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Calendar of Events

Musical: "The Addams Family"

April 27 -29 (7:30 p.m.)
Sunday, April 30 (2:30 p.m.)
Robert E. Johnson Theatre

"The Addams Family" musical is a first-time Murray State musical hosted and performed by students in the music department.

Student Resource Day
Thursday, April 27 (5-6:30 p.m.)
CFSB Center Upper Level

OMI will host a day for students to learn about on- and off-campus resources.

Political Science and Sociology: Year-end celebration
Wednesday, May 3 (5:30 p.m.)
Curris Center Small Ballroom

The Department of Political Science and Sociology is hosting a celebration to highlight their graduates and the end of the year.

'Notations' Reading
Thursday, May 4 (7 p.m.)
Faculty Hall Room 208

Contributors to the creative literary magazine "Notations" will read their submitted works of fiction, poetry and nonfiction.

Murray State News Open House
Wednesday, May 10 (noon - 2 p.m.)
Wilson Hall Room 111

The Murray State News hosts an open house to celebrate their graduating seniors and welcome their incoming staff.

Racer Graduation Kick Off
Friday, May 12 (3 p.m. & 5 p.m.)
CFSB Center

Graduates and their families can celebrate commencement by taking photos with their friends, academic banners and Dunker.

Commencement
Saturday, May 13 (9 a.m. & 1 p.m.)
CFSB Center

Spring and summer 2023 graduates will receive their diplomas concluding their studies at Murray State.

Source: murraystate.edu/calendar



Budget reveals major reallocations
Photo courtesy of Jeremy McKeel

President Bob Jackson (center) and other University leaders address the 2023-24 fiscal year budget at the Budget Town Hall on Tuesday, April 25.

Admin talks COLA, tuition increase

Jill Smith
Assistant News Editor
jsmith194@murraystate.edu

The 2023-24 University budget proposes increasing tuition by 2.9%, a cost of living adjustment (COLA) of 3.3% and 5.5% and raising the minimum wage for student workers on campus from \$7.25 an hour to \$8.00 an hour.

President Bob Jackson and University leaders addressed the 2023-24 fiscal year budget at the Budget Town Hall meeting on Tuesday, April 25.

The change in COLA is determined by an employee's position and years spent at the University. This will be the largest COLA increase in 23 years.

There is also a proposed 3% increase in housing and 6% increase in dining.

President Bob Jackson said 72% of the University budget is enrollment driven, while 75% is people driven. This means 75% of the budget is determined by faculty and staff salaries, benefits and other related areas.

Jackson said \$5 million has been set aside to help cover reallocation, more specifically COLA increases and benefit increases.

There will also be an increase in pension costs because of the recent passage of House Bill 5.

"For the next four years, we will have an approximately \$341,000 increase in our pension costs that we have to budget for each year too," Jackson said.

Jackson said there will be a continued focus on access and affordability, which will be reflected in the budget.

"We added a mental health professional...that position will be made permanent as we move forward."

—Bob Jackson, Murray State President

We added a mental health counselor last year on a one-year contract," Jackson said. "That position will be made permanent as we move forward. There's a number of student campus life initiatives that we'll talk about, including esports you see mentioned, as well as future health services, athletic enhancements and needs."

see **BUDGET TOWN HALL**, page 3

Freedom Rider shares experience with students

Drayton Charlton-Perrin
Contributing Writer
dcharltonperrin@murraystate.edu

The youngest Freedom Rider in U.S. history spoke about his journey from death row at 13 years old to civil rights activist at the Wrather West Kentucky Museum on Thursday, April 20.

The Freedom Riders were civil rights activists in the 1960s who challenged segregation by riding interstate buses in interracial groups all over the southern United States.

Hezekiah Watkins, 75, was arrested 109 times during his years as a Freedom Rider—more than any other Freedom Rider.

"I'm proud to have been a Freedom Rider, and it's time for me to pass the torch."

—Hezekiah Watkins, Freedom Rider



Hezekiah Watkins talks to students about his experience as the youngest Freedom Rider during the 1960s.
Dionte Berry/The News

I'm thinking it's a continuation of a movie segment, but it was news that was happening."

Watkins said he became curious about the Freedom Riders, so he asked his mom who they were.

His mom told him never to use the word "Freedom Rider" again.

Watkins instead asked his science teacher, who he thought would be honest about the Freedom Riders.

"He looked me dead in my eye," Watkins said. "Get the h*** out of here, boy." He said, "You must want me to lose my job."

Watkins said his friend told him the Freedom Riders were coming to Jackson, Mississippi, where the two lived. They then started to think of a plan to sneak out and see them.

Attempting to trick his mother, Watkins decided to fake an illness and sneak out of the house with his friend. When they reached the bus station, his friend made him go first.

"After being pushed inside, I saw the sign," he sighed. "It read, 'whites only.'"

On July 7, 1961, Watkins was arrested at the bus station and taken to the Mississippi State Penitentiary, also known as Parchman Farm, in Sunflower County, Mississippi.

"During this time, it was the most notorious prison in these United States," Watkins said.

see **FREEDOM RIDER**, page 2

Report reveals admin disputes with WKMS

Ava Chuppe

Senior Writer

achuppe@murraystate.edu

An April 20 report from Paducah, Kentucky, news station WPSD Local 6 revealed disputes between University administration and Murray State's public radio station, WKMS.

The report comes after Attorney General Daniel Cameron ruled the University violated the Open Records Act by withholding email correspondence regarding video footage of former 42nd Judicial Circuit Judge Jamie Jameson roaming the Marshall County Judicial Building in his underwear. The ruling allowed WPSD access to several documents, including emails, reports and contracts.

The first reported dispute involves former WKMS reporter Liam Niemeyer's attempt to learn COVID-19 case numbers, including cases within the University. After Niemeyer filed an open records request with the Calloway County Health Department, President Bob Jackson assembled Provost Tim Todd and then WKMS Station Manager Chad Lampe for a Zoom meeting to "discuss WKMS."

Jackson, Todd and Lampe all declined to answer questions from WPSD regarding negotiations about the "mission and vision of WKMS" that followed.

As *The News* reported previously, however, Lampe testified before the state Judicial Conduct Commission he faced pressure from University administration when Niemeyer filed a separate open records request

for email correspondence regarding the Jameson incident in 2022.

Lampe said Jameson told him University administrators, including Jackson, objected to the story.

"If we're talking about this situation and whether or not I felt as though I was attempted, that someone was attempting to influence me or exercise some leverage over me because of the power they hold, yes," Lampe testified.

Lampe said administrators then asked for a written explanation for the records request.

"There was no direct punishment to me directly, but the public radio station had received... changes in their budgetary allocation, as you would see lawmakers contact University officials... I can say the station—not necessarily me, but the station—could receive some negative blowback from the administration," Lampe testified.

Another clash with administrators occurred when Niemeyer pursued a story about Kentucky Sen. Jason Howell's Twitter account. The account "liked" several sexually explicit photos, a development Niemeyer and former WKMS News Director Rachel Keller agreed was newsworthy.

However, the story never aired.

Niemeyer, currently a reporter for the nonprofit Kentucky Lantern, instead wrote the story for that publication. In an email to Marketing and Communications Director Shawn Touney, he requested an interview with Jackson on the subject.

In the email, Niemeyer said Lampe told him to stop the story before it aired.



Dionte Berry/*The News*

WPSD Local 6 in Paducah will broadcast another report about Murray State today.

"He [Lampe] told me he couldn't guarantee that my job would be protected if the story ran," Niemeyer said.

WPSD also obtained a 2021 email from College of Business Dean David Eaton to Lampe and Todd.

In the email, Eaton said Jackson received complaints about the "investigative" nature of WKMS reporting, which he called "a legit function of journalism."

"Clearly, WKMS is not simply a publicity arm of Murray State," Eaton said. "National news [and] events get covered by NPR... The issue seems to be what in-house reporters cover in this area."

Though administrators reportedly declined to speak with WPSD, Touney issued a statement on behalf of the

University, which read in part: "The University has provided consistent financial support to WKMS for many years, including during the pandemic. This financial support, future work and new leadership for WKMS allows us to fully pursue WKMS' vision..."

Currently, WPSD awaits the results of their lawsuit against University administration for allegedly continuing to withhold public information.

Anchor Todd Faulkner said this week the station plans to air a story regarding what transpired when WKMS received a grant to fund another reporter.

To read WPSD's report and relevant documents, visit wpsdlocal6.com and click on the "Local 6 Investigates: Murray State University" tab.

Check back with *The News* for updates.

FREEDOM RIDER, from page 1

While in prison, he had a conversation with two inmates who told him he was on death row.

Watkins was on death row for nine days before being released and taken back to his family in Jackson.

He claimed his mother cried tears of joy when she saw him. He remembers she held him close all the way from the police station to their home. But the joy was followed by punishment.

"My mother beat the stuffing out of me," Watkins said. "I was locked up in the house until August when school started."

At school, he ran into James Bevel, a civil rights activist who wanted to recruit Watkins to become a Freedom Rider.

"I showed him my scars and said, 'Do you think I want to go through this again?'" Watkins said.



Dionte Berry/*The News*

Assistant Professor of English, Alicia Carthell, leads a Q&A session with Hezekiah Watkins.

Watkins was eventually persuaded to join the Freedom Riders and became the youngest Freedom Rider in the U.S.

His mother came around and gave him her blessing.

He said the new generation needs to pick up where he left off to create change in the world.

"I'm proud to have been a Freedom Rider, and it's time for me to pass the torch," Watkins said.

He said the only way to move forward is to vote for qualified candidates in government positions.

"We can't vote for our friends anymore," Watkins said. "That's what has happened. We have put our friends and relatives in these positions, but now that they are there, they don't even know you."

He explained in Mississippi, there are many Black government officials in office, but they don't agree on what platform to advance.

In order to make change, Watkins said people need to look closely at each candidate instead of picking someone they like as a person.

Watkins currently works with the Civil Rights Museum in Jackson and has published "Pushing Forward," a memoir detailing his experience as an activist. You can buy the memoir at pushingforwardbook.com.

**16 DAYS UNTIL
GRADUATION**



**9 a.m. and 1 p.m. in the
CFSB Center**

**MAY
13**

Reunited, boygenius navigates intimacy, relationships

Dionte Berry

Editor-in-Chief
dberry11@murraystate.edu

Sprouting from the indie scene, the dynamic trio boygenius released their debut album “the record” blending their remarkable storytelling skills, crafts cathartic scenes and aggressive outbursts.

In 2018, singer-songwriters Julien Baker, Lucy Dacus and Phoebe Bridgers, all known for their solo acts, debuted as boygenius with their self-titled EP. The project, which showcased each member’s strengths as musicians, received critical acclaim. Since their debut as a power group, the members have individually pushed to the forefront of the indie-alternative music scene.

In 2020, Bridgers released her sophomore Grammy-nominated album “Punisher,” solidifying her status as a star and a stand-out talent.

Dacus received a lot of attention for her 2018 sophomore album release “Historian,” which lifted the curtain in front of typically guarded emotions and shared her grief with her listeners.

In 2021, Dacus found a lighter, catchier sound in her third studio album “Home Video,” a sound that seems to have followed her onto “the record.”

Since the inception of boygenius, Baker has released her third studio album where she sings about overcoming her addiction and focusing on her mental well-being.

Having such strong individual voices while being artists in a similar field, it is not surprising that together they would be viewed as a “supergroup.”

Going in between folk pop and alternative rock, “the record”’s 12-track-long journey is kicked off by “Without You Without Them,” a short and sweet tri-vocal harmony intro into the rest of the project. The introduction sets the tone for the album, showing listeners this isn’t a Bridgers, Dacus or Baker album—it’s a collaboration.

The sweet harmonies turn into an alternative rock bite on “\$20,” led by Baker, where she takes listeners down a trail of adolescent rebellion.

What starts as radio alternative rock dives into a more aggressive sound with Bridgers screaming, “I know you have \$20” in the distant background. Baker’s carefree verses partnered with Bridgers’ howling toward the end made the song feel like a conversation addressing the idea of relying on one another in relationships.

Baker sings about the good and reckless times in a relationship, which act as the glue in the



“the record” was released on March 31 under Interscope Records.

Album cover courtesy of Spotify

“the record”

ALBUM RELEASE DATE: March 31

RECORD LABEL: Interscope Records

MEMBERS: Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus

FAVORITE SONG: “True Blue”

relationship, but when circumstances lead to more serious scenarios, the partnership loses its strength.

“True Blue” starts with Dacus’ lead, singing with romantic imagery of a lover. It feels bright but cold, like a winter sunrise. Lyrics like, “I can’t hide from you like I hide from myself” leads me to listen deeper.

Dacus isn’t just singing about someone she loves but about someone who she finds herself being honest with when she can’t be honest with herself. It’s a real stand-out song.

“Cool About It” has a folk-pop twang, where all members take turns leading the song. The acoustic guitar backdrop allows their songwriting to be center stage.

The members take turns diving into intimate imagery. Bridgers sings, “Once, I took your medication to

know what it’s like / And now I have to act like I can’t read your mind.”

This line, like many others in the song, holds the listeners close, as the members sing about loving someone who isn’t in a healthy place.

“Not Strong Enough” flips the script, and the members reflect on their own emotional well-being when they’re in the position where they aren’t present enough to be a supportive partner.

The climax builds toward the end of the song as the group repeats the mantra, “Always an angel, never a god.” With each repetition, the line becomes more intense.

The line has a double meaning. It could refer to the person’s ability although they are both revered beings, angels do not have the same power as a god.

However, the line, “Not strong enough to be your man” in the chorus can imply the perceived difference in strength between genders, as “angel” is feminized, while “god” is seen as masculine.

“Satanist” leans into a heavier lane of rock and consists of more grungier lyrics with the opening, “Will you be a Satanist with me?”

Multiple verses follow the same format as the opening, but replace “satanist” with “anarchist” and “nihilist.” These lines seem to focus on partnership and the idea of sticking together or having a “ride or die” friend.

The song starts to deconstruct toward the end but does so after a distorted howl, making for a headbanging climax with a softer outro. I love the contrasting elements, and they work well together.

“Letter To An Old Poet” closes out the song on a solemn note. Led by Bridgers, she focuses on a struggle between her heart and her mind. She knows her partner isn’t good enough for her, but Bridgers finds herself reminiscing on the good moments before she decides to break off the relationship.

As an ending it feels like a bitter moment of realization, but I love the feeling it leaves for listeners. Bridgers also ends on the line, “I can’t feel it yet / But I am / Waiting.”

“Letter To An Old Poet” feels like an ending that leads to a new beginning.

In a combination of such potent voices, nobody gets lost or tossed into the background on “the record.” Bridgers, Dacus and Baker all have a chance to shine. This album does not feel as if it’s an extension of one person’s discography while the others are simply features.

Listening to “the record” makes me excited to see what they have in store for listeners and for their solo careers.

In the future, I would like to see boygenius lean into more experimentation and have their personalities more so at the forefront.

Often, I judge an album by its title and cover before listening, and if I were to judge “the record” without having knowledge of Bridgers, Dacus or Baker, I can’t say I would be eager to give the album an ear.

However, I have prior knowledge of the group and was excited when I even heard news about the members doing photoshoots together for their promo.

“the record” deserves a 7.5 out of 10. I love to see a group like boygenius come together and truly blend their talents, and I know they will deliver in the future.

BUDGET TOWN HALL, from page 1

Vice President for Finance and Administration Services Jackie Dudley said with a proposed tuition and fees increase of 2.9%, the University could see potential revenue of \$1.8 million. This revenue will be invested into student scholarships.

As a way to help fund campus enhancements, Dudley said there will be a new student fee.

“All of those student service enhancements will be funded with a... new student fee of \$100 a semester,” Dudley said. “It’s applied to students when they take five or more credit hours of on-campus instruction.”

This fee will not apply to those taking dual credit courses, online courses or high school students enrolled in on-campus courses.

Provost Tim Todd said he and other administrators looked at reviews of courses and programs with low or no enrollment.

“Low-enrolled courses are only going to be taught going forward when...under an absolute necessity,” Todd said. “If some kid needs

a three-hour class, and we need to offer it in the summer, we’re going to do it. We’re going to figure it out, and we’re going to get them graduated accreditation requirements, discipline criteria, etc.”

From fall 2020 to fall 2022, the number of undergraduate sections of low-enrolled courses were 75.

For a course to be considered low-enrolled, fewer than 10 students are enrolled in regular semester courses.

Todd said sections were reduced by 9.5% and that led to retired academic programs during this current budget cycle.

Jason Youngblood, director of Facilities Management, discussed plans for the new nursing building set to open January 2026.

“It was announced that we would get \$45.5 million for a new nursing building on campus,” Youngblood said. “We have selected Ross Tarrant architects out of Lexington to be our prime lead consultant for architectural and engineering services. They have partnered with Ayers Saint Gross, who is a national



The budget will be voted on at the June 2 Board of Regents meeting.

Dionte Berry/The News

nursing design expert, along with Markham Engineering and BFW engineers to complete their consulting team for us.”

Youngblood said renovations will occur in Oakley Applied Science and Mason Hall. There will also be repairs to HVAC units across the University.

Dudley said the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education must approve the proposed tuition rates.

“Even though our board does approve tuition and fees, the council still has the final approval on those,” Dudley said. “That [approval] is pending, but it will be late June before we have final tuition and fee numbers that we actually can say our final numbers are not pending approval.”

The proposed budget will be discussed and voted on at the next Board of Regents meeting on Friday, June 2.

Our view:

Children need to be in school, not working at stockyards

Children working in a factory, injured, covered in hazardous chemicals and exhausted from working an overnight shift plus overtime. This scenario sounds like something straight out of the Industrial Revolution—but it happened earlier this year.

The U.S. Department of Labor released a report on Feb. 17 that showed over 100 children, ranging in age from 13-17, worked in meat-packing factories. Two of the factories belonged to Tyson Foods, the second-largest food processor in the U.S. These children had been working with hazardous chemicals and cleaning dangerous saws.

The number of children involved in child labor has increased by 70% over the past five years, according to a DOL report. The DOL is too small of a department to enforce all of the changes they make to labor standards. The department is investigating over 600 cases of illegal child labor, but this is only a small portion of yearly U.S. incidents. The department's size leaves the enforcement of child labor regulations up to the states, but they often shirk this important duty.

Despite this report from the DOL, 10 states over the past two years have introduced legislation loosening restrictions on what jobs minors can work and how many hours a week they are allowed to work.

Last month, Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders passed the Youth Hiring Act, which removes labor restrictions for 14- and 15-year-old children. This law removes the requirement for an employment certificate, which requires both government and parental approval for the minor to work. Under this law, children aged 14 and 15 years could get a



Wesley Hammer/*The News*

full-time job without their parent's permission and government position.

In Iowa, state legislators are working to decrease the regulations on serving alcohol and working in construction and demolition work. This bill has not passed the Iowa legislature yet, but debate over the bill has been overwhelmingly positive from the state's Republican legislators.

Republicans seem to want parents involved in everything except their child's workplace.

This wave of legislation came from a right-wing solution to the worker shortage and a continued fight against unemployment. Instead of fixing the cause of the shortage, Republicans would rather expand the working age and prey on an underprivileged and unrepresented age group.

We at *The News* believe the solution to the worker shortage should not be employing children with little to

no restrictions. It should be paying a liveable wage or fixing toxic work environments.

Legislators reason that lessening restrictions can help children gain work experience. Minors should not be experiencing harsh working conditions and risk of injury at the expense of their childhood. The benefit of work experience should not outweigh the detrimental effect child labor has on children's education or attention span in school and overall well-being.

For a political party so focused on morals and protecting our children, exposing minors to liquor and harsh working conditions does not seem to fit their narrative.

The main problem with these jobs is they just are not safe. The jobs these states are trying to fill are not safe jobs like those in the food industry or office jobs. They are in industries that could harm the children, like construction or

manufacturing jobs. Our children deserve better than the conditions that currently exist within these fields.

In addition to posing major health risks for the children involved, child labor has a negative effect on a child's education, according to a National Library of Medicine study. Long and demanding overtime hours in a factory or manufacturing plant deplete children of their drive to learn and succeed in school and can harm their mental and physical health.

Many issues and unsafe workplace environments will stem from this legislation, leaving children too exhausted to thrive in school. Labor violations will only get worse if this is allowed to continue. We need to move forward with our worker protections, not backward. Our children deserve more protection, and they should be able to enjoy their childhoods. Children yearn for educated minds—not the mines.



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www.MurrayStateNews.org

Editorial Board

Contact Us
2609 University Station
Murray State University
Murray, Kentucky 42071-3301
MurrayStateNews.org

Dionte Berry
Editor-in-Chief
dberry11@murraystate.edu

Rebeca Mertins Chiodini
Photography Editor
rmertinschiodini@murraystate.edu

Raleigh Hightower
Lifestyle Editor
rhightower@murraystate.edu

Jill Smith
Assistant News Editor
jsmith194@murraystate.edu

Emery Wainscott
Chief Copy Editor
ewainscott@murraystate.edu

Shann Riley
Graphic Designer
sriley11@murraystate.edu

Dr. Carol Terracina-Hartman
Faculty Adviser
cterracinahartman@murraystate.edu

Will Groves
Opinion Editor
wgroves@murraystate.edu

Jakob Milani
Sports Editor
jmilani@murraystate.edu

Wesley Hammer
Editorial Cartoonist
khammer@murraystate.edu

Braylee Finck
Ad Sales Representative
bfinck1@murraystate.edu

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The News strives to be the University community's source for information. Our goal is to present that information in a fair and unbiased manner and provide a free and open forum for expression and debate.

The News is an independent weekly student-run newspaper published at Murray State. The content does not reflect the opinions of the Murray State Journalism and Mass Communications Department.

Garner's homer caps mid-week victory

Jakob Milani
Sports Editor
jmilani@murraystate.edu

Seven unanswered runs ended with a walkoff home run for the Murray State baseball team, as the Racers defeated the University of North Alabama Lions on Tuesday, April 25.

After going down 7-1 through the top of the fifth inning, the Racers were able to score runs in the bottom of the fifth, seventh and eighth innings, setting up the walkoff homer from sophomore infielder Carson Garner and giving the Racers the win. Murray State went through seven different pitchers in the nine-inning contest, with graduate right hander Ben Krizen taking the bump to start the game. In the single inning of action he had, he faced six batters and struck one out, keeping the Lions off the board.

As freshman left-handed pitcher Joe Peca took the mound for the Racers in the second inning, he walked a batter and gave up a double. This set up a three-run home run from freshman infielder Jackson Ferrigno, putting the Lions up 3-0.

Peca gave up another double in the third inning and was quickly pulled. With a new pitcher in the game for the Racers, senior designated hitter Cal Cook stepped up to the plate and hit a double, bringing home graduate utility player Andrew Knight for the Lions' fourth run.

The Racers got on the board in the bottom of the third with a fielder's choice RBI from sophomore outfielder Dustin Mercer that allowed freshman utility player Gunnar Bingham to score.

Another run came across for the Lions in the top of the fourth inning with a single from freshman shortstop Gehrig Frei that brought graduate infielder Kyle Machado home. Machado grabbed an RBI for



Sophomore infielder Carson Garner hits a home run to give the Racers an 8-7 win over the North Alabama Lions on Tuesday, April 25. *Rebeca Mertins Chiodini/The News*

himself in the top of the fifth inning with a single that brought around junior catcher Levi Jensen to score, putting the Lions up 7-1.

Murray State needed a comeback. It began in the bottom of the fifth inning with a walk from sophomore infielder Parker Estes and a single from junior infielder Logan Bland.

Mercer then stepped up to the plate and grabbed his second RBI of the day with a single that allowed Estes to score from second base.

Sophomore catcher Charlie Corum followed it up with a single, scoring Bland and cutting the Lions' lead to four runs with four innings left to play.

In the bottom of the seventh inning, graduate first baseman Brennan McCullough hit a ground-rule double to start the inning, and sophomore infielder Riley Hawthorne singled up the middle to bring McCullough home, making the score 7-4 with the Racers trailing. Murray State added on three

more runs in the bottom of the eighth inning, with the first coming from a double by Estes, bringing around senior outfielder Seth Gardner to score.

North Alabama sent in a new pitcher, but Bland stepped up as the next batter and hammered a triple to left center field that brought Estes home to score and cut the lead to one run.

One batter later, Mercer tied the game with a single up the middle that allowed Bland to score. As the game entered the ninth inning, the teams were tied at seven runs apiece.

In the top of the ninth, the Racers put in junior right-handed pitcher Nathan Holler to close out the game. He struck out two of three batters to keep the Lions at seven runs.

The bottom of the ninth came around, and Garner stepped up to lead off the inning. With just one pitch and the swing of the bat, Garner made sure there was no need

for extra innings as he smacked a home run to left field, walking the game off. The Racers won 8-7.

Garner's home run was his one and only hit of the game, as he went 1-4 at the plate in the game.

Mercer led the Racers at the plate, going 3-5 in the game with three RBIs. Estes and Bland each had a pair of hits and an RBI each, while five other hitters had one hit each.

The seven Racer pitchers in the game combined for 12 strikeouts against the 46 batters faced, but gave up 12 hits and four walks, hitting three batters with pitches.

Murray State improved to 22-20 on the season, the fifth best record in the MVC. The Racers also sit at fifth in the Valley with an 8-7 record.

Murray State travels to Nashville, Tennessee, for a three-game conference matchup against the Belmont Bruins on Friday, April 28. First pitch for the series is set for 5 p.m.



The News'

**ATHLETE
OF THE
WEEK**



**FINISHED THIRD PLACE
2023 MISSOURI VALLEY
CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP
(208 STROKES)**

**BEST CONFERENCE
FINISH IN 10 SEASONS**

TREY LEWIS | MEN'S GOLF | SOPHOMORE

SHANN RILEY/ THE NEWS
PHOTO COURTESY OF RACER ATHLETICS



Rebeca Mertins Chiodini/The News

Senior infielder Gracie Osbron makes a play on a ground ball for the out. Osbron led the Racers to a 1-0 win against Belmont on Wednesday, April 26.

Osbron plays hero in walk-off home win

Ronan Summers

Staff Writer

rsummers6@murraystate.edu

After a historic weekend for Murray State softball, the Racers narrowly defeated the Belmont Bruins on Wednesday, April 26 after walking it off in the seventh inning.

The Racers had cause for celebration over the weekend. The Saturday 3-0 win over the Indiana State Sycamores gave Head Coach Kara Amundson's her 300th career win.

Over the weekend, Murray State's overall record improved to 30-16 after the series against the Sycamores as they went 2-1. The Racers then came back home to prepare for

and host the Belmont Bruins.

The Bruins were 23-20 as they entered Wednesday's matchup against the Racers.

Junior right-handed pitcher Emma Summers got the start for the Bruins, as freshman right-handed pitcher Bre Haislip got the start for the Racers.

The pitching on Wednesday was dominant the entire game. The first hit did not come until the bottom of the fourth inning, when senior infielder Gracie Osbron hit a single to center field. She did so with two outs left in the inning. The next batter flew out, leaving her on base to end the inning, as the teams stayed knotted at 0 apiece.

After getting one out in the top

of the sixth inning, Haislip was relieved by senior right hander Hannah James. Haislip's day ended after 5.1 innings pitched, not allowing a hit or run, walking two batters and striking out two Bruins.

Bruins freshman infielder Nicole Hughes hit a lead-off double to start the top of the seventh inning. The next batter hit a sacrifice bunt to advance Hughes to third base, but James struck out the next two batters to end the top of the seventh 0-0.

With one out and a 1-0 count, Osbron connected with the ball and launched a home run to walk it off in the bottom of the seventh inning and give the Racers a 1-0 win over the Bruins.

Osbron's single and home run

were the only hits the Racers recorded on Wednesday. James earned the win for the Racers, pitching 1.2 innings and allowing one hit, striking three batters out and not allowing a walk or run. This was James' 13th win on the season, tying her for second-most wins in the MVC.

Murray State's record improved to 31-16 overall and 15-6 against conference opponents after the win over Belmont. In its first year in the MVC, Murray State has turned heads. The Racers are currently in third place in the conference standings.

Murray State will travel to play the SIU Salukis in Carbondale, Illinois in a three-game series that will start on Friday, April 28.

Murray State

ATHLETICS SCHEDULE

Shann Riley/The News

APRIL 28

Track & Field vs. University of Kentucky @ Lexington, KY

ALL DAY

Softball vs. Southern Illinois @ Carbondale, IL

4 p.m.

Baseball vs. Belmont @ Nashville, TN

5 p.m.

APRIL 29

Track & Field vs. University of Kentucky @ Lexington, KY

ALL DAY

Softball vs. Southern Illinois @ Carbondale, IL

2 p.m.

Baseball vs. Belmont @ Nashville, TN

2 p.m.

APRIL 30

Baseball vs. Belmont @ Nashville, TN

TBD

Softball vs. Southern Illinois @ Carbondale, IL

NOON

MAY 2

Baseball vs. Southeast Missouri @ Cape Girardeau, MO

ALL DAY

For more information
visit GoRacers.com

Senior Alma Garcia, Women's Golf

Photo courtesy of Dave Winder, Racer Athletics



New course highlights storytelling through podcasts

Jack Ellerbrook
Contributing writer
jellerbrook1@murraystate.edu

Raleigh Hightower
Lifestyle Editor
rhightower@murraystate.edu

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communications introduced a new course this spring centered around podcast recording. JMC 210 Podcasting: Telling Stories With Sound teaches students of any major how to use podcasting as a storytelling medium and the production process behind it.

With the course's only prerequisite being ENG 105, JMC 210 serves as an elective for anyone who is interested.

The course's instructor, Associate Professor of Journalism Leigh Wright, says podcasting is a topic that has frequently been brought up among journalism education associations, and some of her colleagues at other universities inspired her to bring a podcasting class to campus.

"One of my colleagues had proposed a podcast certificate at her school," Wright said. "I thought, that's a great idea—even just starting with a podcast class."

JMC 210 covers the basics of podcasting such as conducting interviews, scriptwriting and recording audio with microphones, such as lavalier mics, that clip onto the interviewee. Students do not need prior audio editing or professional experience to be successful in the class, Wright says.

Throughout the semester, students have completed a combination of smaller assignments and are now finalizing their work on



Sophomore journalism major Ania Boutin uses Adobe Audition in Leigh Wright's JMC 210 Podcasting: Telling Stories With Sound course. *Dionte Berry/The News*

larger projects as finals week approaches.

Some of the smaller activities meant to help the class learn how to produce audio included weekly audio logs and "vox pops," which are impromptu interviews with students on campus.

As part of the "Sounds of Spring" project, JMC 210 students recorded podcasts on a wide range of events, including the opening of Dairy Queen, the Athena Festival, All Campus Sing, an art exhibit, intramural sports, "The Addams Family" musical, Murray State's move to the Missouri Valley Conference and a day in the life of a college student.

"Murray State has such a great tradition of events in the

spring," Wright said. "There are so many different events, and spring is so busy. I thought doing something like the 'Sounds of Spring' as a podcast series could really show what we do here at Murray State."

In addition to producing their own podcast episode, students were also tasked with creating their own podcast concept they could continue after the end of the semester.

Senior public relations major Simon Elfrink cited the creative liberty the class offers as one of the primary benefits of the course.

"The notion of learning more about how to flex my creativity and get my thoughts out there in the audio form was a no-brainer for me when

it came to choosing classes I wanted to take before I graduated," Elfrink said.

Wright says students across all disciplines will have the opportunity to grow professionally in this course.

"To be able to write, to be able to research and to tell a good story, those are skills that transfer to all different areas," Wright said. "Those are great skills to have in your career."

Moving forward, Wright said the department plans to offer the course at least once a year.

Anyone interested in listening to the podcast produced by JMC 210 students this semester will soon be able to find the podcast on Spotify and at the class website at murraystatejmc210podcasting.my.canva.site.

Student group aims to encourage eco-friendly habits

MacKenzie Rogers
Staff writer
mrogers42@murraystate.edu

Founded to advocate and promote the ways people can better the planet, the students behind the Earth Project use the motto "do what you can" to encourage their fellow students to be more environmentally friendly.

The project is part of the course NLS 465 Policy, Legal Issues and Advocacy for Social Change in Nonprofit Organizations taught by Robin Esau, instructor in nonprofit leadership studies.

One member, junior public relations major Rebekah Lynn, said they hope their advocacy will help encourage their fellow college students to help the planet.

"We teamed up to advocate, to help the Earth by encouraging college students to 'do what you can' to save the Earth," Lynn said. "Our goal is to help

college students realize there are simple ways they can help the Earth. It's not so bad once you get going because we are not on this Earth long and we want to take care of it."

The United States generated more than 40 million tons of plastic waste in 2021 alone, with only 5 to 6% of that being recycled, according to Statista.

To combat this, the project suggests simple ways anyone can help the planet, from buying secondhand clothes to switching to reusable water



Members of the Earth Project tabling outside of Carr Hall to educate students on the environmental benefits of reusable water bottles. *Photo courtesy of @theearthproject_23 on Instagram*

bottles to picking up sidewalk trash.

"My favorite way we can help the earth is by using a reusable water bottle," Lynn said. "I've used one for years, and it eliminates so much waste, and plus, buying disposable bottles can get expensive."

Another member, junior Maggie Choate, is a nonprofit leadership studies and business administration major. She says advocating for the Earth and taking initiative to change is simple.

"It's easy to advocate for a

cause, but [the cause] is not easily attainable for people," Choate said. "So our goal was to advocate for bettering the earth in any way you can in your day-to-day life instead of getting overwhelmed by unavailable resources, politics, time, whatever it may be."

The group organized an event outside of Carr Health on April 18 and 20, where they handed out stickers and planted various types of seeds, informing those who stopped by of what they could do to change their lifestyles to be more

environmentally conscious.

"Each one of us loves spending time outdoors, whether that's running, fishing, kayaking, enjoying a hammock, horseback riding or hiking, and we never want to take that for granted," Choate said. "I'm a lover of houseplants and wanted to connect something that I love with our project, which is why we were planting seeds at our table."

Anyone interested in learning more about the Earth Project can follow the club's Instagram @ [theearthproject_2023](https://www.instagram.com/theearthproject_2023).

Legacy lecture series explores free speech in schools

Raleigh Hightower
Lifestyle Editor
rhightower@murraystate.edu

In celebration of the life and legacy of Harry Lee Waterfield, the Department of Political Science and Sociology hosted its 45th annual Waterfield Distinguished Lecture.

Waterfield, the namesake of Murray State's Waterfield Library, served as the 42nd and 44th lieutenant governor of Kentucky. In addition to his time in politics, Waterfield also led careers in journalism and insurance, serving as the president of the Kentucky Press Association and as the founder of the Investors Heritage Life Insurance Co.

The department has hosted the lecture series in honor of Waterfield since 1977. Previous lecturers at the event have included former Kentucky governors, state Supreme Court justices, professors and law enforcement personnel.

This year's lecturer was Assistant Professor of Law at Vanderbilt Law School Francesca Procaccini.

Prior to teaching at Vanderbilt Law School, Procaccini worked for the U.S. Department of Justice, served as a Climenko Fellow at Harvard Law School and worked with the Yale Law School Information Society Project and the Media Freedom and Information Access Clinic.

Procaccini's research focuses particularly on First Amendment law, and this year's Waterfield lecture dealt with the topic of free speech law within the public school system.

Procaccini began the lecture by discussing the power of free speech, but like other aspects of power, free speech can be used inappropriately and dangerously.

"Because speech is so powerful, and in particular, is so powerful for our more vulnerable communities... we get into challenging debates over where the limits of free speech should be," Procaccini said.



Vanderbilt Law School Professor Francesca Procaccini delivers the 45th annual Waterfield Lecture in the Curris Center Ballroom on April 25. *Photo Courtesy of Jeremy McKeel*

One of the battlegrounds for this debate, Procaccini said, is our schools. Procaccini cited legislation such as the Florida Stop W.O.K.E. act; the Parental Rights in Education Act, commonly known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill; and bills targeting critical race theory as current examples of this debate.

Some of the primary discussion targets of these bills include racism, sexism, and LGBTQ+ identity, according to Procaccini.

There are three groups of people to consider when examining speech legislation affecting public schools, Procaccini says: teachers, parents and students. she argued that while it may seem strange, free speech restrictions on teachers and parents can sometimes be good for democracy.

"As a government employee, when you speak, you oftentimes hold a certain degree of power in your

voice," Procaccini said. "When you come at an issue with the government backing you, there is a good chance your voice is going to hold slightly more sway. I would say that challenges democracy."

Procaccini said this could violate the notion of equality.

"Each of us in the public have an equal say, an equal voice in how we reach consensus in an issue like curriculum," Procaccini said. "There are larger democracy goals at play when we think about teacher speaker rights."

The best way to serve democracy in this debate is to increase the free speech rights of students, Procaccini said. The First Amendment does more than protect what students are allowed to say, Procaccini said—it also protects the information they can receive.

In order to restrict the right to receive information, there has to be

a "legitimate pedagogical interest," Procaccini said. One such legitimate interest might include age appropriateness.

Procaccini ended her presentation by urging those in attendance to participate in government at a local level by voting and said relieving pressure in other places in our political system may make public schools less of a political battleground.

The event began with a banquet where the department awarded several different awards, including outstanding senior awards, model UN and mock trial MVP awards, the Dr. Choong Nam Kang student paper award and the Harry Lee Waterfield Governmental Studies Scholarships.

In order to stay up to date with future lectures in the Waterfield Lecture series and to see award winners, follow the Department of Political Science and Sociology on Facebook @murraystateps.

Community celebrates Earth Day at Arboretum



The Murray State Arboretum hosted its annual Earth Day Celebration and Kite Festival on April 22. The event included a wide variety of activities such as: vegetable and herb transplants sold by the Horticulture Club; strawberry transplants and tomato planters sold by Mabie's Garden; kite-making hosted by Alpha Mu Gamma, Japanese Club, International Student Organization and the Department of Global Languages and Theater Arts; and food and refreshments sold by Freddy's Iron Smoked BBQ.

Photos by Mary Huffman/*The News*