

# Brashear High plays donkey basketball

BY AMANDA HERZBERG  
Staff Reporter

Baskets will be scored as the ball moves up and down the court, and excited fans will cheer on their teams at tonight's Brashear High School basketball game. But humans won't be the only competitors at this week's not-so-ordinary game — donkeys will be sharing the court. Basketball isn't just basketball tonight. It's donkey basketball.

Although an unlikely concept, the event is precisely what it sounds like — humans riding donkeys while playing basketball. Four teams of five riders will be competing tonight, with teams consisting of up to ten human players and four donkeys.

Donkey basketball might not be considered an exceptionally popular game, but it

is used as a fundraiser and played all over the country. Donkey basketball has been practiced in the United States since the 1930s, according to the New York Times. However, Brashear principal Don Wilburn said this is the first year Brashear is hosting the sport. The student council is sponsoring the event as a fundraiser for student field trips.

"The state has greatly reduced the amount of money for high schools, and field trips were eliminated as a cost-saving measure at our school unless paid for by the group or organization," Wilburn said. "Student Council has taken on the task of raising money to help fund these field trips as a service project for our school."

Because this is the school's first experience with donkey basketball and Wis-

consin-based Dairyland Donkey Ball LLC, Wilburn said they are not really sure what to expect out of the event at this time, but that they have had what he considers a generous response in advance ticket sales.

Wilburn said he doesn't know what type of crowd to expect at tonight's event, but at least one interested Truman student intends to be present. Senior Joy Bulen said she is excited to watch the absurd twist on a popular sport. Although she has never experienced donkey basketball before, Bulen decided to attend after seeing a flyer for the event in Java Co.

"It sounded pretty entertaining, and the pictures I've seen seemed to clarify that it would be," Bulen said.

Sophomore Jessica Petrie, on the other hand, is a veteran participant. Although she

will not attend this time, Petrie said her high school hosted the event annually, when she acted as both spectator and rider. She said playing as a senior was one of the most fun parts of the year.

"It's not something a lot of places do, and so I think it gets the school and community really excited, and it's a chance to bring the school together for fun," Petrie said.

Wilburn said there still is a need for riders at the event and that anyone interested should contact him at the high school.

"I don't think I'll be riding," Bulen said. "I'm just excited to watch, and will be cheering them on for sure."

Tickets for the Brashear donkey basketball event are on sale now at the Brashear High School office. The cost is \$6 in advance and \$8 at the door. Games will begin at



7:00 p.m. in the school gym. Any interested riders or those with questions about the event should contact the high school office at 660-323-5272.

# Students take on teaching roles

BY CHARUNDI PANAGODA  
Staff Reporter

Senior Meg Varty received her first tattoo, a small heart on her ankle, at age 18. Since then, her interest in the art has grown, and she now has 10 tattoos.

Next semester, she'll teach a Student Initiated Course titled The Tattoo: An Interdisciplinary Study on the Practice of Tattooing.

SICs are designed and developed by students on a topic not covered by the current University curriculum.

"They are courses that are conceived and designed

by students with collaboration of a faculty mentor that they are working with," said Michael Kelrick, director of Interdisciplinary Studies and professor of biology.

Kelrick said the purpose was to give students the opportunity to create courses they'd like to take. He said most students who do this already have a well-developed interest in the area and just need to find faculty willing to collaborate.

Varty came up with the idea for her SIC when she realized some of her friends shared her academic interest in tattooing. Because Truman didn't offer any courses about tat-

tooing, Varty decided to propose a course exploring the culture of tattooing. She and her faculty mentor, David Leaton, have been developing the course since last summer.

"It's just taking a look at the practice of tattooing in general and specifically different areas in how people use tattoos," Varty said. "That's how my mentor and I originally set it up. It's going to be looking at religious use of tattoos, social uses of tattoos and personal uses. Then we are going to go through some semiotic analyses of the actual images of tattoos as well."

Junior Zak Palmer also took the initiative to start a new class. Palmer had been researching gender studies since his freshman year, and noticed the University offered only one course on sociology of gender. He said he thought the course focused too much on traditional gender roles and left out transgender and intersexual gender identities. When Palmer heard his friends talk about Student Initiated Courses, he decided to create one discussing non-normative gender identities. His course, Sociology: Gender Variance, will be offered next semester.

"[The course] Sex and Gender mostly focuses on men and women and, like, traditional gender categories," he said. "There's some talk about trans issues, but it's not the main focus. I would consider this to be Sex and Gender and Society, part two. It's a continuation and it's a deeper analysis. Sex and Gender and Society is a 200-level class. This is a 400-level class. So this is

more in-depth."

SIC courses take approximately a year to prepare, propose and approve, Kelrick said. The approval process is intense and the SICs receive as much scrutiny as any other course.

Student initiators work closely with a faculty mentor in preparing and presenting the course. While the student initiator teaches the course, the faculty mentor helps the student with the teaching process.

Bonnie Mitchell, assistant professor of sociology, said being the faculty mentor for the SIC Ethnography of Native Americans has been more of a learning experience than a teaching experience for her.

"I really like being on the student side," she said. "We would sit in a circle. Tyler [Retherford, the student leading the class] would present a question, something that he would like us to discuss. People will, if it's something they've been paying attention to. They'll jump into the discussion and I would get to participate, sort of like a student."

Senior Melinda Gross, who is taking the SIC Psychology of Theater Arts this semester, said having a student act as the teacher isn't much different from other courses she has taken.

"So far it's been very similar to lots of my other professor-led courses," she said. "We have similar projects, such as we do lectures, discussions, notes, papers, tests — same kind of stuff. But I really appreciate the interaction you can get with having a student be the professor."

## CHURCH | St. Mary's Catholic church once served as many as 400 families

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Mary's as a child. After her grandfather passed away, Ludden's grandmother would walk a mile on mud roads every Sunday just to get to Mass. The image of her grandmother walking to Mass is one of the reasons Ludden said she continues to work to preserve the church.

Del Tollenaar, a volunteer at the Adair County Historical Society, said he has seen many neglected historical sites fall to pieces and is pleased to see that someone is taking care of this site.

"It doesn't take more than a generation for much of that to be gone," Tollenaar said. "We have experienced the loss of several buildings and businesses here in town that might well have been

worth preserving — that nobody took the time or trouble to try to secure these buildings before they were dilapidated."

In order to raise funds to keep up the church, Friends of St. Mary's hosts several fundraisers throughout the year, including serving lunch at the agriculture show at the fairgrounds and an annual homecoming at St. Mary's.

The homecoming celebration every September includes a lunch and a Mass to raise funds for the church's upkeep and is the only event the church is regularly used for.

Ludden said she recognizes that the church has stood for 105 years, but that it might not stand forever.

"If the Lord wants it down, He'll take it down," she said.

**"If the Lord wants it down, he'll take it down."**

**Rita Ludden**  
Friends of St. Mary's member



Krista Goodman/Index  
Friends of St. Mary's member Rita Ludden's uncle, Ernest Ludden, was the first person to be baptized in the baptismal fountain at St. Mary's, and is now buried at the cemetery behind the church.

**Student Initiated Courses**  
Offered Next Semester

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**Sociology / Anthropology**  
SOAN 450 | Topics: Gender Violence

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**Political Science**  
POL 275 | Topics: Politics of Misinformation

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**Inderdepartmental Studies**  
INDV 320/CMDS 488  
Topics: "Professional Development"

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**Interdisciplinary Study**  
IDSM 352  
Topics: "The Tattoo: An interdisciplinary study on the practice of tattooing."



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