

Take a look inside the building that has housed MSU presidents, served as a hospital and a dorm

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The State News



NICHOLE HOERNER/ THE STATE NEWS

2008 ELECTION

DEBATE SEES CANDIDATES EMPHASIZE DIFFERENCES

By Zack Colman
THE STATE NEWS

The economy was on the minds of 80 undecided voters and Internet users during a more aggressive town hall presidential debate Tuesday at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

Sens. Barack Obama, D-Ill., and John McCain, R-Ariz., exchanged barbs by pointing to each other's records throughout the night as the two attempted to separate from their opponent.

Paul Abramson, an MSU political science professor and national elections expert, said Obama did better answering questions about the economy, but McCain's best work came in the foreign policy section.

McCain blamed the financial crisis on Obama and his "cronies" for loosening Freddie Mac's and Fannie Mae's lending requirements, and said the treasury should buy up bad mortgages to renegotiate housing prices.

"Until we stabilize home values in America, we're never going to start turning around and creating jobs," McCain said.

Obama disagreed with McCain's approach, however. He said the key to restoring America's economy is to provide a rescue plan for the middle class by cutting its taxes and reforming the health care system.

"We shouldn't have been there in the first place," Obama said. "The biggest problem in this whole process was deregulation of the financial system. Senator McCain, as recently as March, bragged about the fact that he is a deregulator. On the other hand, two years ago, I said that we've got a subprime lending crisis."

Abramson said the town hall format benefited McCain, but there was no clear winner in a debate McCain needed to win.

"Given McCain is behind in both national and so many state-wide polls in states where Republicans should be safely ahead, all Obama has to do is have a draw in next debate to be in a good position," he said.

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HANNAH ENGELSON/THE STATE NEWS

Visiting assistant professor Dr. Mei-hui Tai works Friday afternoon at the MSU stem cell research lab in the Food Safety and Toxicology Building under a biohazard hood used to prevent dirty air from contaminating sample cells.

SELLING CELLS

Proposal 2 could allow for more stem cell research throughout the state

"There is not a person in this state that does not know someone that could potentially benefit from stem cell research."

Chris DeWitt,
spokesman for
Cure MichiganBy Kelly House
THE STATE NEWS

Voters will have the chance to resolve an ethical issue that has been debated in the Michigan Legislature for years when they cast their ballots this November. Proposal 2 seeks to amend the state's constitution to loosen restrictions on human embryonic stem cell research in Michigan.

Embryonic research is allowed in Michigan, but researchers must get their cells from outside the state. Taking them from sources within the state is a felony.

The proposal would allow Michigan families to donate left-over embryos from in vitro fertilization to stem cell research.

"There is not a person in this state that does not know someone that could potentially benefit from stem cell research," said Chris DeWitt, spokesman for Cure Michigan, the group behind the proposal. "This is

a very fundamental issue for many people that want to see Michigan be able to participate in finding these cures."

Although there are still many mysteries surrounding stem cell research, scientists believe it could lead to cures for diseases such as diabetes and cancer and repair tissue damage in the spinal cord and heart.

But its opponents say using embryonic stem cells to find those cures is like trading one

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Proposal 2

The proposal would amend the state constitution to allow families to donate embryos left over from in vitro fertilization to be used by Michigan stem cell researchers.

Under current law, it is a felony for researchers to use embryonic stem cells that were harvested in Michigan.

The law could make it easier for state universities to do research for many diseases.

SOURCE: CURE MICHIGAN

INVESTIGATION

Police: Slain student was beaten; 3 others shot

By Abby Lubbers
THE STATE NEWS

An MSU student's death last week was part of a quadruple homicide, Ottawa County sheriff's Lt. Mark Bennett said Tuesday.

Katherine A. Brown, who was an agribusiness management sophomore, was beaten to death, police said.

Brown was having dinner at her boyfriend's house



Brown

Sept. 28 in Wright Township when she decided to spend the night. She planned to return to MSU in the morning, said Russ Barkow,

a father figure to Brown since her dad's death about two years ago. Brown's boyfriend Jeremy Zimmer, his mother Sharmaine and his brother Tyler were shot in their home, which was set on fire, police said. The Sept. 29 blaze was an arson to cover up the three shootings and beating, police added.

"It appears as though the arson fire was set to cover up the crime," Bennett said.

Friends and family said the foul play behind the deaths is unsettling.

"It's a lot harder to deal with now that it's not an accident," said Rachel Umlor, Brown's friend of almost six years and a pre-nursing sophomore.

Umlor and Brown graduated from Coopersville High School in 2007.

"It just keeps getting worse and worse the more details come through," Umlor said. "It's just really upsetting that someone could do that."

Brown's friends attended a memorial service Thursday at Trinity Lutheran Church in Conklin.

"It was really sad, but I'm really glad we all went together. It definitely helped with the closure," said Brittany Bellamy, one of Brown's friends and a psychology sophomore.

Brown's family sent The Grand Rapids Press a state-

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CRIME

MSU police release sketch of late-night assailant

Police released a composite sketch of the suspect in a Monday assault near Beaumont Tower and West Circle Drive.

A 19-year-old MSU student said she was walking at 2 a.m. from the Main Library to Campbell Hall, when she was threatened by a man with a pocketknife.

The male suspect held the knife to her neck, MSU police Sgt. Florene McGlothian-Taylor said.

The suspect fled when two men approached the victim, according to a crime alert e-mailed to students just after 2 p.m. Monday.

MSU police ask that anyone with information



contact the department at (517) 355-2222.

ABBY LUBBERS

EAST LANSING

Council approves rezoning of downtown hotel project

By Allison Bush
THE STATE NEWS

The ordinance to conditionally rezone 0.55 acres of the West Village project was approved 4-1 by the East Lansing City Council on Tuesday after months of discussion.

Under conditional rezoning, the building will remain four stories tall, but it will contain five floors. The building will be an 88-room Residence Inn Hotel.

This was the 13th meeting in which the ordinance has had some public discussion, Councilmember Nathan

"It (was) not to be taken lightly, it deserved serious consideration."

Nathan Triplett, East Lansing City Council member on the West Village project

Triplett said.

"My personal opinion is that we (owed) it to the neighbors who have had concerns and to the developer to come to a decision so they have an answer ... about what's going to be happening to this parcel," he said.

The amount of time the issue took was appropriate, howev-

er, because it was the city's first encounter with conditional rezoning, Triplett said.

"It (was) not to be taken lightly, it deserved serious consideration," he said.

The hotel will be the last piece of the West Village project, said Darcy Schmitt, plan-

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SPEAKING OUT

The candidates running for Ingham County prosecutor talk about sexual violence, page 3A.



Weather

Showers
High 63° | Low 49°

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