# TIGHT SQUEEZE
More students, more tripled-up doubles

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Freshmen feel the pinch of growing enrollment

By Brian Wilson

Something is off about Bear House 436. The room still has the feel of a freshman dorm room, complete with Audrey Hepburn posters and Christmas lights that stay on the wall throughout the year. But the 16-by-16 space is much more cramped than a double room should be.

Looking up can begin to explain the lack of space. Two beds are bunked, while another is lofted with a desk under it. Two desks are strung out in the middle of the room, necessary for just two of the residents of the room.

Any extra room would be a luxury here; any space for yourself is nearly impossible.

That’s the way it is in Bear House 436, otherwise known as a tripled-up double room and home for first-year students Carrie Chalker, Jennifer Shearon and Stephanie Pitts.

With rising enrollment, these tripled-up doubles have become an even larger element of Belmont freshman life despite the fast pace of new dorm construction, said Anthony Donovan, director of residence life.

Residence life initially prepared for 200 triples to be used in fall 2011. Around 180 of them were eventually used, and only around 125 are in use now, but Donovan said he expects an even higher number of triples will be necessary to accommodate next year’s freshman class.

“That’s been our biggest challenge,” he said. “We’ve had to be creative. And as each freshman class grows, our sophomore class is among the biggest ever.”

The actual number of incoming resident students is hard to predict since the total number of students isn’t confirmed until well into the summer.

Donovan compared the enrollment situation to Belmont to a closing faucet.

“The problem is when to turn the faucet off. You can still overflow the bucket below it,” he said.

Even when the bucket overflows, residence life is still required to provide housing for freshmen and sophomores who don’t commute. With this in mind, more rooms will be available for freshmen next year when Wright and Maddox halls will become all-freshman dorms for the first time since spring 2010.

“Our goal is to have housing not be an imperative to enrollment,” Donovan said.

At the very least, these additional but necessary triples change the dynamic of a dorm room and the experiences of many first-year students.

When Bear House 436 was initially meant to be a double, the room had been reconfigured to fit three girls, their belongings, and their personalities.

“Originally, I don’t think we knew what to do with each other,” Chalker said. “Yet the three of us together balance each other out.”

“We’ve had to be creative. And as each freshman class grows, our sophomore class is the biggest ever.”

Anthony Donovan
DIRECTOR OF RESIDENCE LIFE

We all have our moments.

Even with those moments, the three have been able to bond and cooperate with each other to make their living situation work.

“We’re all mature enough not to get petty over stupid things,” Pitts said.

For many, living in a tripled-up double also changes the physical dynamic of the room, especially when it comes to personal space. “Don’t expect to have a lot of personal space over to chill,” Pitts said.

“There’s literally no place for them.”

With three people in the room, studying can also be a challenge. “I learned I can’t concentrate here,” Chalker said. “I have to go to the lobby or the library.”

While many of the roommates’ concerns deal with space issues, personal issues still arise, and sometimes differ in different ways.

Tripling up, Donovan said, brings an emotional experience that can still be agreeable to living in a typical double room.

“It’s not bad, but it’s different,” he said. “The same issues are there. They just tend to manifest themselves more quickly and more intensely.”

Emma Reeves, a second-year residence assistant at Patton and former triple resident, agreed, saying most of these issues are resolved early in the semester. For her, the additional dozen or so residents she has because of the extra triples this year have changed her responsibilities as an RA.

“It takes a lot of time,” she said. “Part of being an RA is having a personal relationship with all of your girls. It’s a lot harder to build 50 personal relationships in a month.”

The influx of students also makes it more challenging to keep up with her residents.

“Some residents might get lost in the shuffle. It’s hard to notice when one of them is not leaving their room in two days or needs help,” she said.

Each of the three roommates acknowledged how often triples don’t work and considered themselves lucky to have ended up with each other in the triple.

While they don’t regret living in a triple, if they had to do it again, all three would rather be in a double.

At least a double room that only houses two people.

“It would be nice to have the extra space,” Chalker said. “[Tripling] wouldn’t be our first choice, but we’d be OK with it.”

Upperclassmen ask for more on-campus housing

By Brian Wilson

With larger year-to-year classes, on-campus housing for sophomores and upperclassmen are becoming a greater issue than ever.

Not only are more upperclassmen choosing to stay at Belmont, but more also want to stay on campus. This need for rooms, up to 40 percent from 35 percent in previous years, stretched the office of Residence Life to an unexpected point last year, director of residence life Anthony Donovan said.

“It was overwhelming, quite frankly,” he said.

Donovan thought the existing dorms and apartments for upperclassmen were going to be as full as they ever had been. But a portion of Bruin Hills was demolished last spring to make way for new residences and another parking garage. That left fewer beds for upperclassmen than in 2010-11.

Despite the rising demand for upperclassman on-campus housing, the priority of residence life is to house the freshmen and sophomores they have guaranteed a spot for on-campus.

“We’re all the people we’re required to house,” Donovan said.

While no plans are now officially set, he has some ideas about what could help alleviate the growing need for housing for upperclassmen.

“We have a number of things,” he said. “You could find incentives to encourage upperclassmen to move off campus. The university could be a little more lenient on their exemption policy.”

In an attempt to more efficiently handle upperclassmen housing, this year’s housing draw will take place the week of April 16, which Donovan hopes will allow students to have a more definite sense of their living situation for the fall.

These steps, however, will not be the last steps to fix housing for upperclassmen.

Despite the “pretty much unheard of” boom in residence hall construction — seven residence halls will have been built since 2003 after the two phases of Bruin Hills construction — the university will still have to compensate for further growth.

“We build just enough to get us to the next phase sometimes. When you have that, you are never ahead very long,” Donovan said.

The new Bruin Hills residence hall will house 298 students in four- or five-bedroom apartments this fall. An adjacent building with 195 beds will also be built after the new residence hall is completed.

The two Bruin Hills phases are all that the university has announced for new upperclassman housing, but Donovan said there will be greater housing need in the future.

“We’ll probably build at a higher density than we have before,” he said.
Music majors need practice rooms

By Kristin Hinkle

Practice makes perfect. But what if there’s nowhere to practice?

While Belmont University is known for its musicians and prestigious music departments, it lacks a vital resource for perfecting music: practice rooms.

With more than 600 music majors, 24 instrumental ensembles, 13 vocal ensembles and numerous non-music majors also striving for the personal best musically, it’s no wonder Belmont has problems providing the necessary practice rooms for student musicians.

“These are the practice spaces you can find a space,” said Shauna Goldbach, a transfer junior music major. “I’ve had to warm up in the bathroom and an elevator.”

In fact, a recent sign on a door in Belmont Heights Baptist Church read, “Please don’t use this as a practice room unless you’re practicing going to the bathroom.”

While dorm rooms are a popular second choice to practice in, students also have to get creative with space if it means taking a trumpet into a stairwell to practice as students go up and down the stairs between classes.

Aggravate these problems make the problem clearer:
• About 40 practice rooms on campus are available for about 270 music students with an instrumental focus.
• On average, these students are required to practice at least two hours a day.
• More than 50 additional students, with a vocal emphasis, have to practice 30 minutes a day.

Using these estimated numbers, practice rooms would have to be open at least four more hours every day. In order to achieve this, practice rooms would have to either open at 3 a.m. or close at 4 a.m.

Practice rooms are in exceptionally high demand between noon and 2 p.m., since most students have seminars at 2 that require warming up beforehand.

“It’s kind of an unspoken rule that you can practice whenever you can find a room,” said Erin Meleden, a senior music major. “If it annoys us that’s fine, but accept it and move on because we are all on the same boat.”

Upperclassmen have learned to cope with the limited space, but freshman music Mackenzie Green still struggles.

“For my voice lessons, seminars, and choir and piano lessons, my homework is practicing,” Green said, and the ongoing search for practice space cuts into the time she can study for other classes.

Many students have been clinging to the hope that the new concert hall, expected to be complete in May 2012, could house new practice rooms. However, Belmont faculty have confirmed that won’t happen.

“The new concert hall is going to be purely a concert hall,” said Dr. Jane Warren, who conducts both Women’s Choir and the vocal ensemble, Session. “I don’t even know if we are going to have a backstage space at this point.”

Warren is realistic about the concert hall but, like the students, she sees a need for additional and updated space for classes, rehearsals and practice.

Her hope is that the section between Troutt Theater and the concert hall will be renovated for that at some point in the future to add classroom and practice room space.

But that won’t alleviate one other anticipated problem. There is no freight elevator in the new concert hall, so large instruments such as marimbas will have to be dismantled and taken up in the passenger elevator.

Students knowing what practice options they have can also be an issue, said Dr. Jeffrey Kirk, associate dean of performance studies. A building monitor in Wilson, MPAC and Belmont Heights open some classrooms after hours.

Currently, students can practice in the practice rooms in Wilson, Massey Performing Arts Center, dressing rooms and Belmont Heights. Belmont also recently opened the Guitar House on Compton Street as practice space for guitarists and bass players.

“We’re trying to use every bit of space that we have to make sure that at least everything is maximized out, that there’s nothing just sitting there,” Kirk said.

While all available space is being used for practice rooms, Belmont faculty recognizes the need for growth, and Kirk has ideas for the future.

“I know the library has now 24 hours, and there’s been discussion on whether or not that’s possible for practice rooms,” Kirk said. “Right now that’s not something we’ve been able to accomplish, but certainly something to think about.”

While Belmont has yet to make any concrete plans for new practice rooms, they are brainstorming solutions for the future as Belmont continues to expand.

Kirk said he and other music faculty know there is a problem. “I really want to do everything I can in my position as associate dean to work with this. If students can’t get into rooms to practice, they can’t do well in their lessons, improve and go out and do great things.”

Melanie Rankin also provided reporting for this story.

Nursing major preps for national pageant

By Jessica Adkins

Staff Writer

Natalie Newbill builds her beauty from the inside out. Relaxing, but not sloppy. Posed, but never pretentious. She’s calm and collected, and there’s a controlled spirit about her that most college students couldn’t maintain with such a packed schedule.

After all, Newbill balances her course load as a nursing major with various duties as a resident assistant in Patton Hall, secretary of the Black Student Association and second vice president of Delta Sigma Theta. Of course, she fits that in between tutoring kindergartners for up to three hours every weekday afternoon and speaking for her nonprofit of choice, Be at RISK.

But she’s a pageant girl. And they’re used to dealing with chaos.

In December 2011, Natalie Newbill earned the title of Miss Black Tennessee USA, a title she will carry to the Miss Black USA competition in August.

A native of Milan, Tenn., Newbill has walked the runway in pageants since before she could walk on her own.

“I don’t remember not doing pageants,” she said. She began when she was “a little baby in frilly dresses and frou frou socks.”

Toward the end of high school she moved into the “Miss” category of pageantry and earned the title of Miss Black USA 2010, allowing her to compete for Miss Tennessee USA 2010. She didn’t secure the state title, but she gained experience she’ll use at Miss Black USA 2012.

Newbill, now a junior, had never competed in an exclusively black pageant before. While there wasn’t a state pageant this year, Newbill’s phone interview with the recruitment chair was apparently more than enough to secure the title.

“I guess she liked what she heard,” Newbill said, “because I’m Miss Black Tennessee USA 2012.”

The Miss Black USA organization is a nonprofit “to provide educational opportunities to outstanding young women of color, and to develop the whole woman: mind, body, and spirit.”

Right now, Newbill only works on pageant prep on weekends, but in the coming months, she’ll pick up the pace until it’s an everyday process.

“Eat, breathe, sleep pageant life,” she said. “I wake up and fall asleep thinking of interview questions. I walk in heels all week long just to make sure that my feet get used to it. A lot into pageant life, like eating well and exercising, but it comes together to really make you healthy.”

To Newbill, though, health is physical as well as it is emotional. “If we don’t respect and value ourselves,” she said, “we’re all at risk for basically self-destruction.”

So, as the spokesperson for the movement Be at RISK, she strives to foster respect, intelligence, self-worth and knowledge in adolescents. So far, she’s speaking to middle and high schools in Nashville and across Tennessee.

“I specifically chose Be at RISK,” she said, “because everyone says we should help the at-risk population, but really I think it’s really important for black, white, Mexican, Chinese, for everyone to know how to love themselves.”

In the coming months, Newbill will be rehearsing and shopping with her lifelong support system: her mom and her sister. She’ll be singing Beyoncé songs to practice for the talent portion. She’ll be on the elliptical to stay in shape.

At the same time, she will also look at grad schools to get a masters in nursing and a midwifery degree. She’ll be hitting the books hard to hold onto her spot on the Dean’s List, and she’ll be as available as much as possible to her floor residents in Patton Hall, no matter how crazy things get. She’ll keep serving others through tutoring, through Be at RISK, and, of course, in her position as Miss Black Tennessee USA.

Even with all of her commitments, it’s her service that she gets the most out of.

“When you realize that your title and your reign is not about you, it’s about the lives that you touch, I think you can reach a whole other destination,” said Newbill.
New site brings out ‘inner bulletin board’

By Heather Thompson

STAFF WRITER

Tweeting, re-blogging and even stumbling have dominated the procrastination field for students. Now those same students kept climbing, up now to almost 12 million total views YouTube and Break.com, which ranked “People of Wal-Mart” the top viral video of 2011.

Freh said she had crossed her mind that the “People of Wal-Mart” video would “somehow end up in... somebody’s inbox,” especially with the avalanche of photos from the peopleofwal-mart.com site that began in 2009.

The idea of “people of Wal-Mart” has drawn some criticism for an overall lack of cultural awareness. But for thousands of viewers throughout the Internet topics like “people of Wal-Mart” are numerous and worth watching, turning videos, like Frech’s, into viral sensations.

In Frech’s case, however, an audience beyond the Internet came quickly. Soon after the “People of Wal-Mart” video was posted, she received an email from car manufacturer Hyundai’s marketing company. They liked the various characters Frech played in her video as well as her quirky songwriting and offered her an opportunity to be featured in some of their upcoming TV commercials.

Freh agreed. She said she enjoyed the creative freedom she was given for the commercials – she wrote the song and script, came up with the characters, and was soon filming in Nashville.

Along with two commercials for Hyundai and a commercial for a recent online Pepto Bismol campaign, Frech has also been featured on Fox News, ABC News, Billboard and other media outlets.

“People of Wal-Mart” features pictures of Wal-Mart shoppers as Frech sings a quirky song that accompanies the photos. Frech also created numerous characters that she plays in the video.

Freh originally hoped the video would get half a million hit and she was shocked when the numbers kept climbing, up now to almost 12 million total views YouTube and Break.com, which ranked “People of Wal-Mart” the top viral video of 2011.

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Soon after the success surrounding “People of Wal-Mart,” Frech came up with the idea of weekly song challenges – once a week she would post a video of a song she had written based on an idea chosen from comments on her YouTube channel.
On Legislative Plaza: my day at Occupy Nashville

Mic Check.
Shouts ring out across the plaza in response.
Heads poke out of tents scattered across Legislative Plaza as the shouts get louder.
The group meanders toward the steps, more interested in the “grab” than what the General Assembly has to say.
Signs line the wall, left behind from a previous elephant gathering.
Numbers have been dwindling at the camp. Some claim it’s the cold, but others believe it’s something deeper.
To a casual observer, the gathering is a typical meeting. But in reality, it’s the death of a movement.
It’s a death that’s been a long time coming. Tennessee’s state legislature is just speeding up the process with the inevitable passage of House Bill 2836 and Senate Bill 2508.
Assembly is now in session.
“Democracy in its purest” is being practiced before my eyes. The verdict from both myself and Ben, the facilitator? “Messy as hell.”
No calls to order are made; simple hand movements dominate the conversation until a real call to subject comes up.
I spend my time carefully taking notes and capturing photos, a fact most Occupiers ignore. I’m merely a passer-by in their minds, an outsider who has yet to see the light.
Most folks who see this meeting stare for just a moment before returning to their hustle and bustle. A select few feel it necessary to honk and yell profanities at the group, reminding them their days are numbered.
Enter Tom Sweet, or “Cowboy” as the Occupiers refer to him.
At 53 years old, he is “no longer a spring chicken,” but that factor hasn’t stopped him. Every day you can find him on the plaza slowly making the rounds with his cane, until the state “kicks him out,” that is.
He begins telling me about his three strokes, the miracle recovery, and living in Montana. He even sings me a tune before turning to a more serious topic.
“I’m doing this for you. You guys are our future,” he tells me. In that moment, I believed his intent.
As the meeting continues, the crowd shrinks from 15 to seven. Hasting out another meeting time to plan ahead for the camp upheaval seems too much. Temper run high.
Just when the thought crossed my mind that no resolution would be reached, democracy prevails.
It’s strange watching the Occupiers decide their fate. They know that the movement is on its last leg but no one is willing to admit defeat, at least not yet.
After nearly four hours exposed to the cold, I lost all feeling in my hands and the shivers made walking difficult. A younger Occupier named Andrew Henry takes pity and invites me in his tent in an attempt to prevent hypothermia.
Once inside Henry’s tent, he begins to share his story of “why Occupy.”
His outlook on politics and business in general is much more developed than the Occupy outliers I had talked to previously.
We talked for hours about his thoughts on corruption in education and the state of college sports. The conversation centers around big issues and things beyond Henry’s immediate control.
Then the shift happened.
Henry got a sort of dreamy look in his eyes as he started to share his hopes for the future. Travelling abroad and competing for a second title in jiu jitsu tops his list, but all of that must wait until his time at Occupy Nashville wraps up.
Night settled on the camp while we chatted. Temperatures dropped even lower. If a penguin had waddled across the plaza, I wouldn’t have been surprised. It was that cold.
“Cold enough for you, brace-face?” Henry smirked at me.
Too cold to be exact. Eight and a half hours was my limit.
I returned to my cozy dorm, curled up under the blankets with the heat cranked up and thought about the day, I saw Occupy die.

Autumn Allison, Vision managing editor, is a sophomore journalism major.
‘De-Occupy’
A bill that could bring down a movement

By Autumn Allison
MANAGING EDITOR

Tents in varying shades of green and blue line the walls of War Memorial Plaza. Each tent has been strategically tied, zip-tied and bungee corded to withstand even the roughest winds. Duct-taped peace symbols and spray-paint decals give a little bit of personality to the normally bleak abode. For nearly four months, those tents have been home to the Occupy Nashville movement, but following the passage of House Bill 2638 and the likely passage of Senate Bill 2508, the tents are coming down, and along with them, possibly the entire movement.

The Nashville group, which proclaims on its website that it has been “occupying Legislative Plaza since Oct. 7, 2011,” is one of more than 100 citizen-led movements in the U.S. that were formed in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street. The movement began in New York last September to protest “an unfair global economy that is foreclosing on our future.”

For roughly 30 people in the encampment in Nashville, the death of the movement signals more than just the end of Occupy. It means a separation from a dream and from the group they call family.

Tom Sweet
Wood strikes the marble steps at the plaza with every step Tom Sweet takes. His cane keeps him steady during the rounds through the tents. Everything about Tom Sweet is methodical, timely and even-keeled. Until he speaks with passion, that is. His whole demeanor changes, and his normally soft-spoken voice booms across the plaza.

At 53 years old, Sweet’s 6-foot-2-inch frame is bent and withered, a side effect from the three strokes he suffered in Montana.

“The doctors say I’m a miracle, and, well, I already knew that cause I’m walking,” Sweet said. “Crippled, he calls himself. A social defect in normal society. But at Occupy, he’s a respected individual.

It’s Sweet’s turn on the soapbox during General Assembly, the group’s daily meeting.

“Our rights are being violated,” he said. “We need a government for the people by the people. … We must be in unity, but we’ll take this one day at a time.”

He’s a late joiner to the movement, but so are most of the group on the plaza. Sweet is willing to risk jail time for the cause.

“Come back out on Thursday to see the show,” he said. “I’ll be in my tent just waiting for those troopers to take me away, to take the cripple away.”

Sweet sings a gospel tune he wrote himself as he limps off to the safety of his tent and home for the final days of the movement.

Andrew Henry
Andrew Henry proudly strolls into the public library, pointing out inspirational photos and quotes as he goes.

“I draw inspiration from this room,” Henry said as he walks into the Civil Rights Room.

A college degree, a championship fighting title and a well-off family are in a past that Henry doesn’t talk about much.

Conversations with him center around big topics. Corruption in government, education and sports are just a few of his favorites. For Henry, the world is his soapbox. Occupy Nashville provided the chance for him to take a stand and fight inequalities.

“This movement really comes down to inequalities,” he said. “Being black, this is a prominent issue for me. This has always been a passion of mine.”

With the passage of the De-Occupy Bill in the House and the almost certain passage of its sister bill in the Senate, Henry is not only losing his platform, but his new family.

“You really get to know people out here. You become family,” he said.

Dubbed the “big bad bill” by Occupiers, HB 2638, along with its sister bill SB 2508, were created with the intent to protect the proper use of government property. If passed, it will have a direct effect on the Occupy Nashville movement.

State Representative Eric Watson and Senator Dolores Gresham, the sponsors of the bills, have both told several publications, including The Tennessean and Nashville Public Radio, that freedom of speech is not an issue here and are quick to reassure their bill is not an attempt to stop this right to freedom of assembly.

As soon as the ink dries on the bill, Tennessee Highway Patrol can descend on the camp, breaking up one of the last remaining Occupy camps in the country.

During an emergency crisis meeting on Monday, Feb. 13, the majority of Occupiers decided to move the encampment to Metro Square, shifting the control from the state to local government. A small group, including Sweet, want to hold off the move and wait for action.

Both bills were scheduled to be presented on Thursday, Feb. 16. The State House passed HB 2638 70-26, but the Senate pushed off voting on the bill. The debate will be picked up on the next scheduled floor meeting on Thursday, Feb. 23.
By Dustin Stout

A black Sharpie marks a mail-order CD with his name—a name originally known just on his MySpace page. That’s where Belmont freshman Chase Coy’s story begins.

As mellow as his self-described “deeper personal music,” Coy, 21, slouched in a wooden chair and began to describe how his unique path started with those mail-order CDs and ended with a major label record deal.

Burned onto the CD was the Greenwood, Ind., native’s first offering to the fans he’d garnered on MySpace. That 2008 release, “The Dear Juliet EP,” met so much success that Coy released a second, “The Goodbyes and Autumn Skies EP” later that year.

“Within the first year or so, trying to mail out those EPs to fans got really out of hand,” Coy said. “I started looking for an alternative, and that’s when we put my music on iTunes.”

In just one week, iTunes featured the EPs on its folk music homepage “with one of those big banners and everything,” he said.

The attention didn’t stop there. Big-time label Universal Republic Records started taking notice of the big banners—and the big numbers—Coy’s music was attracting.

“More than anything, they were impressed with the sales numbers,” he said. “That’s how those major labels work. They flew me out to see them, and we started talking. After that, it kind of died down.”

But not for long.

Coy took matters into his own hands and spent the summer of 2009 recording “Picturesque,” the album he would eventually release as a Universal Republic recording.

“I finished up the album, brought it back to the label in November and said, ‘Here’s my album. Do you still want to sign me?’ They said, ‘Yeah, we do.’ That was it,” he said. “I signed my record deal in November of 2009.”

The initiative he showed early in his relationship with the label taught him a valuable lesson he still applies to his career.

“I worked with a lot of different people in a lot of different capacities, and the bottom line is no one’s going to work as hard for you as you will work for yourself,” Coy said. “If you don’t do well, your manager, your label, your booking agency—they’ll just drop you and move on to the next thing. No one’s as invested in your success as you are.”

Most of the album was finished when Coy signed his contract, but “Picturesque” wasn’t quite so picturesque without one final addition: a duet with fellow Universal Republic artist and Grammy-nominated powerhouse Colbie Caillat.

“She was one of the very first MySpace stars. Bubbly became very popular on MySpace,” Coy said. “It was pretty serendipitous that I ended up on the same label as her. All the pieces fell into place, so it was really great.”

Caillat joined Coy on “If The Moon Fell Down,” a song originally included on Coy’s first full-length independent album, “Look How Far We’ve Come.”

“Working with her was amazing. She made me feel really comfortable producing in the studio,” he said. “Here I am—I’m 19 years old, I’m in a studio and I’m producing Colbie Caillat … like, I’m giving vocal direction to Colbie Caillat. It’s kind of just crazy that even happened.”

For Coy, it was just as crazy that he got a major record deal in the first place, especially being so close to attending college.

“My family is very conservative and places a lot of value on education,” Coy said. “For my parents, college has always been the logical step after high school. There was never a question of whether I am going to go to college or not—it was where am I going to college and what do I want to study.”

But an unexpected place eventually convinced Coy’s parents to take the leap of faith and allow their son to pursue his music career after high school and keep college as a plan B.

“They spoke to some of the faculty at Belmont who encouraged them music careers can be pretty time-sensitive,” Coy said. “If I hadn’t even considered Belmont, if my parents didn’t come here, if they didn’t talk to the faculty, I probably would have ended up going to college somewhere else instead of pursuing my music.”

Three years later, plan B was enacted after “If The Moon Fell Down” failed to make progress in radio. Coy asked to leave his contract at Universal Republic.

“Everything was in a state of flux, and I said, ‘In a perfect world, I would just rather go back to doing this independently.’ And they let me out of my contract early—a year early actually,” he said.

That’s when Coy turned back to Belmont to start studying audio engineering technology; he kept in mind some important lessons he learned while on Universal Republic’s roster.

“Working with people at major labels and different companies,” he said, “I’ve found most of them—lots of them—started in a completely different area of the music industry. I am more open to options now, and I see how many options are available. I’m just trying to be flexible and take opportunities that come my way.”

But for now, a black Sharpie will inscribe his audio engineering class projects with his name—a name now known to fans beyond any campus.

Keeping it personal
Freshman trades in label deal

By Jessica Adkins

Floral paintings hang in A Village of Flowers. Little girls are crafting in Sweettronica tracks in front of Fire Finch, along with a cakery giving away cake pops. It’s a scene that returns, always with creative differences, on the first Thursday of every month in Hillsboro Village. The monthly art walk is vibrant with art and culture for children and adults alike as the small businesses near the intersection of Wedgewood and 21st avenues double as art galleries, stages, or whatever the community needs them to be.

“This makes the street a gallery,” artist Michael Kavanaugh said. “Sometimes the people don’t come to the art, so you’ve got to bring art to the people.”

Kavanaugh is the founder of PASTL-Promoting Artists Strengths through Logic— an organization that encourages adolescents, especially those with criminal records, to channel their energy and creativity into art. PASTL is one of several nonprofits that use the Hillsboro Art Walk to get the word out about what they’re offering.

”The kids’ art is really trendy, and I know there’s a lot of trendy people through here, so it’s a good opportunity,” Kavanaugh said.

Craftville, another of the art-based nonprofits, is a group of craft enthusiasts who provide quick, easy and creative activities to involve children at the walk.

These events benefit nearly everyone in the community. The public gets entertainment and the shops get business, while charities and artists get venues, audiences and buyers.

Painter Lydia Hejny, whose work was on display recently at A Village of Flowers, said she doesn’t sell a lot of work during the art walk, but it’s still worthwhile.

“Last year I got a lot of commission work out of it,” she said. “This is still the best area of town to get your art in because the shops are looking for artists specifically for these events.”

Duncan Ragsdale, the event’s director, agreed.

“And some store owners don’t even take commission,” Ragsdale said. “Some will out FOR SALE

Hillsboro art walk turns storefronts into galleries

By Jessica Adkins

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“And some store owners don’t even take commission,” Ragsdale said. “Some will probably would have ended up going to college somewhere else instead of pursuing my music.”

Three years later, plan B was enacted after “If The Moon Fell Down” failed to make progress in radio. Coy asked to leave his contract at Universal Republic.

“Everything was in a state of flux, and I said, ‘In a perfect world, I would just rather go back to doing this independently.’ And they let me out of my contract early—a year early actually,” he said.

That’s when Coy turned back to Belmont to start studying audio engineering technology; he kept in mind some important lessons he learned while on Universal Republic’s roster.

“Working with people at major labels and different companies,” he said, “I’ve found most of them—lots of them—started in a completely different area of the music industry. I am more open to options now, and I see how many options are available. I’m just trying to be flexible and take opportunities that come my way.”

But for now, a black Sharpie will inscribe his audio engineering class projects with his name—a name now known to fans beyond any campus.

Top 5 Albums on iTunes

1. 21 – Adele
2. Whitney – The Greatest Hits – Whitney Houston
3. Barton Hollow – The Civil Wars
4. 19 – Adele
5. The Bodyguard (Original Soundtrack Album) – Whitney Houston

GettINg there
The Hillsboro Village Art Walk welcomes many talents, from bands to singer-songwriters to visual artists to authors. Prospective participants should contact coordinator Duncan Ragsdale through her website, duncarragsdale.com. If you want to go and immerse yourself in the atmosphere, the next art walk is March 1. There’s another on April 5, and it will have an Earth Day theme, featuring eco-friendly, recycled art. The April event will also mark the walk’s second anniversary. It takes place in a couple of blocks in Hillsboro Village on 21st Avenue South between Wedgewood and Acklen avenues.

Calling all artists!
Any artist who wants to display their work at the monthly Hillsboro Village Art Walk can contact Ragsdale at hillborovillageevents@gmail.com or (615) 294-5441.
Musicians, songwriting majors. Belmont juniors. These roommates have a lot in common, but don't let their similarities fool you. Although each has a style of music that falls under the folk-alternative genre, both Mackenzie Scott and Natalie Royal have their own individual styles. Scott and Royal met in their first year writing class and became roommates as juniors. Although they don't write songs together, they often play the same shows and personally support and motivate each other.

Before they were good friends, Royal remembers Scott singing in the Thrailkill stairwell. She loved the sound of Scott's voice and asked her to sing harmonies for her. Now, they sing backup for each other whenever they need harmonies onstage. “Natalie is really good at pinpointing exactly what needs to go where in a song,” Scott said. “In that sense, I would consider it a collaboration of music.”

Scott, originally from Macon, Ga., discovered a passion for songwriting when she picked up the guitar in high school. “[Belmont’s songwriting program] has gotten me familiar with the process of how it works, especially in the major industry scene like Music Row,” said Scott. “It’s definitely made me hone my own craft and have directed my path as far as where I do want to go and where I don’t want to go.”

Scott’s biggest influences as an artist are Ryan Adams and Brandi Carlile. She also admits the showmanship and stage presence of Johnny Cash and Joan Baez.

In March 2011, Scott released her first EP, “Hit and Run,” on iTunes. She expects her harmonies in live performances just makes the threat the throat. It’s an unnecessary insult.” Through her engaging stories, readers discover why Angelou is such a renowned and inspiring individual.

Native Son
Richard Wright
Don Cusic, Music Business

In this classic novel published in 1940, Richard Wright tells a poignant tale of Bigger Thomas, a young African-American man who murders a white woman during the 1930s in Chicago, and his forthcoming trial. Considered to be one of the most profound novels of its time, “Native Son” changed the face of American literature.

Cancer Ward
Alexander Solzhenitsyn
Vance Wilson, Lila D. Bunch Circulation Manager

“Cancer Ward,” set in post-Stalin Russia, follows protagonist Kostoglotov on his journey through a Soviet cancer ward where he falls in love with one of the doctors. But, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that “Cancer Ward” is a metaphor for Soviet government, which led to the book’s ban by the country’s government for many years. “It’s not a ‘nice’ title, but it has a good, movie-like ending,” Wilson said. The dreary Russian backdrop may not make this the best beach read, but it’s a great story and novel, he said.

Scout, Atticus and Boo: A Celebration of 50 Years of To Kill A Mockingbird
Mary McDonagh Murphy
Sally Holt, School of Religion

Most every American student has either read through or knows of “To Kill A Mockingbird.” In “Scout, Atticus and Boo,” Murphy offers insight into this quintessential coming-of-age story and interviews people like Oprah Winfrey and Tom Brokaw about how this powerful novel has influenced them.

Moby Dick
Herman Melville
Peter Kuryla, Department of History

Truly an iconic piece of literary history, “Moby Dick” follows a crazed sea captain, Ahab, on his quest for the elusive white whale. As a defining novel of the 19th century, “Moby Dick” has been the basis for many works of modern literature. If you have already set sail with Ishmael in a high school English class, Kuryla also suggests “The Magic Mountain” by Thomas Mann. “The Magic Mountain” takes place in pre-World War I Europe, specifically in a tuberculosis hospital in the Swiss Alps. When the protagonist, Hans, visits an ailing cousin at the facility, he contracts the disease and begins his journey of learning and self-discovery.

Although the two books differ in subject and plot, Kuryla says that a common theme holds them together. “Both of these books are novels of ideas that depict fragile worlds in the process of passing into oblivion,” he said. “What can be better than that?”

Songwriters share room sometimes a stage
By Ali Williams

Scott, a collaboration of music.”

Scott said. “In that sense, I would consider it a collaboration of music.”

“You try not to pull my inspiration directly from other people,” she said. “I love it when, after a show, I get people telling me I sounded like 20 different people… because it lets you know you’re doing something right—sounding like yourself rather than sounding like other people.”

Since their musical styles complement each other well, some have wondered why these friends haven’t committed to a music duo.

“I think it would be interesting,” Scott said. “I think we could do it well, but we’ve never attempted it.”

Royal agreed. “I could see us collaborating at some point coming from a fresh standpoint like ‘We both are completely out of ideas. Let’s write a song together,’” she said.

In addition to sharing a love for music and songwriting, Royal and Scott also share their band members Bobby Chase, Melodie Morris and Jordan Williams.

Royal and Scott agree that Belmont has fostered their growth as artists by giving them access to resources and connections. “None of this would have happened without Belmont,” Royal said. “I wouldn’t have met Mackenzie or any of the people I play with. Without Belmont, it wouldn’t have happened, and you have to take every possible opportunity.”
The Beat "N" Track plays on this month with sophomore music business major Tristen Smith. He hails from St. Clairsville, Ohio, just east of the Ohio River, where his kind of guitar slinging, rock inspired country music is alive and well. With inspirations like country guitar gurus Brad Paisley and Keith Urban, Smith is finding his own way in country music at Belmont. And with his recent win at the 2012 Country Showcase, his path hasn’t led him astray yet. Vision senior A&E writer Dustin Stout talked with the sophomore to find out how the iconic KISS played a part in making him the “barbed wire country” singer he is today.

How would you describe your style of country?

My style of country is very edgy. I jokingly call it “barbed wire country” because although it is country music, it is edgy and has a classic rock element mixed in.

I hear your nickname is “T-Bone.” Is there a story behind that?

Well, “T-Bone” has been a nickname I’ve had for years. My uncles call me that and other names that are too brutal to mention in print. … Okay, maybe I lied about the brutal part. Back home in the Ohio Valley, it was my stage name. Since I’ve moved down here, I have dropped “T-Bone.” Now, I just go by the name Tristen Smith.

How did you get started playing country music?

I’ve been singing my entire life in many genres of music, but country music has always held a special place in my heart. It’s the music of America. I have been surrounded by musicians since the day I was born. I guess I got my love of country music from my father, who is a drummer and talented singer as well.

You have some pretty impressive skills on electric guitar. Would you say your guitar stylings help you to stand out in the world of instant gratification?

I love a lot of guitar players, but I’d say my true guitar heroes are Ace Frehley of KISS, Neal Schon of Journey, my friends—Kelly Jones, Roger Hoard, Jim Miller—and superstar country singers like Brad Paisley and Keith Urban. I love the way they all play the guitar. I wanted to play like them and discover myself along the way.

You could probably sing any genre you wanted. Why country?

I just love country music. It is by far my favorite genre. The music speaks to me because it’s real.

What acts are you digging right now in country music? Why?

Well, I’m really am digging Brad Paisley right now. His guitar playing is truly incredible and his songwriting is great as well. I also love the new Eric Church album.

What was the last song you listened to? What do you like about it?

I’m such a KISS nerd. The last song I listened to is “Watchin’ You” off their “Hotter than Hell” album. I love the guitar riff and the attitude of the song. And plus, it’s KISS!

What direction is country music headed style-wise? What makes you different than all the rest?

Country is very eclectic right now—lots of pop influence, some rock influence and even some rap. I feel country needs to go edgier yet become more traditional to stay true to its roots. I’m still in my development as an artist trying to find my identity. Right now, what makes me different is my guitar slinging country music with the classic rock attitude. I’m also writing my own songs that have a message relatable to not only my generation but also everyone who listens.

Do you play around town? How does playing gigs help you to become a better musician?

Well, I just started writing. In my entire life, I think I have written maybe 10 songs. When I write, it’s usually about what I’m feeling and what I know. Writing can totally be a therapy session! Not only for myself but also for anyone who listens to the song. Music is called the best medicine for a reason. Whether it’s to turn a mood around or enhance one, music has a healing power.

What’s your favorite song that you’ve written? Why is it your favorite?

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What’s your favorite song that you’ve written? Why is it your favorite?

Like I said, I haven’t written too many songs. One of my favorites so far is “Redline,” which I performed at the showcase. It has attitude, yet when you listen to the words, it’s a song about needing to slow down in our world of instant gratification.

Do you have any music available for fans? If not, do you have plans to release music?

Right now I do not have music available to the public. I’m in the process of writing new material and, in the near future, recording. I will keep everyone posted on my Facebook page and my Twitter account @tristensmith_.

Tristen Smith
Baseball ready to repeat

By Katie Greene
SPORTS EDITOR

While many girls consider a glitzy ring in a Tiffany-blue box their best friend, members of a new Belmont athletic group are instead spending their time with another diamond – one with red dirt and turf.

After winning their first Atlantic Sun conference championship and earning their first NCAA tournament bid, the Belmont Bruins are ready to return to the diamond in 2012 to try to do it again.

The team hopes to have a more consistent season than last year's 38-26, which was historic but required a late season six-game winning streak to the A-Sun title and then wins over Oklahoma State and Troy in the NCAA Regional before losing to Vanderbilt.

“That success, that season, that team is actually behind us now,” longtime baseball head coach Dave Jarvis said.

The 2011 season has provided a goal and a focus for this season: to be the first Belmont baseball team to earn two straight NCAA tournament bids.

Belmont has received votes in numerous 2012 preseason polls, including the USA Today/ESPN coaches’ poll, that have generated hype for the season that started with 2-1 run in the Music City Classic on Feb. 17-19.

“It’s a tribute to last year’s team in many ways, I think, and it feels good for our university and program to get that type of recognition,” Jarvis said. “That’s always a positive and has a carryover effect … [with] team recognition and program recognition with recruits.”

This will be the final season for the Bruins in the Atlantic Sun. The conference coaches predicted the Bruins would finish fourth in the A-Sun this year.

Although this will be a season of transition for the Bruins, Jarvis said it should be like any other. “This is another one of those situations where our goal, effort, and every thought is about making sure we play our way through this conference season.”

Winning the conference tournament is always the goal, Jarvis said.

For seven seniors, this season will be their final in Belmont uniforms. It’s a senior class that has contributed much to the program’s history.

“Every one of those guys as juniors last year was such a big part of our success,” Jarvis said. “We have good leadership in that class. … It’s a good group of leaders and people. I’m very thrilled to have them back.”

Included in this senior class is outfielder Dylan Craig, who has set nine offensive records during his Belmont career.

“I want to take this team back to the A-Sun and win it my last year here,” Craig said. “It’s my goal to always get better … [to] stay unfinished and help the team in any way that I can.

Another key player for the Bruins will be junior pitcher Chase Brookshire, who was part of an NCAA all-region team last spring.

“There’s always things to improve on,” Brookshire said. “We got a whole new team, got tons of new faces. It’s a new culture, and our goal this year is to win.”

The rousing finish to 2011 is in the past, and Brookshire isn’t looking back.

“We are coming off of that high,” Brookshire said. “But I wouldn’t say we really feel any pressure…. Expectations are high, but I think the guys are excited, ready to get back out, and ready to be playing again.”

The team lost several key players from last season, including Nate Woods and Derek Hambleton. However, Jarvis believes this incoming freshman class is capable of stepping up.

“They definitely will, over the course of their careers here, be able to step in and fill those roles for us,” Jarvis said.

Belmont’s ace pitcher, Junior Chase Brookshire racked up a number of awards last season, including being named to an NCAA regional all-tournament team. The lefty’s presence on the mound was a key element in the Bruins’ 2011 postseason run. Brookshire finished last season with 72 strikeouts and 15 starts, tying the team record for starts.

Senior Dylan Craig’s consistent bat provided Belmont with 45 runs, six doubles, a home run and 35 RBIs last season. His experience at bat has already proven useful during the Bruins’ opening tournament, the Music City Classic, at Rose Park.

Diamond Girls start inaugural season

By Courtney Martinez
STAFF WRITER

While many girls consider a glitzy ring in a Tiffany-blue box their best friend, members of a new Belmont athletic group are instead spending their time with another diamond – one with red dirt and turf.

The idea came from head baseball coach Dave Jarvis, and now athletics graduate assistant Mallory McGough is managing the fledgling organization with student captain Elizabeth Halvorson.

“I feel that the Diamond Girls are an important organization that the baseball team was really in need of, not only for in-game assistance and support, but also to continue to spread the word in the community about the success of Belmont baseball,” McGough said.

The concept behind the Diamond Girls is not unique to Belmont. While many college and minor league baseball teams have similar organizations, the Belmont group’s target is to help make the baseball team and Belmont athletics more recognizable in Nashville and in the NCAA.

Sophomore music business major Britany Marshall said working for the Diamond Girls was an opportunity to balance out her studies while being involved with Belmont athletics.

“Tried to work in a very athletic family—my brother played baseball, my sister played softball, and I played softball, so the baseball environment here brings back a great childhood memory and is really fun to be around,” she said.

As the first on-campus organization of its kind, Diamond Girls want to help start off a baseball tradition at Belmont, Marshall said. At this point, however, transition is now priority over that potential tradition.

“It’s really hard for the guys because they’re not used to us yet,” Marshall said. So, [we’re] telling them ‘leave the bat, let them get it’ and just focusing on those kinds of things.

“I’m excited and I think that it’s a great thing that will hopefully continue through the years. And if this goes well, I’d like to keep going until I graduate through the next three seasons.”
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Sharp shot
Ernst shows potential on, off court

By Katie Greene
SPORTS EDITOR

Molly Ernst may be just a sophomore for the Belmont women’s basketball team, but there’s no doubt she already plays a relevant role for the Bruins. Vocal and athletic, the 6-foot guard has started nearly every game this season for the Bruins, earning respect from her teammates since she came to the team as a quiet recruit from Louisville, Ky.

“In my defense … obviously when you come in as a high-schooler hanging out with college players, you’re not going to say a lot. After spending so much time together they realized I was pretty goofy,” she said. “I’m pretty unpredictable I think.”

When Ernst isn’t averaging nearly eight points a game for the Bruins or chasing cats with teammate freshman Katie Carroll, she is preparing for a career beyond college basketball. An exercise science major, Ernst eventually wants to be a physical therapist that works with geriatric patients.

Ernst’s combined enthusiasm for sports and the elderly inspired her to go into physical therapy. Through her rehabilitation for a bone spur in her knee during high school, she discovered a whole new environment that eventually made her want to help others rehab their own injuries.

“The physical therapist I went to was just crazy. We just had such a good time, and they’re working with athletes, people of all ages, all backgrounds, so I knew I wanted to do something fun like that,” she said.

As close-knit with her family as she is, Ernst didn’t look far to find inspiration to work with the elderly.

“My grandma is one of my best friends,” she said. “She’s my role model. She’s 91-years-old. She’s blind. She suffers from macular degeneration—she’s been blind now for about fifteen years. But, while she’s blind, she still lives alone, and she still gets around fine. She’s the most independent person I’ve met in my life.”

Ernst’s respect for older generations reaches past her grandmother towards all elderly people that she meets.

“From my relationship with her, I just love old people. I really respect them. I think they are precious. I love it whenever I see an old couple out having dinner at 3 p.m. in the afternoon holding hands,” she said. While the challenge of balancing basketball and school duties hasn’t gotten easier, Ernst’s family has supported her all the way.

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At the end of the day, Ernst’s optimism is her driving force.

“I try never to have a bad day,” she said. “If I’m making people smile, then that’s something that makes me feel good inside.”

Molly Ernst

Being a Braves fan, through rain and long lines

Being the impatient person that I am, standing in line on a rainy Saturday in Franklin waiting for an autograph of a semi-famous Atlanta Braves pitcher was not my definition of fun.

But when you promise your little brother you’re going to get him a signed baseball, by golly, you better get him a signed baseball.

In my grievously desperation, some eavesdropping mixed with some reminiscing turned my attitude around completely.

You see, the Braves are the unrivaled passion of my family. From my grandfather to my uncle, and now my brother, we’ve all been devoted fans. From dances in the park to the classic scenes of my father and I playing catch with his knuckleball after he got home from work, being a Braves fan is how my family brought our family together.

That conversation took me back at least a decade. When I wasn’t at dance, I was playing catch with my little brother in the yard. Some days we’d work on grounders. Others, we’d work on pop-ups by trying to throw the ball as high as our pine trees and not let it hit either one of us on the head. There was no greater thrill than being able to run in for dinner and tell Mom we hit Dad’s knuckleball after he got home from work.

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Back in Franklin, 5- and 80-year-olds alike were dressed in the nines in their finest jerseys, caps and T-shirts, tomahawk chomping at the bit for a chance to get the autograph of an Atlanta Braves hopeful.

Such loyalty. Such excitement for an otherwise gloomy day in winter.

Every player was analyzed that afternoon:
• Chipper, the team’s aging star, is good, but kind of old. It might be time for him to retire.
• Hanson, the explosive pitcher, is going to be a beast if he stays healthy.
• J.J. probably should have been traded but nobody was going to help enough to be worth losing the effective ace.
• Uggla, a slugger in every right, can’t slump. Offense is going to be a struggle if he and Heyward can’t pick it up.
• Venters, somehow effective, never knows where his sinker goes. But at the end of the day, it doesn’t matter because the batter will swing at it 90 percent of the time.

Standing next to me in line was a Chipper Jr., no more than 8 years old in his No. 10 jersey. He said he plays all the positions in the outfield and is a catcher. He told me he really wants to play second base or shortstop.

His dad said he really wants to play in the infield, and hopes his bat will help get him there. Father and son have been waiting for this event for weeks, and it’s all Chipper Jr. can talk about.

That conversation took me back at least a decade. When I wasn’t at dance, I was playing catch with my little brother in the yard. Some days we’d work on grounders. Others, we’d work on pop-ups by trying to throw the ball as high as our pine trees and not let it hit either one of us on the head. There was no greater thrill than being able to run in for dinner and tell Mom we hit Dad’s knuckleball after he got home from work.

Turns out those timeless traditions that brought my family together are the type to bring the Braves nation together, too. All of a sudden, standing in line wasn’t so bad. In fact, it was kind of fun.

Sports editor Katie Greene is a sophomore mass communications major.