



THE MURRAY STATE NEWS

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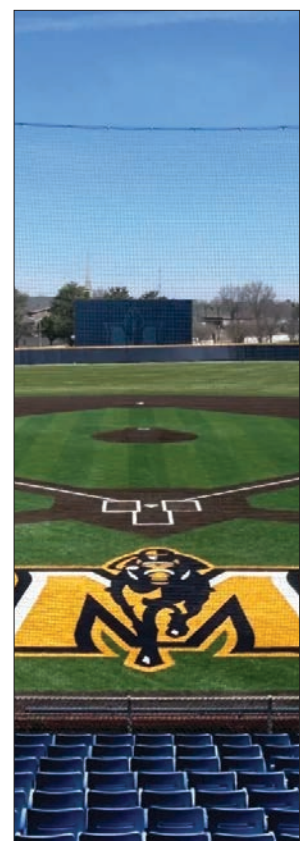
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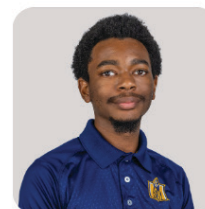
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award-winning, student-run news
organization at Murray State.*

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War in Iran continues to strain US citizens

Students express displeasure over rising global tensions

Harper Spaulding & Denys Bogushko

News Reporters

jspaulding2@murraystate.edu &

dbogushko@murraystate.edu

Over a month into the war in Iran, Murray State students speak up about their concerns regarding the conflict and what it could mean for the country.

On Feb. 28, American and Israeli forces began the weeks-long conflict with operation “Epic Fury,” launching heavy airstrikes against Iranian military infrastructure. In his announcement, President Donald Trump said the attack was intended to cripple Iran’s missile industry and eliminate its nuclear threat. The war also follows months of aggression between Iran and Israel, and a growing Iranian protest movement against the country’s oppressive government.

According to a study by the Pew Research Center, 44% of Americans disapprove of Trump’s handling of the Iran war, with over half saying it was the wrong decision to use military action in the country. At Murray State, student opinions were much the same.

“I really do not agree with this administration at all, and I think it’s a pretty stupid thing to put us into a war, especially if they’re promising not to put us in any more wars,” said Abby Martin, a freshman pre-vet major.

Martin, like many of her peers interviewed by The News, expressed her disapproval of the war and said it was tragic to see people on both sides dying unnecessarily. Martin, who lives about three hours away from Murray State, said gas prices had already risen 60 cents when she made it home for spring break.

Keaton Flint, a freshman computer science major, also expressed his disapproval of the war and said it was a waste for the national economy. Flint said this



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

Iran controls the Strait of Hormuz.

war was another broken campaign promise by Trump, whose promise for peace has become a multi-billion-dollar overseas conflict.

“They say we don’t have money for healthcare, childcare or education, but we can spend a billion dollars a day bombing innocent children in hospitals and schools and Iran,” Flint said.

Along with gas prices, Flint said he was worried the war was negatively affecting our relationship with our allies as the country continues to fumble on the world stage. Flint said it was a bad look for the administration that backed out of the Iran Nuclear Deal to launch a war to prevent Iran from getting nukes.

Read more on our website:



Oil prices jump as war in Iran affects trade channels

Shelby Bloomer

Staff Writer

sbloomer@murraystate.edu

As the war rages on in Iran, many Americans are starting to feel the impacts on their wallets as prices skyrocket. The longer the overseas conflict lasts, the larger the impact on the global economy, including the U.S.

The 2026 war on Iran officially began on Feb. 28, when Israel and the U.S. started bombing the Middle-Eastern country, killing Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. In response to the attacks, Iran blocked the Strait of Hormuz, a vital passageway used by oil-carrying ships. According to Forbes, the shipping passage “accounts for 20% of the world’s oil every day.”

Since Iran began its blockade, threatening to attack any ships that attempt to cross through, the price of oil has increased. According to

The New York Times, the price of oil surged to \$100 per barrel, and it may be “the worst disruption to oil supplies in history.”

As a result, gas prices are already rising, with the national average price per gallon (as of March 29) reaching \$3.980, according to data from the American Automobile Association. In Kentucky, the average price for that same day was \$3.717. In comparison, at the same time last year, the national average price per gallon was \$3.159, while Kentucky’s average price was \$2.831.

Read more on our website:



ICYMI: Murray citizens join No Kings protest, form new Indivisible chapter

River Murt

News Editor

rmurt1@murraystate.edu

About 100 people gathered for a No Kings protest in Murray on the corner of North 121 and 12th Street on March 28, displaying signs to all passing traffic.

The No Kings protest is a national front against the Trump administration and its policy, specifically in regard to ICE’s action toward immigrants and U.S. citizens alike, the mis-handling of the Epstein files, the president’s activities in the files and the war in Iran.

No Kings protests are conducted regularly in Kentucky cities like Paducah and Lexington, national cities like New York and Washington D.C. and have also appeared worldwide in cities such as Paris and Tokyo.

Michael Stickler, a Vietnam War veteran, said he joined the protest to support the people against violence in the United States.

“We have been put in a position now that this is like neighbor against neighbor,” Stickler said. “That’s so wrong

because we love our neighbors around the world, and that’s what we’re trying to emphasize here today.”

Mike Sorrendo, a Murray resident, waved a particular black and white flag with three down-pointed arrows. The flag belonged to the 1930’s German resistance group against the Nazi party — the Iron Front. Sorrendo said this flag flies at his house.

“Our resistance is probably going to be more successful,” Sorrendo said. “(The Iron Front) found it important to stand up for what they thought and believed in as far as government, and although they weren’t successful, I think they set kind of a bar for those of us who believe in democracy.”

Barbara Phillips, a Lexington resident, was visiting western Kentucky for the national geocache at Land Between the Lakes when the protest was announced.

“It’s a wonderful annual event,” Phillips said about the geocache. “It’s part of the amazing splendor, wonder and beauty of our national forests and parks — which are being raped by the current administration.”

Please see Protest | 5



Protesters stand on the corner of North 121 and 12th streets.

River Murt/The News

Heckler car swerves into protestors

Continued from page 4

Philips told The News she and her family weren't needed in Lexington to protest the president. With Philips's family having academic ties to Murray State, paying property taxes in Marshall County and being a Kentuckian — protesting at an event like this means something.

"This is home, of course, Kentucky is one of those states that was divided in the Civil War in a way, and we're headed that way now, and we hate to see it," Philips said. "These (Murray folks), I'm very glad to see them. To us in Lexington, this is not a big deal, and this is a small crowd — but here in deepest, reddest Kentucky, this takes some courage ... I've really enjoyed meeting the people that I've met here."

Philips's comment on courage was tested when a car swerved into protesters.

A woman protester, 59, who asked to be anonymous to protect her federal job, said the car swerved into them after its driver was swearing and heckling at them.

"(The driver) was leaning over, flipping us off, and obviously didn't hold the wheel as much," she said. "You could tell it was an accident. Like they were almost scared that it happened, too. But their (right) front wheel hit the curb and almost came up over the curb. You could hear it pop ... it probably popped their tire."

No one was hurt and the driver fled the scene.

While fellow protesters Jacque Watson and Peggy Veal shared similar sentiments with Philips, they said they wanted to know where the youth were, and they were not alone. Many protesters pulled aside a News staffer to ask the same question.

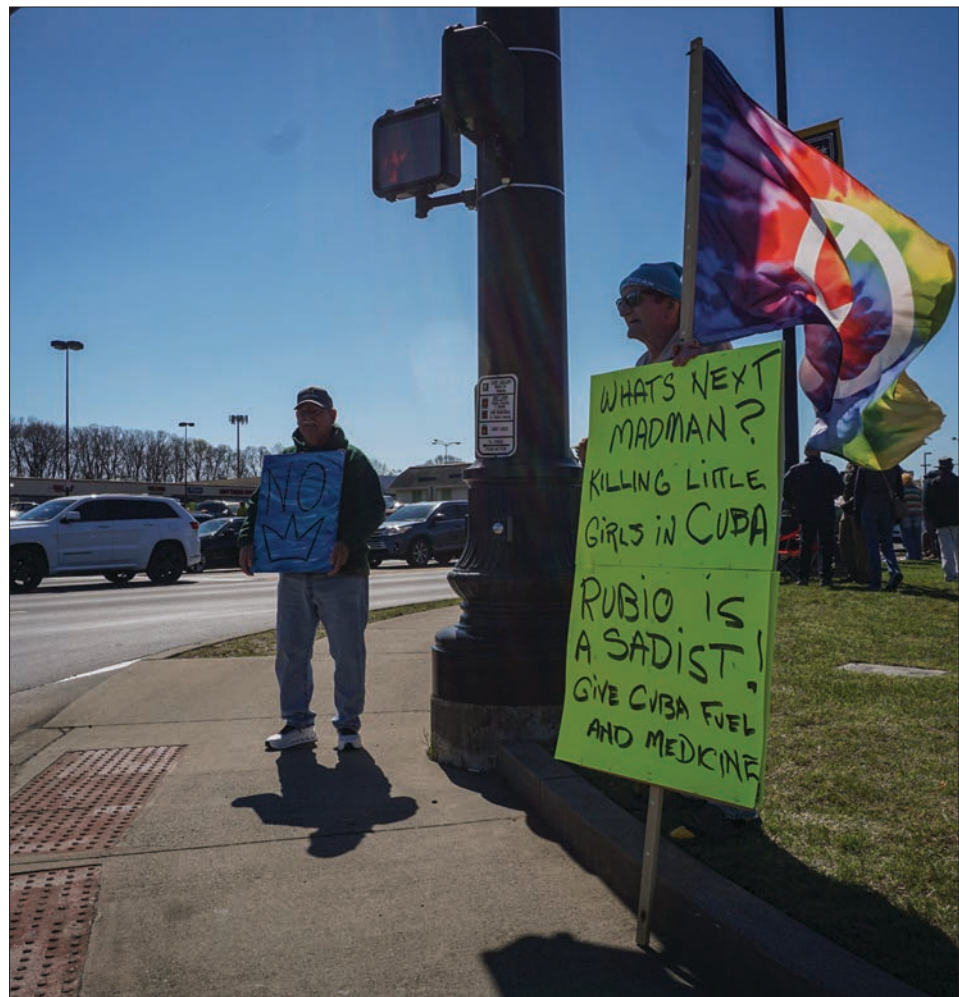
"We need to get some more young people because I know they're getting disillusioned too," Watson said. "They need to show up."

Courtney Peery, the organizer of the Murray event, said this protest was not a part of the larger No Kings protest list for Kentucky cities. Instead, the Callo-way County Human Rights Advocacy group, which also led the ICE Out protest on Feb. 17, organized the Murray event.

Peery said the turnout was "way bigger" than expected, and has "more than doubled" since February. Peery also said with a partnership in activism with Indivisible, another advocacy group planning to establish itself in Murray, she hopes the numbers will grow further.

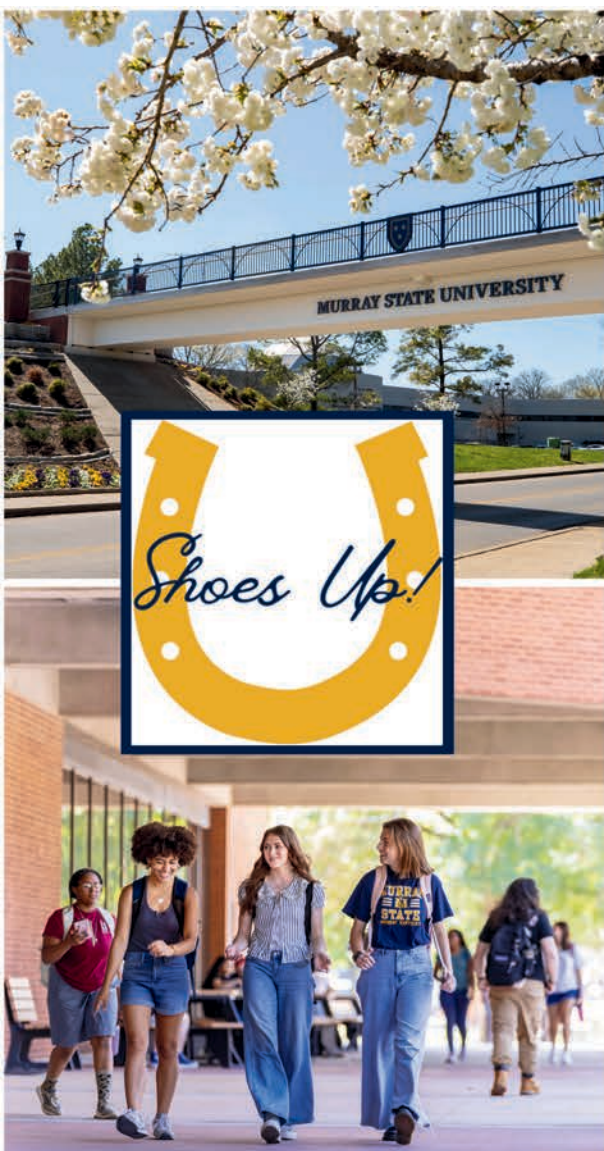
The first meeting for the Murray Indivisible group will be held at The Big Apple on 1005 Arcadia Circle, on April 17 at 6 p.m.

The flyer provided to News staff at the protest says all are welcome.



Protesters stand on the corner of North 121 and 12th streets.

River Murt/The News



Students First Days of Giving

Monday, April 13 and Tuesday, April 14

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The MSU Office of Development invites the entire Racer community to come together for two special days of giving in conjunction with the inauguration of the 15th President of Murray State University, Dr. Ron K. Patterson.

The Patterson family is committed to putting students first, and they have established the Students First Patterson Family Scholarship Fund to help ensure affordability and access for our students and their families.

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Campus speaks on inequalities at University

Shelby Bloomer

Staff Writer

sbloomer@murraystate.edu

As Women's History Month comes to a close, students and faculty say many are unaware of the campus resources available to them and offer suggestions for ways Murray State University could improve gender equity.

Following the passage of House Bill 4 last year — a law preventing public institutions from providing benefits or differential treatment based on factors like race and sex — Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs were dismantled in public universities nationwide. Murray State was no exception, with the University's Pride Center and Women's Center becoming the Oakley Student Lounge and Oakley Resource Center, respectively.

Presley Billingsley, a freshman majoring in sociology, is the president of the University's National Organization for Women Campus Action Network. She said the changes made to campus resources to make them compliant with HB 4 have caused some confusion among MSU NOW members who are now unsure of what resources are available to them and where to find them.

"That's a really big issue we've been dealing with," Billingsley said.

Resources for women on campus include the Oakley Resource Center, which provides free period products for those who need them. Billingsley said MSU NOW and some faculty members also stock certain bathrooms with period products when possible.

However, she said it's something that the University could be doing campus-wide.

"Having period products in every bathroom — even the men's bathrooms — would be helpful, especially with the rising costs of everything," Billingsley said.

One of the faculty members helping to stock products in Faculty Hall bathrooms is MSU NOW faculty adviser Christine Lindner, an associate professor of history and the president of West Kentucky NOW. Lindner said there are even fewer resources for faculty than there are for students, and many faculty are unaware of the resources they have available to them.

"There's confusion on, like, who do we even talk to when we have an issue when it comes to harassment or personal conflicts," Lindner said. "Do we go to HR? Do we go to Title IX? It's all very confusing."

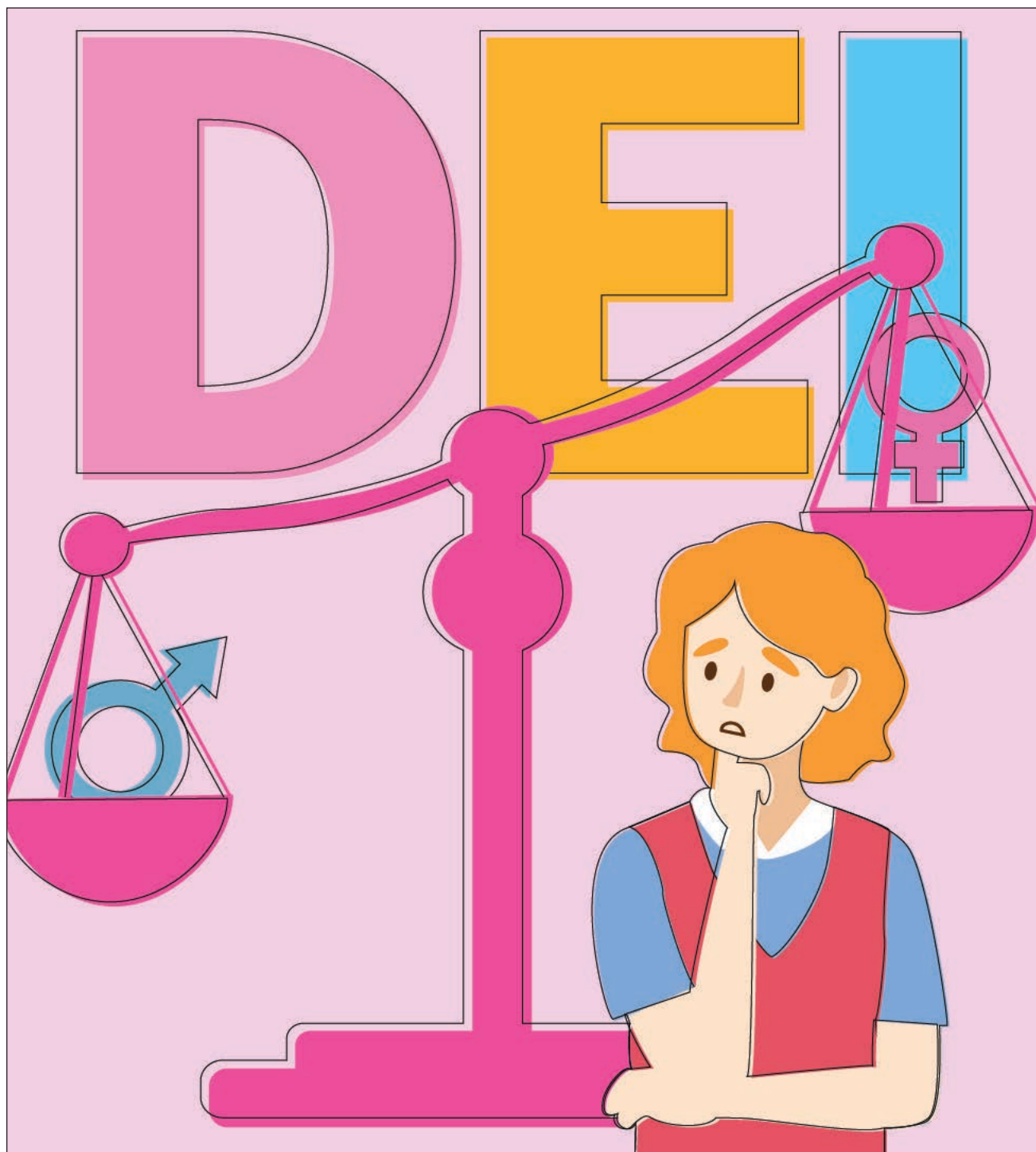
One thing she said would be a useful addition to faculty resources is an ombudsman — an independent, impartial official who investigates and mediates conflicts.

"An ombudsman would make a huge difference," Lindner said. "Somebody who would be able to mediate the conversations between faculty, staff and administration and would be able to illuminate some of the gaps in services ... I think that, to me, pursuing an ombudsman would be a really important kind of first step."

Lindner said as a professor, students have expressed a sense of confusion about available resources and where to find them. She found her own solution to that problem.

"What I did a couple years ago was I just made a list of all the support structures and services for students on campus and off campus," Lindner said. "I make that available on my syllabus, the homepage of my Canvas page, and now we've also uploaded it to the Canvas page of the history department ... I share every semester with all of my colleagues as well."

Lindner said the resources available to both students and faculty should be made more accessible and well-known, and wants that issue to become more of a priority.



Avery "Gingy" Poston/The News

"The fact that a number of our, you know — on-campus for both students and faculty — the resources have been renamed and so some people don't even know about them" Lindner said. "And that's coming from the federal government, but also the state government, and ... I think the University is in a really difficult situation, but I wish the University would take a little bit of a bolder step to recognize how beneficial having women on faculty, staff and as students are, and taking more proactive steps to make sure that we are safe and feel fully valued."

Billingsley and Lindner both said they felt seen, valued and respected as women in their respective fields and departments; however, they both acknowledge that it may not be the case for women in more science-based areas.

"I've talked to people in the science department, and (they're) not treated as the same," Billingsley said.

Billingsley also said she thinks the Title IX office should have a specific way of handling and labeling gender-based violence separately from other types of verbal or physical assault.

"I think there should be a differentiation between violence and gender-based violence, because they come from a different place," Billingsley said. "I feel like there's not enough of a distinction between gender violence against women and women who experienced violence."

While a lack of knowledge about resources has been a longstanding issue on campus, the recent crackdown on DEI initiatives has made it more prevalent.

"I think in this current political climate, there's a lot of uncertainty ... of what we can talk about, what we can teach about, and it's been very unclear, you know, what protections we have (and) where we can go for safe spaces to even talk about these issues," Lindner said.

The University has a list of resources available on its website, both on and off campus. These include the Oakley Resource Center, the Oakley Student Lounge, the Counseling Center, the Racers Helping Food Pantry and others. West Kentucky NOW is off-campus, but also offers a number of resources, including period products.

Anti-tenure House bill passes in state senate

Campus union to petition Beshear; bill may become law regardless

River Murt
News Editor
rmurti@murraystate.edu

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has less than two weeks left in its legislative session, meaning the General Assembly has nearly two weeks to draft and pass new legislation.

At this time, previously The Murray State News reported bills such as House Bills 769, 497, 646 and 773 have not progressed for some time, and will likely die in the legislative process.

These bills respectively involved extending KEES eligibility, tuition waivers for children of disabled or deceased servicemembers, declaring abortion medication a “controlled substance,” and making it a (felony or misdemeanor) to traffic and creating a domestic violence offender registry.

Its exceptions are HB 156, a bipartisan bill which would end child marriage in the state, and the postsecondary education impacting HB 490 — a bill intending to “undercut” tenure in Kentucky.

While HB 156 is still in a read-through process in the Senate, HB 490 and its planned rewrites to the existing standard language for tenure in the state have passed the Senate, and would allow a university to remove a faculty member without exception.

The Senate passed the bill 30-7 on March 27. It has not progressed further in the legislative process with Gov. Andy Beshear.

Ray Horton, a tenured English professor, said this directly affects the education of college students; tenure is supposed to provide a “degree of security” for the faculty of a university.

“Beyond the academic freedom issues, it is telling students at Kentucky’s public universities that they are only worthy of a second-tier education,” Horton said. “(Professors will) pursue their teaching and their research and invest in the institutions that they work for. Without meaningful tenure, professors — faculty are going to leave Kentucky’s public universities, or, you know, look elsewhere when they’re on the job market, to private universities or states that still retain meaningful tenure protections.”

Horton said the language of the bill is vague in its power to remove faculty for any reason. Its exact language may relate to “financial exigency” or financial urgency, low program enrollment, misalignment of revenue and costs and further issues involving poor conduct.

He also said as board of regents’ members are always political appointees, this added power would be detrimental to academic freedom.

require board to act in the manner HB 490 would allow, Ron Patterson, Murray State president, was sent a memo on March 26, by Faculty Senate President Michael Bordieri, expressing the dangers of the bill.

The memo, titled “Why additional statutory authority is not necessary,” said the removal power HB 490 would allow universities, already exists through Murray State’s shared governance.

“The Board of Regents has the authority to declare financial exigency and to eliminate programs, with those determinations informed by structured processes that include faculty participation and institutional review,” the memo reads. “These processes ensure decisions are aligned with academic mission, long-term institutional stability, and public trust.”

According to the memo, the HB 490’s enabling power would disrupt the structure Murray State has for tenure.

It would damage the University’s education, the memo says.

“Tenured faculty positions are structured around an exchange in which qualified individuals accept lower market compensation in return for longterm stability and academic independence,” the memo reads. “If that stability is reduced without a corresponding adjustment to compensation, institutions face a predictable response. Highly qualified faculty are less likely to accept or remain in these roles, weakening recruitment, retention, and program quality.”

Patterson told a News staffer in an interview last month, he does not support the bill and does not want such laws to “drive” Murray State decision.

“We want to be able to work with our shared governance structure, students, faculty and staff as it relates to situations that arise where we have to make cuts,” Patterson said in the interview. “We want to have the flexibility and the latitude to work with those constituent groups to make mission driven decisions.”

The United Campus Workers of Kentucky released a page on their website, asking for 2,000 letters to be written to senators to vote no on HB 490 — now they are sending a petition with signatures to Beshear.

However, with the Kentucky legislative branch under Republican control, HB 490 is expected to be signed into law via veto override if Beshear does not approve the bill.

The American Association of University Professors also released a statement on HB 490, condemning the “abrupt, chaotic, and destabilizing” nature of the bill.



Join us in celebrating...

The Presidential Inauguration of Dr. Ron K. Patterson

Students First. Murray State Always. Racers Forever.



The inauguration of Murray State University's 15th President, Dr. Ron K. Patterson, will take place on Monday, April 13 and Tuesday, April 14. The campus and broader community are invited to participate in a series of special events, including...

Monday, April 13th:

2:00-3:30 p.m. - Presidential Panel and Faculty Symposium
([Don I. Tharpe Lecture Hall, School of Engineering Room 1303](#))

4:00-4:45 p.m. - Meet Racer One and listen to the Murray State Commercial Music Ensemble ([Quad](#))

4:45-6 p.m. - First Lady cookout and ice cream social! Learn more about student organizations and residential colleges. Meet the Racer Band and Dunker! Racer Athletics t-shirt toss. Sponsored by Town & Gown. ([Quad](#))

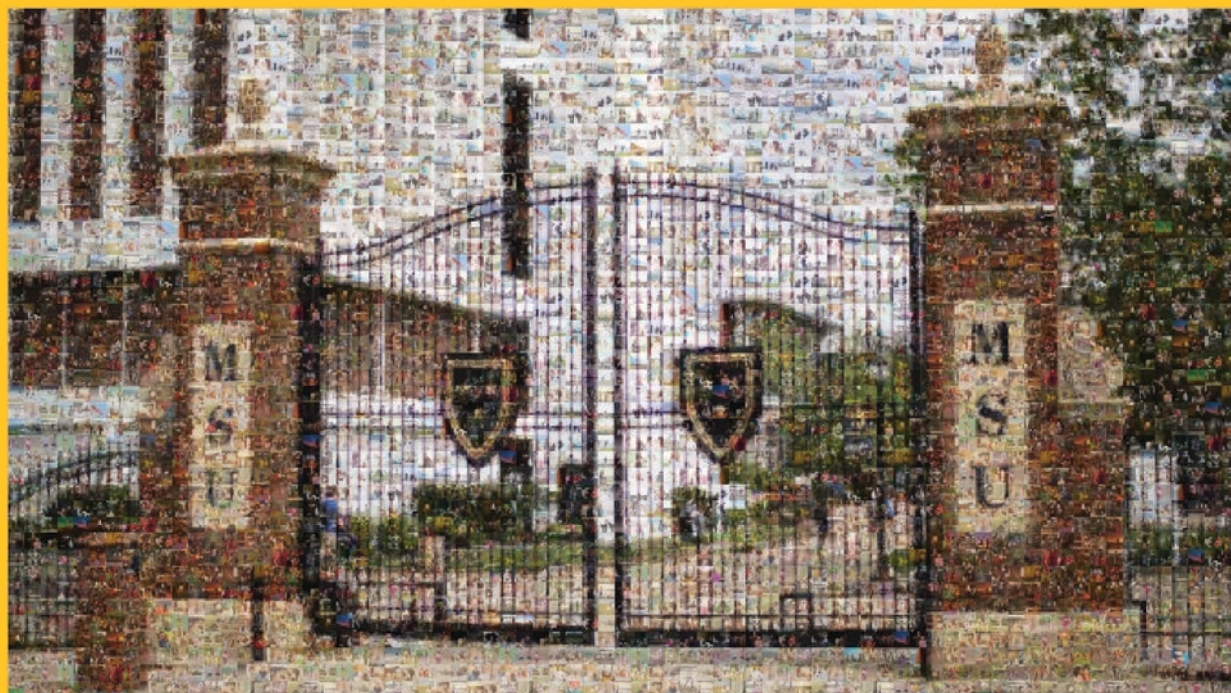
6:00-7:00 p.m. - A special student scavenger hunt with prizes awarded to the top 3 teams! ([Quad](#))

Tuesday, April 14th:

11:00 a.m. - Presidential Investiture ([Lovett Auditorium](#))

Following the ceremony - Presidential Investiture Reception ([Pogue Library](#))

See the full schedule at:
murraystate.edu/inauguration.



In conjunction with President Patterson's inauguration, share your favorite Murray State photo to fill the Interactive Presidential Gates Mosaic!



Scan here to submit your photo!

Green Bandana certifies 20+ students

River Murt
News Editor
rmurt1@murraystate.edu

Green Bandana, a mental health organization seeing its second semester at Murray State, held a certification lecture led by Ambassador Letitisha Usher and welcomed more than two dozen new members in Faculty Hall room 208.

The lecture was part of Green Bandana's mission for members, donning a green bandana on their person, to create a welcoming and safe environment for those struggling with the weight of issues they may be facing.

Members of the organization wearing their bandanas, would signify to anyone, they are someone who can be spoken to and listen without judgement.

"If we're gonna listen to someone, we really kind of almost need to make our-

selves a blank slate like a very neutral person, so that we're not bringing our bias or judgment when we're talking to somebody," Usher said at the lecture. "It could be about family cultural differences. Do you think that cultural differences between a family that lives in San Diego, California might be a little different than the ones that live in Pikeville, Kentucky? Absolutely."

Usher also said Murray State has free mental health services for the campus community and urges new members to take advantage of it — and for people they may helping.

A sheet of these services are included with the certification, and a copy can be found on the Murray State News website with this story.

A person interested in scheduling a lecture can contact Angie Trzepacz, at atrzepacz@murraystate.edu.



Letitia Usher explains the certification package new members receive. River Murt/The News



Screenshot of The United Campus Workers's Instagram post

Anti-tenure bill advances

Continued from page 7

Todd Wolfson, AAUP president, and Randi Weingarten, American Federation of Teachers president, released a statement on March 26, opposing Kentucky's potential replacement of "academic stability with political volatility."

"The bill's vagueness leaves the door open for pretextual terminations that would shut down departments and majors, closing doors for students and eliminating their opportunities to learn about a wide variety of topics," Wolfson and Weingarten wrote. "It prioritizes profit over education and partisan interests over academic achievement. Students who enroll at a Kentucky university intending to study a particular subject could find their education in-

terrupted and their tuition dollars lost if their program is suddenly shuttered."

Wolfson and Wiengarten urge the bill not pass into law.

Read more on our website:



Water main break disrupts Wellness Center's operation

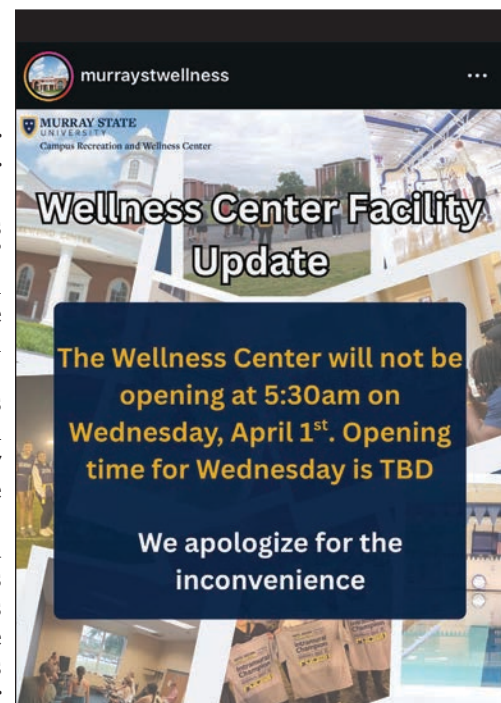
River Murt
News Editor
rmurt1@murraystate.edu

The Murray State Wellness Center reopened on Wednesday after a water main break shut down its facilities.

"(The Center) ... has reopened as is resuming its regular operations," The Wellness Center announced on Wednesday. "All activities will continue as scheduled and the pool will reopen at 3 p.m."

The closure began after the Wellness Center announced its closure on social media on Tuesday, March 31, around 7 p.m., saying it is expected to reopen the next day 5:30 a.m.

However, the Wellness Center posted again to its social media several hours later with uncertain news regarding its reopening on April 1. "We were unable to get the water working in the Wellness Center tonight," The Wellness Center announced. "We will send out an update ... Thank you for your patience."



Screenshot of The Wellness Center Instagram

Congratulations!

GRAY HAWKINS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
2026-27



Panel spotlights faculty during inauguration

Staff Report

Murray State faculty will present research during the Presidential Panel and Faculty Symposium from 2-3:30 p.m., Monday, April 13 as part of the Presidential Inauguration for Ron Patterson.

The symposium, to be held inside the School of Engineering's Don I. Tharpe Lecture Hall (EP 1303), features each of the University's academic schools and colleges and will be fast paced, engaging presentations — each seven minutes long.

Peer-to-peer lending: a friend or foe to the payday lending-crime relationship?

- Leiza Nochebuena-Evans, assistant professor of finance

Struggling to breathe: inspiratory muscle training in adolescent athletes

- Nikki Gaylord, associate professor, speech-language pathology graduate program

Author diversity and replicability in scholarly research

- Sean Rife, professor of psychology

AI sensors revolution: real-time ergonomic risk assessment driving process wins at local manufacturing site

- Julie Boyd, assistant professor, occupational safety and health department

Cultivating change: preparing agricultur-

ists for the 21st century

- Trent Wells, associate professor of agricultural education and chair, department of agricultural Science

Double the stakes: a joint obstetric hemorrhage and neonatal emergency (JOHNE) simulation for practice readiness

- Amy Cook, nurse anesthesia assistant program administrator, assistant professor

Exploring games-based learning in visual literacy education

- Dana Thompson, assistant dean of libraries, research and instruction librarian and associate professor

“Our Presidential Panel and Faculty Symposium will be a powerful reflection of the curiosity, innovation, and scholarly excellence of our world-class faculty at Murray State University,” President Ron K. Patterson said. “This is an opportunity to celebrate the meaningful work of our faculty and to recognize the impact their research and dedication has on our students, our community, and the broader world.”

“This is an outstanding group of faculty who were selected to present in the showcase,” Murray State College of Humanities and Fine Arts Dean Dr. Nicole Hand said. “We are excited that President Patterson chose to feature faculty success as part of his inauguration celebration.”

Celebrating the Inauguration of Dr. Ron K. Patterson, Murray State University's 15th President

FACULTY SYMPOSIUM

Arthur J. Bauernfeind
College of Business

Peer-to-Peer Lending: A friend or foe to the payday lending-crime relationship?
Dr. Leiza Nochebuena-Evans, Assistant Professor of Finance

College of Education and Human Services

Struggling to Breathe: Inspiratory Muscle Training in Adolescent Athletes
Dr. Nikki Gaylord, Associate Professor of Speech-Language Pathology

College of Humanities and Fine Arts

Author diversity and replicability in scholarly research
Dr. Sean Rife, Professor of Psychology

College of Science, Engineering, and Technology

AI Sensors Revolution: Real-Time Ergonomic Risk Assessment Driving Process Wins
Dr. Julie Boyd, Assistant Professor of Occupational Safety and Health

Hutson School of Agriculture

Cultivating Change: Preparing Agriculturists for the 21st Century
Dr. Trent Wells, Associate Professor of Agricultural Education

School of Nursing and Health Professions

Double the Stakes: A Joint Obstetric Hemorrhage and Neonatal Emergency Simulation for Practice Readiness
Dr. Amy Cook, Assistant Professor, Nurse Anesthesia Assistant Program Administrator

University Libraries

Exploring Games-Based Learning in Visual Literacy Education
Professor Dana Thompson, Assistant Dean of Libraries

Murray State Public Relations

Dining Guide



- Weekend breakfast buffet
- Lunch buffet on Sundays
- Friday night specials
- Meat & three daily specials
- Homemade desserts

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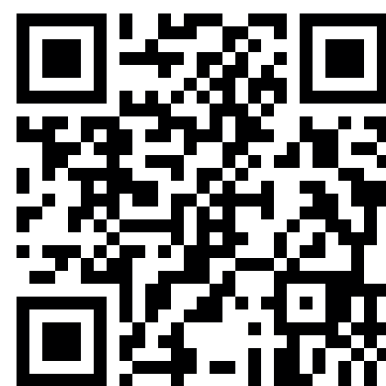
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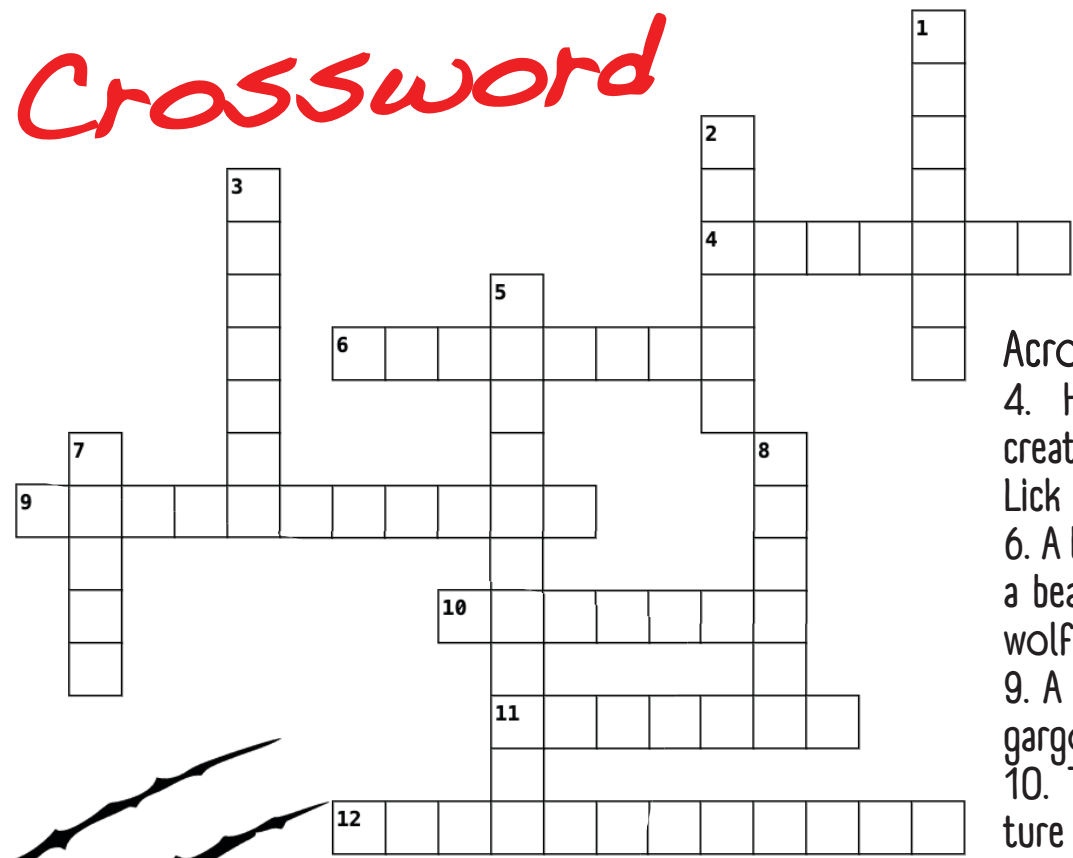
The Best

2026 Edition

The Murray State News put out a survey asking the community for the ‘Best Of’ what Murray has to offer. The News has compiled the survey results from A to Z into a list of 43 businesses, organizations, people and places that have caught the community’s eye in 2026.

Florist <i>Flowers by Whitney</i>	Fraternity <i>Sigma Phi Epsilon</i>	Asian Restaurant <i>Jasmine’s</i>	Athlete <i>Roman Domon</i>	Bakery <i>Dumplin’s</i>	Bank <i>CFSB</i>
Hot Dog <i>Cook Out</i>	Hotel <i>Springhill Suites</i>	Breakfast <i>Rudy’s on the Square</i>	Campus Ministry <i>BCM</i>	Campus Tradition <i>All Campus Sing</i>	Men’s Clothing Store <i>Marshall’s</i>
Place to get your Car Fixed <i>BB’s Auto</i>	Place to Study <i>Waterfield Library</i>	Coffee <i>7 Brew</i>	Consignment Store <i>Traveling Pants</i>	Date Restaurant <i>Stephano’s Trattoria</i>	Donut Shop <i>Murray Donuts</i>
Sporting Event <i>Men’s Basketball</i>	Staff Member <i>Abigail Cox</i>	Getaway <i>Land Between the Lakes</i>	Gift Shop <i>Plantation Place</i>	Golf Course <i>Miller Memorial</i>	Grocery Store <i>Walmart</i>
		Mexican Restaurant <i>Los Portales</i>	Napping Spot <i>Any hammock</i>	Nonprofit <i>Needline</i>	Pizza <i>Matt B’s</i>
		Place to Workout <i>Murray State Wellness</i>	Place to Worship <i>Westside Baptist</i>	Residential College <i>Springer-Franklin</i>	Sandwich <i>Jimmy John’s</i>
		Steak <i>Texas Roadhouse</i>	Tattoo/Piercings <i>Gallery X</i>	Taxi Service <i>Mama Nancy’s</i>	Thrift Shop <i>Peddler’s Mall</i>

Crossword



Kentucky Cryptids

Across

- 4. Half-human, half-goat creature that haunts Pope Lick Creek
- 6. A being with the body of a bear and the muzzle of a wolf
- 9. A legendary gargoyle-like creature
- 10. The classic hairy creature known across the U.S.
- 11. A Hopkinsville encounter of extraterrestrial beings attacking a farm
- 12. A Nelson County 8-foot-tall cryptid

Down

- 1. A bipedal creature with tentacles
- 2. A 7-foot canine-human monster roaming the Land Between the Lakes
- 3. The winged creature known as a harbinger of doom
- 5. A 4-foot monster known for disturbing graves for flesh
- 7. The Eel-pig that roams Herrington Lake
- 8. A 15-foot lizard spotted near Cable Creek



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New student thrift space challenges waste, social stigma

Gray Hawkins

Features Editor

hhawkins4@murraystate.edu

A new initiative from the Division of Student Affairs combines waste reduction efforts, volunteer opportunities and student resource destigmatization to create a campus thrift store.

Campus Thrift, announced on March 2, on the Oakley Resource Center Instagram page, is a secondhand 'shopping' space for Murray State students to find commonly desired items for free. Abigail Cox, director of the Oakley Student Lounge and the Oakley Resource Center, has organized a donation collection to prepare for the space's opening next semester.

"We want this to be a waste reduction project, which is obviously going to take the effort of lots of people on campus," Cox said. "We want this to be a service-oriented project, so it can be a place where students who like to volunteer to be involved with, or students who are just interested in giving back."

The announcement's list of acceptable items included casual clothing, bags and physical media such as books, card games and music. A list of unaccepted items specifies that Campus Thrift will not take items like undergarments, jewelry, professional clothing and food. Cox said this will help ensure item quality control in the space and prevent overlap with the Career Closet and Racer Food Pantry.

The concept for Campus Thrift was suggested by Sidda Roche (they/them), a senior anthropology major and staff member of the Oakley Student Lounge, when Cox prompted lounge employees to research other universities' student affairs departments for activities they would like to see at Murray State. Roche focused their search on the University of Arkansas, where the student affairs department promoted the SEW Closet, a thrift-style campus "store" with donated clothing items.

Imagining a similar initiative at Murray State reminded Roche of the discarded items left in the residential colleges every year when students move out in the spring.

"I've filled trash bags full of clothes when I'm doing a closet clean out so I don't have to carry all of this stuff home," they said. "My immediate thought was this would be so beneficial for campus, not just so people can go to get items they need — or want, it's not necessarily just a need thing."

While waste reduction on campus is a forward-facing goal of this initiative, the organizers also aim to challenge the "needs-based language" that can prevent students from partaking in available resources in fear that their needs are not severe enough.

"People feel like they don't want to take away an opportunity from somebody else," Roche said. "In reality, a lot of these resources are for you, but a lot of times there's this 'I'm not starving and I have clothes on my back' mentality that hopefully we can try to avoid with Campus Thrift."

Cox said a large part of making students feel welcome at Campus Thrift is collaboration with other organizations, such as the nonprofit leadership and social work programs, to provide students pursuing those majors the opportunity to fulfill their volunteer requirements.

"We want to involve as many places on campus in collecting items because that indicates to students that this is your space (and) this is a give and take situation," she said. "You are invited to be a part of this and partake in this ... There is value in providing students with something they feel engaged and connected to."

As Roche recommended when pitching the initiative, Campus Thrift volunteers will collect accepted



MacKenzie Rogers/The News

items from the residential halls at the end of the semester. Chris Trzepacz, college head of Clark Residential College and chair of the council of college heads, said the residence halls encourage students to drop off their unwanted items in a designated area instead of discarding things like functional appliances, old textbooks and clothing in the trashrooms.

"There's a lot of stuff, so when (Cox) mentioned the new thrifting closet, that sounded like a great way to benefit our students directly," Trzepacz said. "It's expensive to go to college, and there's a lot of gently used stuff out there. It's a benefit to the students to have access to that."

Items left in residence halls are collected every year by Angel's Attic, a local nonprofit thrift store. Angel's Attic sorts through viable donations and trash at their own facility, reducing the strain on residential halls and janitorial staff during the already hectic end-of-year activities.

"It's a win for all three of us," Trzepacz said. "Residential colleges get to serve their populations, the Oakley Resource Center is supporting students and Angel's Attic is serving the larger community. It's a great initiative."

Cox said volunteers will collect a few moving bags' worth of acceptable items from the residence halls before Angel's Attic arrives to take the rest.

"We wanted to make sure it's successful and a quality experience for students, and for that to happen, it needs to be organized, manageable and something they feel like is done well," she said. "We want to be very intentional with the volunteers that we're looking for a variety of items, styles and sizes ... Think about the general student body and make sure you're collecting a variety of things for a variety of people."

Campus Thrift opens in the fall 2026 semester inside the Oakley Resource Center, c102 Oakley Applied Science, a space currently used as a study lounge. Cox said students must provide their Racer Card to claim up to five items per month from the

CAMPUS THRIFT

Oakley Resource Center
MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY
OPENING FALL 2026

ACCEPTED ITEMS		
Hoodies	Skirts	Dishes
T-shirts	Coats	Brooms
Sweaters	Shoes	Laundry Basket
Jeans	Belts	Board Games
Sweatpants	Backpacks	Card Games
Shorts	Purses	Books
	Umbrellas	Music

ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED	
Damaged Items	Jewelry
Food Items	Electronics
Professional Clothing	Appliances
Pajamas	Hairbrushes/Combs
Undergarments	Bedding/Blankets
Socks	Decor Items

Graphic provided by Oakley Resource Center

space.

For more information about donations, end-of-year collection volunteering or volunteering in the space next semester, email acox33@murraystate.edu.



Photo provided by Wes Standifer

Honey bees crawl on a fragment of the beehive removed from Lovett Auditorium's men's restroom.

Beehive removed from Lovett Auditorium by local beekeepers

Ainsley Beatty
Chief Copy Editor
abeatty2@murraystate.edu

Dodging bees buzzing around campus can feel like a nightmare when you're just trying to get to class. Plenty of students are allergic to bees, fear being stung or might have a general distrust of any insect flying around their faces; however, these pollinators are incredibly important to local ecosystems and food crops.

Bees and their hives must be treated properly — no matter where they may be found.

A beehive discovered inside the wall of the men's restroom in Lovett Auditorium spurred a search for proper care and removal in mid-March. Jason Youngblood, assistant vice president of Facilities Management, said Facilities Management officially decided to proceed with the removal on Wednesday, March 18, after initial reports reached his office on Friday, March 13.

Wes and Laura Standifer of Southern Honey LLC conducted the removal through Seavers Beavers and More Wildlife Management, a Kentucky-based animal removal company.

To minimize risks to the campus community and the bees, the Standifers handled removal processes during the University's spring break on Saturday, March 21.

Laura Standifer said they used thermal imaging to determine the best way of opening the wall and extracting the hive inside. The beehive, estimated to be three years old, measured 2 feet wide and 4 feet tall and was partially stuck to the concrete dry wall.

"The bees weren't too happy about it since the entire colony had to be rebuilt into a bee box, along with the rest of the hive that was still inside the

wall," Laura said. "Even though we had to tear into their home, the bees were incredibly docile and didn't try to sting either of us."

Youngblood said it was important to have the hive removed from Lovett, not only for those on campus with bee allergies, but for the structural damage a large hive can cause.

"A large colony can accumulate up to 400+ lbs of honey, putting immense pressure on structural beams and ceilings, leading to potential collapse," he said.

Wes Standifer said the number one thing people need to know about finding a beehive in the home or a business building is not to kill it.

"Killing the hive will only lead to more issues, such as drawing other bugs and rodents to the honey, including more bees," Wes said. "It will also smell as the larvae start to rot, creating a whole other issue. Then there is the melting honey that will run down the ceiling or walls and, like water, it will find its way out or into every nook and cranny it can."

Killing beehives can also result in legal recourse as the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act of 1947/1972's KRS 217B prohibits the use of insecticide against honey bees.

Qualified contractors like the Standifers and local beekeepers as listed by the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association have the proper equipment and resources to safely remove and relocate the hive to a more appropriate location without harming the bees, residents near the hive or themselves.

Jesse Adams, a senior business management and occupational safety and health major, has been a beekeeper for eight years. He said he first noticed the bees around campus before spring break and followed their "bee line"

back to Lovett. Adams said he was glad to see the hive removal done properly and in a way that did not endanger students or the bees.

"There needs to be more of an emphasis on the distinction between an exterminator and a wildlife manager," Adams said. "Someone could have easily sprayed these bees with a can of wasp spray and been done with the whole situation. Murray State University made the right decision by having the bees removed by someone who understood the inherent risks, the probability of something going awry and the severity of what could happen if control measures failed."

The Standifers relocated Lovett's beehive to their own hive yard in Mayfield, Kentucky. Laura said the bees are now thriving in their new home on the farm.

"We have a bee yard next to our horse pasture and far away from any fields that get sprayed with pesticides," she said. "It is close to lots of flowers, budding trees and a creek, so the bees have everything they need."



Photo provided by Wes Standifer

A thermal imaging device shows the beehive's heat signature behind the wall.

Alpha Gamma Delta



VOTED BEST SORORITY ON CAMPUS

Shoes up or down? Racer year in review

Owen Hansen
Opinion Editor
ohansen1@murraystate.edu

Despite the breakneck pace of this academic year, Murray State University saw numerous changes across the University — both good and bad. With a student body as vocal as Murray State's, how the University approaches our needs is vital. In one last retrospective as the semester races through its final lap, I have to ask — how did the changes made this year meet the needs and expectations of the campus community?

In the spring of 2025, Ron Patterson was named the University's president. If any year was going to be the time for changes, it was going to be Patterson's maiden voyage.

This year, thankfully, saw many improvements.

Academically, the future is shining bright for the University because of changes and plans put in place over the last year. Several academic programs, such as the Masters of Business Administration, the journalism and mass communications department and the computer science and information systems department have added and revamped, or plan to, different programs.

The School of Nursing and Health Professions' new building, Jackson Hall, has made major progress this past year. The current plan is for the building to be operational for the fall 2026 semester. The new building will relocate nursing classes from the 60-year-old Mason Hall. A breath of fresh air — and fresh ventilation — is a welcome change for nursing students.

The new nursing building, while a great addition to the campus, highlights a serious underlying issue — the academic buildings are very outdated.

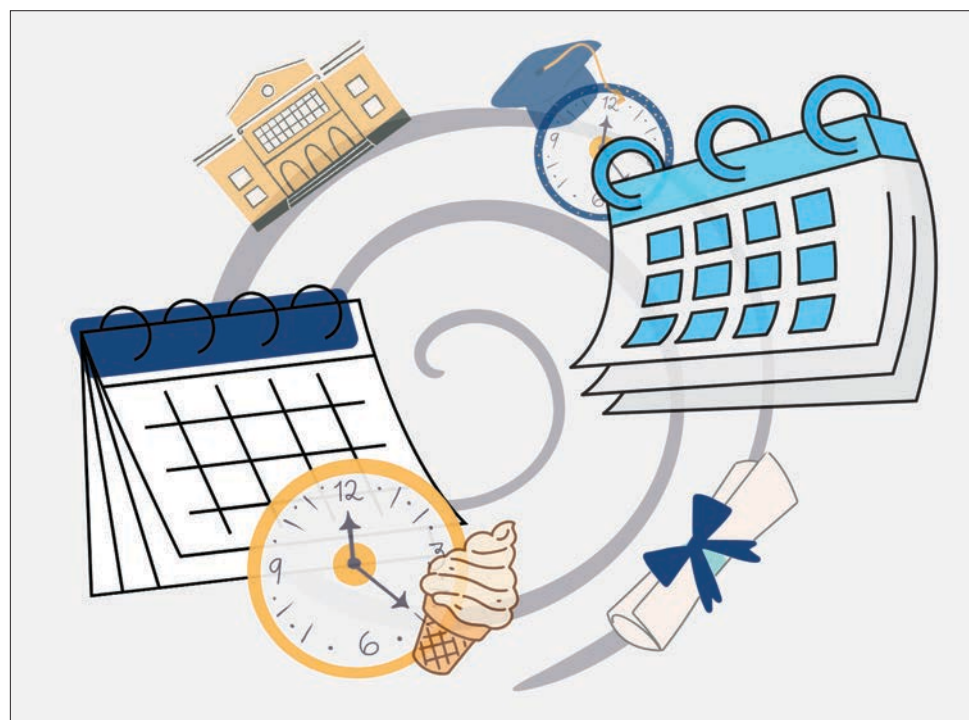
Wilson Hall and the Business Building, in true Midwestern fashion, fluctuate in temperature anywhere from the bottom to the top of the thermometer. Faculty Hall's elevators and doors are always operating on their last wire. Wheelchair accessibility is inconsistent at best — multiple buildings only have ramps completely out of the way from the main path. While the addition of Jackson Hall will be great for students and faculty alike, I hope the University takes a look at renovating older buildings before adding new ones. Replacement cannot be the solution for every outdated building.

The important academic developments this year were not unaccompanied. Murray State made major efforts this year to change the daily lives of students on campus. Some of these changes were incredibly welcome.

Winslow Dining Hall has made major improvements. The previous academic year was one filled with complaints about the quality of food, labeling of ingredients and availability of stations. Luckily, this past year has shown that the University and Sodexo have tried to listen. Food quality, at least in my opinion, has improved significantly from last year. Whenever I'm in Winslow, I see more stations open more consistently than they were. Winslow has also been hosting more events and theme nights, such as the carnival-themed dinner on Feb. 26. Late last month, Winslow added a soft serve machine to the dessert station, and has quickly become a student favorite.

The quality of Winslow has absolutely improved this year, so hopefully this trend continues into the next year.

Despite the improvements, it is important to note that Winslow still struggles with the proper labeling of food. Stations outside of Simple



Owen Hansen/The News

Servings are safer for students with dietary restrictions, with ingredients and potential allergens more consistently listed for the food at each station. However, that improvement only applies if the signage is correct and transparent. Oftentimes, it's neither. For example, the dessert station will label "assorted cookies," with no distinction between them. Peanut butter cookies and oatmeal cookies are placed directly next to each other, posing an incredibly serious risk for students with allergies. Until Winslow takes further steps to ensure the safety of students with proper labeling, I cannot extend my full praise to the dining hall.

Unfortunately for students and faculty alike, the parking situation across campus remained absolutely abysmal this year. If anything, it actually became significantly more of a problem. Most of the parking lot behind Price Doyle Fine Arts and Oakley Applied Sciences was demolished last year to make way for the construction of Jackson Hall. This year, more of the remaining parking lot was blocked off

for the construction project. At the start of the spring semester, a portion of the parking lot by Hart Residential College was blocked off for the construction of the new learning commons between Hart Hall and the Wellness Center.

With enrollment on the rise, the current degradation of parking across campus poses a worrying problem. The University is constructing buildings without parking lots to go along with them. If there are no significant additions to parking in the upcoming years, Murray State is going to have more cars than spaces to accommodate them. I hope that the University takes measures to fix the issues it created with parking this year.

The last year, while imperfect, has been a promising one for the University. It has set up a bright future for academics, with better buildings and expanded opportunities for students. The University has made it clear that it cares about Murray students — that much is evident. Let's just hope that interest in student needs sticks around so that we want to do the same.

Editorial Board

Contact Us

111 Wilson Hall
Murray State University
Murray, Kentucky 42071-3301
MurrayStateNews.org

Zach Simmons
Editor-in-Chief
zsimmons@murraystate.edu

Kris Fister
Associate Photography Editor
kfister3@murraystate.edu

Nyx Alverson
Photography Editor
ealverson@murraystate.edu

MacKenzie Rogers
Associate Editor
mrogers42@murraystate.edu

Gray Hawkins
Lifestyle Editor
hhawkins4@murraystate.edu

Gretchen Beatty
Social Media Manager
gbeatty2@murraystate.edu

River Murt
News Editor
rmurt1@murraystate.edu

Owen Hansen
Opinion Editor
ohansen1@murraystate.edu

Aly Adler
Chief Videographer
aadler2@murraystate.edu

Avery Poston
Graphic Designer
aposton2@murraystate.edu

Ainsley Beatty
Chief Copy Editor
abeatty2@murraystate.edu

Leigh Landini Wright
Faculty Adviser
ewright@murraystate.edu



BATTER UP!

Photos by
Ali Garrett and
Lindsey Hopper

The Racers softball team is in action for the Spring season. The team plays this week, April 3-4 at UIC for a double header on Friday and a single game on Saturday. Scan the QR code to see the full gallery of the previous game against the Austin Peay Governors.



THE HONOR  SOCIETY OF

PHI KAPPA PHI

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi is the most prestigious academic honor society at Murray State University. Membership is highly selective and by invitation only. Each year, the top 7.5% of the junior class, the top 10% of the senior class, and the top 10% of graduate students are invited to join. Phi Kappa Phi is an interdisciplinary honor society, meaning that students must do well in all of their coursework.

Murray State University's newest initiates will be recognized during Scholars Week at an induction ceremony at 4 p.m., Wednesday, April 15, in the Waterfield Library Gallery.

Congratulations to the new student members of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi at Murray State University!

Brynlee Butler
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Lizabeth Conkle
Entropy Cramer
Mouhamed Diagne
Jesse Hutchens
Astha Karki
Kristen Pacheco

Trinten Patten
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Isabella Eads
Andrew Gaby
Sara Gorman
William Gray
Daniel Grubbs
Homira Hane

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For more information about Phi Kappa Phi, contact
 Dr. Shemberger, mshemberger@murraystate.edu.



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2nd: Baseball vs. Belmont, 5 p.m.

3rd: Baseball vs. Belmont, 5 p.m.

4th: Baseball vs. Belmont, 1 p.m.

6th-7th: Men's Golf @ Paducah

10th: Softball vs. Bradley, 2 and 4:30 p.m.

11th: Softball vs. Bradley, 1 p.m.

Tennis vs. Valpo, Noon

11th-12th: Women's Golf @ Miller Memorial

12th: Tennis vs. Valpo, Noon

14th: Baseball vs. SEMO, 4 p.m.

17th: Baseball vs. Illinois State, 5 p.m.

Softball vs. Indiana State, 2 and 4:30 p.m.

18th: Tennis vs. Belmont, Noon

Softball vs. Indiana State, 1 p.m.

Baseball vs. Illinois State, 2 p.m.

19th: Baseball vs. Illinois State, 1 p.m.

21st: Softball vs. SIU, 2 and 4:30 p.m. (**GREEK NIGHT**)

HOME GAMES

MacKenzie Rogers/The News

Racer softball tries to find momentum

Anna Knasel and Riley Staton

Contributing Writers

aknasel@murraystate.edu

rstaton1@murraystate.edu

With 19 games remaining in the 2026 season for Racers softball, let's take a look at how they've done since midway through March.

March 13-14 vs Valparaiso

The only series win in March came against the Valparaiso Beacons, when the Racers took the series despite a rough first game. A two-run fifth inning for Valparaiso decided the first game. Even though the Racers lost the match-up, both senior outfielder Bailey Broemmer and junior utility Adison Hicks hit a home run and sophomore utility Katy Huels hit a double.

The Racers recovered in their second game that day with a 7-6 win. Sophomore outfielder Kynadee Warner went 3-5 with one RBI; senior infielder Ailey Schyck went 3-4, and senior utility Riley Jestadt went 1-1 with two RBI in a pinch hit at-bat. Murray State had 12 hits while limiting Valparaiso to nine.

Murray State followed up the next day with a shutout to steal the series. Sophomore pitcher Karlye Graber pitched a complete game shutout with two strikeouts, one walk and seven hits given up. Warner went 2-3 with two singles and an RBI.

Although the Racers had fewer hits than Valparaiso, they brought the runners on base around to score when it mattered which ultimately won them the game.

March 20-21 at Evansville

Evansville started the series against the Racers by pitching a shutout for a 3-0 win. Despite the loss, the Racers had six hits in the game, including a two-hit game for senior utility Ava Ozment.

The Racers continued to struggle even after a strong seventh inning for the second game of their doubleheader against Evansville, where they fell short 6-5. Evansville racked up five runs in the first inning, but Murray State tied the game in the seventh inning, only for Evansville to walk it off in the bottom of the inning. The Racers had five doubles in the game from freshman catcher Allie Waldron, sophomore infielder Kenley Minor, Schyck and Broemmer. Waldron and Broemmer both had a two-hit day to assist in their comeback at the end of the game.

With two straight losses to Evansville, they managed to take home a win in their final game of the series. Senior pitcher Bre Haislip pitched a strong 6.1 innings, where she struck out three and allowed only one hit. Waldron was 3-4 with a double, while junior utility Parker Holcombe was 2-2 with two hits, two walks and one RBI.

March 24 at Belmont

Murray State found their offensive footing early in game one of their doubleheader with Belmont. Waldron scored a two-RBI home run, followed by an RBI single from Minor. The Bruins quickly responded at the bottom of the first with a solo home run to bring the deficit to 3-1, but the Racers struck again in the fifth, with Warner advancing home on a Belmont defensive error.

Holcombe hit a single to advance another two runners home, bringing Murray State's lead to 6-1. Murray State added a final two runs at the top of the sixth, with Waldron scoring a two-RBI double. The Bruins' offense attempted a comeback, but the Racers held on to take the 8-4 win in game one.

Warner walked twice in the game and scored a run. Haislip took the mound for the majority of the game, striking out

three batters and allowing three runs and eight hits in five innings. Graber closed the game, allowing only two hits and one run in two innings.

Murray State struggled to carry this momentum into the second game. Belmont scored five runs in the first two innings. Ozment hit an RBI double to score the Racers' first run. It would be their last, however, and another two runs in the fourth and sixth allowed the Bruins to take the 7-1 victory to tie the series.

Junior pitcher Raylee Roby started the game before being pulled in the second, allowing four runs on four hits. Graber pitched the remainder of the game, allowing three runs in 4.2 innings pitched.

March 25 vs Austin Peay

The Racers returned to Murray after five straight road games to face former OVC foe Austin Peay. Holcombe got the scoring started first for the Racers with an RBI single to score Waldron after she doubled in the at-bat prior. The Governors offense got going by scoring four

runs in the top of the second, three of those coming off a three-run homer.

Austin Peay hit another home run in the top of the fourth inning to extend the lead to four before Schyck hit a solo shot in the bottom half of the inning to bring the score to 5-2.

Austin Peay scored the final two runs in the top of the fifth and shut down the Racers offense for a 7-2 win.

Freshman pitcher Hailey Brereton took the loss after surrendering three runs and walking six batters.

Warner leads the Racers in batting average with a .354 BA and in hits with 35. Waldron trailing behind with a .345 average and 30 hits. Waldron, Broemmer and Schyck all tie the team lead home runs with three. Haislip leads the team in earned runs average with a 3.13 ERA and strikeouts with 46.

The Racers head to Chicago for a three-game series against the UIC Flames with a doubleheader on Friday, April 3 and another game on Saturday, April 4.

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Baseball set to make home debut

Zach Simmons

Editor in Chief

zsimmons@murraystate.edu

After 28 games played away from Johnny Reagan Field, the Murray State baseball team will finally host a home series.

Murray State officials announced on March 30 on the athletics social media pages and GoRacers.com that "phase one" of the baseball field renovations is complete.

This first phase included a new scoreboard, outfield wall and drainage throughout the outfield. These upgrades were completely donor-funded.

"We are making a tremendous amount of progress by revamping the facility profile of Johnny Reagan Field to make it one of the best in the Missouri Valley Conference," said Nico Yantko, athletics director. "We continue to prioritize fan experience and revenue generation in all of our facilities, and the completion of the first phase of this project will have a major impact on our baseball program as we look towards hosting the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament in May."

The video board placed behind the right-center field fence is a 20-foot-by-40-foot board, making it the largest video board in a Missouri Valley Conference baseball field and is comparable to some found in power conference ballparks. The video board will



Full view of Johnny Reagan Field after the completion of phase one of the renovations.

Photo courtesy of Racers Athletics

be able to show stats, live video feed and Trackman data. The athletics department also plans to host movie nights at the ballpark using the scoreboard.

The infield has been completely replaced with turf from FieldTurf's DoublePlay system. The goal of the turf is to "replicate the best ballparks in America," according to FieldTurf's website. Eighteen Division 1 schools use FieldTurf's DoublePlay system, including fellow MVC school Illinois State.

"We're incredibly excited to expand our relationship with Murray State University and the Racers athletics department. Murray State is the latest among a long list of elite college baseball programs

to entrust the FieldTurf DoublePlay system on its home field," JC Field, national baseball development manager at FieldTurf, said on a GoRacers.com post. "As the surface of choice at Roy Stewart Stadium for nearly two decades, we look forward to extending our presence on campus to Johnny Reagan Field."

The next phase is the Jim and Sue Cash Baseball Clubhouse, which will add a 3,000-square-foot facility that will feature a new locker room, player lounge, meeting room and training room behind the right field wall.

The first series at Johnny Reagan Field will be April 2-4 against the Belmont Bruins.

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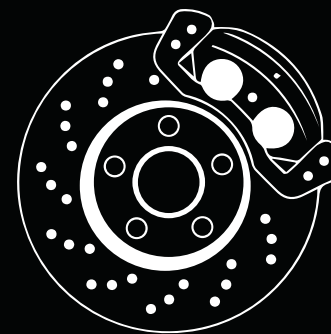
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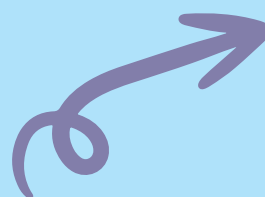
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