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MONDAY
December 3, 2012

THE PARTHENON

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Fiscal cliff crisis: Made in the GOP

By **DAVID LIGHTMAN**

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS (MCT)
WASHINGTON — Both major political parties may have their fingerprints on long-simmering problems in the federal budget, but just one created the current crisis known as the fiscal cliff.

Blame them or thank them, it was the Republicans who forced a series of budget moves over the last decade that now are bringing the

government to a breaking point that threatens sweeping tax increases and indiscriminate spending cuts that could plunge the country back into recession.

Part of it was a political gimmick, working the rules of the Senate to push through sweeping tax cuts in a way Republicans later would lambaste when President Barack Obama's Democrats used the same tactic to enact the

new health care law. The legislative gimmick got the tax cuts through Congress, but it made them the first such tax cuts with an expiration date. Those temporary tax cuts are expiring.

And part of the Republican approach was by design, risking the first-ever default on U.S. debt to force a change in Washington and rein in runaway deficits. That 2011 showdown led to the automatic spending

cuts that will start going into effect Jan. 2 — and which none really wants in their current form.

It started in 2001, when the government was running its fourth straight year of surplus and President George W. Bush moved to cut taxes as he'd promised in his campaign. He faced a serious hurdle, a Senate split 50-50, far short of the 60 votes needed to clear Senate rules and enact his sweeping

tax reduction.

There was a way out, but it was a tactic that the staid Senate was reluctant to use, called reconciliation.

Created to make it easier to deal with budgets, it also became a tool for skirting the 60-vote threshold since only 51 votes were needed. There was a major catch: Any such bill could only make changes in federal revenue for a maximum of 10 years.

With support from some Democrats, the Bush tax cuts passed the Senate with 58 votes. They were temporary.

The precedent was set, and when Bush came back with a new, more controversial round of cuts in 2003, the Republicans used the reconciliation rule again. This time, the bill passed with 51 votes, as Vice President Dick Cheney broke a 50-50 tie.

See **GOP** | Page 5

Experts say police a problem for prosecutors in Zimmerman case

By **JEFF WEINER**
and **RENE STUTZMAN**

ORLANDO SENTINEL (MCT)

ORLANDO, Fla. — It was a strange development in a case that has seen more than its share: Chris Serino, the lead police investigator in the Trayvon Martin shooting, hired famed Casey Anthony defense attorney Jose Baez to represent him at his upcoming deposition in the case.

It's unclear what prompted Serino to hire a private attorney — eschewing available representation by the city of Sanford, Fla., his employer. But one issue likely to come up is his double-talk on whether there was enough evidence to support George Zimmerman's arrest as controversy surrounding the case spiraled out of control last spring.

Serino wrote in a sworn affidavit that there was probable cause to arrest Zimmerman. But he later told the Federal Bureau of Investigation he was pressured to author that document and didn't believe the evidence was sufficient for the manslaughter charge he recommended.

"Nobody put a gun to his head," said Michael Grieco, a Miami defense lawyer and former prosecutor. "When you sign an affidavit, you swear under oath."

And Serino isn't the only Sanford officer whose testimony could prove troublesome for prosecutors in the second-degree murder case against Zimmerman: High-ranking fellow officers largely agreed in March that there was not sufficient evidence to arrest Zimmerman.

Zimmerman's legal team has since listed several of them, including former Sanford police Chief Bill Lee Jr. and Serino's supervisors, as witnesses the defense plans to call at trial.

Baez was not available to comment for this story. But in a recent interview with the Orlando Sentinel, Baez said that Serino hired him because "it's a very politically charged case, and he just wants to make sure that everything is done by the book." Special Prosecutor Angela Corey's office — which Florida Gov. Rick Scott appointed to handle the case — also did not respond to requests for comment.

SUPERSTORM SANDY AFTERMATH



Danny McDonnell removes carpet from the family's property in Seaside Heights, N.J., on Nov. 17. The family is trying to pick up the pieces after Superstorm Sandy damaged their summer home, their rental property and their boardwalk business.

AMY NEWSMAN/THE RECORD | MCT

Sandy victims face long haul as they begin path to recovery

By **KAREN SUDOL**

THE RECORD (HACKENSACK, N.J.) (MCT)

HACKENSACK, N.J. — In the days before Superstorm Sandy walloped New Jersey, Gina McDonnell worried about her home. The home that has flooded repeatedly over the past six years. The home where the basement held 6 feet of water after Hurricane Irene.

So she packed up valuables stored in her cellar and moved them to higher ground.

But McDonnell's well-intentioned preparations were focused on her Oakland house — not her Seaside Heights ranch-style home that was soaked under as much as 4 inches of seawater as Sandy roared up the East Coast.

"We stayed up north because this is our primary home, and we were protecting it," she said. "Not for nothing, but we weren't expecting to have what happened happen down in Seaside, so I never went down there to prepare

for the damage," she said of her family's Summer Avenue home at the resort community made famous by the popular MTV show "Jersey Shore."

McDonnell and her husband, Dan, are old hands at picking up the pieces of their lives after floods. They've already done it four times in six years in Oakland, where their house is near the Ramapo River.

See **SANDY** | Page 5

Ambassador felt risks at U.S. consulate were worth it, says judge who visited Libya

By **HANNAH ALLAM**

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS (MCT)

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Three months before U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens died when suspected

Islamist militants stormed the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Minn.

Supreme Court Justice Paul Anderson, in Libya under the auspices of the American Bar Association to advise on rebuilding the country's justice system, paid a courtesy call to the U.S. embassy in Tripoli.

Stevens, Anderson remembered in a recent interview, gave his visitor a sobering security rundown. Still, the ambassador encouraged Anderson to get out and mingle with Libyans. The judge recalled noticing how little protection the embassy in Tripoli had compared to those in other restive countries he'd visited on similar bar association assignments.

Anderson said that he and Stevens, a lawyer by training, developed a quick rapport and spent more than hour in a broad discussion that ran from constitutional law to the collapse of the police force in Libya. Stevens was well aware of the perils that surrounded him, Anderson said, but he was adamant that good diplomacy meant getting out of the fortresslike U.S. compounds that dot the Middle East.

See **LIBYA** | Page 5

Bradley Manning's trial postponed in WikiLeaks case

By **MATT PEARCE**

LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

Pfc. Bradley Manning's trial on whether he gave classified documents to WikiLeaks has been postponed about a month, a military judge said Sunday.

The delay is intended to allow more time for pretrial proceedings, which continued Sunday with more testimony

after the announcement.

The judge in the case, Col. Denise Lind, announced the delay at a pretrial hearing at Fort Meade, outside Washington, the Associated Press reported. Manning's trial, which had been set to begin Feb. 4, will be pushed back to mid-March.

Manning, who was an intelligence analyst in Baghdad

in 2009 and 2010, is accused of sending hundreds of thousands of logs about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and more than 250,000 diplomatic cables to WikiLeaks, the anti-secrecy activist group.

If convicted of the most serious count of the 22 charges against him — aiding the enemy — Manning could face life in prison.

The viability of the military's case against Manning could depend on whether its treatment of him during a nine-month solitary confinement at a 48-square-foot cell in Quantico, Va., constituted illegal punishment.

Manning was stripped of his clothing, forced to sleep naked for several nights and required to stand naked at attention one

morning, conditions that a United Nations investigator called cruel, inhuman and degrading, but stopped short of calling torture.

Prosecutors said Manning was a suicide risk, which Manning acknowledged during testimony last week after prosecutors confronted him with a noose, and argued that he was in need of protection from self-harm or harming others.

INSIDE: NEWS, 2 | SPORTS, 3 | OPINION, 4 | LIFE!, 6

HI 70°  **LO 50°**

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MARSHALL CAREER SERVICES

Farming with sewage



California's Central Valley residents tire of receiving L.A.'s urban waste

By JESSICA GARRISON
LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

ARVIN, Calif. — Every day, the trucks rumble into the Central Valley by the dozens, chugging over the Grapevine loaded with lawn clippings from Beverly Hills, sewage sludge from Los Angeles and rotting yogurt and vegetables from around Southern California.

Los Angeles officials and others say the daily caravan is an essential step toward recycling thousands of tons of urban waste and turning it into compost and fertilizer in California's vast agrarian middle. But increasingly, residents of the Central Valley and other rural areas object to the stream of semis and their unpleasant cargo.

"You guys in Los Angeles are dumping all your waste on us," said Sarah

Sharpe, the environmental health program director at Fresno Metro Ministry, a nonprofit group that advocates for environmental justice. "We just don't think it's fair."

Simmering for more than a decade, the issue has flared up in the last year after two young workers died from exposure to toxic fumes at one of the state's largest composting operations in Kern County. Community Recycling & Resource Recovery's facility outside Arvin was full of yard waste from Los Angeles, and had also been under fire for allegedly putting plastic on fields in violation of local land use rules.

Kern County's supervisors ordered the operation shut, setting off a legal battle between the county and the operator.

Thirty-nine of California's 58 counties shipped more than 5 percent of

their trash and recycling across county lines last year. Much of it goes to the Central Valley, which has the vast acreage to handle it. A Los Angeles Times analysis of state recycling data shows that more than 60 percent of all non-agricultural compost in the state winds up in the region, which is home to just 14 percent of the population.

Processing waste regionally is the only way cities can meet state goals that call for diverting half their waste away from landfills, state and metropolitan officials say. There is not enough space in urban centers like San Francisco and Los Angeles, nor is there a large market there for compost.

But some officials said that when the waste gets to rural areas, recycling facilities don't always sufficiently protect the environment and

neighbors' quality of life.

"A lot of these disposal facilities don't want to use the most modern technology because it costs more," said Kern County's planning director, Lorelei Oviatt. "Our residents want to know why they have to endure the impacts merely to save money for some people in Los Angeles."

The debate is only expected to escalate: A law approved last year calls for the state to aim to recycle or otherwise reduce 75 percent of its waste by 2020. Los Angeles has vowed to go even further, expanding recycling so much that the city will be "zero waste" by 2025.

One of the most bitter battles in California is over sludge, the batter-like material left over after treatment plants finish cleaning and draining

The city of Los Angeles owns this farm outside of Taft, Calif., where it uses the solid byproduct of human waste to fertilize the fields, much to the displeasure of locals.

MICHAEL ROBINSON CHAVEZ/LOS ANGELES TIMES | MCT

what is flushed down the toilet or washed down the sink.

Sludge used to get dumped in the ocean — but that was banned in the 1980s because of concerns about pollution.

In 2000, the city of Los Angeles bought 4,600 acres in Kern County, just off Interstate 5 near Taft, and has been sending up more than 20 truckloads a day of "wet cake" from the Hyperion Sewage Treatment Plant near LAX.

Los Angeles officials and those at major wastewater treatment plants in the state say that spreading such "biosolids" on land or composting it as fertilizer is good for the city and good for the farm. They note that sludge is heated to 131 degrees for several days until harmful bacteria and pathogens are destroyed or removed.

Boy Scouts of America resisted background checks on leaders

By JASON FELCH
and KIM CHRISTENSEN
LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

After reports of widespread sexual abuse of children in the late 1980s, several leading youth organizations began conducting criminal background checks of volunteers and staff members.

Big Brothers Big Sisters ordered the checks for all volunteers starting in 1986. Boys and Girls Clubs of America recommended their use the same year.

One of the nation's oldest and largest youth groups, however, was opposed — the Boy Scouts of America.

Scouting officials argued that background checks would cost too much, scare away volunteers and provide a false sense of security. They successfully lobbied to kill state legislation that would have mandated FBI fingerprint screening.

While touting their efforts to protect children, the Scouts for years resisted one of the most basic tools for preventing abuse. As a result, the organization let in hundreds of men with criminal histories of child molestation, many of whom went on to abuse more children, according to a Los Angeles Times analysis of the Scouts' confidential abuse files.

Scouting did not require criminal background checks for all volunteers until 2008 despite calls from parents and staff who said its vetting

system didn't work.

In 1989, a Scout committee chairman in St. Paul, Minn., decried the organization's "half-hearted" screening in a letter to headquarters.

"BSA is only creating an illusion of performing what they claim," K. Russell Sias wrote to Scout chief executive Ben Love. "It becomes quite clear that BSA is more concerned in 'passing the buck' than in accepting responsibility for those who are its adult leaders."

That same year, a Las Vegas scoutmaster with a criminal history of exposing himself to boys was arrested for sexually abusing a 12-year-old Scout.

One parent said casinos did a better job of screening workers. "The black eye which Scouting has suffered in this could easily have been avoided if the council had taken the simple expedient of doing a background investigation," the parent wrote to Scouting officials.

From 1985 to 1991 — when the detailed files obtained by The Times end — the Boy Scouts admitted more than 230 men with previous arrests or convictions for sex crimes against children, the analysis found.

The men were accused of molesting nearly 400 boys while in Scouting. They accounted for one in six of those expelled for alleged abuse during those years.

FBI raiding 'body-rub' joints in hot South Florida massage industry

By BRETT CLARKSON
SUN SENTINEL (MCT)

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Hidden in plain sight amid South Florida's suburban storefront malls is a booming adult industry that local leaders and law enforcement officials worry may be a large-scale breeding ground for sexual slavery and human trafficking.

It's known as the "body-rub" business, a world of open-til-late massage parlors better known for blacked-out windows and neon signs, provocative ads and rumors of "happy endings" for cash than their therapeutic merit.

In recent years, experts say, there has been an "exponential" surge of massage parlors in South Florida, particularly in Broward County where many of the parlors advertise their proximity to the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. And many elected officials are concerned.

"At my urging, we are actually looking at how to regulate them," Hollywood Mayor Peter Bober said. "I think there's too many of them, I think they do absolutely nothing to enhance the city."

One reason for the boom in storefront massage parlors over the past decade, say law enforcement officials, are the marketing possibilities and access to customers offered by the explosive growth of the Internet. A federal agent who investigates human trafficking also highlighted the historically weak regulation in Florida of massage businesses



MICHAEL LAUGHLIN/SUN SENTINEL | MCT

The owner of this massage parlor in Plantation, Fla., is among 161 Florida-licensed massage therapists under suspension. The suspensions were part of a joint investigation into potential human trafficking in the massage industry.

that feature foreign women, where proper identification of workers was an issue.

The focus turned to the laws requiring licenses to be displayed and forcing workers to have appropriate identification.

"There was a bit of a loophole," said Carmen J. Pino, assistant special agent in charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of Homeland Security Investigations in Miami.

"Thankfully, the state has come down (on this issue) in the past months and is saying now there's more licensing, more oversight."

One reason for law enforcement's concern: The possibility that such businesses are engaged in sex trafficking, that is, the sexual exploitation of their female employees by force, fraud or coercion for financial gain.

There is nothing illegal about a licensed massage

therapist providing a massage to a customer in a licensed establishment. Massage establishment licenses and individual massage therapist licenses are required for the lawful practice of massage, and both are issued by the Florida Department of Health.

What is illegal is a masseuse accepting cash tips for sexual services, or a customer trying to solicit them.



	C-USA		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
SMU	0	0	8	1
SOUTHERN MISS	0	0	6	1
EAST CAROLINA	0	0	5	1
TULANE	0	0	6	2
HOUSTON	0	0	5	2
MEMPHIS	0	0	4	2

SPORTS

	C-USA		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
UCF	0	0	4	2
MARSHALL	0	0	5	3
TULSA	0	0	4	3
UAB	0	0	4	4
UTEP	0	0	2	4
RICE	0	0	2	5



MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2012 | THE PARTHENON | MARSHALLPARTHENON.COM

Column

Nightmare at Arrowhead

By JAMES COLLIER
FOR THE PARTHENON

Early Saturday morning, the Kansas City Chiefs organization had a disappointing season take a tragic turn for the worse. General manager Scott Pioli and head coach Romeo Crennel were at work early Saturday making final preparations for Sunday's game with the Carolina Panthers. The tandem received a phone call telling them to hurry to the parking lot.

The men exited the building to find 25-year-old linebacker Jovan Belcher standing on the other side of the exit doors holding a gun to his head. They engaged in a conversation with Belcher, ending with Belcher thanking them for giving him a chance to play in the NFL. That would be the final words Belcher would say as the four-year player took his own life with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

The beginning of this tragic morning started just as it ended for Belcher, unfortunately with another person losing their life. Kasandra Perkins, 22, was shot several times in her home Saturday morning. She was later pronounced dead at the hospital. The unfortunate connection in both deaths was Belcher himself.

Belcher shot Perkins several times in her home after the couple had a dispute. Perkins was Belcher's girlfriend and mother of his three-month-old daughter. Authorities have yet to release information on a motive for the murder-suicide, only noting the couple had been arguing frequently.

Kansas City mayor Sly James commented to the Kansas City Star regarding the tragedy at Arrowhead. "He's trying to do his job under probably more adverse circumstances than he's ever seen in his life," James said of Pioli. "He knows all the players. He knows that particular player; he's very emotional."

James could not imagine of being in Pioli or Crennel's shoes, adding: "You have absolutely no idea of what it's like to see somebody kill themselves. If you can take your worst nightmare and put somebody you know and love into that situation, and give them a gun and stand 3 feet from them and watch them kill themselves, that's what it is like."

"It's unfathomable. Think about your worst nightmare and multiply it by five," James said.

Players and friends of Belcher were stunned by the news, adding that he appeared happy in life and was a model citizen and a happy father.

Belcher's agent, Joe Linta, told Sports Illustrated's Peter King on Saturday: "Javon was a happy, proud father, with pictures of his baby on his Facebook page. This is shocking. Something went crazy wrong, and we'll probably never know what it is."

"I never take on anyone as a client I wouldn't be proud to take home and spend time with my wife and kids," Linta said to King. "Jovan was one of those type of people. There's no word for this other than shocking. That's all I can think of."

While there are numerous victims in this tragedy, no one has been affected more than the three-month-old infant who is now orphaned and will never have the opportunity to know her mother and father.

Chiefs quarterback Brady Quinn told the Kansas City Star the team was so stunned, it was hard to digest what had happened.

"It's hard mostly because I keep thinking about what I could have done to stop this," Quinn said. "I think everyone is wondering whether we would have done something to prevent this from happening."

The unfortunate part of this tragedy is so many unknowns that may never be answered. Rather than to provide judgment in this horrific event, the victims should be the main concern moving forward. Pioli and Crennel witnessed something they will never forget and a three-month-old infant is left without her mother and father.

Having children of my own, this story hit close to the heart. I pray that this innocent girl will find happiness in her life and that she will be cared and provided for. Reports were discussed this morning that the Chiefs' organization plans on playing a substantial role in her care.

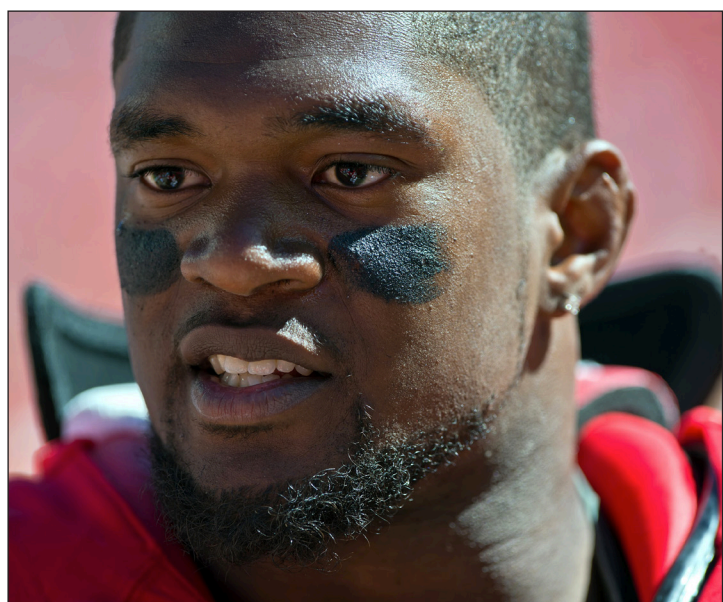
No matter how one chooses to remember Jovan Belcher, he is and always will be a murderer. However, the true reasoning that lead to this event may never be known.

No one plans for an accident, hence the reasoning of the name. While it is easy to point fingers and cast judgment, the events that occurred cannot be reversed. Only events in the present and future can be changed and learning from mistakes in the past can prevent future reoccurrences.

Depression and suicide are states of mind that may lead one to do something out of the ordinary. Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States claiming over 38,000 lives each year as reported by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Persons considering suicide or to learn more about the signs and symptoms of suicide call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or online at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org or the National Hopeline Network at 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433).

James Collier can be contacted at collier41@marshall.edu.



DAVID EULITT/KANSAS CITY STAR/MCT

Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher shot and killed his girlfriend on Saturday before going to Arrowhead Stadium and fatally shooting himself as team personnel tried to stop him, police said.



JOSHUA C. CRUEY/ORLANDO SENTINEL | MCT

Tulsa's Trey Watts accepts the MVP trophy after helping defeat Central Florida, 33-27, in overtime in the Conference USA title game at Chapman Stadium on Saturday in Tulsa, Okla.

UCF falls to Tulsa in overtime of Conference USA title game

By PAUL TENORIO
ORLANDO SENTINEL (MCT)

TULSA, Okla. — A sea of blue jerseys rushed onto the field Saturday afternoon, pushing past Central Florida defenders who looked stunned as they unbuckled their helmets and trudged to the visiting locker room.

The Knights came to Oklahoma with hopes of leaving Conference USA with one final championship, collecting one more trophy before moving on to the Big East.

Instead, Central Florida fell short. The Knights lost, 33-27, in overtime to Tulsa in the Conference USA Championship Game. After the game, the Knights accepted an invitation to play in the Beef 'O' Brady's Bowl Dec. 21 in St. Petersburg.

The C-USA title game was marked by bizarre moments and special teams gaffes,

all of which played a big role in the final score.

Two blocked extra points and a blocked field goal. A touchdown on a punt return that UCF players insist was whistled dead long before the Tulsa player reached the end zone. A poorly-called timeout that gave the Golden Hurricane a chance to drive for a touchdown.

For the second time in as many weeks, however, UCF (9-4) left Tulsa wondering more about what may have come if only it had capitalized on a few more opportunities.

"We all want to win, and we gave it our best and we came up short," redshirt senior center Jordan Rae said. "There's nothing else you can say. We came up short. They beat us on one extra play than we beat them."

The contest turned on two key moments.

The most glaring was Tulsa junior Trey Watts' 54-yard punt return for a touchdown with 5:06 remaining in the game. It tied the score.

UCF punted into the wind from its own 10-yard line, and when Jamie Boyle's kick bounced backward in the air, senior Kenal Ishmael leaped and batted the ball toward midfield. As Brendan Kelly slowly approached the ball to down it, Watts swooped in to pick it up. Watts raced down the left sideline for a touchdown.

There was confusion among UCF players about whether the play was whistled dead and also if Tulsa players came from the sideline onto the field of play, but the return stood and the score was tied.

See FOOTBALL | Page 5

Herd hoops escape Seahawks

By LAKE MOREHOUSE
THE PARTHENON

Marshall defeated the UNC-Wilmington Seahawks Saturday at the Cam Henderson Center, 61-58.

Two crucial free throws and a steal by DeAndre Kane late in the game sealed the victory for Marshall, its fifth win of the season.

The Thundering Herd got off to a quick start in front of a crowd of 5,689 against the Seahawks.

Marshall did not miss a shot until 12:25 left in the first half. D.D. Scarver proved to have the hot hand early in the game, finishing with twelve points.

Despite the initial offensive effectiveness for the Thundering Herd, UNCW and freshman guard Craig Ponder rallied back to tie the game heading into halftime.

Marshall head coach Tom Herrion said he was glad to leave the Cam Henderson Center with a tough win.

"A bad win is better than a good loss," Herrion said. "We're always thrilled with a win."

DeAndre Kane led the Thundering Herd in scoring with 16 points, while Nigel Spikes recorded his first double-double of the season.

See BASKETBALL | Page 5



MARCUS CONSTANTINO | THE PARTHENON

Marshall junior guard DeAndre Kane passes the ball to a teammate during the second half of the basketball game between the Marshall Thundering Herd and the UNC Wilmington Seahawks at the Cam Henderson Center on Saturday.

OPINION

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THE PARTHENON

ABOUT US

The Parthenon, Marshall University's student newspaper, is published by students Mondays through Fridays during the regular semesters, and weekly Thursdays during the summer. The editorial staff is responsible for news and editorial content.

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THE FIRST AMENDMENT | The Constitution of the United States of America

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble; and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Column

iPhone iOS 6 software upgrade offers new features, met with mixed reviews

By **MORGAN HUELSMAN**

KANSAS STATE COLLEGIAN, KANSAS STATE U. VIA UWIRE

With the recent success of the iPhone 4S and iOS 5 software, Apple took the plunge in a new advancement in both the iPhone 5 and the new software of iOS 6.

According to a Sept. 21 TechRadar article by Gary Marshall, the new software is "much more social than before." Not everyone is happy with the upgrade, however, because of glitches and other issues.

iOS 6 upgrades iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch with more than 200 new features, including new versions of Maps, Camera and FaceTime, Siri, Phone and Safari applications.

Before the new update, Maps was as simple as its name. The user received directions and did their best to get to their destination. Maps is now vector based, keeps the streets and places in their real locations, zooms in and out smoothly and has voice navigation and real-time traffic updates.

These features were added, however, at the cost of long-time partner Google. Apple has used Google Maps in the past, but because of disagreements between the companies, Apple decided to create their own app. This has several loyal Apple costumers upset because the new version of Maps is less reliable and has more glitches than Google Maps ever did.

Although some costumers dislike iOS 6, others praise the new technology of the Camera and FaceTime application. iPhone cameras now have the ability to take photos in panoramic view. Also, the FaceTime application can now work over 3G provided that you have the correct hardware and calling plan. It will work with the iPhone 4S but not the iPhone 4.

The Phone system and Safari also needed a necessary update due to complications in past versions. iPhone users now have the ability to put off a phone call with just a few swift motions. The iOS 6 software allows users to instantly reply with a text message, set a callback reminder when they decline an incoming call, or put their phone in "Do Not Disturb" mode.

Safari now lets users save web pages and open up their most recent tabs even when not connected to the Internet. Users can also read while offline and then switch to another device to read the same article from the place they left off.

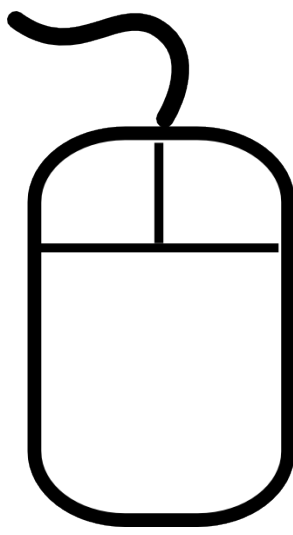
Apple also made improvements to Siri. Siri can now understand more languages, work in more countries, provide updates on the scores of the latest games, find the best restaurants and give the user the dates and times of nearby movie theaters.

With all the new updates, you'd think people would be excited, but this was not the case upon the software's release. An Oct. 1 Fox News article by Jeremy A. Kaplan stated that over 183 million out of 283 million eligible users — that's more than half — did not update to iOS 6.

By Nov. 9, Northern Voices Online reported that about one-third of iPhone customers in the U.S. and Canada had still not upgraded. Why? Some users choose not to update due to technological issues, having the wrong version of the iPhone or because they wanted to buy the iPhone 5.

Being an iPhone 4S user myself, I do not believe upgrading to the new iOS 6 system is critical. I have updated my phone, and I find that I have hardly used any of the new software updates. TechRadar said it best, stating that the new iOS 6 software is "the refinement of something that already works extremely well."

ONLINE POLLS



How do you study for finals?

- Short bursts over time
- Cram session at the end
- What is studying?

Do you think the Thundering Herd men's basketball team will fare better or worse in Conference USA this season?

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Editorial

Talk of Palestine makes the world crazy

The United Nations voted to grant the Palestinian Authority "non-member statehood" on Thursday — a decision that means Palestinians will now have greater authority in the international arena.

While President Obama has made it clear he will not retaliate, even after objecting to the vote beforehand, Congress has decided to step up and play the role of "Child Throwing a Tantrum."

Even more sad, it is not just one side, but both acting like children not getting their way.

Just hours before the vote, four Senators stepped up and showed their displeasure to the possibility of Palestinians being granted any legitimacy by threatening to tighten legislation against Palestine and even cut off U.S. aid.

So our elected leaders, the people who help run our country, are the type of people who would cut off aid to the poor, sick and hungry because the majority of representatives from the world's countries voted for something they do not agree with.

Real mature guys and gals.

Seriously, the vote was 138-9 in favor of Palestine. But, of course the zealots in Congress cannot stand the thought of anything challenging Israel — not matter what the rest of the world thinks.

Speaking of Israel — their U.N. ambassador, Ron Prosor, attempted to scare the General Assembly before the vote by saying "the Palestinians are turning their backs on peace."

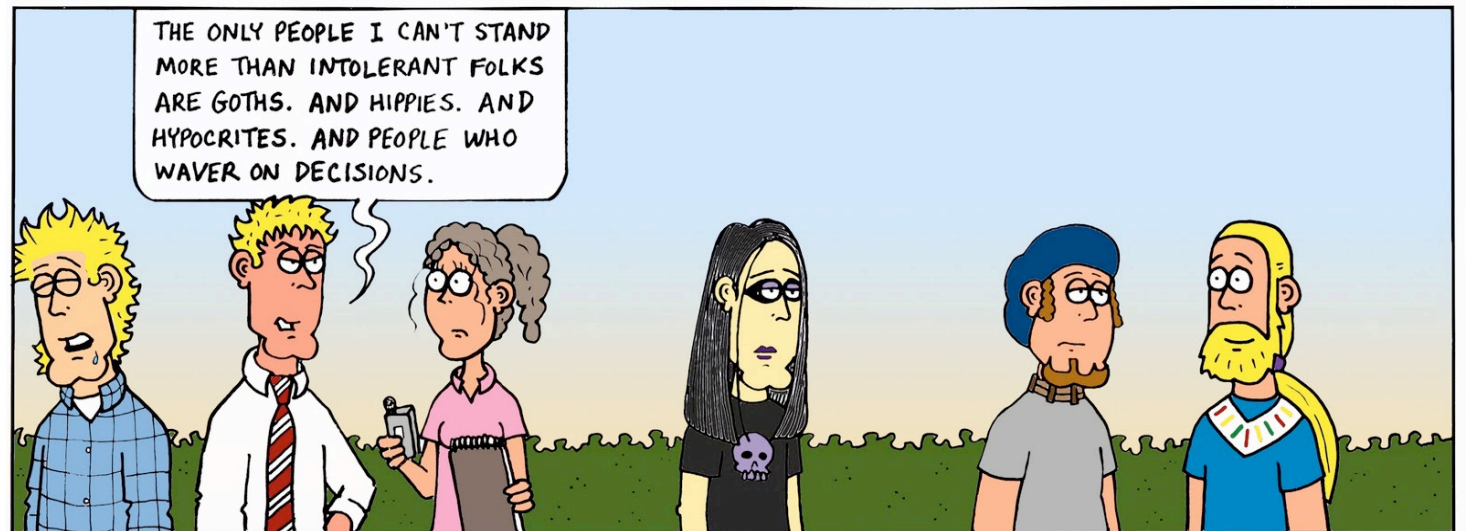
So they are turning their back on peace by going before the U.N. to request a vote to legitimately join the world community — what an utterly idiotic statement.

But utterly idiotic statements are not in short supply when it comes to those blindly supporting either side.

Garbage needs to stop pouring out of the mouths of people who have been given power to influence international politics. The world needs to come together and realize the supposedly two-state "solutions" that have been brought up in the past have been jokes, shams to keep Israel as sole owners of the land and giving their supporters the false idea they can point at Palestine and say

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Column

In defense of Susan Rice

By **MICHAEL O'HANLON**
LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

Is U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice an appropriate choice as President Obama's second-term secretary of state?

Nearly 100 House Republicans have come out against Rice, joining several prominent GOP senators. Meetings on Capitol Hill this week appear not to have helped her cause with them. They consider her either untrustworthy or incompetent, insinuating that she is too much of a partisan to represent the country as a whole on the world stage. But the Republicans should relent in their opposition.

I am no blind supporter of Rice. She is my friend and former colleague at the Brookings Institution, but I advised Hillary Rodham Clinton in the 2007-08 primary campaign, while Rice co-lead the Obama foreign policy team, and I supported the surge in Iraq, while Rice opposed it. Despite these battle scars, I consider Rice a person of high integrity and intelligence; she has a strong work ethic and a clear commitment to this country's security.

There may be a valid debate as to whether Rice, or Sen. John F. Kerry, or someone else (Adm. Michael G. Mullen and another Clinton come to mind) should succeed Clinton as the nation's next top diplomat. But Rice is a

solid candidate and would be a fine secretary of state.

The opposition to Rice begins with the matter of Benghazi. Her Sunday talk-show statements about what happened when Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other Americans were killed on Sept. 11 were mistaken but far from unreasonable. Early on, some in the intelligence community suspected a spontaneous demonstration was the starting point for the situation. Five days later, more was known: The attack was preplanned. Rice qualified her statements, but the emphasis was wrong. Still, no evidence has been presented that her comments were mendacious.

There is a broader criticism of Rice, as well. Some view her as untried, untested, too young or too much of an Obama loyalist rather than an independent thinker. Her record deserves a more careful look.

After serving on the Clinton administration's National Security Council and at the State Department, Rice was at Brookings from 2002 through 2008, and her published work is still available. It shows that she was creative, forceful and in fact ahead of either party in many of her views.

For example, in 2004 and early 2005, long before then-Sen. Obama made it a centerpiece of his foreign policy vision, Rice wrote important opinion pieces calling for direct talks with regimes like Iran or North Korea. This was a reasonable way to change the tone of President George W. Bush's "axis of evil" concept, which had proved unproductive for handling these problem states. Yet anyone who believes this reflected naivete in her thinking about such rogue states need only witness the way she has orchestrated campaigns of pressure and sanctions against both in her current job.

It is also important to put Benghazi in perspective, beyond the issue of what was said on a talk show. It was a tragedy, to be sure, and the administration's State Department needs to learn lessons about how to reduce the risk of similar debacles in the future. But we must not exaggerate the harm done to American interests here. The challenges in Libya remain largely as they were before the killings; the importance of Libya to the broader Middle East remains limited in scale in any case. This is not the issue on which the region or the world will turn in the months and years ahead.

Contrast that situation with another impressive young leader named Rice, the former secretary of state under Bush. When Condoleezza Rice's name was considered by Congress in 2005, Democrats could have

made the case that as national security adviser, she had led a broken policy process that left a huge mess in Iraq and that disqualified her from a Cabinet-level rank.

It was not simply that the Iraq war was, in some eyes, a mistake. It was that the United States had no clear single policy that established what we sought in Iraq after Saddam Hussein's demise or what tools we were prepared to employ to achieve it. We had no real plan or capacity to stabilize the country after Hussein's downfall, and chaos as well as insurrection ensued.

The poor political and military planning for the Iraq war was primarily due to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and his supporters. But Rice's job as national security advisor was to be sure that inconsistencies were identified and competing views reconciled. She failed to do this, with much weightier consequences for the country than Benghazi will ever cause. She was also part of public presentations on Hussein's weapons of mass destruction that later proved faulty. Yet the Senate rightly confirmed her as Bush's secretary of state, recognizing that many others shared the blame for these problems, and giving her a chance to learn from her mistakes and improve — which in fact she did in her next post.

Football
Continued from Page 3

"The other kids coming down there were in pretty good coverage lanes, they said they heard a whistle," UCF coach George O'Leary said of the Knights. "Whatever. They should have still played the ball. And that kid made a good play and congratulations to him."

In a statement, C-USA coordinator of officials Gerald Austin said there was no visual evidence that players entered the field from the sideline and "there was not a whistle blown during the runback. In the replay you can see the whistle of the back judge swaying back and forth."

Before the end of the first half, another pivotal decision led to a Tulsa score.

UCF was leading 14-7 and the Golden Hurricane (10-3) appeared to be running out the clock, but facing third and six from their own 26-yard line with 41 seconds remaining, O'Leary called UCF's final timeout.

On the ensuing play, Tulsa quarterback Cody Green ran for eight yards to convert the first down, and the Golden Hurricane continued to move down the field, benefiting mostly from a poorly-covered deep pass that set up first and goal from the two-yard line with two seconds remaining. Tulsa's Ja'Terian Douglas scored a touchdown as time expired.

After the game, O'Leary said he called the timeout because he needed to change personnel.

"... I didn't intend on getting the ball back," he said. "Normally you call it to see if you want to kick a field goal with the wind and stuff, but it was called basically to get more their breath underneath them on the passing down and to get the rush team on the field."

UCF couldn't score in the final five minutes of regulation and Shawn Moffitt's 38-yard field-goal attempt was blocked in overtime. Tulsa ultimately plowed through a dejected UCF defense for the game-winning touchdown run in overtime.

"We obviously lost the conference championship," O'Leary said. "If you didn't play with 100 percent effort with your God-given ability, then you need to be disappointed. But if you gave the effort you need to give and we came in second, you can (hold) your head high and we'll line up for the next game."



MARCUS CONSTANTINO | THE PARTHENON
UNC Wilmington sophomore forward Cedrick Williams, right, attempts to shoot from under the goal as Marshall University senior center Nigel Spikes defends as the Thundering Herd and the Seahawks faced off at the Cam Henderson Center on Saturday.

Basketball
Continued from Page 3

Kane said he was pleased to find success at the free throw line and earn Marshall's fifth victory.

"I finally knocked down two free throws when it counted," Kane said. "It felt good to get a win."

Herrion said he is aware of Marshall's offensive struggles and the adversity the team has faced.

"We know we're not playing very well on offense," Herrion

said. "Nothing is coming easy to this group right now."

UNCW hung around late in the game—longer than Marshall would have liked. Led by Craig Ponder, the Seahawks played tightly with the Thundering Herd all the way up until time expired.

Ponder, a Bluefield, W.Va., native, caused fits for the Marshall defense, finishing the game with 26 points.

Kane said the team's problems with offensive productivity stem from the new

faces on the Thundering Herd roster.

"We're still not there offensively," Kane said. "Everything's not together. We're not clicking on all cylinders yet. It's a new bunch."

Marshall is back in action Wednesday evening. The Thundering Herd will take on West Virginia in the annual Capital Classic at the Charleston Civic Center. Tip off is set for 7:30 p.m.

Lake Morehouse can be contacted at morehouse1@marshall.edu.

GOP
Continued from Page 1

In May 2001, White House press secretary Ari Fleischer was confident the cuts would be extended forever. "To do anything other than that is to raise taxes on the American people," he said.

Republicans miscalculated. The tax cuts contributed to a decade of record deficits and debt, aided by rising spending on a new Medicare benefit and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The national debt, \$5.7 trillion when Bush took office in January 2001, had grown to \$10.6 trillion by the time he left eight years later. It grew more under Obama.

"Republicans set up the deadlines feeling voters would move in their direction. But in the last election, they didn't move in that direction," said Steven Schier, an author of books on budget politics and a political scientist at Carleton College in Minnesota.

The deficits topped \$1 trillion a year as the country suffered through the Great Recession spanning the Bush and Obama administrations, and they have stayed at that level since.

Attempts to curb that debt were stymied in part by the tax cuts. When they first were to expire at the end of 2010, Obama backed a two-year extension, despite opposing the lower rates for the wealthy, because he feared a tax increase would threaten the still-fragile economic recovery.

"My sense here is that the GOP was hoisted on its own petard, in that Bush and congressional Republicans constructed the end date of the tax cuts to kick in after the end of the Bush administration, so that Republicans could either continue them or Democrats would be 'forced' to raise taxes," said Burdett Loomis, a professor of political science and congressional expert at the University of Kansas.

"To a large extent the strategy has worked re: taxes, but has clearly helped to produce a

huge structural deficit," he said.

Republicans had a bold idea to bring down that deficit. As the debt limit approached its legal ceiling of \$14.3 trillion in 2011, party leaders saw the need to raise the limit as a way of forcing massive spending cuts.

"There hadn't exactly been much restraint in spending, and Bush had a lot to do with that," said Michael Franc, vice president of government studies at the conservative Heritage Foundation and a former top aide to House Majority Leader Dick Armey, R-Texas.

By 2011, with the government running trillion-dollar annual deficits, Republicans were emboldened. They won control of the House of Representatives in 2010 with support of the grassroots tea party movement, which pledged tough action to slash spending. The party had modest success in winning cuts early in 2011 and by summer saw a bigger prize: Give us massive cuts, its leaders said, or we'll resist efforts to increase the debt limit.

"We need to have a show-down at this point that we are not going to increase our debt ceiling anymore. We are going to cut (spending) necessary to stay within the current levels. ... This needs to be a big show-down," Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C., told Human Events, a conservative magazine, as the 2011 congressional session began.

The conservative stand led to White House-congressional negotiations in the summer of 2011. They eventually agreed to raise the debt ceiling — avoiding default — but only with the promise that a congressional "supercommittee" would seek \$1.2 trillion in reductions from projected deficits.

As a hammer to force that committee to produce the promised savings, the deal set automatic spending cuts as the alternative.

The committee failed, and the automatic cuts now are set to start on Jan. 2.

Sandy
Continued from Page 1

But the catastrophic blow that the monster storm delivered on Oct. 29 to the barrier island has posed the greatest of challenges for this family and all other shore homeowners who are facing the reality that rebuilding their seaside getaways will be a complicated, long and trying process.

The family's efforts are compounded by the fact that they own not only the summer house on Sumner Avenue but a first-floor apartment on nearby Fremont Avenue. For the first time this past summer, Gina McDonnell also co-managed a booth at the boardwalk on the Casino Pier with her son.

A portion of that pier washed away in the storm, dumping a roller coaster in the ocean.

She removed all the merchandise from the booth in October, but she has yet to see the boardwalk because access is restricted.

The first trying moment for the McDonnell family came after the hurricane had passed. They had no idea how much damage their

summer home and rental had sustained.

"The anticipation of that?" said McDonald, a dental hygienist. "Talk about stress. That's more stressful than actually getting there."

As Sandy moved up the coast, it lingered over the borough, wiping out the boardwalk as well as portions of two piers with amusement rides. An estimated 80 to 90 percent of homes were damaged or destroyed. Sand buried the streets.

Residents were not allowed to return for two weeks because the roads were deemed unsafe and the access bridge was closed — many of the streets, including Route 35, the main drag, had to be cleared of sand and debris while sink holes had to be repaired.

The McDonnells' first post-Sandy visit to their Sumner Avenue house didn't come until Nov. 10, when they were bused over the Thomas J. Mathis Bridge early that morning.

As they walked down their street from a drop-off area at a church, McDonnell said she thought the house, which sits 4 feet above ground level, might be OK.

"We got there and noticed a lot of garbage

had floated onto the property," she said. "I couldn't go inside because it's a little nerve-racking seeing if water had gotten in or not."

They discovered up to 4 inches of water in various rooms of the house, she said. Items for a backyard lounge area were tossed around, including an outside refrigerator that was lifted and turned on its side. But a tiki bar, ping pong table, picnic table and baker's rack remained in their original spots.

Performing repairs is difficult when it's cold out and there's no heat in the house, she said. She also said she had a past experience with mold developing on the walls and kitchen of the Fremont Avenue condo when the gas was unexpectedly shut off and the rental had not been winterized.

"When you don't have heat, there's a chance, with everything being shut down, that mold could grow," she said. "You don't want to start putting money into something and having it ruined because of a lack of utilities."

They know one thing for certain, though.

"We have to do a lot of work," McDonnell said.

Libya
Continued from Page 1

"He was really upbeat, enthusiastic, about the potential for the future," Anderson said. "His optimism was almost tangible, but I don't think it was Pollyanna or rose-tinted. He knew the risks."

Since then, Anderson has become more contemplative about Stevens' take on security

and finds himself mulling his own conduct in Libya: a senior American jurist cruising Tripoli streets in an ordinary car with a local driver — without bodyguards or weapons.

"You're there doing good, and because you're doing the right thing, you feel a certain kind of immunity," Anderson said. "Well, that's not the way it is, of course."

It was easy to feel welcome

in Libya, Anderson recalled, despite signs of declining security. Just a week before his arrival in June, a disgruntled militia seized control of the Tripoli airport. But Anderson decided to stick with his plans, and he felt vindicated when the passenger next to him on the plane into Tripoli thanked him for American support in the NATO intervention that was vital to the rebel victory over former

leader Moammar Gadhafi.

The gratitude was even more remarkable, Anderson said, because of the man's story: The fellow passenger was an oil worker whose brother, a physician in Colorado, had flown back to Libya to fight with the rebels and was killed by NATO forces, who'd mistaken his unit for regime loyalists because they'd just captured a government tank.

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PETER JACKSON TACKLES ANOTHER J.R.R. TOLKIEN CHALLENGE WITH 'HOBBIT' TRILOGY

By JOHN HORN

LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

LOS ANGELES — Peter Jackson has a message for J.R.R. Tolkien: I can't quit you.

Nearly a decade after the New Zealand filmmaker concluded his massively successful "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, a string of films that grossed more than \$2.9 billion worldwide, capped with a best picture Oscar for 2003's "The Return of the King," Jackson is set to launch yet another three-film series from the fantasy novelist's other famous tome, "The Hobbit."

Unlike his previous trifecta, Jackson wasn't the original filmmaker behind the "Hobbit" films (Guillermo del Toro was initially set to direct, with Jackson producing), and there were supposed to be two, not three, "Hobbit" productions. Warner Bros. executives were so excited after seeing a rough cut of Dec. 14's "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey" that they ordered one more movie, forcing Jackson to reassemble his cast and crew the very summer day he was supposed to be marking the conclusion of production.

"It was announced to us the day of the wrap party," said Martin Freeman, who plays Bilbo Baggins, the reluctant hero at the center of "The Hobbit." "But we had an embarrassment of riches."

The second film, called "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug," is due next December, with the concluding entry, "The Hobbit: There and Back Again," scheduled for July 2014.

Readers of Tolkien's 1937 children's literature classic might be startled to hear that two, let alone the idea of three, movies could be spun out from what is not only a rather slim novel but also a book that's heavy on episodic action and very light on back story.

The book's central conceit is a quest led by the wizard Gandalf (reprised by "Lord of the Rings" veteran Ian McKellen) to recover treasure guarded by a dragon. Gandalf and Baggins are joined on their journey by a band of dwarfs, who jointly or separately must battle goblins, a vaguely humanoid Gollum (Andy Serkis, another "Lord of the Rings" alumnus), giant spiders, wolves, elves and the dragon known as Smaug.

Jackson said the three films, whose screenplay was written by Jackson, his partner Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens, draw heavily on Tolkien's appendices to "The Lord of the Rings," which was published nearly two decades after "The Hobbit." While those additional materials are known mostly to a small circle of fantasy fiction fanatics, Jackson said they provided him and his filmmaking team more than enough flesh to hang on the "Hobbit's" bones.

"There's a lot of material, a lot of action, a lot of adventure," Jackson said. "And so what we did is we decided at the very beginning that we would take as much of that material as we needed to and we would expand it." In two specific examples, the appendices were used to explicate Gandalf's

history, and how he came to work with the dwarf Thorin (Richard Armitage). The supplemental material also helped Jackson create more of a story for Gollum, who makes only a brief appearance in "The Hobbit."

Yet even if Jackson and his team had what they believe was more than enough story, the director was forced to scramble when Del Toro abandoned the project. The "Pan's Labyrinth" director, frustrated that the financial collapse of co-financier MGM kept the "Hobbit" movies from officially starting, left the two films in May 2010 after spending nearly two years preparing his productions.

Jackson briefly considered implementing some of Del Toro's designs, and concluded that he couldn't shoot another filmmaker's movie.

"He's an incredible visionary guy and all his designs were Guillermo's designs," Jackson said. "I thought, if I'm going to do it I need to actually be comfortable, to do the thing that I want to do in my head. So I suddenly found myself scrambling. I was literally scrambling to get designs ready on time for the film that I wanted

to make. And we were revising the script furiously. The delay didn't help anybody. It didn't help us. It didn't help the film."

In not only "The Lord of the Rings" but also in "King Kong" and "The Frighteners," Jackson has excelled at creating memorable creatures, and "The Hobbit" provides a great test: Smaug is arguably one of the best-known dragons in literature, and yet moviegoers of all generations believe they know what a dragon, not just Tolkien's fearful beast, should look like.

"The trouble with redesigning dragons is that if you really get fruity with it, it suddenly starts to look like some sort of monster from another

planet, you very quickly can go into science-fiction territory," Jackson said. "I don't want to do that. I mean, people expect a dragon. "The Hobbit" is one of the most famous dragon stories in the

I'm not trying to step away from the dragon. I just want to present the most venal, scary, decrepit, nasty dragon that I possibly can."

Perhaps Jackson's greatest storytelling challenge is Tolkien's almost steadfast refusal to engage in exposition and allegory. People can read into "The Hobbit" whatever they want, but Jackson isn't going to help confirm anyone's theories.

"I just like to tell stories," Jackson said. "I don't set out to try to preach to people and put hidden meaning into things. I just think if you can entertain people and give people a good time at the movies you're doing your job well. I don't think it's any more complicated than that."



WARNER BROS. PICTURES AND MGM | MCT DIRECT

For the first time, half of Sundance films have female directors

By JOHN HORN

LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

LOS ANGELES — The odds of getting into the Sundance Film Festival have been astronomical for years, but the statistic that jumps out from the dramatic competition lineup for January's festival might be even more remarkable: In what festival programmers say is a Sundance first, fully half of the narrative features were made by women.

Culled from 1,227 submissions, the 16 dramas playing in the 2013 festival announced Wednesday cover a wide array of subjects and are populated by well-known actors (Casey Affleck, Daniel Radcliffe, Octavia Spencer, Jessica Biel) and complete unknowns. Many of the films, perhaps as a reflection of the gender of their directors, focus closely on personal, and often highly sexual, relationships.

"They are very much women's stories," said Trevor Groth, the festival's programming director. In the 2012 festival, only three of the 16 dramatic competition films were made by women. According to San Diego State University's Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, only 5 percent of the 250 highest-grossing films last year were directed by women.

John Cooper, the festival director, said the quantity of women directors for 2013 was not intentional, although he was proud of the 50-50 split. "Every film has to stand on its own. You are just looking for original stories."

Several of those women-driven stories are about women seeking physical and emotional connections.

"I'm concerned with women's concerns. I like telling intimate stories about women, about what they want and what they

feel," said Liz W. Garcia, a prominent television writer ("Cold Case," "Memphis Beat") who wrote and directed "The Lifeguard." Garcia's debut feature tracks a woman (Kristen Bell) who returns to her hometown and has a dangerous affair with a high school student. "I'm proud that my movie is very female," Garcia said.

Stacie Passon wrote and directed "Concussion," about a woman named Abby (Robin Weigert) who feels sexually abandoned in her marriage to another woman (Julie Fain Lawrence) and takes extreme steps to find companionship. Passon said that even with a lesbian relationship her film "is really about a mid-life crisis within a marriage."

Running from Jan. 17 to 27 in Park City, Utah, Sundance is the nation's top showcase for movies made outside the studio system. The 2012 festival launched "Beasts of the Southern Wild," "The Sessions" and "Arbitrage," all of which were directed by men, among other acclaimed independent productions that are considered likely awards season contenders.

Though many of the

festival's more prominent titles are found in its premiere section (those films, which are typically made by more established directors with bigger budgets, are announced Monday), the competition titles tend to define the festival's personality.

The Sundance competition film with probably the most star-laden cast, "Ain't Them Bodies Saints," is writer-director David Lowery's account of a fugitive (Affleck) trying to reunite with his wife (Rooney Mara). Lowery said that even with his high-profile actors (his cast includes Ben Foster and Keith Carradine) and Texas locations, he was trying to make "a very small film" about a couple's bond. "I really wanted to tell a story that was exceedingly simple that didn't have a lot of twists and turns," Lowery said.

Two of the eight films helmed by women feature their directors (Lake Bell and Cherien Dabis) playing the lead roles. "The performances just come through as more connected and more authentic," Cooper said. "But we've also seen it backfire on some people."

In Bell's feature debut, "In a World ...," she plays a voice-over artist whose father (Fred

Melamed) is in the same profession and isn't entirely welcoming of his daughter's fledgling success.

"His insecurity stands in the way of his being supportive of his daughter," said Bell, whose short film "Worst Enemy" played at Sundance in 2011. "I've seen a lot of father-and-son competition, and I liked the fresh idea of giving the competition to the daughter."

Bell said even though it wasn't essential that moviegoers detect that her film was directed by a woman. "I think it's clear it was directed by a daughter, if anything," she said she was pleased that so many women, including herself, were part of the Sundance slate. "I like the idea of my two little sisters feeling proud and empowered," Bell said.

Dabis, whose "May in the Summer" will open the festival, said her movie was shaped by growing up with four sisters. In the film, Dabis plays May, a Christian woman engaged to a Muslim man. When May visits her Middle Eastern family, she is forced to confront pressure from all sides of the clan, including her siblings. "At its core, at its heart, it's very much about family, and about a character struggling with her own sense of truth," Dabis said.

The next test for the competition filmmakers is to find a distributor in Park City. But for now, the directors are enjoying the moment, having survived the first cut, from 1,227 to 16.



Carrie Underwood to play Maria in NBC's 'Sound of Music' remake

By MEREDITH BLAKE

LOS ANGELES TIMES (MCT)

LOS ANGELES — If you've been wondering how Carrie Underwood looks in a nun's habit, you'll find out soon enough: The "American Idol" winner, five-time Grammy winner and country superstar has been cast as Maria von Trapp in NBC's upcoming live broadcast of "The Sound of Music," the network announced Friday.

"Speaking for everyone at NBC, we couldn't be happier to have the gifted Carrie Underwood take up the mantle of the great Maria von Trapp," said NBC Entertainment Chairman Bob Greenblatt in a news release. "She was an iconic woman who will now be played by an iconic artist."

For anyone unfamiliar with either the beloved Oscar-winning film starring Julie Andrews or the Rodgers and

Hammerstein musical on which it was based, "The Sound of Music" tells the tale of Maria, a rebellious young woman in pre-World War II Austria who leaves a convent to work as a governess for the family of a stern widower. Much singing, dancing and repurposing of curtains ensues.

While some die-hard fans of the original might be skeptical about Underwood's involvement, Ted Chapin, president of Rodgers & Hammerstein, praised the decision to cast her as "exciting beyond words."

NBC is partnering up with Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, producers of "Smash" and the upcoming Oscars telecast, on the project. "The Sound of Music" will air sometime during the holiday season in 2013, though an exact date has not been set.

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