

4-25-2005

The Murray Ledger and Times, April 25, 2005

The Murray Ledger and Times

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SPORTS: Racer Football Enters Busy Summer Season

MURRAY LEDGER & TIMES

Monday, April 25, 2005

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Conservatives call for end to filibuster

By BRETT BARROUQUERE
Associated Press Writer

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The comments came during a rally called "Justice Sunday," an event organizers say was aimed at getting values voters to pressure the Senate into eliminating filibusters of judicial nominees.

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TOM BERRY/Ledger & Times photo

Sponsors sought for 4-H program teaching shooting safety



Greg Wood, a sixth-grader at Calloway County Middle School, fires a shot from his .22 caliber rifle at his target during shooting practice at the LBL target range. Wood is one of about two dozen members of the newly-organized 4-H Shooting Sports Club.

TOM BERRY/Ledger & Times photo

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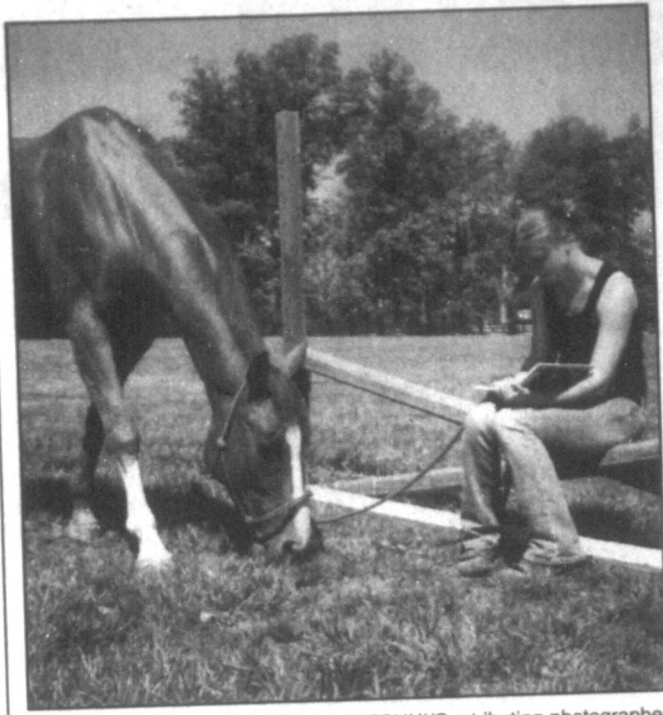
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What'cha Readin'?



ELISSA BAERTSUNI/Contributing photographer
Lisa Harbison from Edwardsville, Ill., takes time to read while Stingray, a leased horse from Murray State University, grazes.

Road work planned next week for Calloway

PADUCAH, Ky. — Department of Highways personnel plan to conduct the following maintenance activities in Calloway County for the week of April 11 through April 15.

- Monday, May 2: Private entrance repair and construction on Ky. 299 and Ky. 121; slope mowing on Ky. 1346.
- Tuesday, May 3: Private entrance repair and construction on U.S. 641 south; ditching operations and slope mowing on Ky. 1346.
- Wednesday, May 4: Mowing along Ky. 748, Ky. 774, Ky. 821, Ky. 822, Ky. 1327, Ky. 2075 & Ky. 2594; herbicide spraying on Ky. 94 and slope mowing on Ky. 1346.
- Thursday, May 5: Mowing along Ky. 1497 and Ky. 893; herbicide spraying on U.S. 641 north, and slope mowing on Ky. 1346.
- Friday, April 6: Mowing along Ky. 1497 and Ky. 893; slope mowing on Ky. 1396.

Maintenance activities are scheduled on a tentative basis and are subject to change depending on weather conditions, emergencies, and other factors beyond the control of the Department of Highways. To report a pothole or other problem on any state maintained road, call the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's toll-

free pothole repair line at 1-800-PATCH IT, or 1-800-728-2448.

Motorists are urged to use caution in work areas, and to be alert for flaggers, workers, equipment, which may block a portion of the roadway, and other items of concern in work zones. They should pay attention to warning signs alerting them of the road work and obey work zone speed limits where applicable. The Kentucky Department of Highways maintains nearly 259 miles of roads in Calloway County.

National Medical Lab Week celebrated at MCCH

National Medical Laboratory Week (NMLW), April 24-30, is a special time set aside to recognize medical laboratory professionals. It is a time of celebration for the approximately 265,000 medical laboratory professionals and 15,000 board-certified pathologists who perform and interpret medical laboratory tests.

Pathologists and laboratory technologists and technicians at Murray-Calloway County Hospital will be recognized for their vital role they play in every aspect of healthcare.

National Medical Laboratory Week (NMLW) has grown increasingly important over the years as medical laboratory personnel celebrate their professionalism and are recognized for their efforts on behalf of their patients. Often, laboratorians use this time to inform and educate medical colleagues and the public about the medical laboratory.

Since medical laboratory professionals often work "behind the scenes," few people know much about the critically important testing that laboratorians perform every day. NMLW is also an excellent opportunity to promote medical laboratory professions, to recruit students to the field, to thank technologists and technicians, build morale, and gain visibility for the laboratory throughout the institution and the community.

To celebrate National



Photo provided
Pictured are employees of the Laboratory Services Department at Murray-Calloway County Hospital.

Medical Laboratory Week, laboratories across the country will be celebrating in various ways, informing the public and other health care professionals with the workings of the medical laboratory.

MCCH celebrated Lab Week with an information board and daily events for the laboratory employees.

"We are proud of the work we do," said Linda Cavitt, Director of Laboratory Services at MCCH. "We are meticulous in performing our jobs to provide dependable and accurate answers to our patients' physicians. There are 434 years of

service here in the MCCH Laboratory, Pathology, and Blood Bank. Over half of our staff have more than 15 years of service to the hospital, which is a lot of service and dedication to healthcare and says a lot about the people who work at the hospital and the level of care we provide."

Results of laboratory tests often identify the presence of disease in its earliest stages, when the possibilities of a cure are greatest and when treatment is least costly.

Medical laboratory professionals represent a variety of specialties, including patholo-

gists, medical technologists, clinical laboratory scientists, medical laboratory technicians, histotechnologists, histologic technicians, cytotechnologists, cytopathologists, phlebotomy technicians, clinical chemists, microbiologists, laboratory managers, and medical educators.

Within the laboratory, these highly educated and experienced medical laboratory professionals may work in chemistry, serology, hematology, cytology, microbiology, immunology, coagulation, histology, urinalysis, molecular biology, or the blood bank.

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Report: Fletcher canceled consultant's contract amid kickback suspicions

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — The Fletcher administration canceled a consultant's contract amid suspicions — but no proof — that the consultant was getting kickbacks from insurance companies, a newspaper reported.

The administration learned last fall that the parent and sister company of Mercer Human Resource Consulting were the targets of a lawsuit by the New York attorney general's office. The companies — Marsh & McLennan Companies Inc. and Marsh Inc. — paid \$850 million to settle the lawsuit.

Fletcher's office never directly tied Mercer to the charges in the lawsuit, but terminated Mercer's contract in January, the State-Journal reported Sunday.

Insurance companies, in some instances, pay brokers like Mercer in return for the company or group the broker represents signing a contract for coverage with that particular insurance company.

In the industry the fees are known as "placement service agreements," or "commission override payments," but some call them kickbacks.

Margaret Handmaker, head of Mercer's Louisville office, denied the firm engaged in such payment schemes in Kentucky. She said in an interview with the newspaper that company policy forbids her from commenting on her company's work in Frankfort or for any other client.

Mercer had been a partner with the state since 1998, work-

ing on the health-care package that currently covers 229,000 state employees, retirees and their dependents.

If the service agreements that led to the New York settlement were in effect here, it could have resulted in the state and its employees having to pay more for the insurance package.

"We were never able to determine or substantiate whether Mercer received override commissions," said John Roach, general counsel to the governor. "Although Mercer worked with- in terms of providing us responses, we ultimately decided that we were not going to be able to — in a timely fashion — in essence, figure it out."

Suspicions about Mercer surfaced in a series of correspondence between the Finance and Administration Cabinet and Mercer. It started with a letter from Mercer alerting the state to the Oct. 14 filing of the New York lawsuit against its parent

and sister companies. That letter was sent Oct. 20, the day after the end of the fall special session to rework the health-care plan.

During the course of the two-week special session, House committees heard testimony in an attempt to determine if there was any wrongdoing in the design of the healthcare plan.

On Nov. 29, Michael Kalinyak, executive director of the Finance Cabinet's office of general counsel, sent a letter to Handmaker, saying that Mercer had disclosed two payments totaling just under \$500,000 in 2004 from insurance companies that sought the state contracts.

In the letter, Kalinyak gave Mercer a Dec. 9 deadline to explain the payments and allow access to Mercer documents. Kalinyak said he never got clear answers about the reason for the payments from the insurance companies or if they could have had anything to do with the state contracts.



Gov. Ernie Fletcher

Roach said officials decided not to look further into the issue and instead severed ties with Mercer. Roach said that move allowed the state to move on with a different company — PricewaterhouseCoopers — and start work on the 2006 health-care package.



TOM BERRY/Ledger & Times photo

Under the watchful eye of parents, young members of the new 4-H Shooting Sports Club aim their rifles at a target about 50 feet away during practice at the LBL target range recently. The youngsters are all students in the Calloway or Murray Independent school systems.

Town Crier

NOTICE

■ The Murray Independent Board of Education will meet in special session at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Carter Administration Building. The agenda includes approving two leaves of absence and considering Section 7 allocation requests for staffing.

■ The Murray Planning Commission will meet in special session at 5 p.m. Tuesday in the Murray Electric System board room on Olive Street. The Murray Board of Zoning Adjustments will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the same room. Both groups will consider amending the recorded final plat for a planned development project for two lots in University Heights on Brooklyn Drive.

■ To report a Town Crier item, call 753-1916.

■ Safety ...

From Front

effort and LBL officials allow the teams to use the target range free of charge. Vanderbilt Chemicals in Murray has supplied members with protective eyewear.

However the club is looking for more sponsors to help pay

the costs. Joe Geurin, of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, said financial help is needed to continue the program.

"They need some equipment as well as money to pay fees, travel and that sort of thing," Geurin said. "If any businesses

out there want to donate money or equipment it will be appreciated."

Geurin said those wanting to donate to the program should call the Calloway County Extension Office's 4-H extension at 753-1452. Sims may be contacted by calling 753-7426.

PoliceFireLogs

Murray Police Department

- A theft was reported at 1709 Chris Drive at 10:11 a.m. Friday.
- An injury accident was reported at 3:30 p.m. Friday at Sixth and Poplar streets.
- Franklin H. Stevenson, 23, of Benton, was arrested for theft by unlawful taking less than \$300 after a shoplifting complaint at 6:25 p.m. Friday at Wal-Mart.
- A red Chevy was westbound on Ky. 94 East near the city limits at 8:41 p.m. Friday. The driver was possibly drunk. The vehicle was gone when an officer arrived. Five minutes later, an injury accident was reported on Old Salem Road and involved multiple vehicles. One driver left the scene on foot. Calloway County Sheriff's Department assisted at the scene. A call from the hospital emergency room at 9:15 p.m. requested assistance with related subjects outside the ER.
- A burglary was reported at 11:12 p.m. Friday at 706 Glendale Road.
- Someone was banging on the door at 11:54 p.m. Friday at 1302-A Michelle Court. Four officers responded to the burglary in progress. Blane Ford, 22, and Evan Roberts, 18, both of Cadiz, were arrested for second-degree burglary. Ford also was charged with first-degree driving under the influence and Roberts also was charged with possession of a fictitious license.
- The theft of a bathroom fixture was reported at Attitudes at 12:03 p.m. Saturday. It was the "Flush Out Cancer" toilet used to raise money for Relay For Life.
- A burglary was reported at 12:52 p.m. Saturday at 213-K Brentwood.
- A juvenile was charged with possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia during a traffic stop.
- A cell phone was reported stolen at 11:58 p.m. Sunday at Kenlake Foods.

Calloway County Fire-Rescue

- Three trucks with 15 men responded to a mobile home fire Friday on Lovers Lane near Dexter. The mobile home was completely engulfed when firefighters arrived. The home was unoccupied and a total loss. CCFR was on the scene for an hour.
- Two firefighters responded to a two-vehicle injury accident on Outland School Road on Friday. They assisted with traffic control and EMS.
- A structure fire was reported Sunday on Arnett Lane. Ten men in two trucks responded to the abandoned house, which was totally engulfed when they arrived. They were on the scene about an hour.

— Information is obtained from reports, logs and citations from various agencies.

Road work planned for Calloway

Staff Report

Murray Ledger & Times

The state Department of Highways plans to conduct maintenance activities on Calloway County roads.

Crews were repairing a private entrance and completing construction on Ky. 783 and Ky. 893 today. Similar entrance repairs and construction on Ky. 893 will continue Tuesday along with ditching operations on Ky. 893 and Ky. 1346.

Highway personnel will continue private entrance repairs and complete construction work on Ky. 121 on Wednesday. The crews also will mow the slop on Ky. 1346.

Ditching operations on Ky. 1550, shoulder repair on Ky. 1497 and slow mowing on Ky. 1346 will be completed

Thursday. All but the ditching work will continue into Friday.

Maintenance activities are scheduled on a tentative basis and are subject to change depending on weather conditions, emergencies and other factors.

Motorists are urged to use caution in work areas and be alert for flaggers, workers and equipment in the road. They should pay attention to warning signs alerting them of road work and obey work zone speed limits where applicable.

The state highway department maintains nearly 259 miles of roads in Calloway County. To report a pothole or other problem on any state-maintained road, call the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's toll-free line at 1-800-PATCH-IT.

■ Audit ...

From Front

to the attorney general's office as requested.

"We have no written correspondence, no communications that they've asked for anything more than what we've already provided," Butler said. "All I can say is that we're open to working with the attorney general in whatever manner we can."

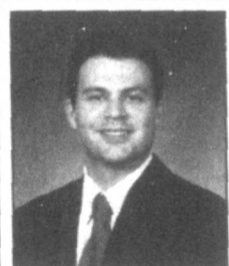
Meanwhile, the cabinet has increased the number of investigations conducted and has iden-

tified nearly \$7.4 million in fraud, a 30 percent increase over 2003, said Robert Benvenuti, the executive director of the cabinet's office of the inspector general.

"We're not only doing a better job in capturing fraud, but we're going back and seeing how we got ripped off," Benvenuti said.

More new cases are likely to emerge without an audit, even with additional safeguards, cabinet officials said.

"Investigating and fighting fraud is a lot like building a mousetrap," said Butler. "As soon as you've built a good one, people will find a way around it."



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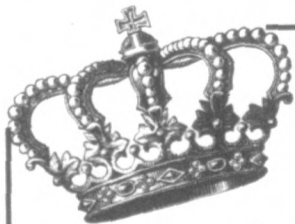
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ATTENTION

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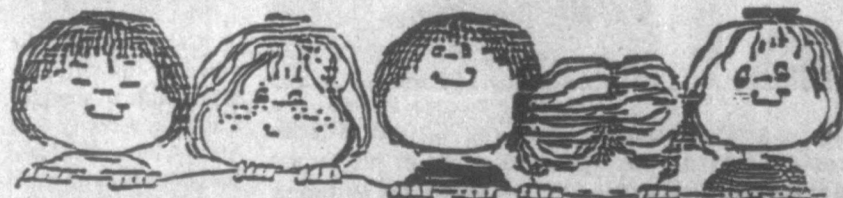
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Murray Preschool Head Start is accredited by the
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AP Photo

Pope Benedict XVI shakes hands with German Cardinal Friedrich Wetter, Archbishop of Munich, during an audience with German pilgrims in the Paul VI hall at the Vatican, today. Pope Benedict XVI, who is the first German pope in centuries, received a hero's welcome from his fellow countrymen who came to Rome to attend his installment Mass on Sunday.

Pope meets with Muslims, wants to continue 'building bridges of friendship'

By NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press Writer

VATICAN CITY (AP) — A day after reaching out to other Christians and to Jews in his installation Mass, Pope Benedict XVI met with members of the Muslim community, assuring them the church wanted to continue building "bridges of friendship" that he said could foster peace in the world.

Benedict made the comments while meeting with religious leaders who attended Sunday's installation ceremony, saying he was particularly grateful that members of the Muslim community were present.

"I express my appreciation for the growth of dialogue between Muslims and Christians, both at the local and international level," he said.

He noted that the world is marked by conflicts but longs for peace.

"Yet peace is also a duty to which all peoples must be committed, especially those who profess to belong to religious traditions," he said. "Our efforts to come together and foster dialogue are a valuable contribution to building peace on solid foundations."

"It is therefore imperative to engage in authentic and sincere dialogue, built on respect for the dignity of every human person, created as we Christians firmly believe, in the image and likeness of God," he said.

Later, Benedict told an audience of German pilgrims that at one point during the conclave that elected him pope, when he was getting many votes during the balloting, he had prayed to God that he might be spared the job.

Speaking in his native German, Benedict told the audience that a cardinal slipped him a note of paper reminding him what he had preached about Christ calling Peter to follow him even if he did not want to go. Benedict, 78, said he had hoped to spend his last years living quietly and peacefully.

"At a certain point, I prayed to God, 'Please don't do this to me,'" he recalled. "Evidently, this time he didn't listen to me."

Benedict was interrupted several times by applause and cheering, and he seemed to enjoy the welcome from his countrymen, smiling and chuckling. He apologized for being late, saying the meeting with the religious leaders had been "heartfelt" and had gone late.

"The Germans are used to punctuality," he joked. "I'm already very Italian."

The Vatican did not say which Muslim leaders attended the meeting, which was closed to the press.

But it did release a list of those who attended Sunday's Mass, including Saeed Taghavi, head of the office of religious minorities in Iran's culture ministry, and the head of Rome's central mosque.

Two dozen Buddhist representatives also were on the list, which included the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams; Metropolitan Chrysostomos, a top envoy for Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, the spiritual leader of the world's Christian Orthodox Church; and a senior representative of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Kirill.

Most Jewish leaders could not attend the Mass because it coincided with Passover.

"I assure you that the church wants to continue building bridges of friendship with the followers of all religions, in order to seek the true good of every person and of society as a whole," Benedict said.

The message was significant because Benedict had left out any specific mention of Muslims in his inaugural homily, although he had directed a greeting to "believers and non-believers alike."

In the homily, he specifically mentioned Jews, calling them his "brothers and sisters" who were joined with Catholics in a "shared spiritual heritage." He

also called several times for full communion of Christians.

Benedict repeated that message Monday, telling ecumenical leaders that he fully supported the need to work toward uniting Christians divided by schism and saying the ecumenical presence at his installation was a good sign.

"Your presence, dear brothers in Christ, beyond that which divides us and casts a shadow over our full and visible communion, is a sign of sharing and support for the bishop of Rome, which can count on you for following the path in the hope and for the belief toward he who is the head, the Christ," he said.

In his homily Sunday, Benedict — who has a reputation as a hard-liner for leading Vatican crackdowns on dissidents — said he wanted to shape his papacy by being a "listener" and not set off by imposing his own ideas.

"My real program of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen, together with the whole church, to the word and the will of the Lord," Benedict said.

The pope did not elaborate, but the speech suggested his papacy could study some pressing issues, such as greater social activism and ways to reverse the decline of church attendance and the dwindling number of priests in the West. In his previous role as guardian of church teaching, he had staunchly opposed calls for fundamental changes such as ending bans on contraception or for allowing women to become priests.

Train derails in western Japan, at least 50 killed

AMAGASAKI, Japan (AP) — A packed commuter train jumped the tracks in western Japan on Monday and rammed into an apartment complex, crumpling passenger cars into twisted metal. At least 50 people were killed and 340 injured in the deadliest rail accident here in four decades.

Investigators immediately focused on whether excessive speed or the actions of the inexperienced driver caused the crash in an urban area near Amagasaki, about 250 miles west of Tokyo. The 23-year-old driver had overshot the stop line at the last station before the accident.

Several people were still trapped in the wreckage hours after the crash, local police said, but it was unclear what their conditions were. Train operator West Japan Railway Co. said at least 343 people had been taken to hospitals.

The seven-car commuter train was carrying 580 passengers when it derailed, wrecking an automobile in its path before slamming into a nine-story apartment complex just yards away. Two of the five derailed cars were flattened against the wall of the building, and hundreds of rescue workers and police swarmed the wreckage and tended to the injured.

"There was a violent shaking, and the next moment I was thrown to the floor ... and I landed on top of a pile of other people," passenger Tatsuya Akashi told NHK. "I didn't know what happened, and there were many people bleeding."

The Amagasaki Fire Department said at least 50 people were killed. It was not clear how many of the dead were passengers or if bystanders or apartment residents were among the victims.

The accident was the worst rail disaster in nearly 42 years in Japan, which is home to one of the world's most complex and heavily traveled rail networks. A three-train crash in November 1963 killed 161 people in Tsurumi, outside Tokyo.

Monday's accident was under investigation.

"There are many theories but we don't know for sure what caused the accident," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said. "The prime minister instructed us to respond with urgency."

The train operator apologized.

"Our most important task now is to rescue the passengers from the accident and we are doing our best," West Japan Railway Co. President Takeshi Kakiuchi told reporters.

Survivors said the force of

the derailment sent passengers tumbling through the inside of the cars.

Photos taken by an NHK reporter aboard the train showed passengers piled on the floor and some clawing to escape from the busted shells of the cars.

Investigators struggled to come up with reasons for the crash. Tsunemi Murakami, the train operator's safety director, estimated that the train would have had to have been going 82 mph to have jumped the track purely because of excessive speed.

He said it still was not certain how fast the train was running at the time of the accident. The crash happened at a curve after a straightaway, requiring the driver to slow to a speed of 43 mph, Murakami said.

NHK reported that the automatic braking system at that stretch of track is among the oldest in Japan. The system stops trains at signs of trouble without requiring drivers to take emergency action, but the older system is less effective in halting trains traveling at high speeds, NHK said.

The driver's inexperience may also have been a factor. He only had 11 months on the job. He had committed a previous overrun at a station in June 2004 and was issued a warning, officials said.



AP Photo

Rescuers gather around the wreckage of a derailed commuter train in Amagasaki, western Japan today. The seven-car commuter train, carrying 580 passengers, derailed and plowed into an apartment building, killing 50 people and injuring more than 340 others in the deadliest rail accident here in more than a decade.

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FORUM

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WASHINGTON TODAY

By Donna Cassata

A Piece of Free Advice

FRANKFORT - If Gov. Ernie Fletcher wants to hand out free Capitol office space, secretarial help, parking spaces, phone and computer services to non-state employee/volunteers, he really ought to find someone



Agree Or Not

By Todd Duvall
Syndicated Columnist

who can volunteer free advice on the public perceptions of Fletcher's actions. Like giving free office space, secretarial help, etc. to the treasurer of the Republican Party of Kentucky, Dave Disponett, who uses the public space on the Capitol's first floor to vet potential employees and appointees to state boards and commissions. The public perception volunteer would have advised Fletcher that the taxpayers might get the notion that their office space, personnel, equipment and parking lot were being used to benefit the Republican Party and not their own interests. That a volunteer patronage man using a Capitol office, secretary, etc., etc. doesn't come under the rules and regulations that apply to all other state government workers, and thus cannot be held accountable for his actions like all other public employees, including Fletcher himself.

Far better, the public perception volunteer would have explained to Fletcher, to put Disponett on the payroll as a special assistant to the governor like many previous patronage men under governors in the past, or let Disponett do his interviews from state Republican Party Headquarters, which is only three short blocks from the Capitol and almost certainly contains adequate space for the party treasurer to do his thing quietly and effectively but very much out of public space.

The public perception volunteer would have explained to Fletcher that, since he campaigned for governor as a reformer determined to do things differently than his Democrat predecessor, Paul Patton, Fletcher really has to go out of his way to give the public the idea that Fletcher is different.

Instead the public perception is that nothing much has changed at the Capitol after all. And on the subject of

Fletcher's investments, the volunteer public perception advisor would have told the governor that he really ought to avoid doing business with people he appoints to plum positions or allows the use of free office space, secretarial help, etc. in the Capitol.

That's because the public is liable to believe there is a quid pro quo between Fletcher and his business partners.

It only makes sense, the public perception advisor would have explained, to invest the profits from the sale of Fletcher's Washington and Lexington residences, but the governor ought to have turned that job over to a professional without something to be gained from assisting Fletcher.

By investing money in Florida condominium projects with free-Capitol-office Disponett, contractor Stephen Branscum, a Fletcher appointee to the UK Board of Trustees and, among others, UK basketball coach Tubby Smith (recipient of a pricey practice facility in Fletcher's new budget), the public will understandably cast a cynical eye on who's scratching whose back the hardest.

That's not a public perception reformist governors want if they expect to lope easily into a second term.

The volunteer public perception advisor finally would have educated Fletcher into the quirkiness of the public's attitude toward politicians and public officials. And how quickly the public can turn on them.

He - or she - would have pointed to Patton, who enjoyed high approval ratings during most of his two terms, who arguably did more for higher education in Kentucky than since passage of the land grant college act by Congress after the Civil War, but slunk out of Frankfort after Fletcher's inauguration a disgraced ex-governor.

If Patton himself had the services of a volunteer public perception advisor, Patton would have understood how swiftly the public can turn when it perceives that a governor is more interested in dallying in hotel rooms with a mistress than running the state.

So Fletcher ought to send Disponett down Capitol Avenue to party headquarters and turn his office over to someone who can look the governor in the eye and say, "Wait a minute. Let's think about that for awhile..."

Todd Duvall is editorial page editor for The State Journal in Frankfort.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Beyond the sound and fury of the Senate fight over U.N. ambassador-nominee John R. Bolton is the reality that presidents typically get their man — or woman — and President Bush boasts one of the better records on high-level appointments.

The stunning turn of events in the Bolton case — the Senate Foreign Relations Committee postponed a widely expected affirmative vote on the nomination to investigate new charges of abusive personal behavior and misuse of government power — highlights the history of the venerable advice and consent that the Senate gives presidential appointments.

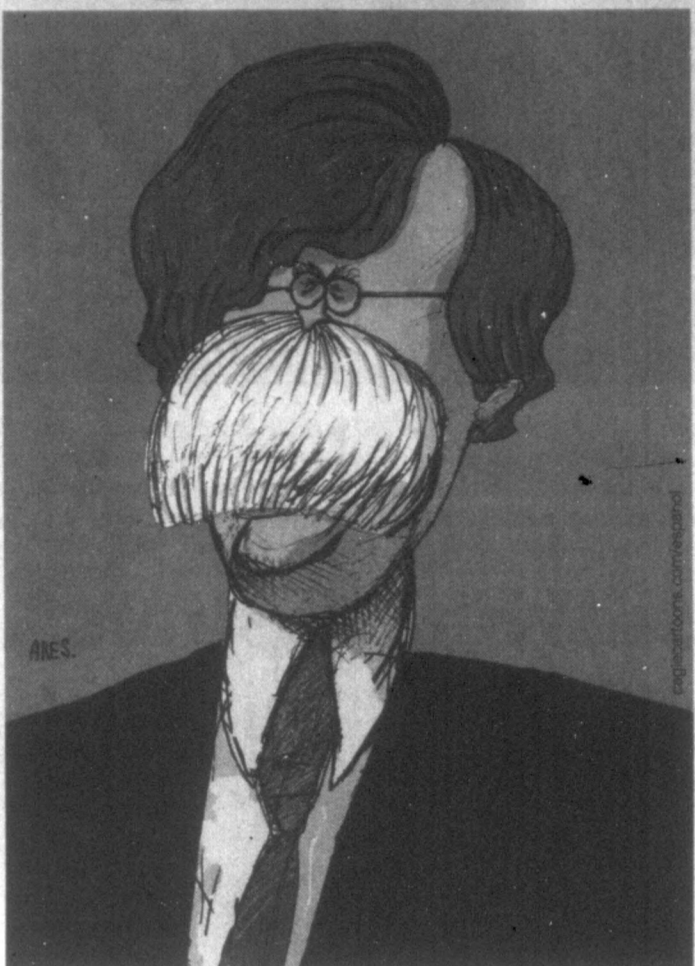
Senators traditionally have saved their fights for judicial nominees, particularly Supreme Court choices, and let presidents have their picks for the Cabinet and other senior executive branch jobs.

"These are relatively rare events for the Senate to scrutinize and not give the president deference for appointments," said Sarah Binder, an associate professor of political science at George Washington University.

Few nominations have faltered over whether the candidate is a bully, and some point out that Congress itself has more than its share of hard-driving bosses.

"That's a standard a lot of senators might not be able to pass," said John J. Pitney, a government professor at Claremont McKenna College who, paraphrasing the line from the movie "Apocalypse Now," said denying a nomination over boorish behavior is like "handing out speeding tickets at the Indy 500."

Since 1789, presidents have made hundreds of Cabinet appointments, and the Senate failed to confirm just 15 — nine rejections, four withdrawals, two died in committee, according to the Congressional



Research Service.

The last failed Cabinet nominee is one Bush would remember — his father's choice of former Texas Sen. John G. Tower to be defense secretary.

In January 1989, Tower seemed headed to confirmation despite allegations of a drinking problem and womanizing. Then conservative activist Paul Weyrich testified about Tower's personal behavior and the Senate Armed Services Committee rushed into closed session, stalling the nomination.

Amid the delay, the committee received fresh allegations about Tower, giving new life to the opposition. The committee eventually gave the nomination an unfavorable recommendation, on an 11-9 vote, as partisan rancor rose.

The Democratic-controlled Senate had the final say, reject-

ing the Republican president's pick of Tower, 53-47, on March 9.

Ross K. Baker, a political science professor at Rutgers University, sees similarities between the Bolton nomination and the Tower fight.

"Anybody who has an overbearing boss, tyrannical, hopes there's a day of reckoning," said Baker, who argued that the problems arise when there is a significant postponement in the vote, giving "time for people who might have been tempted to come forward."

Said Pitney: "It's payback time for anyone he's mistreated. And it sounds like it could be a very long list."

Bush offered a strong defense of Bolton on Thursday, calling him "the right man at the right time for this important assignment" and urging the

Senate to confirm him. Like his father with Tower, he is bound to see the nomination through to the end.

But it was a Republican, Sen. George Voinovich of Ohio, whose reservations about Bolton prompted the committee to delay the vote. William Binning, a political science professor at Youngstown State University, said once Voinovich makes up his mind, the White House should forget about trying to change it.

"He's a bulldog, he doesn't yield," Binning said.

Said former Sen. John Breaux, D-La., of Voinovich: "He's independent. He calls them as he sees them."

In the face of strong opposition, many a nominee has either jumped or been quietly pushed by the White House before a vote. Some realized their problems would surely scuttle their selection and abandoned the fight before the gavel sounded on their confirmation hearing.

Two of Bush's picks — Linda Chavez for Labor secretary in 2001 and Bernard Kerik for Homeland Security in 2004 — withdrew their names due to potential problems involving hired help.

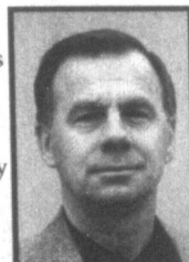
Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, had picks for attorney general (Zoe Baird and Kimba Wood) falter over nanny problems and his choice to head the Justice Department's civil rights division (Lani Guinier) undone by her legal writings on racial issues and strong Republican opposition.

William Weld, a liberal Republican and Clinton's pick to be U.S. ambassador to Mexico, couldn't get past the determined effort of former Republican Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, the conservative chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Donna Cassata covered the Tower nomination for The Associated Press in 1989.

Senior judge program applauded

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — One judge was on extended active duty in the military. Another retired unexpectedly. There have been illnesses, surgeries and surges in case-



Capitol Ideas
By Mark Chelgren
AP Frankfort Correspondent

loads. In each case, the vacancy on the bench was filled temporarily by a senior judge, a five-year-old experiment in Kentucky lauded by many in the legal community but questioned by some as a potential make-work program created to improve the benefits of retired judges.

"I think it's got some good points and then there's the flip side, some not so good," said Rep. Gross Lindsay, D-Henderson, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

If conducted properly and if retirees are required to perform meaningful tasks, Lindsay said the program can probably save some money overall.

Created by the General Assembly in 2000, the first retiree has just completed her obligation of working 600 days. The incentive for the retiree is an improved pension, but no other pay.

In the arcane world of public employee retirement, the actual benefit realized for participation in the senior judge program varies widely by individual. It is based on the time spent as a judge, any benefits earned in another public employee retirement plan, age and any personal contribution to the pension program. In any event, the amount of pension benefit cannot be more than sitting judges are paid in annual salary.

"The people who are being critical of it are focusing on the cost, and there is some cost," said Lewis Paisley, who has served in the district, circuit and appeals courts in 21 years of service on the bench. "The question is, what is the benefit. Everything costs something."

An actuarial study estimated the annual cost at \$420,000 for the enhanced retirement benefits. But the study estimated that

three-fourths of the eligible retiring judges would elect to take part. But according to the Judicial Form Retirement System, there were 55 judges who might otherwise have been eligible to retire since the program started and only 27 judges have joined, or about half. There are 263 active judges in the state, though a senior judge could not sit on a Supreme Court case.

Creating a new judgeship is an expensive proposition as well. A new district court judgeship costs an estimated \$310,000 the first year and slightly less thereafter, according to figures used by the Legislative Research Commission. Circuit Court judgeships cost more and family court judgeships cost nearly \$500,000.

To take part in the senior program, judges must be vested in the retirement program, which requires at least eight years on the bench. Their years of judicial service and age must also add up to at least 75. There are few practical limits and most retiring judges could take senior status.

According to the retirement system, the participating senior judges all have at least 13 years and many have more than 20. Full retirement is available to any judge who serves 27 years on the bench.

The senior program has virtually eliminated the need for the appointment of special judges, according to Chief Justice Joseph Lambert. Special judges were appointed for very short periods of time to handle unusual and emergency situations.

Special judges are paid only a modest amount, and there were no limits on their other law practice, which caused its own problems, Lambert said.

"We had a real hard time getting special judges at \$150 a day," Lambert said.

With no restrictions on legal practices, a lawyer could walk into court one day and preside and the next week as a litigant. "It created a black eye on the system," Lambert said.

Nevertheless, the roughly \$120,000 annual cost of special judges is practically gone, Lambert said.

Senior judges must agree to work 600 days, ideally spread out over 5 years, but the time it takes to fulfill that obligation is flexible.

Paisley said when he first became a sen-

ior judge, he worked virtually full time sitting in for a Fayette County Circuit Court judge who had been called to active military duty. Since then, he has also taken a rush of drug cases created by a special law enforcement task force in Owsley County and worked in Martin County to replace a judge who was not immediately replaced.

"I don't see it as make work," Paisley said.

"Obviously, I would not have done it for nothing," Paisley said.

"We have daily records that verify that a judge is doing what he says he's doing," Lambert said.

Senior judges borrow secretarial and other support staff from the court system and have none of their own. They receive travel reimbursements, but no additional compensation other than their enhanced retirement benefits.

Paisley said his own retirement benefit went from \$6,100 to \$8,888 per month by participating in the senior judge program. Paisley said he contributed \$115,000 of his own money into the retirement program that has served to enhance the benefit.

Buying time, as it is known, is common practice in public employee pension programs in Kentucky.

Lambert said there is another benefit to senior judges — unquestioned impartiality.

After most of the judges in Fayette County declined to take a contentious case involving the condemnation of the local water company, a senior judge from Bardstown was sent in. "Before he went on that case, there was a storm of criticism," Lambert said.

A senior judge taking over a class action lawsuit against the Roman Catholic church in northern Kentucky eliminated "claims of local favoritism" among the sitting judges, Lambert said.

The program is scheduled to expire in January 2009 and the legislature this year declined to consider a bill that would have extended it until 2015.

Rep. Lindsay said legislators want more time to see how it works in practice before extending it.

Mark R. Chelgren is the Frankfort, Ky., correspondent for The Associated Press.

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Ladies of Murray Country Club

Ladies of the Murray Country Club will have their regular ladies day golf on Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. at the club. Ve Severns, phone 759-8358, will be the hostess. The line-up has been released as follows:
Tee 1A - Betty Jo Purdom, Ve Severns, Sue Outland and Linda Burgess;
Tee 3 - Freda Steely, Barbara Gray, Cyndi Cohoon, Peggy Shoemaker and Inus Orr;
Tee 6 - Betty Stewart, Venela Sexton, Rainey Apperson and Evelyn Jones;
Tee 7 - Norma Frank, Ann Brown, Patsy Green and Mar-

ilyn Adkins;
Tee 9 - Brenda Rowland, Susan Johnson, Rebecca Landolt and Frances Hulse;
Nine Hole players - Tee 1B - Beverly Reuter, Ann Stanley, Beth Belote and Betty Shepperson.
Winners of four person golf scramble on April 20 have been released as follows:
First place - Ve Severns, Evelyn Jones, Betty Stewart and Brenda Rowland;
Second place - Sue Outland, Barbara Gray, Norma Frank and Patsy Chaney;
Nine Hole players - Beverly Reuter, first, and Ann Stanley, second.

AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary nominates officer candidates

BUCHANAN, Tenn. — Nominations of officers for the new year was the primary business of the April meeting of AMVETS Auxiliary #45. Brenda Leach named the following candidates for office in first round nominations:
Shirley Collins, president; Nancy Byford and Beverly Clark, first vice; Kathy Sufferin, second vice; Melissa Nergard, third vice; Kristi Frye and Brenda Leach, treasurer; Melissa Nergard, scholarship; Kastha Caldwell, chaplain; Cheryl Lutz, Sarah Wofford and Carol Feldkamp, sergeant-at-arms.
Nominations will reopen at the May meeting with the election to follow.
A vote was taken for Auxiliary Lady of the Year and it was awarded to Kristi Fyre of Murray. This is a coveted award given to a member who goes the extra mile for the Auxil-

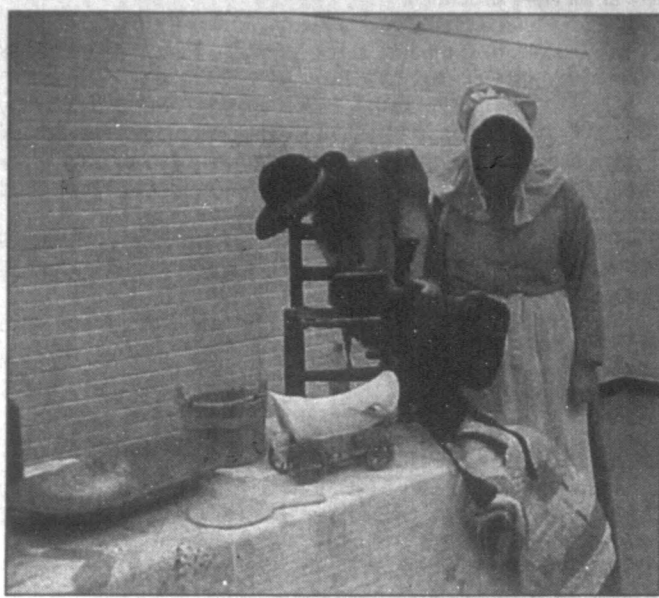
ary. Treasurer Shirley Collins reported that the Ways and Means Committee is planning a steak dinner May 21 to help raise funds for the state convention.
Americanism Office Jan Doall told of plans for the Living flag to "wave" again in the Fish Fry Parade at Paris, Tenn., and lined up volunteers to do it again at the Iris Festival in Dresden, Tenn. She read a tribute to volunteers.
Member Carol Spaulding was introduced by Hospital chair Dorothy Edwards to report on the plans for the "Nurses and Health Care Personnel Tribute" planned May 14 by the Auxiliary.
Angie Gardner reported that she had made visits to both Nashville V.A. and C. York V.A. facilities, taking books, games and puzzles for the patients.

Angels Attic displaying quilts and quilt pieces

Silent bids are being accepted on the quilts and quilt pieces displayed at the Angels Attic until the store closes at 5 p.m. on Saturday.
Also on that date all quilts will be made available for inspection in the store.
Included in the plethora of quilts are a 1930's handmade quilt with uncarded cotton, an

action figure tied twin quilt, and an unfinished baby quilt.
Winning bidders will be notified by telephone beginning May 3 and will be given one week to pick up their merchandise before it is offered to the second highest bidder.
Proceeds from sales provide financial support for the Angels community clinic.

Salmon Presents Program



Ann Salmon portrayed a 14-year-old girl, Mary Theadora, in "The Adventures of the Oregon Trail" at the April meeting of the Calloway County Genealogical Society. The next meeting will be May 7 with members to meet at 10 a.m. at the Calloway County Public Library to go on a field trip to Columbus-Belmont State park and Camp Beauregard. Members are encouraged to bring a sack lunch. For more information call Ruth Cole at 753-2718.

McGaughey will hold book signing at Curris Center

Dr. Bob McGaughey, editor and publisher of Sermons from Stones and Books from Brooks, will sign copies of the book May 4, from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the MSU Bookstore in the Curris Center on Murray State University's campus.
The book is the latest by the late R.H. McGaughey (Bob's father) of Hopkinsville. McGaughey was completing his book when he was killed in an automobile accident on March 28, 2003, in Hopkinsville. He would have been 90 years old the following week.
The work describes the life lessons learned from nature and the surrounding world. The book has 29 ethical stories and lessons, which the elder McGaughey compiled from his 60-year career as a journalist, author, farmer and military officer. Many of the essays were used in Sunday school during his 65 years of teaching class or conducting opening services.
This is the fifth book authored by the elder McGaughey. His other books include Life With Grandfather, This Is Your Weather, Molly of the Shakers and The Way I Heard

It. Molly of the Shakers is a historical novel that describes the Shaker town near Harrodsburg and the Civil War battle of Perryville. The hardback book is still available, but the others are sold out.
Bob, who is the retired chairman at MSU's department of journalism and mass communications, noted that there is one other work of his father's that he intends to publish. It is a collection of short stories with the title, Where Destiny Leads Me and Other Short Stories. The other stories are Four Went Fishing, The Woman in 313 and The Initiation.
Sermons from Stones can be purchased for \$19.95 plus Kentucky sales tax at the MSU Bookstore, The Shepard Shop (270-886-0720) in Hopkinsville, the New Life Christian Bookstore or the Murray Life magazine office in Murray. It also can be purchased at the Christian Supply House on Irvin Cobb Drive in Paducah. Copies can also be obtained from McGaughey by calling (270) 762-6874 or at (270) 753-5083 or by email at robert.mcgaughey@murraystate.edu.

Herndon, Billington and Guthrie receive awards

Donna Herndon, Peggy Billington and Karen Guthrie were recently recognized with Lifetime Achievement Awards for mentors at the Annual Senior Luncheon for students, presented by the American Humanities/Youth and Nonprofit Leadership program at Murray State University.
Herndon received one of the awards for her efforts in working with AH students in serv-

ice learning projects and as interns for the past decade at the Family Resource Center. Billington and Guthrie, representatives from the United Way and Calloway County Youth Services Center, were awarded for their work with student interns for the past 20 years and for working with AH students in organizing College Day for the past decade. College Day is a service learning project in which AH students organize a day of activities for eighth-grade students to become more familiar with college life.

'Grandparents Raising Grandchildren' will meet



Jo's Datebook
By Jo Burkeen
Community Editor

The "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" support group for Murray and Calloway County will meet Tuesday at noon at the Murray City Schools Family Resource Youth Services Center, located at 901 Main St.
Living wills be distributed to each person and a Notary Public will be available to notarize the signatures at no charge.
Any grandparent raising a grandchild or relative is encouraged to attend. Lunch will be served. For additional information or transportation, call the Murray Resource Center at 759-9592.

Alzheimer's group will meet

Alzheimer's Support Group will have a discussion meeting Tuesday at 4:30 p.m. in the board room of Murray-Calloway County Hospital. For information call Cindy Ragsdale, L.S.W., at 762-1108.

Retirement tea will be Tuesday

A retirement tea honoring Rita Ford will be Tuesday from 3 to 5 p.m. in the private dining room of Murray-Calloway County Hospital.

AARP Chapter will meet Tuesday

Kentucky Lake/Murray Chapter No. 4437 will meet Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. at Pagliai's with Nikki Henderson, AARP state representative, as speaker. Everyone is invited.

Stroke/Head Injury group will meet

Murray Stroke/Head Injury Support Group will meet Tuesday at 6 p.m. at the Center for Health and Wellness classroom. Note the change in date and time. Amy Agyeman will present a program on "Young Stroke Survivors." For information call Cheryl Crouch at 762-1557.

Character Counts meeting planned

Character Counts Coalition of Murray and Calloway County team meeting will be Tuesday at 1 p.m. at Pella Corporation. For information call Doris Clark Parham at 762-5429.

Al-Anon meeting is Tuesday

Al-Anon will meet Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church. Please enter from the southside rear door located near the playground. The only requirement is that there be a problem of alcoholism or addiction in a relative or friend.

Singles will meet Tuesday

Murray Singles (SOS) will meet Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the annex of Calloway Public Library. This is open to all singles. For information call Vicky at 753-3128, Laverne at 753-0181 or Jackie at 1-270-247-7754.

MHS Prom meeting Wednesday

Murray High School Prom meeting will be Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. at the old Lassiter Plaster building to discuss final plans for the Prom 2005 to be held Saturday. All interested individuals are encouraged to attend. For information call 293-6408.

MES Council meeting today

Murray Elementary School Site-based Decision Making Council will meet today at 11 a.m. for a special meeting.

Band uniform sale today

Calloway County Laker Band Boosters has scheduled another sale for former Laker band uniforms today from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the high school. The boosters purchased the old band uniforms to sell as a keepsake, money-making endeavor. For more information call Wendy S. Collins at 767-0777.

Parent Support Group will meet

Parent Support Group, formerly called Parents Anonymous, will meet tonight from 6 to 8 p.m. For information call 753-7004.

MES committee plans meeting

The Curriculum Committee of Murray Elementary School Site-based Decision Making Council will meet today at 4 p.m. in the library. The meeting is open to the public.

New Concord meeting tonight

New Concord Neighborhood Watch meeting will be tonight at 7 p.m. at New Concord Church of Christ. Speakers will include Venita Loranger of Kentucky Allied Services Homeland Security and Sheriff Larry Roberts. All area residents are urged to attend.

Great Books group will meet

Adult Great Books Discussion Group will meet tonight at 7 p.m. at the Calloway Public Library. Magha Battle will lead a discussion on "Orality and Literacy" by Walter Ong. All persons who have read the selection are invited to take part in the discussion.

MES Board plans meeting

Murray Electric Board will meet today at 4 p.m. in the Carroll Conference Room, 205 North Fourth St.

Need Line lists special needs

Need Line has released a list of items needed to fill the bags for the clients. Food items needed are tuna, spinach, fruit, tuna, cereal and crackers. Personal hygiene and cleaning supplies needed are bath tissue, dish liquid, toddler size tooth brushes and deodorant. Also large brown paper bags are needed. Items may be taken to the Need Line office in the Weak's Community Center from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For information call 753-6333.

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Majority Leader Frist defends anti-filibuster effort

By DAVID ESPO
AP Special Correspondent
WASHINGTON (AP) — Majority Leader Bill Frist said it was not "radical" to ask senators to vote on judicial nominees as he hardened his effort to strip Democrats of their power to stall President Bush's picks for the federal court.

Frist, speaking Sunday at an event organized by Christian groups trying to rally churchgoers to support an end to judicial filibusters, also said judges deserve "respect, not retaliation," no matter how they rule.

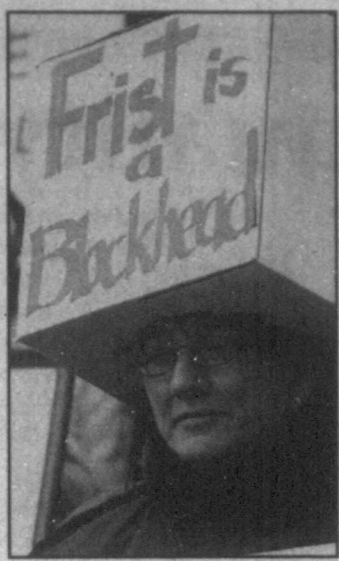
A potential candidate for the White House in 2008, the Tennessee Republican made no overt mention of religion in the brief address, according to his videotaped remarks played on giant television screens to an audience estimated at 1,700 in Louisville, Ky.

Instead, Frist seemed intent on steering clear of the views expressed by House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, and other conservatives in and out of Congress who have urged investigations and even possible impeachment of judges they describe as activists.

"Our judiciary must be independent, impartial and fair," said Frist, who was not present at the event.

"When we think judicial decisions are outside mainstream American values, we will say so. But we must also be clear that the balance of power among all three branches requires respect — not retaliation. I won't go along with that," Frist said.

For months, Frist has threatened to take action that would shut down the Democrats' prac-



AP Photo
Kathi Whalen of Louisville, Ky. shows her opinion of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist during a rally held on the steps of the old Jefferson County Courthouse Sunday in Louisville, Ky. The rally was held to counter the Justice Sunday rallies being held.

tics of subjecting a small number of judicial appointees to filibusters. Barring a last-minute compromise, a showdown is expected this spring or summer.

"I don't think it's radical to ask senators to vote. I don't think it's radical to expect senators to fulfill their constitutional responsibilities," said Frist, whom Democrats have accused of engaging in "radical Republican" politics.

"Either confirm the nominees or reject them," Frist said. "Don't leave them hanging."

While a majority of the Senate is sufficient to confirm a judge, it takes 60 votes under Senate rules to overcome a filibuster and force a final vote.

Rather than change the rules directly, Frist and other

Republicans have threatened to seek an internal Senate ruling that would declare that filibusters are not permitted against judicial nominees.

Because such a ruling can be enforced by majority vote, and Republicans have 55 seats in the 100-member Senate, GOP leaders have said they expect to prevail if they put the issue to the test.

Democrats blocked 10 appointments in Bush's first term. The president has renominated seven of the 10 since he won re-election, and Democrats have threatened to filibuster them again.

Among the speakers Sunday was Charles Pickering of Mississippi, one of the judges blocked from a permanent promotion to an appeals court. He called the filibuster tactic unconstitutional and said it should be ended permanently if used again.

Pickering's bruising battle for a seat on a federal appeals court abruptly ended when Bush, in a temporary recess appointment that did not require Senate approval, elevated him last year to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans.

Democrats threatened a filibuster of Pickering's nomination, accusing him of supporting segregation as a young man, and promoting anti-abortion and anti-voting rights as a state lawmaker — allegations Pickering denied.

Pickering announced his retirement in December, saying he would not seek nomination for a permanent seat that would have required Senate approval.

Putting more evangelicals on the court will mean rulings more in tune with the religious convictions of churchgoers, said R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

"We are not asking for per-

sons merely to be moral," Mohler said. "We want them to be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Republicans pushed two of the nominees — including Texas Supreme Court Judge Priscilla Owen — from the Senate

Judiciary Committee last week on party-line votes.

Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., raised the possibility of a deal. "I think we should ... say to them that ... we'll let a number" of the seven judges "go through, the two most extreme not go

through and put off this vote and compromise," he said on ABC's "This Week."

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., is open to compromise, his spokesman said Sunday.

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Conservatives ...

From Front

based Focus on the Family, denounced the Supreme Court as "out of control," and said a five-member majority can make law that most of the country disagrees with.

"They're not gods," Dobson said. "They don't do everything right."

During Sunday's event, names, photographs and office phone numbers of senators were flashed across the TV screens. Perkins asked those in the church and others watching a nationwide simulcast to call the senators and ask them to end the filibuster.

Outside the church, several dozen protesters waved signs denouncing the rally.

"They don't speak for all the people of faith," said Nancy Troy, a Presbyterian minister from Louisville.

Billy Hower of Louisville stood outside the church holding a sign that read "Meet the All-American Taliban."

"I think that they're driving toward a theocracy, or at least they're trying to," Hower said. "That's when the bad stuff happens."

Other critics, including ministers and Democratic politicians, said holding the event in a church was inappropriate.

At one of several rallies in the city on Sunday afternoon, about 100 protesters sat on the steps of the Jefferson County Courthouse as public officials voiced their dissent, reiterating the importance of the filibuster in American politics.

"It's a rule of the United States Senate that's been used for over 200 years on many issues," said Jerry Lundergan, the chairman of the Kentucky Democratic party.

Lundergan said the filibuster is vital to balancing power.

Other speakers, including retired circuit judge Michael J. O'Connell, agreed with Lundergan's reasoning.

"Historically, the filibuster has served a great purpose to protect the interest of the minority in the Congress throughout the history of this country," said O'Connell.

O'Connell said filibusters encourage discussion about judges who might be perceived as impartial or not qualified for the job.

Other protesters said the rally didn't represent the views of all Christians.

During another protest, several hundred people gathered at a Presbyterian church as progressive religious leaders condemned Frist and others for using the pulpit to spread a political message.

The Rev. Nancy Jo Kemper, executive director of the Kentucky Council of Churches, said she thinks the church is being divided because of "Justice Sunday."

"I lament today that our brothers and sisters in Christ at Highview Baptist Church believe those who do not agree with them are somehow anti-Christian," Kemper said. "Religion and religious people are being manipulated to achieve political ends."

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Area farmers aim for better quality crops

OWENSBORO, Ky. (AP) — The West Kentucky Growers Cooperative seems to be facing a make or break year and officials are changing some practices in the hopes of making it.

The cooperative will promote product quality this year by hiring a production manager and inspecting vegetables, said Joe Cecil, the cooperative's CEO and president of sales.

The move comes after the state Agricultural Development Board questioned the cooperative's viability when it asked the board to cover operating losses last year caused by heavy sum-

mer storms.

Although some growers have made profits in previous seasons, the cooperative as a whole has not turned a profit in its five seasons.

Cooperative officials said they hope the new position of production manager can help more farmers turn a profit.

Production manager Dave Kendrick will work with the cooperative's 39 growers to make sure they have high quality sweet corn, bell peppers, squash and broccoli — most of which are high maintenance crops that need more attention than traditional row crops

such as corn and soybeans.

"We feel very strongly having the production manager is going to boost our yields," Cecil said. "We recognized after five years of compiling our data we've got a percentage of growers who are at the top (in yields) every year, and a percentage of growers who are below average."

Kendrick said his job is to work with the growers "from seeding and transplanting all the way through harvest." He said growers have accepted the coming changes.

Growers will be charged a fee for

Kendrick's services, Cecil said, but that will be refunded if the grower produces more than the average cooperative yield during the season.

"We've got to bring the people at the bottom of the chart to hit the average mark or be above average," Cecil said.

Because quality is at a premium, each vegetable shipment from growers will undergo an inspection before it is accepted, Cecil said. Crops that don't meet quality standards will be sent back to the grower.

In the past, the cooperative accepted lower-quality crops, Cecil said, so

growers could recoup as much of their production costs as possible. But that practice lowered prices for all cooperative vegetables.

Gary Cecil, a veteran cooperative grower, agreed that refusing low-quality crops is necessary.

"It hurts all of us when a bad quality crop comes in there," he said. "They need to be very conscious of that, for the benefit of all of us."

Other changes include planting less corn and peppers and more broccoli.

Farm-state lawmakers want bigger boost in ethanol

By H. JOSEF HEBERT
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Corn-based ethanol is being pumped into more gas tanks every year, and farm-state senators and a majority of governors want an even greater flow. They say an energy bill Republicans are pushing through the House this week does not go far enough to replace foreign oil with home-grown ethanol.

The legislation would require refiners to use 5 billion gallons of corn-based ethanol a year by 2012, about 20 percent more than the industry expects to produce this year.

But governors from 30 states, in a recent letter to President Bush and members of Congress, urged lawmakers to boost the requirement to 8 billion gallons a year and provide tax breaks and other federal help to spur production from non-corn sources including grasses, wood chips and even garbage.

Rising oil imports are a major risk to the nation's energy, economic and environmental security, the governors wrote, adding that expansion of ethanol would be "the safest and cheapest way to mitigate these risks."

Transportation accounts for more than half of the U.S. thirst for oil, about 56 percent of which comes from imports; that portion is expected to be well over 60 percent by 2012.

Bills were introduced in the Senate and House last week calling for refiners to use 8 billion gallons of ethanol as a gasoline additive each year. An attempt is expected to be made to change the energy bill to reflect the higher number when it comes up for House debate Wednesday, although prospects of doing so are uncertain.

Almost all ethanol now produced comes from corn. A federal mandate for refiners to more than double its use over the next seven years would be a major boon to farmers. While non-corn ethanol from various biomass sources is widely talked about, a practical and cost-effective process for producing it is still years away.

A coalition representing farmers, petroleum and environmental interests generally agree on language that would require refiners to use more ethanol as a gasoline additive, replacing a petroleum-based oxygenate, MTBE, which is being phased out because it has been found to

contaminate drinking water.

New York, Connecticut and California banned MTBE in early 2004, resulting in a surge in ethanol demand and production. Ethanol production more than doubled during the last five years with dozens of new plants being built. About 4 billion gallons of ethanol are expected to be produced this year, compared with 1.4 billion gallons annually a decade ago, according to the industry.

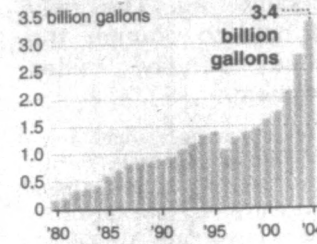
"We've proven we can grow rapidly. We've proven we can supply the market," says Monte Shaw, a spokesman for the Renewable Fuels Association, which represents ethanol producers. The group has vowed to push Congress to adopt "the most aggressive" ethanol proposal possible in energy legislation.

Ethanol prices have declined sharply in recent months, largely because of the rapid growth in supply and few new markets. Shaw maintains that refiners are ignoring ethanol and keeping the additive out of some markets where it is readily available. The wholesale price of a gallon of ethanol is now about \$1.20, compared with \$1.75 in January, according to the National Corn

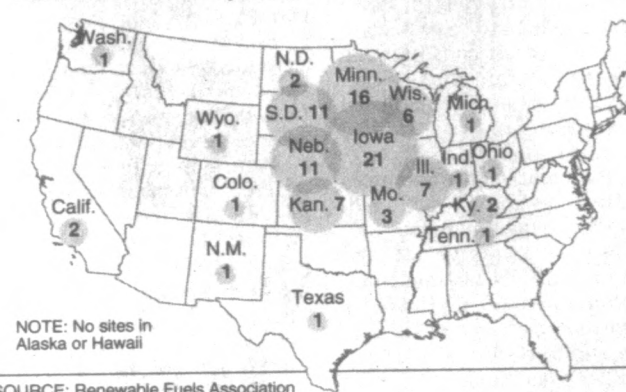
Alternative energy grown by the cob

Ethanol, a corn-based gasoline additive that helps vehicles run cleaner and more efficiently has seen rapid growth as another additive, MTBE, is being phased out because it contaminates drinking water.

U.S. fuel ethanol production



Number of ethanol production sites, by state



NOTE: No sites in Alaska or Hawaii

SOURCE: Renewable Fuels Association

Growers' Association.

A requirement for 8 billion gallons a year has more than 20 sponsors in the Senate and about the same number in the House.

While ethanol has widespread support among both Republicans and Democrats in

Congress as well as at the White House, the corn-based fuel also has its detractors, among them lawmakers from California and the Northeast. They have argued a mandate to use ethanol isn't needed because refiners can produce gasoline that meets clean-

air requirements without it or MTBE. They fear requiring ethanol, which is largely produced in the Midwest, will add to fuel costs where it is not widely produced.

"It's nothing more than a giveaway ... nothing more than a welfare program" for farmers, Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., said as he tried to strip the ethanol mandate of 5 billion gallons from the House energy bill in committee last week. His effort was easily defeated.

Increasing the requirement beyond 5 billion gallons a year may be just as difficult.

The higher number is opposed by both Majority Leader Tom DeLay and Rep. Joe Barton, both of Texas. Barton will manage the energy legislation on the House floor, beginning Wednesday. The oil industry also has vowed to vehemently oppose any requirement beyond what's already in the bill.

"It will drive up costs, have minimal effect on petroleum imports, and force ethanol into areas where it is uneconomical to be used," Ed Murphy, director of refining and marketing at the American Petroleum Institute, said in an interview.

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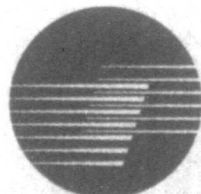
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SCOTT NANNEY/Ledger & Times photo

Murray State's Tyler Pittman slides safely into third base ahead of the throw during play in the fifth inning of Sunday's contest against Tennessee Tech at Reagan Field. The 'Breds dropped a 12-9 decision to the Golden Eagles.

Run for the Roses field set for Derby

NEW YORK (AP) — One final audition demonstrated how quickly fortunes change on the always unpredictable road to the Kentucky Derby.

After a little ol' 1 1/16th-mile race at Keeneland, former top contender Rockport Harbor is headed back to Philadelphia, a long shot to run in the 'Derby on May 7; virtually unknown Coin Silver rocketed onto the scene; and trainer Bob Baffert can only hope his last chance colt, Sort It Out, qualifies for the race.

Consider Rockport Harbor. The injury-plagued gray colt flunked his test in Saturday's Lexington Stakes, finishing sixth in a seven-horse field. Trainer John Servis told owner Rick Porter he's against a trip to Louisville. That would leave Servis and jockey Stewart Elliott — last year's Derby winning combo with Smarty Jones — without a chance for an encore.

Servis, though, said he's on a "wait and see" schedule. Consider Coin Silver.

Who? Exactly. Rarely, if ever, mentioned as a Derby possibility, Coin Silver won the Lexington by 3 1/2 lengths in the slop to give trainer Todd Pletcher a third 3-year-old for the race.

Assistant trainer Tristan Barry said Sunday that Coin Silver came out of the race in "great shape. We're very excited about his race. We don't know who will ride him in the Derby, but Todd will make that decision shortly. After the way he ran, it shouldn't be too difficult to find a jockey."

Consider Baffert. The three-time Derby winning trainer could be without a Derby starter for the second year in a row. Sort It Out finished second in the 1 1/16th-mile Lexington and earned \$65,000 in graded stakes money. The Derby is limited to 20 starters; if more enter the field is determined by graded stakes earnings. Sort It Out is 21st.

Among questionable Derby

■ See DERBY Page 2B

'Breds tripped up by Tennessee Tech

Special to the Ledger

A first-inning grand slam by Tyler Pittman got the Murray State Thoroughbreds off to an optimistic start on Sunday, but visiting Tennessee Tech scored six unearned runs in the fifth inning en route to the 12-9 win in Ohio Valley Conference play at Reagan Field.

The loss, coupled with Saturday's split of a doubleheader, put Murray State (21-20, 9-6 OVC) into a third-place tie with Jacksonville State in the league standings.

Austin Peay (10-5 OVC) moved into sole possession of second place with a three-game sweep at Tennessee-Martin over the weekend. League-leading Morehead State (11-3 OVC) maintained its hold on the top spot in the conference despite losing two of its three games at Jacksonville State.

The top two teams in the conference standings earn byes in the first round of the OVC Championship Tournament, scheduled for May 25-28 in Paducah.

The 'Breds scored a season-high 24 runs — including 14 in the third inning alone — in a 24-7 rout of the Golden Eagles during Saturday's first game. However, MSU could have used some of those runs in the nightcap as it was shut out 6-0.

In Sunday's game, Tech (10-29, 5-9 OVC) plated three runs in the top of the first inning with the help of a two-run double by Nathan Marty.

In the bottom of the first, Pittman popped his team-leading fifth home run of the season to put the 'Breds ahead 4-3.

MSU scored again in the second inning when Griggs hit a sacrifice fly to score

Phil Lopez, which gave Murray State a 5-3 lead.

A 'Breds error in the fifth inning opened the gates for the Golden Eagles, as they scored six unearned runs in that inning to take a 9-5 lead.

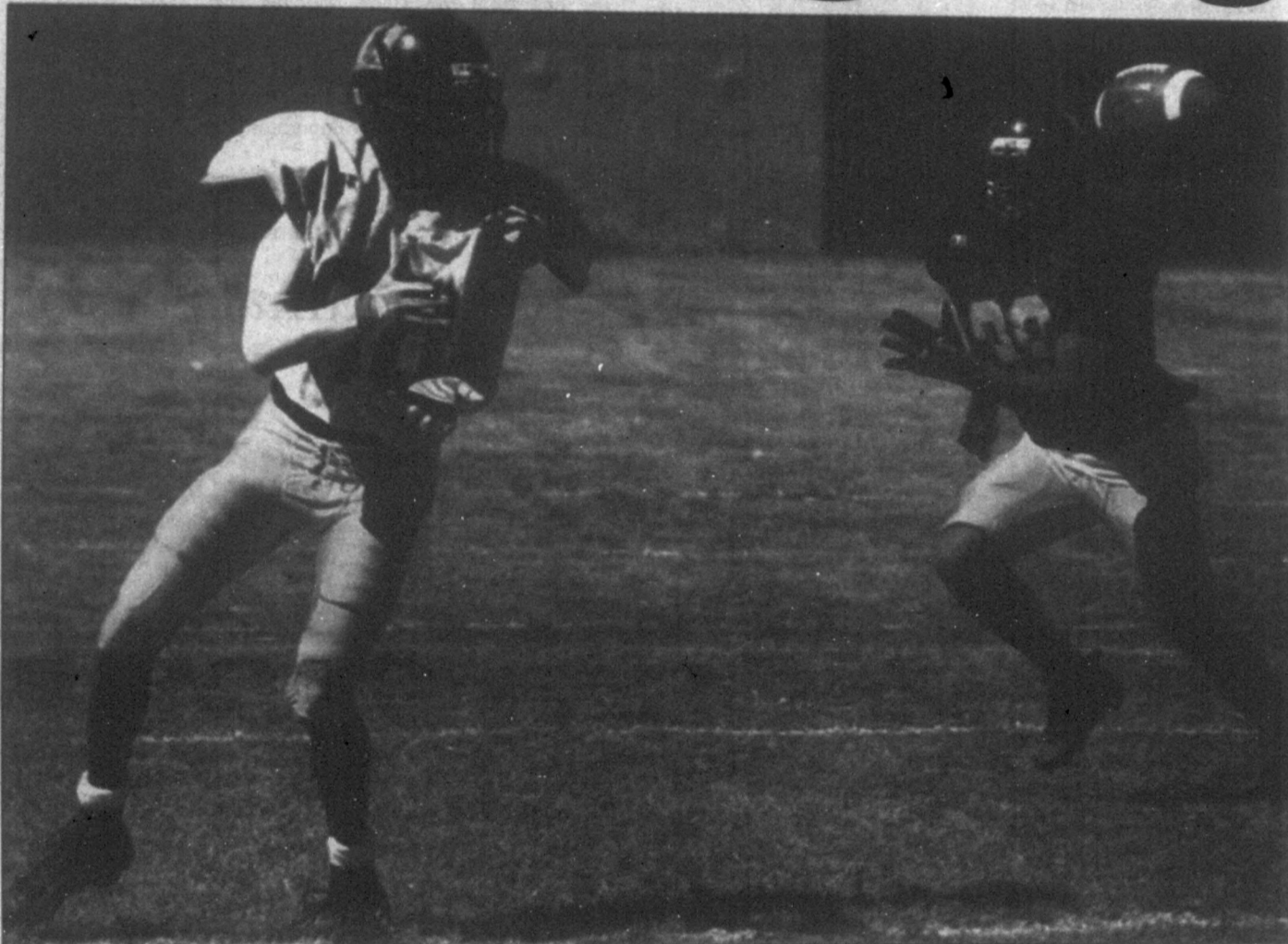
MSU responded in the bottom half of the inning, when Hudson hit a one-out single and Griggs hit an infield single. A poor throw allowed both runners to advance two more bases, scoring Hudson and putting Griggs on third. Pittman hit a single to score Griggs, which cut the TTU lead to 9-7.

Murray pulled even closer in the seventh inning when Griggs led off the inning with a home run, cutting the deficit to 9-8.

The Golden Eagles scored two more

■ See 'BREDS Page 2B

MURRAY STATE FOOTBALL Final Spring Fling



SCOTT NANNEY/Ledger & Times photo

Wide receiver Lee McGinnis (80) prepares to catch a pass thrown by quarterback Ken Topps as cornerback Stevie Chaney (39) defends on the play during Sunday's spring practice session. Yesterday's workout was the final one for the Racers this spring.

Racers end spring practice with guarded optimism

By SCOTT NANNEY
Sports Editor

Spring practice for any college football program can bring equal parts optimism and concern.

There was definitely a little of both in the air on Sunday, as the Murray State Racers wrapped up their 15-practice spring session with an approximately hour-long workout on the practice fields behind Roy Stewart Stadium.

The optimism stems from an offense — led by the tailback trio of Ron Lane, Chad Cook and Nick Turner — that has the potential to be one of the most

explosive units in Division I-AA football.

On the other hand, there is much work to do to improve on the defensive side of the ball, where the line suffered a major hit with the losses of end Marcus White and tackles Greg Archer, Brandon Dixon and Ronald Samuel to graduation.

Head coach Joe Pannunzio is also looking for leaders to emerge as the Racers enter offseason workouts.

"I'm really concerned with our senior leadership. Any team that wins is going to have good leadership, and we

★ St. Louis signs free agent contract, page 2B

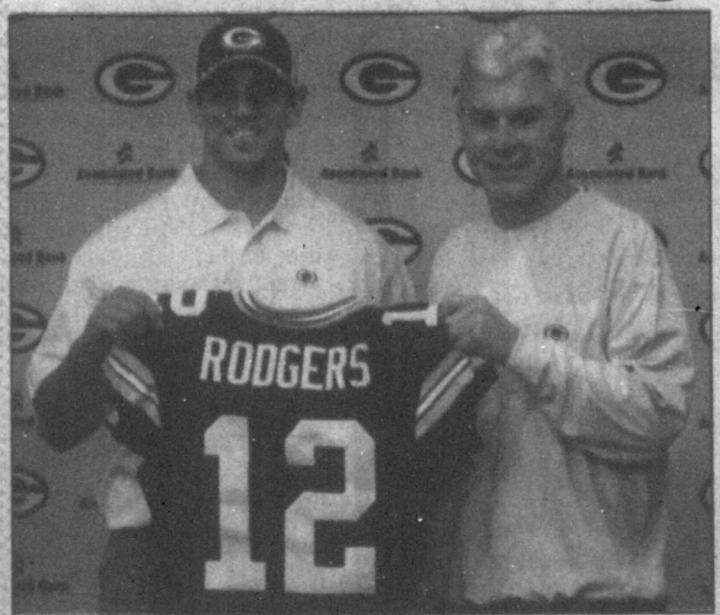
don't have that right now," Pannunzio said. "We've also got to go out and get some defensive linemen. But our kids are really working hard. We've put together a good foundation. Now, it's up to the kids to work hard this summer."

The big story in the Murray State camp this spring centered around the quarterback position, where newcomer

■ See RACERS Page 2B

2005 NFL DRAFT

Smith and Rodgers forever linked by draft



AP Photo

Green Bay Packers general manager Ted Thompson, right, stands next to the team's first-round pick, California quarterback Aaron Rodgers, during a news conference Sunday in Green Bay, Wis.

NEW YORK (AP) — Alex Smith and Aaron Rodgers will forever be judged against each other.

The quarterbacks seemed to be neck-and-neck in the race to become the top pick during the weeks leading up to the NFL draft. The San Francisco 49ers and 22 other teams thought otherwise.

Smith was picked first overall out of Utah by the 49ers and charged with reviving a once-great franchise.

California's Rodgers waited nervously until Green Bay selected him with the 24th pick, pegged by the Packers to one day replace Brett Favre. The outcome did nothing to shake Rodgers' confidence.

"I still think I'm the best quarterback in this draft," Rodgers said.

Rodgers' fall provided the one bit of intrigue in a draft

considered short on franchise players, with so many of the teams at the top looking to move down that none could swing a deal.

Running backs and cornerbacks dominated the top 10 picks, with three of each being selected.

For the first time, three running backs were selected in the top five. Auburn's Ronnie Brown went second to Miami, Texas' Cedric Benson went No. 4 to Chicago and Brown's teammate, Carnell Williams, was the fifth pick to Tampa Bay.

The corners came next with Adam "Pacman" Jones of West Virginia going No. 6 to Tennessee. Antrel Rolle of Miami was taken eighth by Minnesota and Washington tapped Carlos Rogers, another Auburn Tiger, on the next selection.

Auburn was shut out of a chance to play for a national

championship last season, despite going 13-0. But the Tigers ended up with four first-round draft picks and became the first team to have an entire backfield taken in the first round when quarterback Jason Campbell was picked No. 24 by the Redskins.

"I don't think it's ever happened before and I don't think it will ever happen again," Auburn coach Tommy Tuberville said.

Oklahoma, the team that edged out Auburn for a spot in the Bowl Championship Series title game against Southern California — and then got crushed 55-19 by the Trojans — had the most players picked with 11.

Sooners quarterback Jason White wasn't one of them. Fourteen passers were chosen over the 2003 Heisman Trophy winner.



AP Photo

St. Louis first baseman Albert Pujols celebrates with teammates in the dugout after hitting a two-run home run in the first inning against the Houston Astros Sunday at Busch Stadium in St. Louis.

Cardinals rock Astros for series sweep

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Albert Pujols is sure the St. Louis Cardinals will start hitting soon.

Pujols hit a two-run homer, and David Eckstein and Mark Grudzielanek each had three hits to help the Cardinals complete a three-game sweep of the Houston Astros with an 8-5 victory Sunday. The NL Central leaders have won nine of 10 without consistent offense, given the team's .243 batting average.

"I just think you guys take this too serious," Pujols said. "The season is just starting and you struggle here and there like we were early and it's, 'Oh man, what's wrong with the Cardinals?'"

"It's too early, what did you expect? Just go out there and hit .500 right away as a team? No, this is the big leagues, this is not the minor leagues."

The Cardinals have been off and on thus far, leaning more on consistent starting pitching than an overpowering lineup. On Saturday, they won 1-0 in 10 innings, and three other times they've scored three or fewer runs.

Matt Morris (2-0) worked five effective innings in his second start since shoulder surgery for the Cardinals, who have won their last seven home games against the Astros — including the 2004 NL championship series. St. Louis swept the Astros at home for the first time since May 21-23, 2002.

"These are big ones," Morris said. "A lot of times, the wins in April make the difference in September."

It was certainly momentous for manager Tony La Russa, who earned his 2,126th victory to break a tie with Joe McCarthy for fifth on the career list.

Jeff Bagwell had two RBIs for the Astros, who are 1-8 on the road and 7-2 at home.

"It's ugly, it's really ugly," manager Phil Garner said. "We're going to have to bring in some snake oil and maybe do an exorcism."

MISS SPRING 2005



Laura Mitchell
MHS

Robyn Ryan
CCHS

A special supplement of the Murray Ledger & Times • April 25, 2005

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Choosing Miss Spring No Easy Task

By Slone Cansler/Advertising Manager

There are lots of exciting days for the sales staff at the Ledger & Times. There's the day we get finished with our In Our Backyard magazine and anxiously await its publication and the day before Thanksgiving when the newspaper is flooded with tons of Christmas ads heralding the official start of the holiday shopping season. And, every now and then, there's that random, crazy day when everything that could go wrong does and somehow we still find a way to laugh about it.

But, without a doubt, the most exciting day of the year at the newspaper is the day that we announce Miss Spring.

There's nothing like the feeling when we burst into a young lady's classroom and present her with that banner and flowers. The look on

her face starts at complete confusion and ends in absolute joy. And the parents, who are always notified a day in advance, finally get to celebrate after keeping a huge secret for 24 hours.

For 31 years now, Miss Spring has been one of the most successful special publications produced by the Ledger. Community support for the section has only gotten stronger since we decided, in 2003, to choose a Miss Spring from each school. In all the years past, Miss Spring was chosen from one school and the selection alternated — Calloway County one year and Murray the next. That system inevitably left a deserving young lady out each year. Our first dual Miss Spring issue featured Rebecca Cripps from

See SELECTION/Page 3



Robyn Ryan

Miss Spring 2005
Calloway County High School



Laura Mitchell

Miss Spring 2005
Murray High School

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VOTED #1 READER'S CHOICE

Selection process has evolved over publication's 31 years in print

From Page 2

Calloway and Summer Williams from Murray. The response from everyone was overwhelming. As for us, we can't figure out why we didn't think of it sooner.

This year, our tradition continues and two lovely young ladies, Robyn Ryan from Calloway and Laura Mitchell from Murray, share the honor of Miss Spring 2005. Readers will learn all about Robyn and Laura in this very special section. We've had a ball taking photos and shooting the cover. I know the girls are nearly exhausted from running all over town, but I hope they've had a wonderful, unforgettable time.

Every year someone wants to know how Miss Spring is chosen and though the method of selection has varied over 31 years we believe we've finally found the best way to select our Misses Spring.

Advertising staff members met with principals at both high schools in February and filled them in on our new selection process. Principals in turn notified students that any senior girl who wanted to be Miss Spring had to fill out an

application outlining at least a 3.0 grade point average as well as school and community activities and write an essay about why they would want to be Miss Spring. A selection committee of seven people would vote based on applications and essays submitted by each candidate. The two young ladies, one from each school, who received the most votes from the committee made up of each school's guidance counselor, two community members and three members of the advertising staff would be named Miss Spring.

Although I did not serve on the selection committee this year, I've read all the applications and essays. Choosing Misses Spring could not have been an easy task. All the young ladies who applied were fine, upstanding students with proven leadership abilities and a desire to accomplish something in this world. This community and its schools have a great deal to be proud of.

Robyn and Laura have a great deal to be proud of, as well. They, like so many Misses Spring before them, have been able to interact



Laura Mitchell

with those at the heart of our local business community, meet people they would not otherwise have known and, hopefully, gained an even greater sense of self-confidence and grace. And we get to know two wonderful young ladies we might never have met.

It's so much fun to keep up with them over the years and follow their accomplishments. We often run into their mothers and some-



Robyn Ryan

times Miss Spring herself and, not surprisingly, they are always doing great things. I know that years of extraordinary parenting, excellent school systems and just plain old hard work and determination have had the most to do with where these young ladies end up, but I like to think that Miss Spring and the Ledger played at least a small role in letting each girl reach for and realize her goals and dreams.

Lilly says,
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Robyn breaks out of shell to shock of some

The old Robyn Ryan might not have handled such public excitement so well. The new Robyn Ryan, though, came through with flying colors — and a new title, too.

Just a few weeks ago, the Calloway County High School sen-

ior was simply minding her business inside the school's newspaper office when she suddenly became the center of attention. Like something from a Publisher's Clearing House commercial, a large group of smiling people carrying flowers and banners was coming toward



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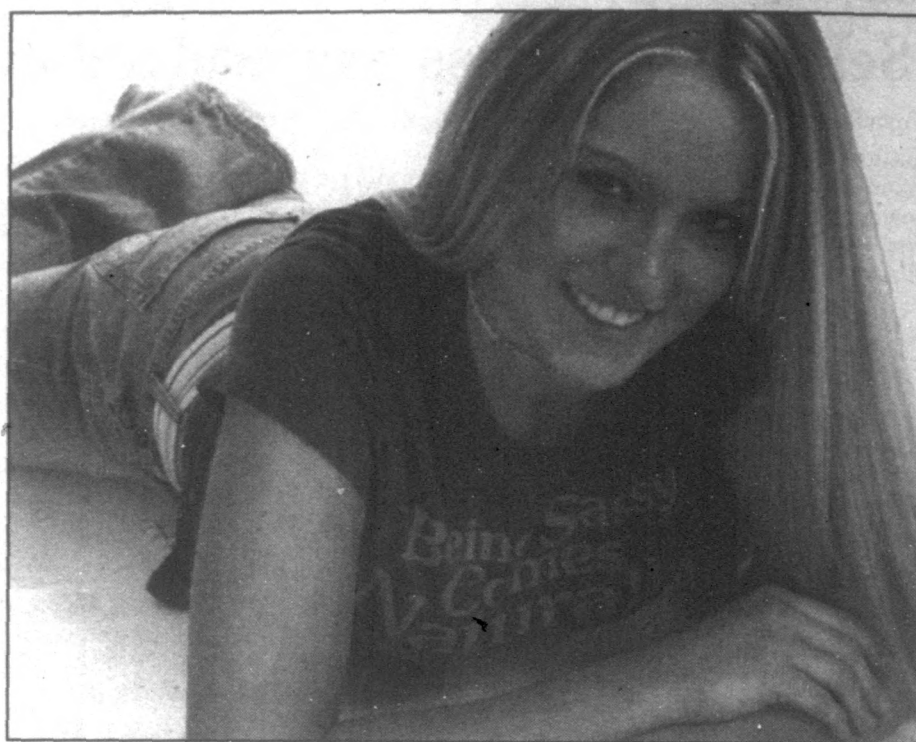
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Congratulations Robyn & Laura!



Once shy, Calloway County High School senior Robyn Ryan is now brimming with confidence in herself.

her.

In earlier years, anxiety might have paralyzed the once-painfully shy Robyn. On this day, though — after getting over the shock of the

moment — a girl bursting with self confidence was able to gleefully accept a moment she thought would never come.

See ROBYN/Page 6

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'That Pella girl' Laura fits in well in Murray

Growing up in different cities, Laura Mitchell got a taste of the pomp and circumstance associated with honors and accolades given to young women associated with an event. In Louisville, it was the Derby Princesses who coincided with the Run for the Roses. In Iowa, it was the Tulip Time Court.

All the while, Laura would think how nice it would be to be a part of something like that. And now, she is. The Murray High School senior was named Miss Spring 2005 along with Robyn Ryan, a fellow senior at Calloway County High School.

That was the day her work on the yearbook staff at MHS came to a grinding halt.

"Basically, I saw a bunch of people walking into the room, but I really didn't pay any attention," Laura recalled of the coronation in yearbook advisor Jill Herndon's classroom. "The next thing I know

(Ledger & Times advertising manager Slone Cansler) is putting a sash on me that said I was the new Miss Spring.

"It was pretty exciting," Mitchell said she had looked at the Miss Spring publication the previous two years, but had not really envisioned being part of it herself ... not that the thought did not go through her mind.

"I had been sitting at the lunch room table with Lauren Peal (Miss Spring 2004 for MHS) when she was told that she had been selected and I do remember thinking, 'Wow! This would be something nice to have.'"

"When we were in Louisville, she was around the Derby Princesses. Then when we moved to Iowa, she would see what was called the Tulip Time Court, and she would think, 'Oh, wouldn't it be neat if I could be part of that?'" her mother, Kathy, remembered.

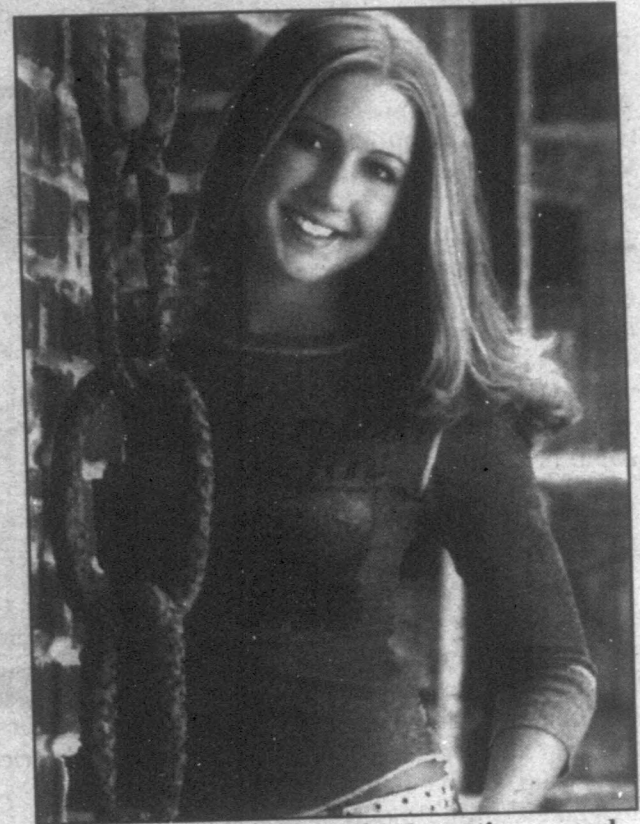
Laura Mitchell, believed to be the first Miss Spring in the

title's 31 year history not to have lived here at least half of her life, has been part of the MHS scene since her sophomore year moving here from Pella, Iowa. Pella is home of Pella Windows & Doors company, which made Murray its first Kentucky satellite manufacturing facility in 2002. Mitchell's father, John, now serves as president and chief operating officer of the advanced materials division.

Her former home is also the source of her nickname, acquired one day during pre-season track practice as a sophomore. All it took was one look from then-coach Monica Evans at the Pella T-shirt Laura was wearing that day.

"Everybody just started calling me 'Pella' or 'that Pella girl,'" she said. And it wasn't until attending a track meet that first season that her parents were able to experience the "Pella" phenomenon first

See LAURA/Page 8



After having moved around the nation — and world — Laura Mitchell is home in Murray.

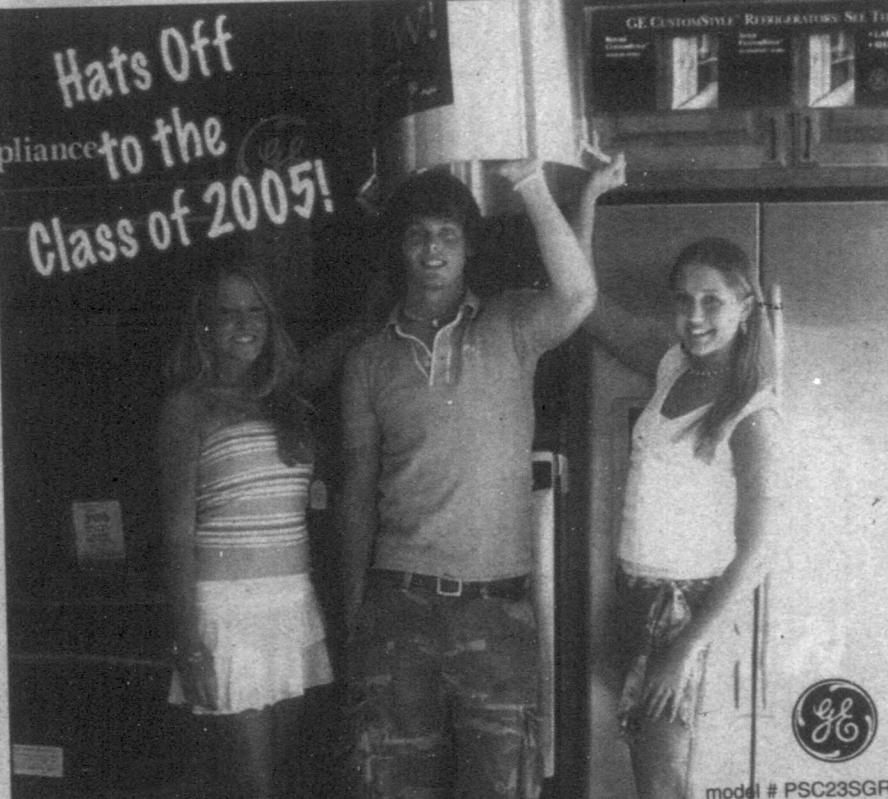



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Robyn fulfills Miss Spring dream

From Page 4

She had just become the Murray Ledger & Times' Miss Spring 2005 for CCHS.

"I could not stop smiling," said Robyn, who joins Murray High School student Laura Mitchell as winners of the 31-year-old honor.

Her mother, Tina Ryan, said that even as recent as two years ago, Robyn would express doubts about being worthy enough to receive such an honor, even though she would always wonder how exciting it would be to one day hold the title.

This year, "I can't" became "I did."

"I remember when I was looking at (Miss Spring editions of past years), and I'd look at the girls in them, I really wanted to be them. I just thought they were the coolest people," Robyn said. "I love having pictures taken, and I thought it would be great to have a chance to have all those pictures taken

and be able to dress in those cute clothes.

"But then, I'd look at all the other people that were applying for this, and I didn't think I had much of a chance because they were the ones that seemed to get all the nice awards," she added. "I had wanted to be a lot of things, but everyone else had gotten them."

"When she was told about this, she said to me, 'You know how I'd wanted those other things? That's not important now,'" Tina said.

The term "blossom" may sound a bit cliché, but Robyn Ryan has blossomed in being around and dealing with people to become a



Robyn served as varsity captain for the Laker cheerleading squad.

In Their Words By Robyn Ryan

I would like to be selected as Miss Spring because I think that the person chosen should be someone who represents Murray and Calloway County with class and spirit, for themselves and their community. I think that I would be a good candidate for this honor. I have participated in many activities in my community and throughout my high school career at Calloway County High. When I attend Murray State University this fall, I plan to represent my town and family with pride and dignity.

Though these last few years have been very busy, I have learned many things about teamwork and discipline. As captain of the varsity cheerleading squad and golf team this year, I have been able to experience the role of leadership and guidance. This has helped me mature and has prepared me for being a better role model in my community.

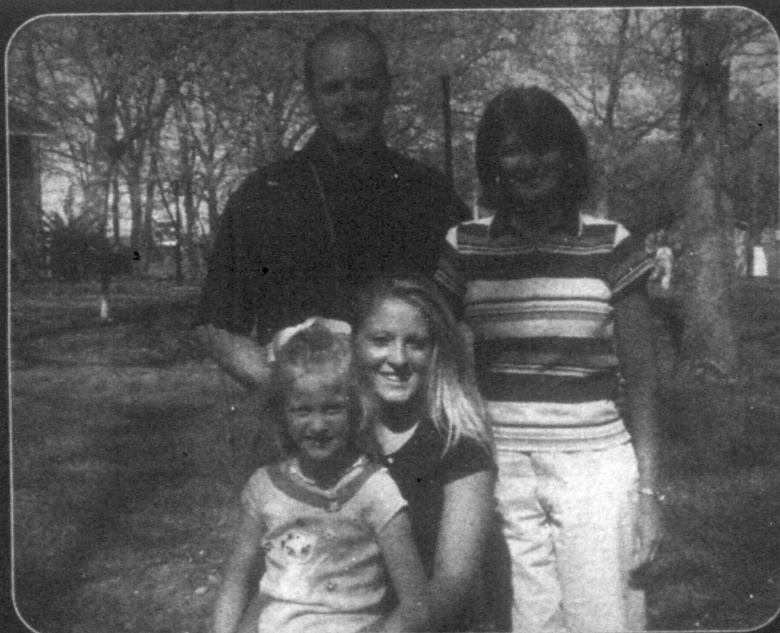
The Character Counts theme that our schools are teaching has made an impact on me and how I do and see things. Miss Spring should be a person that exemplifies the Pillars of Good Character. Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship are very important characteristics to have and to share. After being a Character Counts ambassador last year, I learned much more about these and how useful they are in everyday life. I would like to be Miss Spring so that I could share with my peers, community and family all that I have learned the last few years.

When I think of Miss Spring, I think of a girl who has an outgoing personality, takes pride in herself and her appearance, and knows how to set a good example to others. Having these personality traits has definitely helped me while working in the public around different kinds of people.

With all the controversy between Calloway and Murray schools right now, I would like the opportunity to show our town that two senior girls can work and have fun together and make the 2005 publication of Miss Spring a success.

This would be an awesome experience and I would be proud to represent Calloway County High School and my community as one of 2005's 31st annual Misses Spring.

See RYAN/Page 7



**We are so proud of
you Robyn!**

*We love you!
Mom, Dad & Hannah*

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Robyn has three jobs to stay busy

From Page 6

popular member of her student body. In her final year as a high school student, she has had a pair of big honors come her way by being named captain of two athletic teams — the girls golf team and the Laker cheerleading squad.

"That and my jobs ... those have helped me most, I think," she said.

Her work career began as an attendant at the Oaks Country Club pro shop in the summer of 2002. This summer, though, that will be one of three jobs she will have, along with being a receptionist at The Exercise Room fitness facility while continuing her position working the concession stand at the Cheri Theatre.

"I was a lot more shy before working at the Oaks, so having those jobs definitely did something for me, especially at the Cheri on Friday nights. I'm dealing with all kinds of people then," she said.

However, according to her mother, her ascension within the cheerleading ranks has been the tell-tale sign of how dramatic the blossoming process has been for Robyn. "I never saw Robyn as really a leader until this year. She'd always been a follower type that would always do her part well, but I'd never seen her as the type that could lead others."

She also believes her daughter's stints as a mission team member from Glendale Road Church of Christ may have had something to do with those leadership skills being realized.

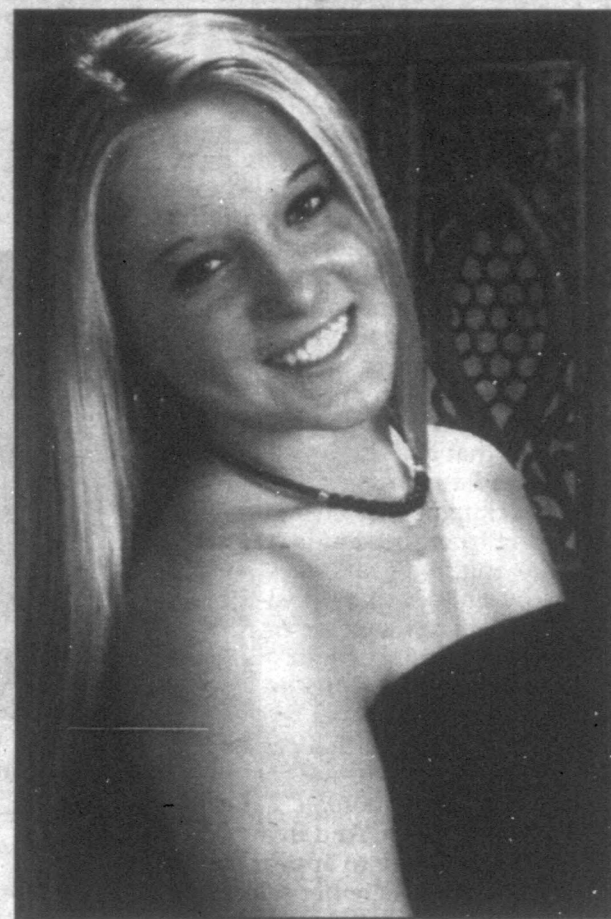
"They ran a vacation bible school in Texas two years and she was a leader for that. That meant she had to do plays for the kids, put together skits and games, and I think that really gave her some confidence," Tina Ryan added. "Now, she's even taking a public speaking class at church.

"That's one of those where you hear that and say, 'Yeah right,' because this is the same girl that would duck her head and grab my leg and hide behind me because she was so scared of new people years ago."

"She'll look you in the eye now," chimed in Robyn's father, David, proud of how his daughter has continued looking for new challenges. In her list of activities, she is a Relay for Life volunteer, student volunteer for activities with Need Line and the Calloway County Family Resource Center, as well as student ambassador for the community's CharacterCounts! celebration.

"She's tried just about everything, I think, but that's been good for her."

— John Wright



Robyn has a full slate of activities, including volunteer work for Relay for Life.

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Laura also enjoys Miss Spring title

From Page 5

hand.

"You have to remember, having been at her previous school, we were already used to saying, 'Go Pella.' I'd been concentrating on having to say, 'Go Murray!' then this started," laughed her dad, who is not complaining a bit. After all, such comments were the tell-tale sign that he and Kathy's daughter had received full acceptance in a new town that has spread way beyond a track.

That nickname was heard emanating from the stands the following two years as Mitchell, from her setter position, led MHS to the verge of a state tournament berth in volleyball. It also was prevalent from the bleachers of Roy Stewart Stadium this past fall when she became a popular choice for football homecoming queen. And in a few weeks, it is sure to appear somewhere in the MHS yearbook, where her selection as Miss Murray High 2005 will be set in print forever.

"For living here only for a short time, it is

pretty amazing that these things have happened," said Laura. "After we moved here, that December, I started meeting people. Then track started and I found



Laura heard plenty of 'Go Pella!' while competing in the state track meet in Lexington.

I really liked that, which led to meeting more people, and it just went from there."

Her mom noted a moment recently that she said is the perfect summation of how Laura is treated these days.

"We had people over at our house doing work on it, and she was getting ready to leave but her car was blocked in," Kathy recalled. "She asked if the person could move his truck

and he told her, 'Anything for Miss Spring.' She still beams when she thinks about it."

— John Wright

In Their Words By Laura Mitchell

Just as the winter chill gives way to spring flowers, Murray celebrates the coming of spring with the long-standing tradition of Miss Spring. For 30 years, Miss Spring has helped brighten the day of Murray residents by highlighting just a small part of the talent and character that exists in our community.

To become part of this tradition by being named Miss Spring would be a great honor. The emphasis placed on character, academic performance, leadership and community involvement makes the selection of Miss Spring very meaningful. I would take pride in joining the list of women who have demonstrated these ideals.

In addition to the honor of being selected, it would be a privilege to have the opportunity to interact with the community. I enjoy meeting new people and the chance to work with local businesses would be an exciting experience. Miss Spring is able to interact with various kinds of businesses and this would be a connection that I otherwise may not have.

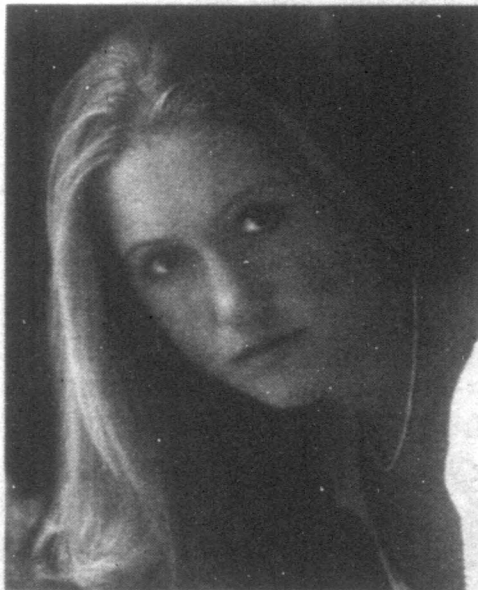
Although I have not lived here my entire life, Murray feels like home. I suppose that if I had grown up here, I might not appreciate Murray like I do. Most of my early years were spent in Louisville, but I also lived overseas two years and in Iowa for five years. These experiences make me really appreciate the southern, small-town lifestyle of Murray. Since I now call Murray home, having the chance to become part of this unique Murray tradition would be a privilege.

The annual Miss Spring issue is read by most of the local population, and I would feel lucky to be included. To be named Miss Spring would be both an honor and an opportunity. I would take pride in upholding this tradition if I were selected.

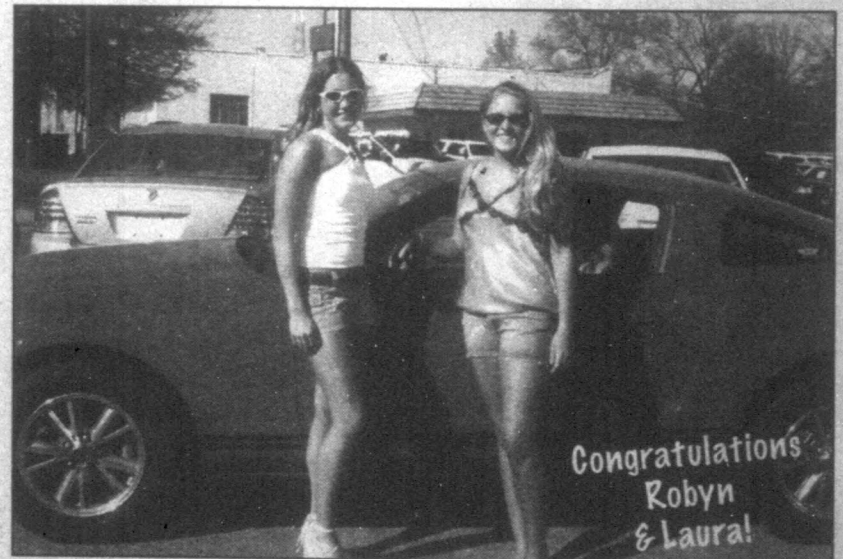
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Academic challenges come easy for Laura

If history is any indication for Laura Mitchell, the traditionally male-dominated world of engineering will be getting a heavy-hitting female pretty soon.

Mitchell, Murray High School Miss Spring 2005, has met just about every challenge given to her with ease, including that which usually gives high schoolers their biggest fits — academics. When she graduates from MHS this May, she will accept her diploma more than likely having accumulated a perfect 4.0 grade point average that will be used as ammunition for enrollment at either Purdue University or Notre Dame.

"She has always excelled in math and science courses, so this is something that seems to fall into what she'd want to do," said Laura's mother, Kathy. "Yes, we know that for a female this is an odd choice, because women are kind of outnumbered in this field. The one thing is, though, we've talked to many people about it who talk about the fact that female engi-



neers are needed today, and that a lot are needed."

Mitchell has visited Alabama, Georgia Tech and Kentucky's campuses as well, and has received an offer from academic power Washington University of St. Louis, Mo. Tech and Purdue are both



The Mitchell family — John, Kathy, brother Mike, and Laura. At left is an adorable picture of Laura when she was 2.

ranked in the top 10 by 2004's U.S. News & World Report for the nation's best engineering schools.

The mere fact they are even talk-

ing to Mitchell about having her become a student is testimony to

See CHALLENGES/Page 12

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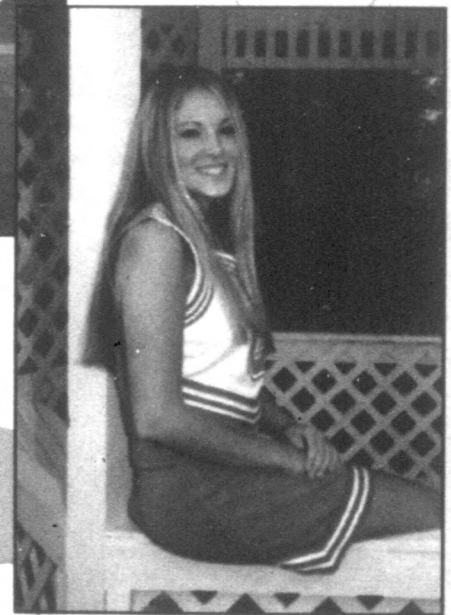
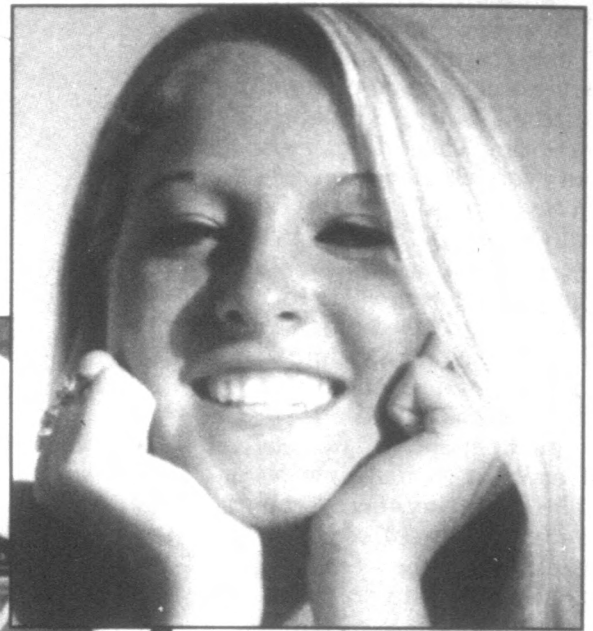
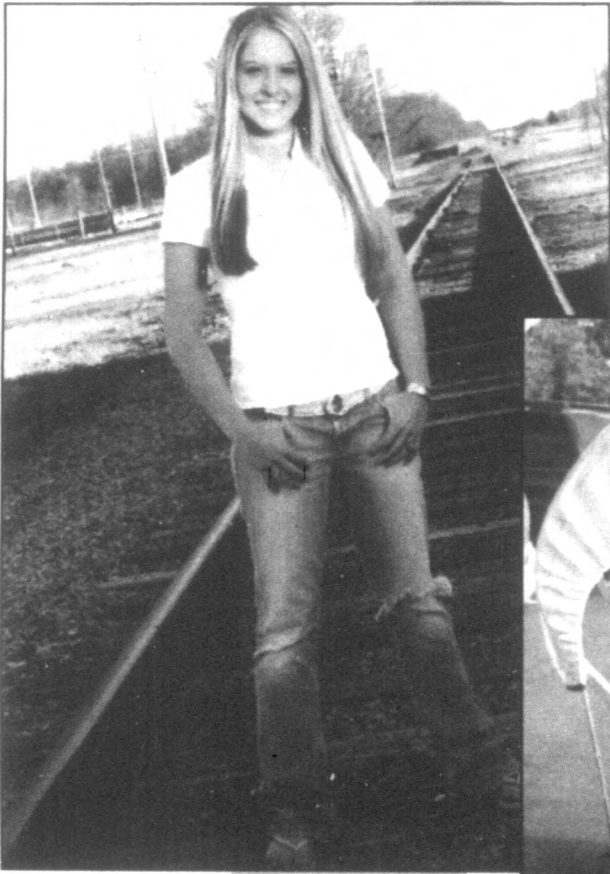
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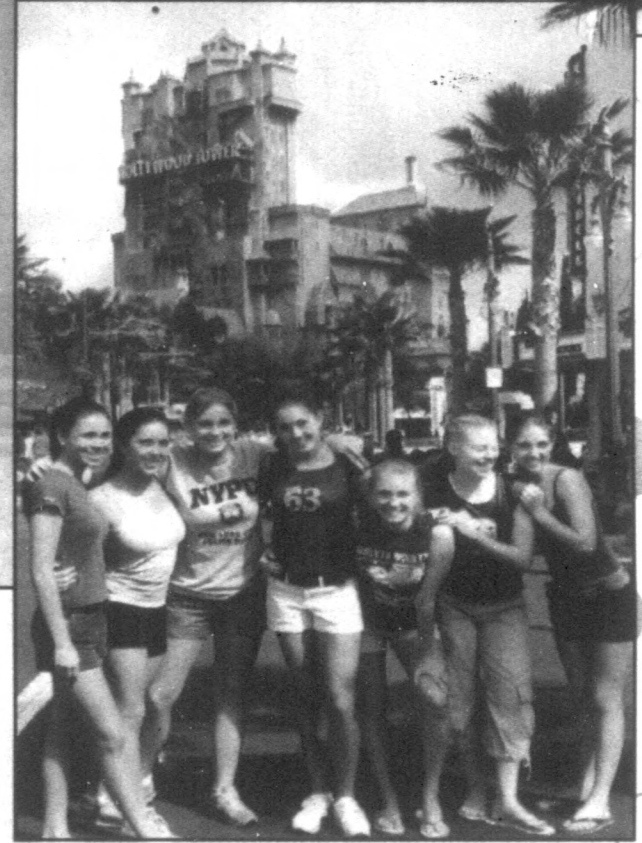
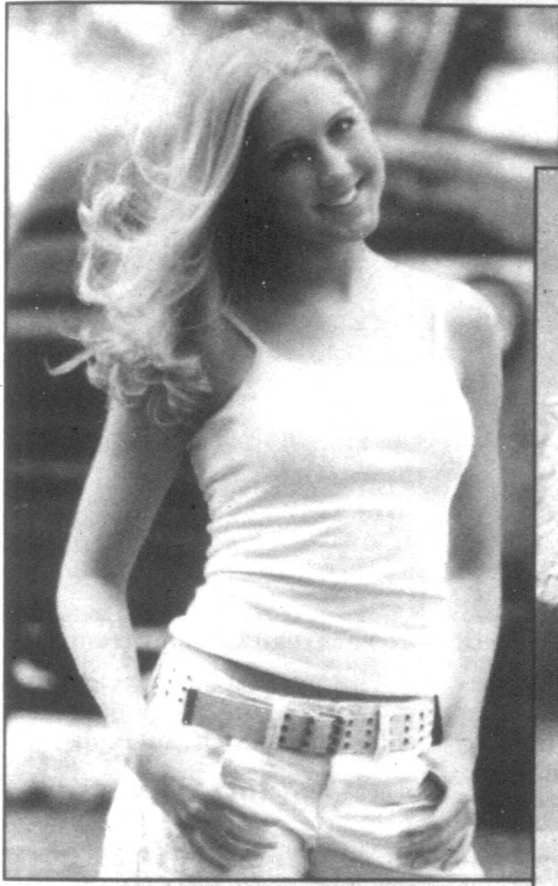
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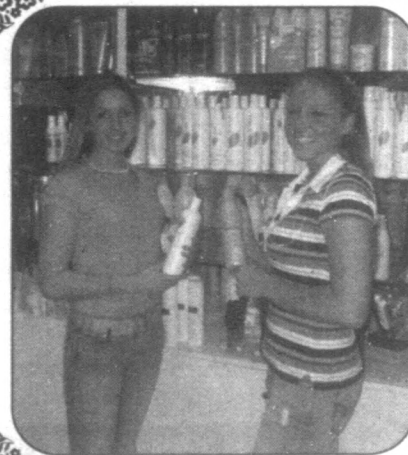
Laura



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Laura also takes on many athletic challenges



Laura is confident in working toward a career in the field of engineering.

From Page 9

her brain power.

"It's just been one of those things where I've always wanted to get good grades. I knew that was an important thing for me to do," she said. Her classroom success has led to honors such as a spot in 2005 Who's Who of American High School Students, along with membership to MHS's chapter of the National Honor Society.

She also admits that she's very competitive in both academics and athletics, which her mother said has armed Laura quite well for the future.

"I think gymnastics did that quite a bit for her when she was younger," Kathy Mitchell said of the activity her daughter enjoyed between ages 5 and 11. "I mean, when you're having to do the balance beam and you're up there performing in front of people on this four-inch-wide beam, that teaches you a few things.

"I think there, though, is where she first learned about self-confi-




Laura (8) and the Murray High District Volleyball Champs from 2004.

dence," she added, "and it has carried over into so many other places for her. I mean, that is just such a demanding sport with all the hours and hours of practice."


That may explain why class projects that require a long time to complete really do not bother the

See CHALLENGES/Page 13

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Sports have helped Laura meet many of her challenges

From Page 12

senior. Now, the payoff could be following in her father John's footsteps. Currently, the president and chief operating officer of the advanced materials division at Murray's Pella plant, he has been in the engineering field several years, giving him the opportunity to serve as an advisor when it comes to her college aspirations.

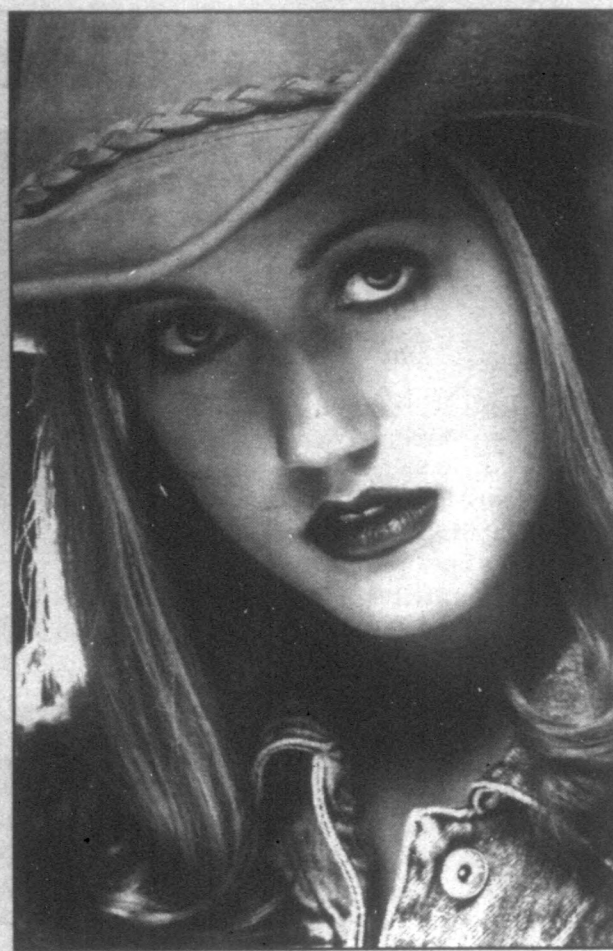
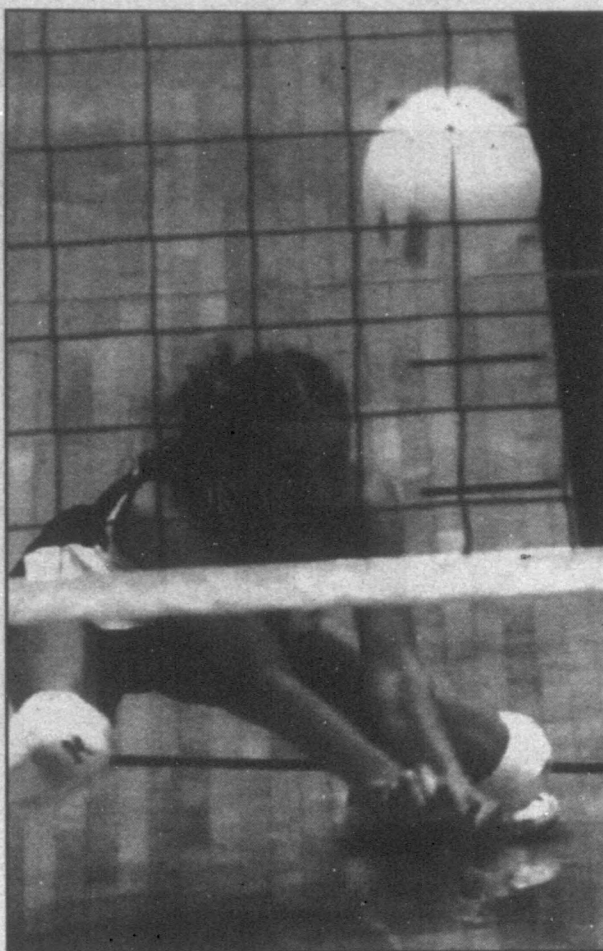
"In the end, though, it is still her decision," he said.

Still, more than likely, the majority of Mitchell's classmates, regardless of where she goes for college, will be of the opposite sex. This does not bother her, though, not in the least.

"She'll go out many times, and it'll be four or five boys and she'll be the only girl there," said her mother. "So, that's not going to bother her at all.

"I think, through sports, she's just come to relate better to boys. I mean, for the longest time, the little boy across the street from us has probably been her best friend, because they can play sports together."

— John Wright



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Love of children sets Robyn's future path

Robyn Ryan is a fully-admitted victim of falling into the trap of being affected by the plights of children. She needs no reform, though. No intervention can possibly stop it. She is hooked and she knows it. And she does not want to fight it.

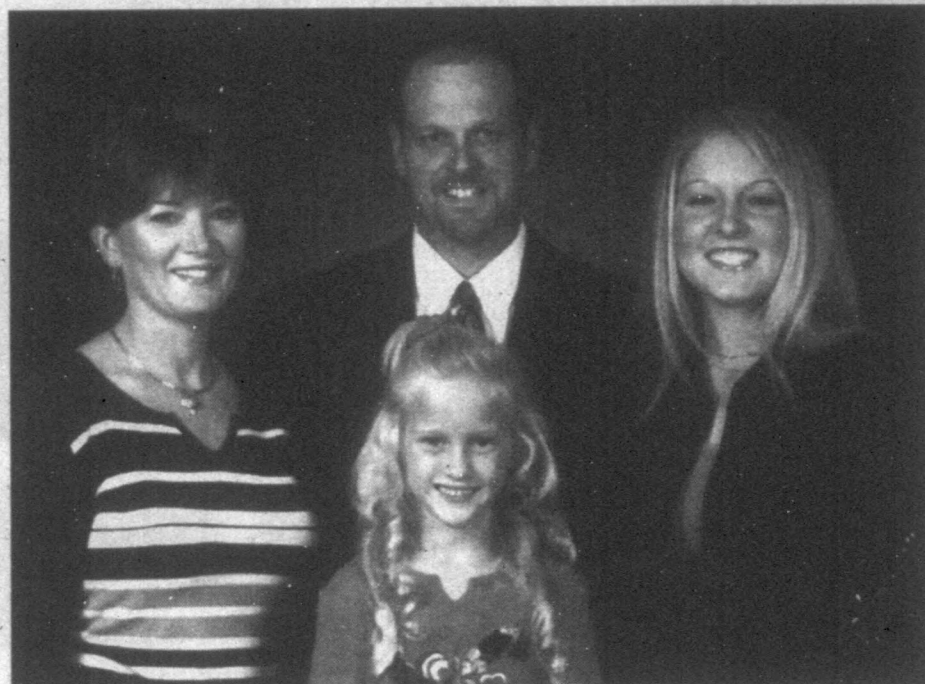
Therefore, she is going to do the one thing a person in her situation really can do to satisfy this urge.

"I'm going to be a teacher," said Robyn, The Murray Ledger & Times' Miss Spring 2005 for Calloway County High School, who has already started the path she hopes will lead to a job in special education. "I have a class that I'm taking right now at Murray State where I have had 20 hours helping in a classroom (at Murray Elementary School) and I have loved it. In fact, on the last day I was in that class, when I left, all of the kids gave me a picture of them. It was really nice."

"What's really good about that is



that she is actually taking a college class, meaning she gets half credit from Murray State," said Robyn's mother, Tina, whose oldest daughter plans to enter her hometown university this fall. "She just decided to go into it and give it a try to see if she'd like it, and it's really



The Ryan family — Tina, David, Hannah and Robyn. At left, Robyn, at 5, gets ready to swing for the fences.

been an enjoyable thing for her."

The bug to work with children seemed to first bite Robyn during her stints with being part of a mis-

sion team from Glendale Road Church of Christ's youth ministry.

See CHILDREN/Page 15

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Being around children showcased Robyn's passion, faith

From Page 14

She has participated in four such outings in Louisiana, Texas and, last year, in Mexico; however the two years of the mission teams' working in the rural areas around the east Texas city of Lufkin, seemed to have the most impact.

There, she was exposed to youngsters from the area on a full-time basis, not only helping to perhaps show her the way to her future, but helping her combat her lifelong battle with shyness.

"She's grown up a bit since I've gotten to know her," said Nick Hutchens, youth minister at Glendale Road, who supervised the journeys and saw Robyn gain in leadership skills — such as those that will be required for teaching someday — as she was put in charge of organizing children's activities for vacation bible school those years in Texas.

"Her's was a typical transformation, I suppose, where she was able



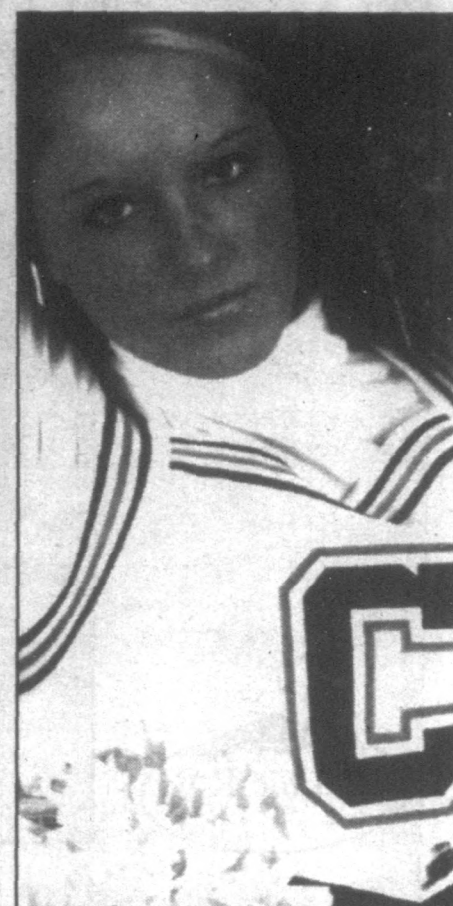
Through her work and school activities, Robyn has grown in her leadership skills.

to gain a great deal of confidence. As she got older, particularly when we went to Lufkin, her leadership skills did continue to develop as she was given both the chance to work with others, but also big responsibilities that went with it," Hutchens added. "And it's not just with her. Sometimes, we do try to

force responsibility onto these kids because that lets them gain confidence. In her case, I think she had to see what she was capable of, and she saw she could do a lot."

Hutchens also believes the area of service Robyn has chosen for a career fits her, based on her previ-

See HEART/Page 16



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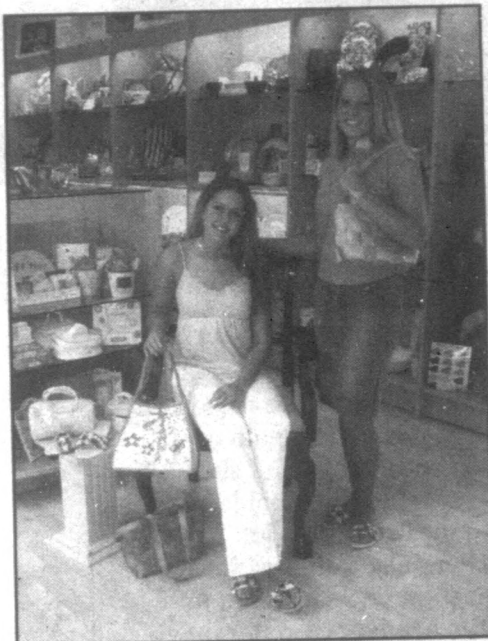
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Robyn's goal is to specialize in an area that helps people. She is shown with sister Hannah.

**Robyn's heart has need to
help people, says her dad**

From Page 15

ous experiences.

Her mother and I have talked
with her some about going into
this," said Robyn's dad David. "She
said she wanted to go into some

area where she can specialize in
something that really helps people,
and I think this is a good way to go.
"She's got a good heart."

— John Wright



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Laura adjusts to Murray life

Teenagers, admittedly, have a reputation for emotions turning on a dime. Happy one minute. Sad or mad the next. This year's Murray High School Miss Spring Laura Mitchell can testify, though, that sharp turns can lead to plenty of good things.

Still, things weren't always rosy for Mitchell, who, in Iowa, was facing her third long-distance move since she was in her elementary years with the transplant of her father, John, from Pella Windows and Doors' home office to its new facility in Kentucky.

"I was not happy. Really, for the first month or so we were here, I didn't want to like anything about Murray," she said of the move from Pella, Iowa that came five years after moves from Louisville and Wales in the United Kingdom. "Now, though, I think I like the town of Murray a lot more than I ever did Iowa."

One thing missing from the transition to Murray was that Laura didn't have to give up a passion as she had when her family moved to Iowa when she was 11. In Louisville, she spent five years — three or four days a week — in competitive gymnastics, an activity her parents feel has had as much to do with her self-confidence and teenage successes as anything.

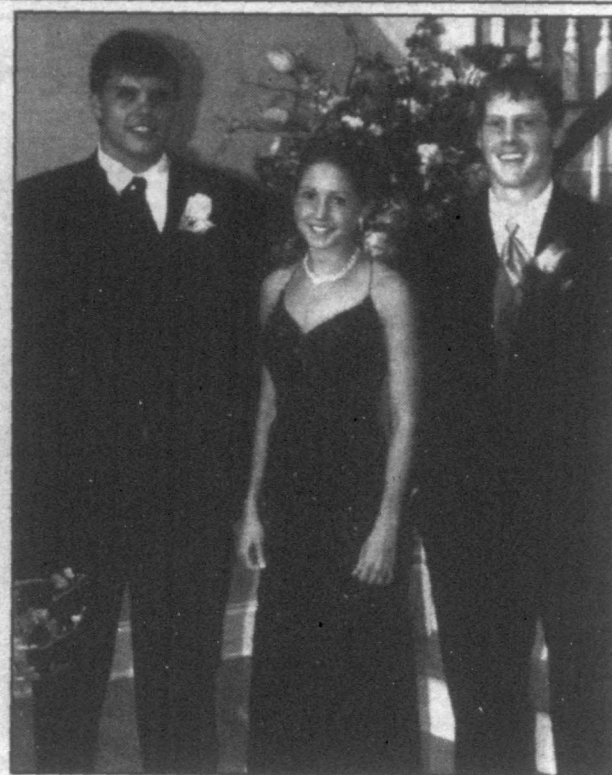
But that activity had to disappear. Then, just when it appeared the moving was over, they learned Murray would be coming into the picture.

"If I could've waved a magic wand to make her feel better somehow, I would've," said dad John Mitchell, whose continued promotions prompted the family's moves. "She was never bitter, though. She never was crying or anything. But you could just tell she wasn't happy. And she wasn't talking to me a whole lot in those times, either. It had me questioning did I make the right decision.

"It's easy to justify it all by saying that getting a child used to change is a good thing, and, in the end, it probably has been that way for her because she's been using that experience in a lot of things," he added. "Still, you just question yourself."

Needless to say, the questions have ceased. Once Laura was able to get over the disappointment of leaving friendships she had built in Iowa, her ability to adjust to new surroundings began taking center stage.

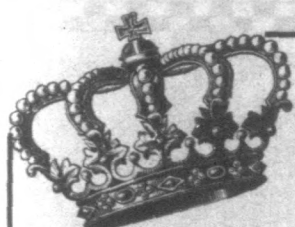
"It almost changed overnight," John said. "During her weekdays up to that point, she had spent most of her time on the computer or on the phone talking with her friends back in Iowa. Then, one night, I went to a basketball game to pick her up and I waited in the car like I always did. Usually, she would've been right out there to go home, but this night she wasn't coming out right away. So, I waited and waited and, finally, after 15 minutes, she came out with (MHS student-athlete Cory Zirbel).



Laura, ready for the 2004 Murray High School prom, with friends Cory Zirbel, left, and Tim Masthay, right.

He introduced himself, shook my hand and then Laura said, 'Dad, there is a party happen-

See MURRAY/Page 18



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From Page 17

ing at (another student's house). Can I go?' That was when I knew it was getting better for her."

Patty Patterson, Murray High School's receptionist, can relate to the difficulty Laura and her parents faced in those days. Five years ago, Patterson's family moved to Murray from Illinois, which meant her daughter, Ashley, then a junior, was also making the long trek from familiar territory at a rather fragile time in life.

However, Patterson said the way her daughter was received made the experience easier, much like it has been for Laura Mitchell.

"What I've seen here is that the kids are just really good to each other, and I can tell you that is not how it would've been at the place we came from," Patterson said of their Illinois home.

Still, as John Mitchell suggests, Laura has had to do a lot of the adjusting herself, which is probably going to better prepare for the future. In fact, Laura herself has said that, come next fall, when she enters either Notre Dame or Purdue



(her two leading choices for college), she will not be fazed by the fact she will probably not know a single student the first day of classes.

However, her mother, Kathy, said while Laura may handle it well, it is going to be tough watching her go.

"Because of the moves, I think


we've grown closer. I've talked to so many other mothers that have been through this, and they say the same thing. So, yes, I'm going to miss her next year," Kathy said.

"I'm going to need to get a good car for all the trips I'm going to want to make."

— John Wright



Young Laura at the Tower of London. At left, Laura is 1.




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Work's not a word that gets Robyn down

If one statement could be made as a summation of Robyn Ryan's character, it probably could be made in five words:

She's not afraid of work.

She holds a solid 3.68 grade point average at Calloway County High School with one of the classes offering a head start for her soon-to-be freshman year at Murray State University. However, it is outside school life that the Murray Ledger & Times' 2005 Miss Spring for CCHS and her appetite for work really shows.

Not only has she poured her heart into mission projects with the youth ministry at Glendale Road Church of Christ the last four years, she also has taken a head-first dive into life in the teenage work force, one that will see the waters become even deeper in a few weeks when she begins work as a receptionist at The Exercise Room, a local fitness facility. That goes with a job she has held for a little more than a year working in the concessions area at the Cheri Theatre and her pro shop attendant's position at the Oaks Country Club that introduced her to the paid work community in 2002.



Robyn, right, works during a mission trip with her church group at Glendale Road Church of Christ.

"I just got my first checking account, so I'm hoping that, this summer, I can really start saving some money for college," said Robyn Ryan, who said having three jobs will allow her to stay busy. "I know some of my friends don't have jobs, and it makes me wonder what they're going to do just to pass the

time.

"With three jobs, I'm definitely going to have something to do nearly all the time, and I really like that."

Her position at the Oaks seemed to come rather naturally, being that she has played the game of golf for several years. This past fall, in fact,

she finished her high school career as captain of the Lady Laker team.

That activity has provided a bonding mechanism for Robyn and her father, David, who has been a golfing enthusiast for many years.

"I think she got into (golf) more for me than her. She knew how much I liked it and she decided to go into it for herself, and, yeah, I'm happy she did. It's been good for us," he said. Both father and daughter have even participated in several tournaments together over the past few years.

"You do need your mom more for girl issues, but your dad is also a very important part. He's been more of a behind-the-scenes type," Robyn said. "He's also an awesome Christian man. I can usually talk about anything with him."

Those discussions have been in many places, from home to the golf course, even in faraway places, like Texas and Mexico on Glendale missions. During last year's mission in Mexico where the Glendale Road team helped construct a new church in a rural area, mother Tina Ryan said even she was impressed

See WORK/Page 20

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Though not a tomboy, Robyn isn't afraid to get to work

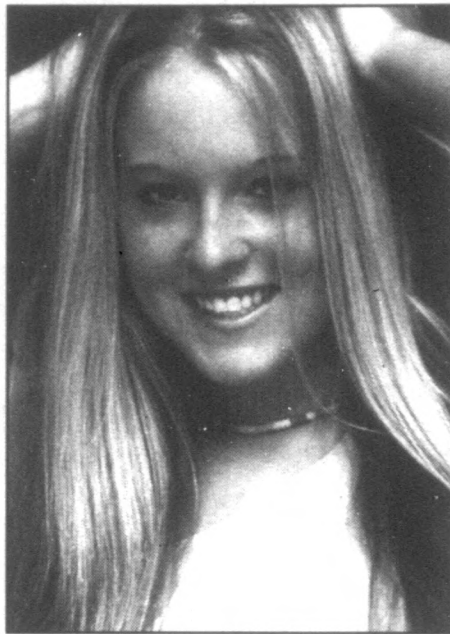
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with how her daughter attacked the task at hand.

"In the other missions we had done, there had not been as much building involved as there was with this one," she said, observing that her daughter had not been known for handling dirt and sweat all that well. "Oh no, she's not a tomboy, and really, she does not like having to get dirty like that. I'm telling you, though, I've never seen her work the way she did on that mission before. She really got in there and did a lot. I was proud."

"Before we went down there, I told (the youth group) that this was not something glamorous, that they were going to get very hot and very dirty, and that will be a week that they're going to see everybody's warts, if you will," said Glendale youth minister Nick Hutchens. "She jumped in and worked as hard as a lot of the guys did. I was very pleased with her."

— John Wright



Robyn typifies the duality of glamour in front of the camera and grit when it's time to get to work.

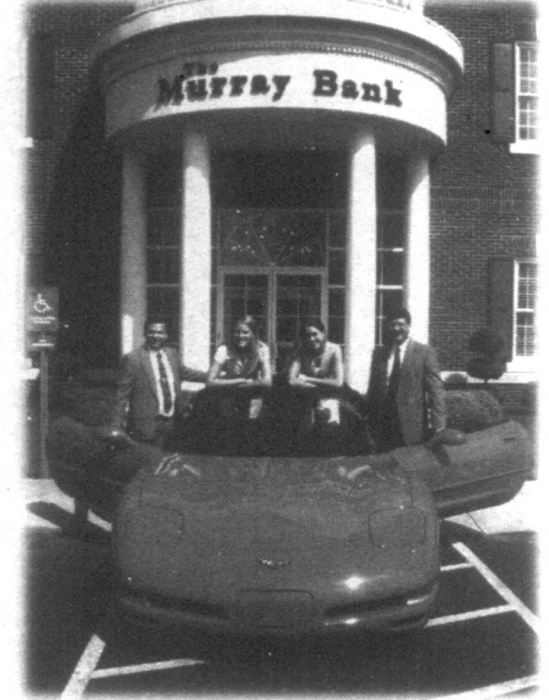
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