upgrade to the distance-learning room was completed, and a digital sign was recently funded by a $50,000 Tennessee Department of Transportation grant.

The center is used for county/city government and local industry meetings, McNairy County School System in-service, and local civic and cultural activities.

For more information about the center and the courses offered, contact Beene at dbeene@utm.edu or call 731-646-1636.

Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory
serves veterinarians, producers, residents

The West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, located on the UT Martin campus, is beginning its second year of operation, and the lab's staff will continue its work providing a list of services in support of animal disease diagnosis and regulatory activities.

The facility functions as part of a statewide animal disease network and also serves to further diversify and support the development of the livestock industry in West Tennessee.

Dr. Jason Roberts, a veterinarian who joined UT Martin in January 2009, serves as facilities manager. Roberts, a native of Martin, graduated from UT Martin in 1998 and UT College of Veterinary Medicine in 2002.

He spent seven years in practice in Dresden. Tara Woods is a lab technician. Woods, a 2000 UT Martin graduate, completed the online UT Martin Master of Science in Agricultural Operations Management program in 2008.

"The goal of the diagnostic lab is to serve the veterinarians, producers and people of West Tennessee," said Roberts. "I believe the diagnostic lab can have a real benefit to the people of West Tennessee and encourage them to take advantage of it if they have a need."

A partnership between the Tennessee Department of Agriculture and UT Martin establishing the diagnostic lab was made possible by the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program, established in 2005 by Bredesen and supported by the Tennessee General Assembly.

The goal of the TAEP is to help improve animal health and livestock production and to encourage farm diversification in Tennessee.

The West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory functions as a satellite facility of C.E. Kord Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory operated by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture in Nashville. Another regional laboratory operating independently is located at University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine in Knoxville.

The 2,200 sq. ft. facility provides post-mortem tissue collection services only. Samples are shipped overnight to Kord laboratory, where all definitive diagnoses are made by state veterinary pathologists. Veterinarians, producers and West Tennessee residents may submit animals to the facility for necropsies.

Animals do not have to be referred by a veterinarian. The owner will be strongly advised to list a veterinarian where the pathology report may be sent.

In this way, a valid client-patient relationship will be maintained by the veterinarian and client.

No recommendations for preventative health measures or disease control will be made by the employees of the satellite laboratory, reflecting the policy that the local practitioner that has visited the farm and is familiar with the management practices is best positioned to advise the owner.

There is no charge for necropsy of agricultural animals. State law defines those animals exempt from fees as being raised for food or fiber, and also exempts horses.

On all other animals, the basic-fee structure of C.E. Kord will be followed. There is a fee of $35 for necropsies of companion animals. The fee is $60 if toxicology samples are submitted with the necropsy.

No live animals will be accepted for necropsy, and euthanasia will not be performed on the premises.

Lab hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

An appointment is not required to submit an animal to the lab, but an advance phone call is helpful.

Animals also may be submitted to the lab on weekends; however, necropsies will not be performed until the following Monday.

For more information about the West Tennessee Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, contact Roberts at 731-881-1071.
The UT Martin Skyhawks logo has landed a new home—on a new line of birdhouses. The university has partnered with the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services “From the Heart of Tennessee” program to produce birdhouses featuring the school’s Skyhawks athletics logo.

Proceeds from sales will benefit developmentally delayed adults who are building the birdhouses. “From the Heart of Tennessee” provides an avenue for Tennesseans with mental retardation and developmental disabilities to produce products for sale at Tennessee State Parks and other locations.

Besides birdhouses, program workers also produce greeting cards, doggie treats, photo albums and other products created at adaptive workstations.

“All proceeds benefit the adults who produce these products,” said Gary Smith, program director. “The Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services supports the program but does not benefit financially from sales.”

Smith said that the Skyhawks design joins other birdhouses that feature the UT Lady Vols logo, a tribute to the Lady Vols’ 2008 national championship and Tennessee State Parks.

Other partners in the UT Martin Skyhawks birdhouses include UT Martin’s Barnes and Noble Bookstore and the University of Tennessee Office of Trademark Licensing. The university is waiving the normal licensing fee to support the program.

The Skyhawks birdhouses can be purchased in the UT Martin campus bookstore, located on the second floor of the Boling University Center, or at the store’s utm.bncollege.com Web site. The birdhouses sell for $27.98 each.

“We’re pleased to partner with this wonderful program,” said Sam Covington, bookstore manager.

“UT Martin fans have big hearts, and we hope that Skyhawks birdhouses will be a big hit as we both support these adult workers and our sports teams.”

Area Colleges, Tops: Survey
By: Brad Douglass
bdouglass@wbbjtv.com
8:50 p.m.

Several West Tennessee universities and colleges have been named as some of the nation’s top schools by U.S. News and World Report. The schools are being noted for their education programs, affordability and leaving students with the least debt.

Here in the south for the best master’s programs, overall Union University was named in the south’s top tier for the 13th straight year, moving up four places to 16th.

Freed-Hardeman University moved up one spot to 38 and the University of Tennessee-Martin is ranked 56th. Freed-Hardeman University was also ranked 15th in the south among the Great Schools, Great Prices listing. Among liberal arts college, Lane College is tops for the least amount of student debt, with an average of just over $8,400.
College officials proud of rankings

By TRISTAN MCKELVY
contactus@jacksonsun.com

West Tennessee college officials expressed pride Thursday for their recognition in the annual U.S. News and World Report rankings, which were released Wednesday.

Union University, Freed-Hardeman University and the University of Tennessee Martin ranked in the top half of more than 100 Southern universities considered the best for a full range of undergraduate and master’s programs, according to the U.S. News and World Report Web site.

Bethel University ranked in the fourth tier of those schools.

Lane College and Lambuth University are ranked among the fourth tier of about 250 schools in the category of Best Liberal Arts Colleges.

The University is in the top tier of Southern Universities-Master’s for the 13th straight year, according to a Union news release. The university moved up four places to rank 16th, the highest it’s ever ranked.

Union also was ranked second in the Southern Universities-Master’s category for schools “where the faculty has an unusual commitment to undergraduate teaching,” and fourth in the list of up-and-coming schools.

For the second straight year, Union was selected as one of 21 “A+ Options for B Students,” in its category. This classification highlights schools where “serious B students with a desire to achieve” have excelled, the release said.

Union also ranked third in its category for freshman retention rates, with a mark of 86.2 percent.

Union's President David Dockery said, “The numerous ways in which Union is recognized in the 2010 rankings point to markers of excellence across the Union University community and help communicate to others the extraordinary quality of our faculty, staff and students.”

Freed-Hardeman moved up one spot to the 38th spot among Southern Universities-Master’s. It has been among the top schools in its category for the past 10 years, according to a news release.

FHU also is one of two universities in Tennessee, along with Lee University, to receive the “Great School, Great Price” distinction. FHU has received the “great price” recognition since 2006.

In the release, FHU President Joe Wiley said, “I believe Freed-Hardeman University will continue to move in the ranking as we continue to grow and become the technological leader among schools in Tennessee and in the South. This is a tribute to the hard work our faculty and staff have done in the last year to make our university more healthy.”

UT Martin in this year’s rankings showed improvement in its graduation rates, average SAT/ACT scores and the number of freshmen who were in the top 25 percent of their high school class, according to a news release. The student enrollment for fall 2009 is a total of 6,385, an 8.2 percent increase, the release said.

“We’re delighted to once again be in the top tier for Southern master’s institutions,” UT Martin Chancellor Tom Rakes said.

Dan Ashton, provost at Lambuth University, stated in a news release, “The Lambuth faculty and staff truly believe in the importance and significance of a liberal arts education. We are honored to be ranked within the Best Colleges and Schools, and we continuously strive to improve the services we provide our students. The exemplary education we provide allows our students to be successful no matter what endeavor they pursue.”

Officials at Lane and Bethel could not be reached for comment Thursday.

But an earlier Lane news release noted that the college's tuition has remained among the lowest for colleges and universities in Tennessee for the 11th year. Lane was listed in the U.S. News and World Report rankings as one of the liberal arts schools where graduates have the least debt.

Lane also has been recognized by Consumer's Digest as the No. 3 “Best Value” private college or university in America, according to the release.
Course helps teachers communicate effectively in Spanish

Spanish for the Classroom,” a course for teachers that covers the essential Spanish they need to know, to communicate effectively with Spanish-speaking students and parents, will be offered by the University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies.

This course does not include long vocabulary lists or complex grammar rules. Instead it uses games and stories to make learning easy. Teachers can even earn renewal points for recertification.

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And they can access the classroom 24/7 from anywhere with an Internet connection. New sessions of each course run every month. They last six weeks, with two new lessons being released weekly (for a total of 12).

The courses are entirely Web-based with comprehensive lessons, quizzes, and assignments. An instructor facilitates every course, pacing learners, answering questions, giving feedback and facilitating discussions.

To learn more, visit the online instructor center at www.utm.edu/departments/cece/onlinecourses.php and select ed2go.

Holt, Hacker claim award in digital media tournament

University of Tennessee at Martin director of the Instructional Technology Center and Web Services Steve Holt and Tim Hacker, UT Martin instructor of English, recently won the faculty service-learning category of a regional digital media tournament.

In the spring, UT Martin joined universities across the state and around the southeast in the Digital Media Sandbox Consortium Governor’s Challenge Academic Media Tournament.

Participating institutions included campuses all across Tennessee, as well as campuses from Georgia, Texas, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky and Washington.

Faculty and students from all campuses competed in six categories (faculty course concepts, faculty service-learning, student course concepts, student service-learning).

UT Martin selected campus winners in three of the six categories to advance to the regional competition, where Holt and Hacker’s entry in the tournament was selected as the winner in the faculty service-learning category.

Digital media files in all categories were judged by a collection of judges from all over the world, who were identified and selected by using social media tools such as Facebook and Google Docs.

The Digital Media Sandbox Consortium Governor’s Challenge Academic Media Tournament files were hosted this year by East Tennessee State University on its iTunesU site.

“I hope to generate more interest in participation from our students and faculty in the next tournament, which is being rolled out this fall,” said Holt.

The Digital Media Sandbox Consortium Web site can be found at www.tnsandbox.com. ETSU’s iTunes Web site, which contains the entries for the spring 2009 tournament, can be found at www.etsu.edu/itunes.

Soybean Festival to be held in Martin

A talent show and musical contests, parade, street fair, pet show and carnival, all scheduled with children and youth in mind, are planned during the 16th annual Tennessee Soybean Festival, Sept. 5-13, in Martin.

The fifth annual Miss Soybean Festival Pageant is slated for Sept. 5 at the University of Tennessee Martin Student Life Center. The pageant begins at 10 a.m. and will include categories for babies to 19 years. It is sponsored by UT Federal Credit Union. Call (731) 588-2507 or (731) 587-7333.

The fifth annual Soybean Festival Talent Contest, with categories for contestants ages 8 and younger, 9-12, 13-21, and 22 and older, will be Sept. 7 on the downtown stage. The junior competition is at 6 p.m. The competition serves as a Mid-South Fair Preliminary Contest for participants ages 13-21, who will compete at 7 p.m., along with those 22 and older. The contest is sponsored by the Westview Key Club and WCMT. Call Linda Ramsey at (731) 587-6549.

Saturday, August 22, 2009
SKYHAWKS HELP — The University of Tennessee at Martin Skyhawks logo is being featured on birdhouses built by developmentally delayed adults as part of the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services “From the Heart of Tennessee” program. Proceeds from sales benefit the adults who build the birdhouses. Showing the new birdhouses are Dr. Tom Rakes (left), UT Martin chancellor, and Gary Smith, “From the Heart of Tennessee” program director. The birdhouses can be purchased at the university’s Barnes and Noble Bookstore or online at utm.bncollege.com.

Skyhawks birdhouse sales to benefit adult workers

The University of Tennessee at Martin Skyhawks logo has landed a new home — on a new line of birdhouses.

The university has partnered with the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services’ “From the Heart of Tennessee” program to produce birdhouses featuring the school’s Skyhawks athletics logo. Proceeds from sales will benefit developmentally delayed adults who are building the birdhouses.

“From the Heart of Tennessee” provides an avenue for Tennesseans with mental retardation and developmental disabilities to produce products for sale at Tennessee State Parks and other locations. Besides birdhouses, program workers also produce greeting cards, doggie treats, photo albums and other products created at adaptive workstations.

“All proceeds benefit the adults who produce these products,” said Gary Smith, program director. “The Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services supports the program but does not benefit financially from sales.”

Smith said the Skyhawks design joins other birdhouses that feature the UT Lady Vols logo, a tribute to the Lady Vols’ 2008 national championship and Tennessee State Parks. Other partners in the UT Martin Skyhawks birdhouses include UT Martin’s Barnes and Noble Bookstore and the University of Tennessee Office of Trademark Licensing. The university is waiving the normal licensing fee to support the program.

The Skyhawks birdhouses can be purchased in the UT Martin campus book store, located on the second floor of Boling University Center, or at the store’s Web site at utm.bncollege.com. The birdhouses sell for $27.98 each.

“We’re pleased to partner with this wonderful program,” said Sam Covington, book store manager. “UT Martin fans have big hearts, and we hope that Skyhawks birdhouses will be a big hit as we both support these adult workers and our sports teams.”

UT Martin names local students to summer semester dean’s list

MARTIN — The outstanding academic achievements of undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee at Martin have been honored with publication of the Summer 2009 Dean’s Lists for the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, College of Business and Global Affairs, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, College of Engineering and Natural Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

To be eligible for dean’s list recognition at UT Martin, a student must take at least 12 hours of credit (pass-fail courses are not included) and achieve a 3.2 (B) grade point average based on a 4.0 scale. Students can make the dean’s list with honors (3.2 through 3.49), high honors (3.5 through 3.79) or highest honors (3.8 through 4.0).

Local students earning a spot on the dean’s list include: Caroline E. Harber, of Medina, Highest Honors; and Natasha M. Davidson and Courtney N. Sullivan, of Milan, both with Highest Honors.

Classroom Spanish offered to teachers

“Spanish for the Classroom,” a course for teachers that covers the essential Spanish they need to know to communicate effectively with Spanish-speaking students and parents, will be offered by the University of Tennessee at Martin Office of Extended Campus and Online Studies.

This course does not include long vocabulary lists or complex grammar rules. Instead, it uses games and stories to make learning easy. Teachers can earn renewal points for recertification.

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To learn more, visit the online instructor center at www.utm.edu/departments/ece/online-courses.php and select ed2go.
UT officials say ‘perception issue’ clouds view

PIKEVILLE (AP) — University of Tennessee officials say the system is about more than Knoxville.

At a workshop Tuesday at Fall Creek Falls State Park, UT Board Vice Chairman Jim Murphy said there’s what he called a “perception issue” that the university system is Knoxville-driven, but it is no longer true.

The Knoxville News Sentinel reported interim university President Jan Simek said moving the administrative offices off the Knoxville campus might help make the distinction.

The UT system includes the medical school in Memphis, UT-Chattanooga and UT-Martin as well as the Knoxville campus.

It also encompasses the Space Institute in Tullahoma, the Institute of Public Service and the Institute of Agriculture.

Simek said he didn’t expect immediate decisions, but wanted to stimulate thought.


Soybean Festival gears up for 16th year

Little Texas and Sister Hazel will headline the 16th Annual Tennessee Soybean Festival, Sept. 5-13, in Martin, Tenn. A mix of free musical entertainment, along with a car and bike show, pageants, talent contest, parade, barbecue cookoff and educational programs, also highlight this year’s event. The theme is “The Crossroads of Good Livin’.”

“This is our 16th year to promote agriculture and community through the Tennessee Soybean Festival,” said David Belote, festival chairman. He added that the festival continues to be a week packed with events to interest people of all ages throughout Martin and the region. “We try to offer the best possible entertainment while striving to provide a program of events that is diverse and exciting.”

“The Tennessee Soybean Festival has grown to be one of the premier festivals in the state,” said Randy Brundige, Martin mayor. “I am proud of what this community has done and the way it comes together during the event.”

The 2009 festival will include “The Return, A Beatles Tribute” concert as the Tuesday night feature during festival week; the fifth annual Faith and Community Night, sponsored by the Martin Ministerial Alliance, with The Lesters concert and Dennis Swanberg, “America’s Minister of Encouragement,” as the Wednesday night entertainment; and Sister Hazel performing Thursday night. On Friday, Main Line, Peacemakers and Second Helping, a Lynyrd Skynyrd tribute band, are slated to perform. Saturday night concerts begin with Margarita Beach and 7 Bridges, an Eagles Tribute band, and end with Little Texas. All concerts are free.

Little Texas hits include the No. 1 single, “My Love,” as well as hits such as, “Some Guys Have All the Love, You and Forever and Me,” “What Were You Thinkin’,” and “I’d Rather Miss You.” Sister Hazel had hits with “All For You,” “Champagne High” and “Change Your Mind.”

Traditional festival events will include the Mayor’s Kickoff Luncheon, sponsored by Leland-Powell Fasteners, Inc.; First State Bank-sponsored Soybean Festival Parade; the Soybean Farmer’s Breakfast, sponsored by Farm Credit Services, Weakley County Farm Bureau, Weakley Farmers Co-op and Tennessee Soybean Promotion Council, Vincent, Inc., and TN Tractor; Union City Coca-Cola Bottling Co.-sponsored School Children’s Street Fair with Volunteer Community Hospital hosting lunch for the children. Also included in the lineup are the “Singing Bee” live game show, sponsored by Thunderbolt Broadcasting Co.; Soybean Idol, sponsored by WENK; WPSD-TV “What’s It Worth,” sponsored by C.E. Weldon Public Library; Rotary Club golf tournament; Kiwanis/Kenton Sports/Sideline Physical Therapy & Fitness 5K run; Lions Club Health Fair/Street Fair; Optimist Club/Pilot Club bicycle rodeo, the 13th annual car and bike show, sponsored by MTD Products Inc.; and the 16th annual barbecue cookoff, sponsored by Tyson Foods.

Among other activities planned are senior adult events, an art exhibit and competition, talent show, pageants, quilt show, pet show, prayer breakfast and more.

Complete festival information is posted on the Web at www.tnsoybeanfestival.org. For more information, call Kimberly Craddock, at 731-588-2507, or email med@martin.tnstate.org.

Free business consultation available

The next opportunity to get one-on-one business consulting with Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant, will be at the University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REED) Center, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sept. 2. He will be available to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners with advice on a business plan, financing options, marketing, customer service, cash flow and other issues.

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 731-587-REED (7333). The REED Center is located at 406 Lindell St., Martin, TN 38237.

For additional services offered by the REED Center, go to www.utmc.edu/reed.
UTM Skyhawks birdhouses for sale

The UT Martin Skyhawks logo has landed a new home – on a new line of birdhouses. The university has partnered with the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services “From the Heart of Tennessee” program to produce birdhouses featuring the school’s Skyhawks athletics logo. Proceeds from sales will benefit developmentally delayed adults who are building the birdhouses.

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A carnival with food, entertainment and craft vendors begins at 5 p.m. Sept. 8 downtown.

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Activities for all ages are featured at this year’s festival. For more information, visit tnsoybeangestival.org or call (731) 588-2507.

West Tenn. Writing Project offers class

The West Tennessee Writing Project offers an open workshop on Sept. 12 for all grades and all subjects on the campus of University of Tennessee Martin. The title of the workshop is “Control+Shift: Cross-Curricular Writing with Technology,” and it will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. with lunch included in the registration cost. For more information on this workshop or other WFPP programs, visit the Web site, www.utm.edu/wfpp, email project director David Carrithers at dcarithers@utm.edu or call (731) 881-7290.
UT Martin Skyhawks birdhouse sales to benefit adult workers

The UT Martin Skyhawks logo is being featured on birdhouses built by developmentally delayed adults as part of the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services “From the Heart of Tennessee” program. Proceeds from the sales benefit the adults who build the birdhouses. Showing the new birdhouses are (left) Dr. Tom Rakes, UT Martin chancellor, and Gary Smith, “From the Heart of Tennessee” program director. The birdhouses can be purchased at the university’s Barnes and Noble Bookstore or online at utm.bncollege.com.

The UT Martin Skyhawks logo has landed a new home on a new line of birdhouses. The university has partnered with the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services “From the Heart of Tennessee” program to produce birdhouses featuring the school’s Skyhawks athletics logo. Proceeds from sales will benefit developmentally delayed adults who are building the birdhouses.

“From the Heart of Tennessee” provides an avenue for Tennesseans with mental retardation and developmental disabilities to produce products for sale at Tennessee State Parks and other locations. Besides birdhouses, program workers also produce greeting cards, doggie treats, photo albums and other products created at adaptive workstations.

“All proceeds benefit the adults who produce these products,” said Gary Smith, program director. “The Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services supports the program but does not benefit financially from sales.”

REED Center makes it easy to get business advice you need, September 2

Take advantage of the next opportunity to get one-on-one business consulting with Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant. Acree will be at the University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REED) Center, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., September 2. He will be available to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners with advice on a business plan, financing options, marketing, customer service, cash flow and other issues.

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. Ap- pointments may be made by contacting the REED Center at 731-587-REED (7333). The REED Center is located at 406 Lindell Street, Martin. For additional services offered by the REED Center, go to www.utm.edu/reed.
Students make Martin weather data available on Web, iPhone

Weather. It’s probably the most common conversation topic. Regardless of your political philosophy, knowledge of world events, thoughts on food or fashion, you likely have something to contribute when someone mentions “the weather.”

Three University of Tennessee at Martin engineering students have made a conversation about the weather even easier. But that’s just the start. More importantly, they’ve made current local (Martin) weather conditions data available for safety, research, planning and even forecasting—all at the click of a mouse. Previously, weather conditions information reflected online and via the media was derived from weather stations in Jackson, Dyersburg or Paducah.

Kramer Nance, of Martin; Brian Mink, of Memphis; and Luis Herrera, Hendersonville; designed and constructed a wireless weather data collection station and placed it atop the Johnson EPS Building on campus as their capstone design project.

As part of graduation requirements at ABET (Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology)-accredited colleges and universities, students must complete a capstone design project. At UT Martin, that requirement is fulfilled in a yearlong sequence of courses that culminates in the demonstration of the project in the spring.

The trio’s project, which received William and Roberta Blankenship College of Engineering and Natural Sciences Research Endowment funding, really is just the beginning. Future students can choose to expand on their work and add forecasting and other functions to the wireless data collection functions of the current station.

The weather station’s unassuming appearance belies its durability, collection capabilities and the value of the data that is constantly uploaded and available at www.utm.edu/staff/knance or via a mobile application, e.g. iPhone or iPodTouch, with a user-friendly interface.

“It’s constantly collecting data and archiving data that can be used by anyone interested,” said Nance. As examples of the varied data use, he explained that UT Martin Department of Safety and Security can monitor threatening local weather conditions. Professors can use it in ongoing research, and middle and high school students can incorporate it into science projects. Since it’s available on the Internet, applications are as endless as the data collected.

His responsibility was to design the wireless network and the user interface for both the Web and mobile applications. Herrera was responsible for the microprocessor design and Mink, the hardware station design that included the sensors and fabrication.

The group, mentored by Dr. Somsak Sukittanond, UT Martin assistant professor of engineering, and Lee Bennett, Department of Engineering technician, spent the first several months of the project researching the technology and what it would take to design and construct the station. They studied sensors and specifications and protocols they would have to meet to develop an industrial-type weather station.

“It can be put anywhere. It works off a mesh network so you can add other stations. It will automatically pick them up and fit them into the network and send data wirelessly back into this building (EPS).”

The station uploads the data to a database on the Web, and then anyone can access the data through the Web site. It can be graphed, downloaded and imported into an Excel file. “It can also be accessed through mobile apps with an iPhone. That’s what’s supposed to be unique about it,” said Nance. And, it’s the only weather station in the local area. “That was the motivation for doing this — to see actual data from Martin. There was a use for this project.”

“We would like to thank the sponsors for the financial support in this research. It is an exciting and rewarding experience for the students to design, build and test the device that can benefit many people in Martin,” said Dr. Sukittanond.

“This can be the foundation for future projects,” said Bennett. “Other students can add more features like weather prediction.”
ASABE student mechanization branch at UT Martin

An American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers student mechanization branch has been founded at the University of Tennessee at Martin and recently was approved by the ASABE Membership Development Council.

The branch designation was spearheaded by Dr. Tim Burcham, chairholder, Gil Parker Chair of Excellence in Agriculture and Natural Resources and professor of agricultural engineering, and Richard Shadden, professor of agricultural engineering.

"The UT Martin Agricultural Mechanization Branch of the ASABE will allow student members to gain valuable professional development skills, while enjoying the many sanctioned ASABE Student Club events," said Burcham.

"The 1/4-scale tractor pulling contest is just one of many fun and educational opportunities afforded to student branch clubs of the ASABE. Our students look forward to networking with young professionals from the United States and around the world." "Having this student chapter of the ASABE on our campus will provide a means for students at UT Martin to better connect with other students with similar interests, not only on our campus but even with those throughout our nation and the world," said Shadden.

"Membership in a student branch of a professional society gives graduates a jump start in their profession. This chapter will give our students the same advantage to develop professionally as is provided at any major college campus which has a student branch. I look forward to working with our students in helping them promote and develop this new student chapter of ASABE."

ASABE student branches promote professional relationships for engineering students. Activities that familiarize students with engineering interests and developments provide a basis for professional aspirations and for transition from academic to professional careers.

This new branch joins over 50 universities across North America, Puerto Rico, Ghana, Mexico and Nigeria that have previously established student branches.

For more information, contact Burcham, at 731-881-7275, or Shadden, at 731-881-7264.

UT Martin remains in top tier of U.S. News rankings; enrollment increase expected

The University of Tennessee at Martin continued its top-tier ranking for master's level public universities in the South in the 2010 edition of America's Best Colleges compiled by U.S. News & World Report. The rankings, released this week, rate colleges and universities using information gathered from various sources.

In the 2010 rankings, UT Martin improved its graduation rates, average SAT/ACT scores and number of freshmen in the top 25 percent of their high school class.

UT Martin tied for 56th place among public universities in the South that grant bachelor's and master's degrees.

Colleges are ranked against their peers using information submitted in a survey completed by the institutions and other sources. Categories used to determine the rankings and to measure academic quality include peer assessment, retention, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources and the alumni giving rate.

UT Martin recently was named one of the best colleges and universities in the Southeast, according to The Princeton Review for 2010.

The New York City-based education services company selected the school as one of 141 institutions it recommends in its "Best in the Southeast" section on its Web site feature, "2010 Best Colleges: Region by Region." So far, students enrolled for fall classes total 6,355 compared to 5,873, an 8.2 percent increase, for the same point in fall 2008. A record 7,578 students enrolled for fall 2008 classes.

Registration for fall semesters continues with classes set to begin Aug. 31. Information about UT Martin is available by calling 1-800-829-UTM1.

Small business consultant offers services

Ron Acree, Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) consultant, will be at the University of Tennessee at Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (REED) Center from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday.

He will be available to help aspiring entrepreneurs and existing business owners with advice on a business plan, financing options, marketing, customer service, cash flow and other issues.
Soybean Festival has full schedule of events

Little Texas and Sister Hazel will headline the 16th Annual Tennessee Soybean Festival Sept. 5-13 in Martin. A mix of free musical entertainment, along with a car and bike show, pageants, talent contest, parade, barbecue cook off and educational programs, also highlight this year’s event. The theme is “The Crossroads of Good Livin’.”

The 2009 festival will include “The Return, A Beatles Tribute” concert as the Tuesday night feature during festival week; the fifth annual Faith and Community Night, with The Lesters concert and Dennis Swanberg, “America’s Minister of Encouragement,” as the Wednesday night entertainment; and Sister Hazel performing Thursday night. On Friday, Main Line, Peacemakers and Second Helping, a Lynyrd Skynyrd tribute band, are slated to perform. Saturday night concerts begin with Margarita Beach and 7 Bridges, an Eagles Tribute band, and end with Little Texas. All concerts are free.

Traditional festival events will include the Mayor’s Kickoff Luncheon, the Soybean Festival Parade; the Soybean Farmer’s Breakfast; School Children’s Street Fair with Volunteer Community Hospital hosting lunch for the children. Also included in the lineup are the “Singing Bee” live game show, Soybean Idol, WPSD-TV “What’s It Worth,” Rotary Club golf tournament, 5K run, Lions Club Health Fair/Street Fair; Optimist Club/Pilot Club bicycle rodeo; the 13th annual car and bike show and the 16th annual barbecue cook off. Among other activities planned are senior adult events, an art exhibit and competition, talent show, pageants, quilt show, pet show and prayer breakfast.

The Miss Soybean Festival Pageant is slated for Sept. 5 at the University of Tennessee at Martin Student Life Center. The pageant begins at 10 a.m. and will include categories for ages birth to 19 years. Call (731) 588-2507 or (731) 587-7333 for more information.

The Soybean Festival Talent Contest, with categories for contestants ages 8 and younger, 9-12, 13-21 and 22 and older, will be Sept. 7, on the downtown stage. The junior competition will be at 6 p.m. The Soybean Festival Parade will begin at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 8 in the parking lot of Graham Stadium at UT Martin. The parade require an entry fee. Prizes will be awarded. Call Jeff Capps or Regina Vickers at (731) 587-9561 for more information.

The Tennessee Soybean Festival Parade will begin at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 8 in the parking lot of Graham Stadium at UT Martin. The parade require an entry fee. Prizes will be awarded. Call Jeff Capps or Regina Vickers at (731) 587-9561 for more information.

The carnival, with food, entertainment and craft vendors, will begin downtown at 5 p.m. Sept. 8 and continue through Saturday night.

The School Children’s Street Fair will take place from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sept. 11 in downtown Martin. From 9 a.m. until closing, the Friends of the Library Used Book Sale is scheduled at C.E. Weldon Library. Dippin’ Dots ice cream will be available for purchase. Roberta Peacock can be reached at (731) 587-3148 for more information.

The Soybean Idol contest will have Saturday auditions and culminate with the final competition/performance Sept. 8 on the downtown stage. The winner will perform on stage at 8:30 p.m., prior to the Little Texas concert, Sept. 12. Call 885-1240 for more information.

Children and youth can participate in “The Singing Bee” live game show program at 7 p.m. Sept. 11 at Weldon Park. Call (731) 587-9526 for more information.

The Soybean Festival 5K Road Race/1 Mile Fun Walk will begin at 7:30 a.m., at the Martin Recreation Complex in the softball parking lot. Call Jim Scott at (731) 587-9572 for more information.

A pet show, with registration at 3 p.m., begins at 4 at Weldon Park. Call Sarah Baringer or Amy Mitchell at (731) 587-5319 for more information.

A bicycle rodeo is planned for Sept. 13, with registration at 1:30 p.m. and events at 2, at the recreation complex. Call Steve Vantrease at (731) 881-7766 for more information.

For complete festival information visit www.msoybeanfestivals.org.

For more information, call Kimberly Craddock, at (731) 588-2507 or e-mail mcd@martintennessee.org.
Economy Spikes Financial Aid Need

Reported by: Jennifer Horbelt
Email: jhorbelt@wpsdlocal6.com
Last Update: 7:46 am

MARTIN, TN- Paying for a college education isn't nearly as easy as it used to be.

Colleges in our region are reporting a big increase in the amount of Free Applications for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA's. The economy plays a big part in the spike.

"I was so afraid I wasn't going to be able to come up here," UTM Freshman Marah Vogt said.

It was a relief, says Vogt, to lift and strain to move into her college dorm room Thursday at UTM. Just weeks ago her mom, Angela Hallmark, felt real fear that taking her first-born to college wouldn't happen.

"To the point I quit talking about her going to college because I wasn't sure that she would be here," Hallmark said.

"The economy has really affected a lot of students ability to pay for college education," UTM Financial Aid Director Sandra Neel said, adding that Vogt's situation isn't unique. "Phone calls have just gone out the roof.

"Their parents not having the money that they originally thought they were gonna' have."

Vogt's step-father lost his job in January. Then a few weeks ago, even worse news about her mom's job.

"Our entire company is in jeopardy. The next month, month and a half will determine whether or not we have jobs," Hallmark said.

Neel says Vogt and other students have been visiting Neel's office for help at the last minute, after being accepted for financial aid based on last year's income but facing job loss this year.

"At least 10 to 15 a day with that situation coming in to sit down and see somebody," Neel said.
Last year, UTM processed 16,158 FAFSA's. Since January of this year, they've already processed 18,215 FAFSA's.

Vogt was able to get two more scholarships after meeting with Neel.

"Very big relief. Coming out of that office was just..." Vogt finished the phrase with a sigh.

Vogt's college dream is coming true and her mom says so can others facing financial hardship due to the economy.

UTM isn't the only school seeing an increase in FAFSA applications. Murray State University reports filing 10,292 FAFSA's in 16-months last year. Already this year, they've filed 9,663 FAFSA's.

Many college campuses have emergency funds available to students, including MSU. They've got the Racer Advantage Grant which is used as one of the last funding efforts for students.

UTM says they also have emergency funding available for students. The Bailey Loan Scholarship Endowment Fund is available. Students may get more information and/or apply as the need arises by contacting the Office of Development or the Office of Student Financial Assistance. Money is awarded annually until the income is depleted. Those receiving the assistance are asked to give back to the fund after they graduate to help other students who experience emergencies. The Carol Dean Memorial Endowment is another emergency fund for students. Students may get more information and/or apply as the need arises by contacting the Office of Business Affairs.

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A year of living dangerously takes a toll on undercover Memphis officer
She 'was always on edge' in her role as a junkie
By Kristina Goetz (Contact), Memphis Commercial Appeal
Sunday, August 30, 2009

April Leatherwood no longer goes by the name Summer Smith.

Summer's brown, greasy hair has been cut and bleached, highlighted to April's honey blond. Summer's glasses have been removed to reveal April's 20/20 vision.

And Summer's feet -- once covered by the same filthy pair of socks for an entire year -- now slide into April's black flip-flops with a fresh pedicure and red toenail polish.

The physical transformation is complete -- a signal that one life is over and another can resume.

Leatherwood always wanted to be a police officer, to wear the crisp, blue uniform, the shiny, gold badge. After graduating from the police academy in December 2005, she worked as a patrol officer and then in the organized-crime unit, catching thieves and busting violent felons. She loved the camaraderie of the department and its protect-and-serve mission.

Then the rumors started in fall 2008. April was unhappy. Police work left her unfulfilled. She quit. Somebody said she moved to Miami. She stopped returning phone calls from family and friends, even recruits she was closest to in the academy. Nobody was sure what happened to her.

In fact, Leatherwood, the once-proud police officer, was living as Summer Smith, the junkie.

Only April's parents and her former partner knew it was an elaborate ruse: that she had been chosen by Memphis Police Department's undercover operations unit to give up her badge and uniform and go deep undercover.
Undercover work is not for everybody, even the most dedicated officers, Leatherwood said.

In early August, she pulled herself out of the program. She felt depressed and numb. She could feel herself slipping away.

Her departure from the program is one reason police officials allowed her to speak openly about her experience.

"We want to let the public know and the individuals she was responsible for arresting to know that she is a Memphis police officer and not an informant," Sherman said. "These individuals look at informants totally differently than a police officer. We protect informants, but sometimes they don't take heed to the warnings to get out of town.

"But she will be protected at all costs."

Leatherwood's work came at a cost. She lost a three-year relationship, and it changed the way she thinks about the world.

"Would I do it all over again? Yeah. Because it taught me a lot about me, a lot about life. I live by 'everything happens for a reason,'" she said.

The day after Leatherwood left the undercover program, she drove down a stretch of Summer Avenue, a drug dealers' haven and a place she spent so much time during her undercover days, to run an errand. The weather was nice, and small groups of people were hanging out on the street. Drug dealers, prostitutes, addicts.

Suddenly, Leatherwood was elated when she realized she was no longer one of them.

It felt good to be known by her real name again, as the 30-year-old woman who graduated from Germantown High School, who played four years of softball and earned a marketing degree from the University of Tennessee-Martin.

April Leatherwood.

Det. April Leatherwood of the Memphis Police Department.

-- Kristina Goetz: 529-2390