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NEWS BRIEF



Graphic courtesy of Alumni Relations
RacerFest is a first time celebration, hosted by multiple campus organizations.

First-time event celebrates the end of academic year

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The RacerFest Block Party will celebrate the end of the centennial academic year with live music, lawn games and catered food. Alumni Relations, Student Government Association, the Residential College Association and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts organized this first-time event. Alumni Relations Director Carrie McGinnis said the idea for RacerFest came to be through a conversation she had with Brent Webster, director of guitar studies, and Chris Trzepacz, assistant biology professor and head of Lee Clark Hall. “Brent shared that he was looking for a fun new opportunity for the students within the University’s Commercial Music Ensemble, under his direction, to put on a show for students, faculty and staff,” McGinnis said. “That led to the idea for RacerFest, an outdoor show on campus to...send off our seniors and give the students a good time to thank them for their hard work all year long.” McGinnis said attendees can enjoy live music from Murray State’s student rock band, the Commercial Music Ensemble, and premiere a cappella choir, EQBlu. There will also be free snacks, cotton candy, sno-cones and games, including corn hole.

“That led to the idea of RacerFest, an outdoor show on campus to... send off our seniors and the students a good time to thank them for their hard work all year long.”
—Carrie McGinnis, Alumni Relations Director

The corner of 15th and Olive Street will be shut down from 1 to 5 p.m. on Friday, May 5 for RacerFest. All members of the campus body are invited.



Material Science major George Timmermann and Biology major Jess Stein were recognized as the 2023 Outstanding Seniors at the April 26 Senior. Photo courtesy of murraystate.edu

Seniors highlighted for college achievements

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Biology major Jess Stein and material science and polymer chemistry major George Timmermann were named as the 2023 Outstanding Seniors, one of the most prestigious graduation recognitions. The Outstanding Senior award recognizes those who have excelled in their fields of study and during their time as a Racer. Both will also speak at commencement. Stein and Timmermann were announced as the 2023 outstanding seniors at the April 26 Senior Breakfast.

Stein said she was proud and caught off guard when she received an email telling her she would be an Outstanding Senior. “I read it, and I was like, ‘Are they sure they want to pick me?’ just because at first I wasn’t confident in myself and what I have done,” Stein said. However, Stein said her confidence grew as she reflected on her time at Murray State as a biology major on the pre-optometry track. “After looking back at, you know, my four years here, I have done a lot, and I am a really hard worker,” Stein said. Stein’s experience at Murray State started in 2019 as a Presidential Fellow where she was required

to do five hours of research a week under Assistant Biology Professor Chris Trzepacz’s mentorship. Although Trzepacz’s research had to do with worms, Stein still found the experience to be useful for her career in optometry. “With the research that he was doing, it was super helpful in just kind of getting some practice with fine motor skills and everything like that because the worms are microscopic,” Stein said. “As an optometrist in the future, I’m going to be doing a lot of fine motor skills work.”

see **OUTSTANDING SENIORS**, page 2

Safety walks focus on campus security

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University administrators held their biannual safety walk on April 11 to identify any potential safety concerns on campus. This walk is for administrators to see what improvements have been made to campus safety and what other improvements can be made. Don Robertson, vice president of Student Affairs, said the goal of these walks is to find potential lighting concerns or hazards. “Many times we’ll look at other areas where trees or bushes are grown up that need to be trimmed back, or there’s areas that could be potentially hiding places,” Robertson said. “If we saw any areas that we think are hazardous, we would point those out.” Walks are held twice in the academic year: once in September, which is Campus Safety Month, and once in April, which is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Director of the Women’s Center and Pride Center Abigail Cox said several groups on campus work to ensure everyone has their safety concerns addressed. “This is a collaborative effort between multiple parties on campus and includes student representation,” Cox said. “This collaboration represents a



Joanne Gunns, Jamie Miller and Don Robertson examine the lights during the April safety walk. Jill Smith/The News

commitment from across campus to addressing safety concerns.”

“Many times we’ll look at other areas where trees or bushes are grown up that need to be trimmed back or there’s areas that could be potentially hiding places”
—Don Robertson, Vice President of student affairs

Director of Facilities Management Jason Youngblood said 70 lights were out, which is a small percentage of the total number of exterior lights on campus. He said the majority of the lights need new lights, but some have more technical issues.

“There was an issue with the lights near Oakhurst where the photocell needed to be adjusted,” Youngblood said. “There are other lights that have underground wiring or circuit issues that will take longer to diagnose and repair.” Some of the areas marked as potential concerns include: the parking lot on the south side of the Chemistry Building, the crosswalk by Wilson Hall and a path to the Curris Center by Regents Hall. All concerns brought up by administrators during the April walk were regarding dark lighting near parking lots and buildings.

see **SAFETY WALKS**, page 2

WPSD report reveals WKMS budget cuts

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Paducah news station WPSD Local 6 aired on April 27 a second report showing University administrators planned a \$50,000 budget cut to WKMS in 2021 and attempted to get out of grant agreements that funded reporters.

As *The News* previously reported, WPSD obtained access to several admin emails, reports and contracts, following Attorney General Daniel Cameron's ruling the University violated the Open Records Act.

According to the WPSD report, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Affairs Jackie Dudley emailed President Bob Jackson to confirm a \$50,000 WKMS budget cut for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Jackson approved the cut.

On the following day the budget was approved, Feb. 1, 2021, Jackson emailed a working draft of a budget planning memo to former WKMS Station Manager Chad Lampe, Provost Tim Todd and College of Business Dean David Eaton.

The email read in part: "We will ask WKMS to raise additional funds...and reduce the state funding portion for WKMS—an amount to be determined." It did not mention the \$50,000 budget cut.

Later, on April 12, 2021, Eaton emailed Todd on the matter.

"I'm more curious about the \$50k, and I'm trying to see if I've seen that number before," Eaton said. "That's an almost 20% cut in University funding to WKMS. Almost sounds

like we...can't outright kill you, but we're going to starve you strategy."

The grant fund Report for America chose WKMS to fund full-time journalist in December 2021. Fundraising and underwriting revenue were supposed to cover what the grant did not.

Despite Lampe's indication WKMS would cover the position completely through fundraising, Todd responded by saying Jackson was "very concerned on the upcoming legislative session."

"Unfortunately, I don't have good news on this," Todd said. "[Jackson is] uncomfortable adding [Full-Time Equivalents] when we may have to do more cutting across the University. I realize this is another disappointment...believe me."

Eaton, reportedly, wrote a letter to Todd calling for Jackson to reconsider. The president reportedly said he would allow the process to move forward but questioned a clause in the Report for America contract absolving the reporter of any potential liability.

After Lampe finally announced the grant in April 2022, Eaton messaged Todd: "There is no risk to the University budget from this. I realize that getting rid of WKMS if we don't want it would bring bad PR to the University. Killing it slowly isn't any better of an approach."

"Buddy, the decision is done," Todd replied. "Anger will occur if you and Chad [Lampe] keep pushing this."

Eaton did not comment on the matter, but he did email Lampe



Dionte Berry/*The News*

Visit murraystatenews.org and search "WPSD" to find previous articles on the matter.

and Todd about Jackson's unfavorable attitude toward WKMS.

"I can't honestly think of too many things that I would put in the 'investigative/NYT/Watergate' type of vein, but that seems to be the nature of the concerns from those calling the President," the email read. "We can look and see how to keep the news, service and educational functions of WKMS going strong and how to navigate these rapids and get to calmer waters."

Exchanges regarding the budget also discussed Ohio Valley ReSource, a public broadcasting grant funding reporters in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia. The grant funded the salary of former WKMS reporter Liam Niemeyer.

Jackson reportedly wanted Niemeyer to remain in his position only if the grant continued to fund it. However, a message to Dudley from Director of Accounting and Financial Services Ellen Dale noted, "Stations should intend to integrate their OVR reporter into their FY22 operating budget without continued CPB funding."

An email from Dudley to Jackson followed with the proposal to "get out of the OVR agreement." In response, Jackson said "they will shift [Niemeyer] around to other grant monies." But, it was months before the president signed off on Niemeyer's grant funding.

Stay tuned for more updates on the reports regarding administration's relationship with WKMS.



Jill Smith/*The News*

Student Government Association President Ellie McGowan points out a lamp light outage.

SAFETY WALKS, from page 1

The outages were scattered across campus, including the West Farm, located on College Farm Road.

Sixteen of the 70 lights belong to Murray Electric, a local electric utility company. The University pays Murray Electric to add lights and direct them towards campus.

Youngblood said there is no timeline on when the Murray Electric lights will be replaced.

"There is no specific time, but I would expect they generally get them fixed within a few weeks," Youngblood said. "It may depend on their other workload or what the issue with light may be. Some may require parts that take longer to acquire."

Robertson said they also look at the emergency call boxes around campus.

"We'll get someone to say they think there should be a call box here, and we're gonna move on to make sure they're working properly and the blue lights are on," Robertson said. "We have installed additional boxes, because of the tours in the past."

Youngblood said while the safety walk is only done once or twice a year, night shift employees can report concerns.

"There are staff that work night and evening shifts in our Central

Plant and MSU Police that notify facilities management routinely of lights that are out on campus," Youngblood said.

Cox said this walk allows administrators and staff to step into the students' shoes.

"In addition to providing continued attention to the physical attributes of campus as they relate to safety, the tours allow staff and administrators to view campus through a student lens as we consider each area of campus," Cox said.

Both Youngblood and Robertson said student safety is a top priority for them, and they hope students will reach out with any potential concerns they may have.

Cox said student feedback is very important when it comes to addressing campus safety.

"Students are the first to notice when a path they travel feels unsafe or if a parking lot makes them uneasy," Cox said. "This feedback may be given to a variety of areas on campus: RAs and RDs, Campus Police, SGA, etc. The safety walks are a way for all of those points of contact to come together with the people who ultimately make the needed repairs and changes."

Students with concerns can email msu.

OUTSTANDING SENIORS, from page 1

Beyond her work as a Presidential Fellow, Stein was on the cross country and track team for three years but decided to leave the team in order to pursue a path closer to her field.

Stein then got a job as a medical technician at Jarvis Vision Center.

Working in eye care, Stein said, she was able to see all of the behind-the-scenes workings that go into optometry.

In her role, she led patients through the eye exam, finalized the prescription for the doctor and went over the results with the patients. After six months, she then moved to the optical side of the work—like making glasses.

"You know, cutting the lenses, dispensing them to a patient, is kind of even just like the more aesthetic part of choosing what would look good on a patient," Stein said.

Stein credits her mother with getting her feet on the Murray State campus.

"I had no idea what Murray State was...she signed me up for a tour without me even knowing and was like, 'yeah, I'm taking you out of school on Friday, we're going down to western Kentucky,'" Stein said.

Stein thought she would be taking a trip to Western Kentucky University, but instead, her mother brought her to Murray State.

After graduation, Stein plans to attend Indiana University's School of Optometry.

Timmermann was announced as an outstanding senior alongside Stein. Like Stein, he is a Presidential Fellow.

Timmermann is a student ambassador for the University and the chemistry department and works as a chemistry tutor.

During his time as an undergraduate student, Timmermann has already had his research published during his work with Organic and Polymer Chemistry Professor Kevin Miller.

"I got published my sophomore year in the American Chemical Society journal for applied polymer chemistry, and that was really cool," Timmermann said. "I'm working toward a second publication this summer as well, which is gonna be really cool if I get to."

Along with having publishing research, Timmermann has presented at two American Chemical Society conferences. Although Timmermann has had public speaking experience, he finds being a commencement speaker as something out of his comfort zone.

"The only formal speech training I've had was in a Zoom class, so there wasn't much in front of people practice," Timmermann said. "The only other presentations I've given are chemistry presentations, which are kind of supposed to be boring, you're not exactly supposed to be all that interesting since it's about chemistry."

Similar to Stein, Timmermann was surprised to be one of the outstanding senior recipients and didn't know he was in the running for the award.

"I remember I read through the email multiple times. I was like, 'what is this, what does this even mean?'" Timmermann said.

"I was really confused, so I called my mom and she's like, 'yeah, I'm pretty sure like, that's the Outstanding Senior Award.'"

To conclude their career as Racers, Stein will be a speaker at the 9 a.m. commencement on May 13. Timmermann will be speaking at the 1 p.m. commencement on May 13.

After graduation Timmermann will begin a doctoral student at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

"I've really just had an amazing undergraduate experience socially and academically. It's the best undergraduate experience I could have ever asked for," Timmermann said. "I'm just thankful and, it's gonna be tough to leave."

Jack Harlow dives into personal, reflective rhymes

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Just a year after the release of his second studio album, Louisville-born rapper Jack Harlow is back with his third album, "Jackman." His previous album, "Come Home, The Kids Miss You," received varying forms of praise and criticism. The album itself ultimately missed on many points, feeling bland or repetitive despite star features from Justin Timberlake, Drake, Lil Wayne and Pharell. When Harlow announced his new album on April 26 of this year, fans were hoping for the old Jack. Released on April 28, "Jackman." sees Harlow get personal about his success and his life.

The album kicks off with "Common Ground," a song about the divide between white and Black children being raised in different neighborhoods till their paths eventually cross.

Harlow goes on to talk about how white kids use sayings that are typically coined as Black phrases, despite not knowing what life in predominantly Black neighborhoods is like. He also talks about how racism seems to plague these suburban neighborhoods, ending the song with the lyric, "common ground ain't that common."

In "They Don't Love It," Harlow talks about his growth in life and how he's accepting it all, how he's grown into a better version of himself, and ultimately, that he's still working to get to the top.

One portion of the song that can't go unmentioned, where he claims to be the best white rapper since Eminem: he's "the hardest white boy since the one who rapped about vomit and sweaters." While it's hard



Album cover courtesy of spotify.com

'Jackman.' released on April 28 under Generation Now Atlantic Records.

to dispute because of some streaming numbers, some fans may agree that other rappers like the late Mac Miller gives Harlow a run for his money.

Harlow reflects on his life with an upbeat sound in "Ambitious." He talks about where his rap career was at when he was 19 to where he stands now at 24. He's at the height of his career and meeting his heroes—something he's dreamed about for years is finally a reality.

We then reach the song "Gang Gang," and, boy, is this track something. On this track, Harlow talks about the dark secrets of some of his closest friends. He tells the tale of two of his close friends who have different criminal charges against them. He says in the chorus, "ride for my dawgs, lie for my

dawgs, die for my dawgs," but in the final verse, he makes the difficult decision of cutting them out after their terrible actions, saying "almost like you never were there."

A top song of mine follows it up with "Denver," which samples "Do You Know" by Douglas Penn. I enjoy this song so much because the sample just sounds beautiful throughout the song, and the beat itself is very enjoyable. Harlow talks about his struggles with depression and anxiety and his recent improvement, but he still wonders about the problems in his life and if they will ever get better.

"It Can't Be" sees Harlow questioning what got him to the top. He says it can't be his looks, it can't be the work he's

put in or the flashy appearance of his life: "it must be my skin, I can't think of any other reason I win." He understands he's a white rapper, and he grew up in a better environment than others.

Finally, we reach my favorite track on the list, "Blame On Me." The beat is phenomenal, with the sample of "Blame" by Grey Hawken playing as the chorus. Harlow plays three roles through the three verses. First, a younger brother envious of his older brother who left him for his friends. Second, the older brother who regrets leaving his little brother behind and fears their relationship is fractured now. Third, the father who tells the story of his treatment of the kids and his empathy because he too lost his relationship with his brother. It's a sad yet relatable story to many.

In the last track, "Questions," Harlow asks himself 33 different questions about his life and where he's at now. It's self reflection. He's worried about his future and misses parts of his past. But, he's scared he won't reach where not only he wants to be, but where his fans want him to be.

"Jackman." is an album about all the issues in Harlow's life, the problems he sees around him and how he can reach the top to give back to those he loves. It serves as a bookmark in an already illustrious career; one that Harlow can, hopefully, look back on fondly some day.

Overall, this album gets an 8 out of 10 from me. It's full of stories that Harlow hid for a while. He's self conscious yet aware of where he is right now. He has to make changes to make life better. While Harlow may want to make anthems, he's got a real knack for making some conscious music that is still enjoyable.

Student research explores AI privacy

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Under the supervision of Cybersecurity and Network Management Professors Randall Joyce and Faris Sahawneh, three students are conducting research on smart home devices and their implications regarding privacy and data security.

Smart home devices such as the Amazon Alexa and Google Home have grown prevalent in U.S. households, offering conveniences like voice-controlled assistants, home automation and music playback. But, the ability of these devices to listen, record and store audio data has sparked debates on users' privacy and the potential for misuse by manufacturers or unauthorized third parties.

The students—senior CNM majors Will Hudson and Zach Coplea and math major Mitch Pierson—have recorded over 140 hours of TV shows using an array of devices.

Sahawneh said the research aims to provide a public service to the campus and wider community by educating them on how to guard privacy while using these devices.

"We are analyzing the data to see what trigger words would turn those speakers on and whether this [artificial intelligence] technology is biased," Sahawneh said.

Specifically, Coplea said, the team checks for misactivations with the trigger words.

"With some devices, it's 'Alexa,' 'Echo,' 'Computer,' 'Ziggy,' stuff like that," Coplea said. "If we find a TV show that we play through speakers accidentally triggers one of the

devices, we are monitoring the network traffic from those devices to see if we can find that activation."

The students played TV shows like "SpongeBob SquarePants," "The Big Bang Theory," "The X-Files," "The Golden Girls," "Frasier" and more. Researchers included a diverse range of shows from different countries. They showed particular interest in the TV show "Lost," which incorporates multiple accents and languages.

In the preliminary part of the investigation, the group used Google Translate to say words in different accents.

"You could type a word that's not the wake word at all, but it sounds like the wake word, and that'll activate it," Hudson said. "I think there's some leeway they give the smart speaker in order to understand the different accents that allows it to be triggered on accident more often."

Hudson said he is concerned about user privacy issues with smart home devices.

"You may have run into a situation where you're talking about something on the phone, or you see an advertisement pop up for that," Hudson said. "That, for me, is definitely a confirmation that they're listening when they shouldn't be."

Coplea said it is obvious the devices are always listening.

"In order for them to know when the trigger word is said, they always have to keep listening for it to happen," Coplea said. "What happens with that data when it's not the trigger word? That's a concern. Where does it get sent? Does it just get deleted upon receiving it?"

Amazon devices allow users to view the audio data sent to and



Rebecca Mertins Chidoni/The News

Student researchers focus on smart home device privacy, data security and AI.

from its servers, which Hudson said reveals a great deal of traffic.

"Not to mention...sometimes, if you asked the smart speaker a question without saying the wake word, it might even tell you, 'You didn't say the wake word. Say it again with the wake word.'"

An NBC News story suggested the Amazon Alexa could be key to solving a murder, which Coplea found revealing.

"It could have actually recorded the entire murder that was happening in front of the device," Coplea said. "The fact that police could think that's a point of interest in terms of getting information from it, that's another indicator that maybe the privacy of individuals on these devices aren't the most well-kept."

While Coplea acknowledged AI represents a technological revolution, he said it can be scary.

"It seems exponential, the increase in how advanced it's getting," Coplea said. "I mean, ChatGPT just came out last December. Microsoft invested...several billions of dollars."

Coplea said society will have to be responsible with AI as it continues to develop.

"We're also going to have to be careful with who owns the chatbots," Coplea said. "Should it be something that private corporations should be in charge of solely, or should it be more open-sourced? ...Some people might be concerned with political biases or ideological biases that might be in the code itself."

The team aims to publish the research later this winter or by spring 2024 in the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Security & Privacy journal.

Our view: Twitter Blue risks safety of users

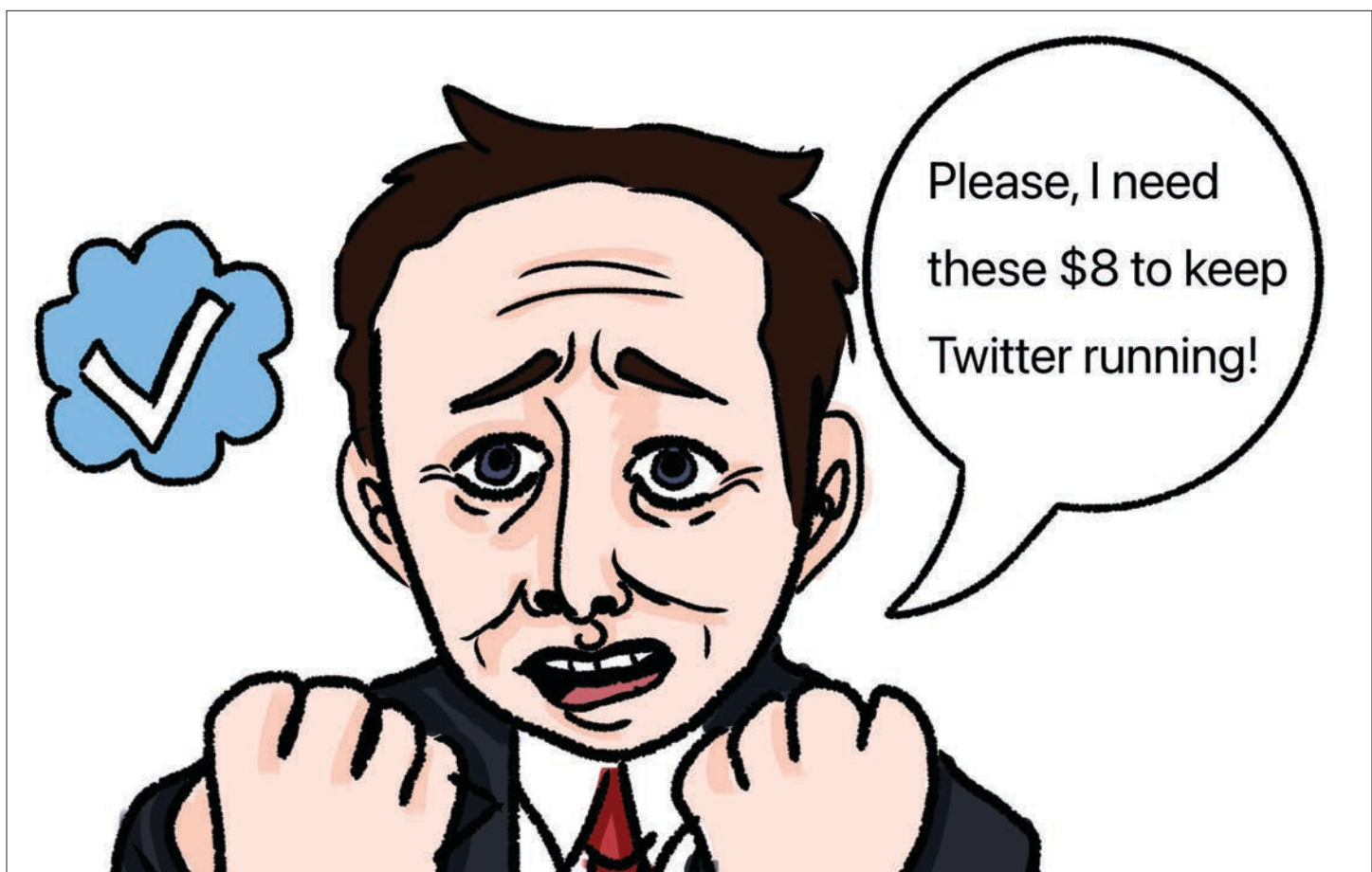
After firing over 6,000 employees and offering to reinstate former President Donald Trump's banned account, Tesla founder and tech billionaire Elon Musk's acquisition of social media platform Twitter has been nothing short of chaotic and messy. The most change came from Musk's Twitter Blue verification service. First released on Dec. 12, 2022, Twitter Blue allows users to buy a blue checkmark for \$8 per month. If subscribed, users get the ability to edit their Tweets and use more characters per Tweet than other users.

Originally, there was no way to tell the difference between an account verified for its merit versus an account subscribed to the Twitter Blue service. This led to multiple issues and public concern with verification, affecting the safety of online communities and the economic safety of businesses.

Pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly and Co and arms and defense dealer Lockheed Martin Corp were some of Twitter Blue's first victims.

An account impersonating Eli Lilly and Co posted about their free insulin prices, and as a result, the company's stock dropped by approximately 4%, according to *The Washington Post*. This impersonation cost the corporation billions of dollars in stock prices but opened the company up to positive conversation about their inflated insulin prices.

Lockheed Martin Corp suffered a similar fate when a parody Twitter account Tweeted about halting all arms business with the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Israel because of human rights violations. As a result, the



Wesley Hammer/*The News*

corporation lost over \$7 billion in stock prices.

We at *The News* believe these corporations' losses could have been avoided if Musk had not distorted the importance of identity verification.

The main issue of Twitter Blue stems from the most recent update to the policy. All users who received verification for their notoriety like celebrities and journalists had their verification marks removed and were asked to pay for the service. This leaves these users without the ability to ever fully verify who they claim to be and leaves them vulnerable to harmful impersonation.

We at *The News* believe verification should be free because it is meant to protect the consumer and allows for true engagement.

Verification on social media began as a way to dissuade people from impersonating important people online.

Journalists largely benefited from the introduction of the blue checkmarks because their readers could verify their news was coming from a credible source. Coming out of the pandemic, where misinformation and conspiracy theories were spread by false sources on social media, it is very troubling Musk wants to worsen the problem, not fix it.

With concerns of "fake news" and misinformation running rampant on all sides, it is no surprise why Elon Musk would approve this service.

Twitter's revenue has fallen by approximately 50% since Musk acquired the social media site, according to Bloomberg. Major companies that once provided a good portion of Twitter's ad sales backed out future advertisement deals since Musk bought the platform. Companies like Coca-Cola, Ford and Chipotle no longer run advertisements

on Twitter.

With these major revenue losses, Musk is willing to risk the safety of the platform and its users for a quick buck.

Musk banked on celebrities paying for Twitter Blue to keep their blue checkmarks, but the opposite effect occurred. Celebrities like LeBron James and newspapers like *The New York Times* have been public with their dislike and refusal to pay for the service.

The blue checkmark has become a symbol of shame for Twitter users, and celebrities have shown they are not willing to pay for it.

Twitter Blue is the latest example of Musk's reckless attempts to increase Twitter's profitability with random ideas that do not support its users on the platform. Musk should not be throwing the safety of Twitter's users away to break even on a questionable financial decision.



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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.

The News' seniors sign off

Dionte Berry, Editor-in-Chief

Dionte Berry
Editor-in-Chief

I joined *The News* team when I was a freshman in the fall of 2019 with zero journalism experience. At that point I didn't know what a big role *The News* would play in the next three years of my college experience. I have worked multiple positions over the years and I am proud to be finishing my undergraduate experience as the Editor-in-Chief of *The News*.

I am thankful for the editors who were guides to me when I first joined their ranks, always willing to answer my constant questions and work with my

Adobe illiteracy. I am thankful for the editors who have joined during my tenure that I have seen grow into great and confident editors.

I would also like to thank the current Adviser of *The News* Carol Terracina Hartman and the former Adviser Stephanie Anderson. During their respective times at *The News* they have been rocks that I have been able to rely on.

Lastly, I would like to thank those who read our newspapers, scroll through our website and like our posts on social media. Thank you for supporting student journalism, young members of the fourth estate.



Dionte Berry/*The News*



Photo courtesy of Breckyn McKinney

Emery Wainscott, Chief Copy Editor

Emery Wainscott
Chief Copy Editor

When I first heard of *The News*, I thought there was no way I had the ability to be part of something like a college newspaper. Thankfully, my professor at the time praised my writing and encouraged me to apply. I knew I had strengths (and weaknesses) I needed to hone and work on, and there was no better place to do such than *The News*.

Murray State's Department of Journalism and Mass Communications taught me to always have a backup of your backup of your backup. It taught me to triple check both my mic and audio

recorder are on before I interview someone. It taught me a lede can be reworked 20 times—and in the end, the first one you had was the best choice.

But most importantly, it taught me resilience and determination by chasing a good story, patience by knowing when to let a story go and kindness by knowing and allowing someone to back out of a story.

I want to thank my fantastic journalism professors—particularly Professor Leigh Wright for never giving up on me. And thank you to the readers, who keep us on our toes.

Happy graduation!

Will Groves, Opinion Editor

Will Groves
Opinion Editor

If you ask any of my friends to describe me, "opinionated" would be one of the most common answers. As a political science major, I am always ecstatic when someone asks me my opinions on current political issues, and I am so glad to have had the opportunity to share these opinions with our readers.

I would like to thank my fellow members of the Editorial Board and Adviser Carol Terracina-Hartman for their assistance in my understanding of journalism. Thank you for reeling me back in when I got a little

too ambitious and for inspiring ideas when it seemed like nothing was going on in the world.

Thank you to my friends from the Department of Political Science and Sociology who recommended I apply for the Opinion Editor position and now consistently read the newspaper. When the position opened up for my last semester of undergraduate studies, I knew I had to jump on the opportunity. I would not trade this experience for the world.

Finally, thank you to our readers. We at *The Murray State News* would not be able to put out our content without your support.



Will Groves/*The News*



Dionte Berry/*The News*

Raleigh Hightower, Lifestyle Editor

Raleigh Hightower
Lifestyle Editor

When I first got involved with *The News* my junior year, I really had no idea what to expect. Initially, I was just looking to get more involved and grow my resume. Even though as a political science major I had no connection to journalism, what we do here at *The News* became personal for me rather quickly.

From the first story I wrote with *The News*, I have always enjoyed the voice we have on campus. Here at *The News* we get to recognize people and bring them into the spotlight for the things they're passionate about,

the effort they have put into building the university community and for their creativity. Oftentimes it seems like the same people are ones being praised and recognized, and I have always enjoyed being able to cast the light on projects that might have flown under most people's radar.

While I may not be pursuing a future in journalism, the experiences I have gained through *The News* will always follow me. I would like to extend the highest level of respect to my counterparts here at *The News* who have time and time again selflessly dedicated themselves to the University community.

CONGRATS SPRING AND SUMMER 2023 GRADUATES!

Good luck to all
Spring and Summer
2023 Grads!
#30
From *The News*

CONGRATULATIONS



Dionte Berry, Grace Boatright, Connor Capito, Noah Crum, Rachel Essner, Emery Wainscott and Dustin Wilcox

Congratulations on your achievements! Best wishes for a bright future in the media.

Best, Professor Leigh Wright

CONGRATS TO THE NEWS GRADS



Class of 2023

DIONTE BERRY
EMERY WAINSCOTT
RALEIGH HIGHTOWER
WILL GROVES

BRAYLEE FINCK
ELIZABETH (LIBBY) GERDES
RACHEL KIDD
TAYLOR PAGE

MURRAY STATE

KATE MANLEY

SPRING 2023
GRADUATING SENIOR



MSU ADS CLUB

CONGRATULATIONS

SIGMA ALPHA PROFESSIONAL SORORITY IS PROUD
TO ANNOUNCE OUR SPRING 2023 GRADUATES:

- Grace Buchanan
- Megan Calloway
- Maggie Faecke
- Braylee Finck
- Samantha Habenstein
- Abby Herzing
- Olivia Hritzkowin
- Karlie Kelley
- Gracey Moffitt
- Ashley Prott
- Morgan Robertson
- Abigail Vandenberg



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the PRSSA Members graduating May 13.



Brittany Kenner



Eli Pitcock



Eliza Simikian



Grace Rapp

Thank you for your leadership!



Rebeca Mertins Chiodini/The News

Junior right handed-pitcher Malik Pogue (left) and graduate right hander Ben Krizen (right) combined for seven strikeouts as the Racers defeated SEMO 5-0 on Tuesday, May 2.

Pitching carousel shuts out Redhawks

Jakob Milani
Sports Editor
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The saying goes “three wins is a streak,” and the Murray State Racers are on a win streak as they took down the SEMO Redhawks on the road for their third consecutive win on Tuesday, May 2.

The Racers used six different pitchers on their way to a 5-0 win over the Redbirds. The pitchers combined for 15 strikeouts in 35 batters and allowed just three hits in the nine innings.

After the Racers went down in order in the top of the first inning, junior left-handed pitcher Allen Roulette took the mound for Murray State and struck out a pair of Redhawks to end the inning, despite walking one batter.

Roulette went back out to pitch in the second inning and struck out another SEMO batter, leaving the game scoreless through two innings.

Murray State loaded the bases in the top half of the third inning, but

failed to have anyone cross home plate for a run. Junior right-handed pitcher Matt Boynton relieved Roulette in the bottom of the third, and despite giving up a hit, got the other three batters out and kept the game scoreless.

The fourth inning was a near repeat as Boynton struck out a batter and allowed a hit, but the two teams still failed to put any runs on the board.

After two Racers struck out in the top of the fifth inning, junior right-handed pitcher Alex Elsing took the mound for Murray State and walked the first batter before striking out the next three.

The scoreless tie was finally broken in the top of the sixth inning.

Sophomore infielder Riley Hawthorne led off the inning with a single before sophomore outfielder Dustin Mercer stepped up to the plate and hit a home run to right field, putting the Racers up 2-0.

Elsing forced one out in the bottom half of the sixth before being relieved by junior left hander Thomas McNabb. He struck out his

first batter but walked the next three to load the bases.

Junior right-handed pitcher Malik Pogue relieved McNabb after the three walks and forced a fly out to get the Racers out of the inning unscathed.

Neither team scored a run in the seventh or eighth inning, with Pogue striking out four batters through the two innings.

Junior infielder Drew Vogel drew a walk to start the ninth inning, followed by a single from junior catcher Ethan Krizen. Sophomore infielder Parker Estes then stepped up to the plate and hit a single of his own, allowing Vogel to score from second and add to the Racers’ lead.

Senior outfielder Seth Gardner then stepped up and reached base on a fielder’s choice, loading the bases for Mercer. He proceeded to hit a single up the middle and bring in two more runs to give the Racers a 5-0 lead.

Graduate right-handed pitcher Ben Krizen came in to close the game out for the Racers. He struck

out the first batter before allowing a single, then struck out the last two batters to secure the Racers’ win and the season series over the Redhawks.

Murray State had seven hits total in the game, with Hawthorne and Mercer each getting a pair. Pogue led the pitching staff with four strikeouts while three other pitchers fanned three batters each. They allowed just three hits and gave up five walks, facing 35 batters in total.

The Racers themselves struck out 15 times at the plate and drew just three walks, batting a total of 39 times.

Murray State improves to 25-21 on the season, the fifth-best overall record in the MVC. The Racers MVC record sits at 10-8, good for the fourth spot in the Valley standings.

Just three conference series remain for Murray State this season, with a one-game series against Belknap University falling in the middle. The Racers host Missouri State in their next series, with game one set for 5 p.m. on Friday, May 5.



SHANN RILEY/ THE NEWS

THE NEWS'
ATHLETE
OF THE WEEK
MAY 4

CARSON GARNER
BASEBALL, SOPHOMORE
INFILDER #8

IN THE LAST FOUR GAMES*
7-18 BATTING (.273 THIS SEASON)
4 HOME RUNS (9 THIS SEASON)
1 DOUBLE
5 RBI'S
✧ NAMED MVC PLAYER OF THE WEEK

REBECA MERTINS CHIODINI / THE NEWS

Softball drops back-to-back to Salukis

Ronan Summers

Staff Writer

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The Racers traveled to Carbondale, Illinois this past weekend to play the SIU Salukis in what was Murray State's final road series of the year.

The weekend series that took place from Friday, April 28 through Sunday, April 30 was very competitive with both teams showing why they are at the top of the MVC.

With the MVC Championship around the corner, a fourth game between these two teams in the tournament could be exactly what softball fans need.

Game One

Senior right-handed pitcher Hannah James got the start for the Racers on Friday, as junior right-handed pitcher Hannah Hockerman got the start for the Salukis.

The Racers scored first, as freshman utility player Adison Hicks reached first base after an error by Hockerman at the top of the second inning. This error allowed freshman outfielder Bailey Broemmer to cross home plate, giving the game its first score.

Sophomore outfielder Erin Lackey then bunted with junior infielder Lily Fischer on third base. The squeeze bunt was successful, as Fischer scored, and Lackey successfully made it to first base.

SIU replaced Hockerman with right-handed pitcher Madi Eberle with one out at the top of the second inning. Eberle was able to do some damage control for her team, as the Salukis were down 2-0 at the end of the inning.

The Racers added onto their lead at the top of the third inning, as Hicks hit a sacrifice flyout to allow freshman utility player Shelby Durbin to tag up and score.

Senior infielder Lindsey Carroll doubled at the top of the fourth inning, driving in senior infielder Gracie Osbron and giving the Racers a 4-0 lead. Neither team scored after Carroll's double, resulting in a 4-0 final score.

As a team, the Racers had five hits and five walks. Broemmer got



Rebeca Mertins Chiodini/The News

Freshman outfielder Bailey Broemmer drew five walks and got a hit against the Southern Illinois Salukis throughout the three-game series.

on base on three occasions in the win. She walked twice, hit a single and scored a run. Lackey, Osbron, junior catcher Taylor Jackson and freshman infielder Ailey Schyck all recorded a hit respectively. James pitched all seven innings, finishing with four strikeouts, one batter walked, five hits allowed and no earned runs.

Game Two

Junior right-handed pitcher Jenna Veber got the start for the Racers on Saturday, as Eberle got the start for the Salukis.

SIU got on the board in the bottom of the second inning after senior outfielder Aubree DePron singled up the middle, driving junior infielder Rylie Hamilton home.

This was the only score of the game, as SIU won 1-0.

Fischer recorded Murray State's lone hit on Saturday, as Veber got the loss. Veber pitched all six innings, allowing four hits, one run,

one walk and struck two batters out.

Game Three

Sunday's matchup was a shootout. Both teams brought their bats, as 23 total runs were scored.

Eberle started on Sunday for the Salukis, and James got the start for the Racers. Both starting pitchers had been replaced by the second inning.

A Saluki error in the first inning set the Racers up to score twice at the top of the first inning. SIU knotted things back up after a two-run home run in the bottom of the first inning, ending the first inning 2-2.

SIU turned up the heat in the bottom of the second inning, scoring four times. A strong eight-run inning for the Racers allowed them to retake the lead at the top of the fourth. The fourth inning ended with the Racers up 10-6.

The Salukis added another run onto the board in the bottom of the fifth inning. The Racers retaliated at the top of the sixth with another

run of their own. SIU hit a grand slam in the bottom of the sixth inning, tying the game at 11 apiece.

The Racers were held scoreless at the top of the seventh inning, allowing the Salukis to hit a walkoff single in the bottom of the seventh inning and giving the Salukis a 12-11 win in what was an offensive thriller.

Murray State cycled through three pitchers and allowed 14 hits, 12 runs, eight earned runs and one walk in Sunday's loss to the Salukis. Murray State batters recorded nine hits and five walks. They also left six runners on base.

After the win and pair of losses, the Racers are 32-18 overall and 16-8 against conference opponents. Murray State now sits in fourth place just a little over a week away from the MVC Championship.

The Racers will host the Missouri State Bears in the team's final regular season series of the year. The series will be held on Racer Field from Friday, May 5 through Sunday, May 7.

Track and field preps for conference meet

Ronan Summers

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As the Racers continue to prep for the MVC Outdoor Championships, the team performed well at the Jim Green Invitational over the weekend.

Murray State had five event winners and three top-10 performances in the invitational, with many other notable performers as well.

Heading into championship week, sophomore thrower Alexis Meloche says she feels good about the team's chances.

"Right now, we're feeling really good about how we're doing," Meloche said. "Especially from last weekend and how much success we had in our Lexington meet. It shows that we're prepared for this weekend and that we're individually ready for our events."

The Jim Green Invitational hosted by the University of Kentucky from Friday, April 28 to Saturday, April 29 was the final meet to tune up the Racers before the conference outdoor championship.

The Racers were able to place in two short distance events. Junior sprinter Teliyah James finished third in the 200 meter dash with a final time of 23.62 seconds. Sophomore

sprinter Amyah Davis finished with a time of 1:01.40 and placed third in the 400 meter hurdles.

Freshman distance runner Allison Wood ran the 3,000 meter steeplechase in 11:59.02, earning her first place.

Murray State also finished third in the 4x400 with a time of 3:47.26.

The Racers had three of the five top place finishes in the 3,000 meter run. Sophomore distance runner Ruth Kimutai's final time was 10:47.47, earning her second. Freshman distance runner Jocelyn Host finished in third place with a time of 10:57.60. Freshman distance runner Samantha Tucci placed fourth, finishing with a time of 11:05.93.

Murray State finished first and second in the long jump. Senior jumper Rachel Hagans earned first place with a 6.45 meter jump. Junior jumper Jenna Pauly jumped 6 meters, earning her second place.

The Racers continued to have success jumping, as junior jumper Meghan Fletcher jumped 1.71 meters on her first attempt, earning first place.

Senior jumper Brooke Misukonis finished in third place in the pole vault with a jump of 3.81. Pauly finished fourth in the event with a jump of 3.81.



Photo courtesy of Ben Nichols

Sophomore thrower Alexis Meloche won the javelin event at the Jim Green Invitational hosted by UK.

Meloche finished first in the javelin throw with a final throw of 40.11 meters. She commented on her improvement from last year.

"Last year's meet, I think I was only throwing mid 30's, and this year I got to the 40's, which puts me in a good place for conference," Meloche said. Junior middle distance runner

Kayla Bell ran the invitational 800 meter run in 2:06.37 and finished first place in the last event of the Jim Green Invitational.

After an overall positive weekend in Lexington, the Racers should be primed and ready to go. The MVC Outdoor Championship will be held in Normal, Illinois from May 12 through May 14.

Journalism staff member retires after 27 years

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Murray State's journalism and mass communications department prepares for the departure of Administrative Assistant Marion Hale, who has worked at the University for over 27 years.

Before her time with the Journalism and Mass Communications Office, Hale had worked in three different departments on campus over her 27 years of employment, spending some of her earlier years in the Dean's Office in Fine Arts and Communications, an office that has since been redone and separated into two different offices.

"I've enjoyed meeting people," Hale said. "That's my one concern, keeping up with the people and the students. It's been fun to watch the students as they come through in the different offices and especially [in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications] because I've been here the longest. I'm going to miss them."

One of Hale's most memorable moments from over the 27 years happened when one of her former student workers invited her to come and sing at his wedding.

Hale said while she was nervous, it was one of those things that she could ever forget.

Hale initially began her time at Murray State as a student in 1974, with both of her parents working at the University in some capacity. Knowing the retirement system through her parent's campus experiences, Marion sought out a career at the university herself.

"My mom worked on campus for about 20 years in food service, so I was familiar with campus," Hale said. "My dad worked on campus until he was actually



(From left) Associate Professor Bella Ezumah congratulates JMC Administrative Assistant Marion Hale at Hale's retirement reception on Monday. Photo courtesy of Orville Herndon

old enough to retire."

She came back to work at Murray State after years in the workforce because of the generous benefits offered to employees. Through her parent's experiences, she had prior knowledge of how the accumulation of paid vacation and sick days worked at Murray State. Hale made it her goal to remain employed long enough to be eligible for the guaranteed medical insurance for life, a retirement perk in place for employees of over 20 years.

Hale reflected on the differences throughout the University since she first began working here, from the numerous physical expansions to the development and implication of technology.

"When I first came to campus, I did have a computer," Hale said. "It was with one screen, but I also had a desk that had a typewriter. We used that quite a bit for several things, but now, everything that

we used to do [on it], I can do on a computer. So things have changed like that. Of course, people have changed. Most of us have some gray hair now. But I think just in general, it's just more modern."

After retiring, Hale said she was looking forward to enjoying some time with her nieces and nephews, who are scattered around the Midwest, and finally getting around to some household renovations.

Like most retirees, Hale has plans to travel and hopes to go on a river cruise in the fall, traveling along the Mississippi River from New Orleans, Louisiana, to Memphis, Tennessee.

Hale admitted she has had to adapt over the years, but those changes have kept her going.

"Be willing to adapt because if you don't, you won't want to stay," Hale said. "You won't keep up with what's going on on campus, in the world. You've got to keep learn-

ing no matter what and never be satisfied."

Because she's a Murray local, Hale does not have to worry about missing out on some of the traditions and aspects of campus life, from seasonal sports to musical performances.

"My husband and I attend a lot of programs and get to watch a lot of my students in those programs, which was really fun," Hale said. "A couple of my student workers were in plays that we got to go see in Johnson Theater. Some of my students were in marching band."

While Hale is excited for the next chapter in life, she says she will miss the friends she has made over the years the most.

"It's hard to say between all the people across campus who I'll miss the most," Hale said. "I might have to sneak back in when the faculty have their end of this semester meetings and have lunch with them. I don't think they'll mind."

Humanities and Fine Arts office awards faculty, staff

Caroline Blakeman
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The College of Humanities and Fine Arts awarded CHFA Excellence awards to faculty and staff last week.

Five variations of the award were given, which included Excellence in Teaching, Excellence in Research and Creative Activity, Excellence in Service, Excellence in Mentoring and Staff Excellence.

The recipients of the awards were Jim Bryant, Matthew Robertson, Paul Foote, T. Michael Martin and Tori Herndon.

Paul Foote, an associate professor of political science, has worked at the University for seven years and was presented with the CHFA Excellence in Service Award.

Foote said he was quite pleased and surprised when the award was announced.

"I hope my students take note of my dedication and commitment to working with them through the arduous process of becoming a mock trial attorney," he said.

This was Foote's first Excellence Award at Murray State, but he was also awarded a service award during his time working at Eastern Kentucky



(From left) History Administrative Assistant Tori Herndon and Associate Professor Paul Foote were both recognized in the CHFA excellence awards. Photo courtesy of CHFA newsletter and murraystate.edu

University for the 2011-12 academic year.

"I want to thank the CHFA awards committee for this honor," he said.

Tori Herndon is the administrative assistant for the Department of History and was given her first Excellence Award, which is the CHFA Staff Excellence award.

"Honestly, I was a little shocked," Herndon said. "I am very grateful for the group of faculty members that I work with and knowing that they appreciate my efforts is very rewarding."

She has worked at the University since July 2013, originally hired as a records assistant for the Transfer Center, which has since merged with the Admissions Office. She later transferred to her current position in the history department.

Herndon said one of her responsibilities in her department is supervising student workers.

"I strive to help each student worker develop skills and communications that will help them transition from students to gainfully employed

members of society," she said. "I try to show them how tasks they complete as student workers can translate to job skills they can use on their resumes."

She said receiving her award is another teaching moment for her student workers.

"It provides proof that hard work does create rewards of many kinds, such as the acknowledgment that you are doing your work well," she said.

To learn more about the CHFA excellence awards, visit smore.com/xpad5-college-of-humanities-and-fine-arts.

New art exhibition celebrates biodiversity, nature

Raleigh Hightower

Lifestyle Editor

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In a first-of-its-kind art exhibition, contributors across several different majors used art to explore biodiversity.

The 2023 Biodiversity Art Exhibition was organized by Professor of Plant Ecology Kate He.

He, who has been working at Murray State for 23 years, decided to host this exhibit after her own experiences exhibiting photography locally and because of the region's recent history with extreme weather. "By participating in a few exhibitions, I realized that very few exhibitions are nature or biodiversity focused," He said. "Given the fact that multiple extreme weather events have happened in the region, having healthy ecosystems around us has become even more crucial."

She also hosted the exhibition in hopes it would encourage collaboration between scientists and artists.

This year is the first year the Biodiversity Art Exhibition has been hosted, and He says the time around Earth Day was the perfect time for the exhibition to come to campus.

"We celebrate Earth Day each spring with multiple events on campus," He said. "I thought a biodiversity art exhibit would be a good way to celebrate Earth, to promote regional biodiversity and to bring artists and scientists together on campus and in the local community."

The exhibition was juried by a panel of four judges. The judges included He, Professor of Evolutionary Biology Howard Whiteman, Assistant Professor of Art and Design Cintia Segovia Figueroa and Executive Director of the Murray Art Guild Debi Danielson.

The judges evaluated submissions based on a set of general criteria that included, among other things, originality, creativity, visual design, aesthetic appeal and adherence to the theme.

The exhibit, which received 64 submissions, was narrowed down to 32 exhibited works. Of the 32 works, the panel of judges selected a "Best of Show" piece, first place, second place, third place and an honorable mention.

The winners of this year's exhibit were also given



First place piece 'Hügelland' by Susan Krieb on display in the Biology Building's Atrium on April 28.

Jayden Hayn/The News

monetary prizes with their awards, thanks to the funding provided by the Watershed Studies Institute and the Department of Biological Sciences.

Senior studio art major Laurie Snellen was awarded Best in Show for her piece titled "A Glitch in Biodiversity: Meadowlark." Snellen's piece, which depicts a Meadowlark bird, aims to highlight the intricacies of the biodiversity crisis through the lens of birds, a group of animals that are especially sensitive to climate change.

"I am very invested in biodiversity, as I believe it is an aspect of the climate and environmental crisis that is overlooked too often," Snellen said. "It is my goal to spread awareness so more people can learn to do their part to help the environment."

The first place award went to Susan Krieb, an administrative specialist in Teacher Education Services at the College of Education and Human Services. Krieb's piece, a fabric landscape titled "Hügelland," depicts a series of rolling hills, each of which contains a different crop.

Krieb said one of the best things about her experience with the exhibit was the way it made biology and biodiversity more accessible.

"By displaying the beauty of biology through artwork,

even those not familiar with biology or biodiversity are able to have a visual connection to it," Krieb said. "Hopefully, through collaborations like this, we can learn to appreciate and understand the beauty and complexity of nature, and in turn, take better care of it."

The second place submission went to senior wildlife biology and conservation major Dawson Gray. Gray's piece was a photograph titled "Chorus Frog in Leaves."

Gray's photo depicted a chorus frog in a Murray State lab this semester. Gray also submitted two other photos to the exhibit, which depicted a mockingbird and a smothered dagger moth.

The exhibit also recognized a third place winner, Patty Hughes, and an honorable mention, Paul Grumley.

He hopes to expand the event next year and include more artists from around the region.

Spring 2023 Final Exam Schedule

Exam Day:	For Classes That Meet at:	Exam Time
Monday, May 8	8:30 a.m. MWF	8:00 a.m.
	11:00 a.m. TR	10:30 a.m.
	2:30 p.m. MWF	1:30 p.m.
	Monday evening	Same as regular class time
Tuesday, May 9	9:30 a.m. MWF	8:00 a.m.
	11:30 a.m. MWF	10:30 a.m.
	12:30 p.m. TR	1:30 p.m.
	Tuesday evening	Same as regular class time
Wednesday, May 10	9:30 a.m. TR	8:00 a.m.
	12:30 p.m. MWF	10:30 a.m.
	2:00 p.m. TR	1:30 p.m.
	Wednesday evening	Same as regular class time
Thursday, May 11	8:00 a.m. TR	8:00 a.m.
	4:30 p.m. MWF	8:00 a.m.
	10:30 a.m. MWF	10:30 a.m.
	1:30 p.m. MWF	1:30 p.m.
Friday, May 12	Thursday evening	Same as regular class time
	7:30 a.m. MWF	8:00 a.m.
	3:30 p.m. TR	8:00 a.m.
	3:30 p.m. MWF	10:30 a.m.

Source: Murraystate.edu

**9 DAYS
UNTIL
GRADUATION**

★

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