Hark, the Christmas spirit rings

By Shelley Camardese
Staff writer

The Student Activities Council may not be able to reach students all the children of the world who are lacking at Christmas time, but they have a good start with 47 children right here in Jackson.

The SAC Christmas Special, celebrated on Dec. 9, gets the entire campus involved in helping children who otherwise wouldn’t be able to celebrate Christmas.

“What we do,” said Andy Lyons, president of SAC, “is we call the Carl Perkins Center, which is the center for abused children, and we request normally between 40 and 50 children.

“The children make a wish list, between five and 10 things that they want . . . and we compile that together in a list for the organizations. Each organization or sponsor has to buy at least $50 worth of stuff, so that it’s not like one kid’s getting one thing and another one’s getting tons of stuff.”

Sponsorship is not limited to organizations. Several individual students have joined together to help brighten a child’s Christmas.

The children’s ages range from 3 years old to middle school, although the average age is normally between 5 and 8. Most of them are away from home, and the families that they stay with often cannot afford much at Christmas, he said.

One of the most unique aspects of this program is that the sponsors will be able to meet the children they are sponsoring and

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Survey says: campus glitch-free for Y2K

By Shelley Camardese
Staff writer

Union’s Y2K task force found that the university will be OK in Y2K.

Since last spring semester Union has researched the possible problems the university and its students may face on Jan. 1, 2000. A Y2K task force, chaired by Kimberly Thornbury, dean of students, took a comprehensive look at how Union might be affected.

The Y2K task force looked into four areas of possible concerns.

• Union’s utility services are supplied by Jackson Utility Division. JUD has completed an extensive review of its operating system, and officials are confident that it will be able to supply Union’s utility demand through the Y2K transition, Thornbury said.

• The Union network will also be running as usual on Jan. 1. Dr. Hal Poe, vice president for academic resources and information services, said the computers that hold financial records and students’ grades have had the necessary upgrades and are Y2K compliant.

The library computer system, as well as the student computer labs, has undergone upgrades that will keep them up and running in the new year, Poe said.

• ARAMARK, Union’s food supplier, has made necessary changes to be ready for an unforeseen emergency.

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“Christmas is the coming of Christ to earth and the manger, and that’s what we try to point to,” said Wayne Johnson, associate professor of speech and theater.

He was speaking of “Christmas Is . . .” Union’s Christmas production to be presented Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. in the G.M. Savage Memorial Chapel.

The cast this year features
• Rebecca Coleman as Mary
• Joel Callis as Joseph
• Matt Harber, Graham Hillard and Josh Stegall as the kings who brought gifts.

• Jimmy Hoppers and Brent Green are the shepherds who spread the good news.

• Cassie Schumaker is the stage manager.

• Hosts Andrew Holladay, John Melton and Blake Staples will narrate the whole production.

The second annual includes the music department’s ensembles, jazz band, symphonic band and the children’s choir. “Big numbers, sing-a-longs and sweet numbers will also be performed. It will be a great time for the whole family to get together,” Johnson said.

“We did last year what is most easily described as an all-white Christmas. I’m not talking about the old song. I’m talking about the costuming …all the elements, the manger and everything was all white. This year the look will be the same, but we’ll handle the presentation differently. The characters and the speaking parts will be different,” Johnson said.

“If you want to give a good touch of Christmas a headstart, come to ‘Christmas Is . . .’” Johnson said.

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INSIDE

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Here on the fence

By Justin Phillips
Columnist

As I opened my campus mail box one day, I was surprised to find one of the “you’ve got a package” yellow slips, as a package is one of the rare pleasures that seems to brighten my visit to the post office. Now you understand my anticipation of receiving anything in the mail.

Imagine my response to the 15 Abercrombie and Fitch Christmas 1999 catalogs lying before me. The first page I opened revealed a strikingly handsome young man (whom I could just tell possessed a rapier wit) holding a pen and pad, wearing the latest fleece whatever, gazing to the heavens and sitting here on the fence. It’s time for a quick word-association game. If I asked you to say two words describing Abercrombie and Fitch, you might say “cool clothes,” “beautiful models” or “whoo, hottie!” The words that come to my mind are “overpriced T-shirts,” “genetic freaks,” “suspected reality” and “eating disorders.”

Let’s start with the sheer numbers of this guiding force in American culture. The day I pay $29.50 for a T-shirt will also be the day that I attend my 31st chapel, watch a movie in the Commons, renounce my citizenship in the United States and sell my kidney so I can buy the matching A & F hat. In short, it will probably never happen.

If that analogy does not suffice, then understand that I equate paying $18.50 for a pair of underwear to being trapped at a Backstreet Boys concert next to Richard Simmons and being beaten within an inch of my life by him. It would also be like awakening in a hospital room only to find that the janitor from my high school is the only person qualified to nurse me back to health. That, my friends, is a bad day.

As for the models, where is the nearest Nazi factory producing these superior specimens? I am fully convinced that these people do not exist and being completely comfortable in this knowledge, I no longer feel bound to the unattainable standard of their brooding, yet attractive pouting. You know, the last time I saw a group of figures this synthetic I was taking a behind-the-scenes tour of Epcot Center.

However the best thing about the A&F catalog is the utterly ridiculous situations in which the models are placed. After all, I know that on any weekend you can find a big game of boxer-brief football going on with a bunch of guys who like to hang out with other guys.

Past the game, in a clearing, you can find a lounging couple that has somehow rationalized that while it is cold enough to wear a fleece pullover, it is just too hot to wear a shirt. At the tennis courts, the Abercrombie tennis team is getting ready to break a few ankles, as they have decided to play tennis in sandals, khakis and sweaters. But you know, I really cannot decide whom I dislike more: the weird, yet reflective nouveau-hippie couple, where the guy is wearing an Abercrombie tribal afghan as a skirt with his bitter wail of a girlfriend by his side or the hiker, who after a trying day of repelling stops to look skyward to thank God for making him so pretty that a photograph without him in it is like the Summer Breeze Without K.C.

The only people I feel somewhat sorry for in the catalog are the black models — all three of them. They get their two pages of just hanging out together, and that is about it. Apparently, white guys climbing a mountain in Timberlands and a thong happens all the time but an interracial gatherings is just too farfetched in Abercrombie Land. OK, I am exaggerating just a bit. The black models get to pose in the obligatory group shot, for the cover, where you can find all you favorite Abercrombie characters gathered as one big, happy celluloid family. Look, look there’s the toboggan girl from page 74!

This brings me to wonder what effect this catalog has on all of us. In 1996, the Center for Eating Disorders at St. Joseph’s Medical Center released a study showing that 56 percent of women and 43 percent of men disliked their overall appearance with an even larger percentage dissatisfied with individual attributes such as weight. In a related one-man survey by Here on the Fence, it was revealed that the Christmas catalog of Abercrombie and Fitch was found to be the sole cause of every single eating disorder reported since 1997.

The distorted images of the human body presented in this catalog should serve as a warning to us all. When a clothing company warrants a song for the girls who wear its clothing, then our country has surely slipped into a dark, seedy chasm, where the battle of self-idolatry and self-hate fully manifests itself. It is either that or I just am really looking for some good mail to come my way.
The Tennessee Baptist Convention, held Nov. 15-17, was at First Baptist Church in Franklin, and Jerry Tidwell, pastor of West Jackson Baptist Church, was unanimously elected president.

“The spirit at the convention was very good,” said Dr. David Dockery, president of Union University. “There was a real sense of unity, and everyone was able to recognize their differences without being divisive. Much of the credit goes to Larry Gilmore, last year’s president.”

Some may remember that Carson-Newman, another school in the TBC, had its 1999 funds suspended last year.

“This year some “positive steps were made to bring Carson-Newman and the Tennessee Baptist Convention back together,” Dockery said.

The convention approved restoring the 1999 funds for the school, although they will be held until 2000 until all things can be worked out, Dockery said.

“I hope they can be worked out for Carson-Newman and they can relate to the convention the way Belmont and Union University do. This year was very positive.”

Another important thing that happened is a motion was approved to expand representation on the board of trustees at the colleges.

Union’s 10 nominated trustees were elected. They are:

- Lisa Rogers of Jackson
- Bob Cook of Jackson
- Bob Campbell of Jackson
- Chuck Frazier of Jackson
- Bill Dement of Jackson
- Randy Phillips of Union City
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By Laural Smith
News editor

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Letter from page 2 . . .

Personally, I cannot go through life basing what I think about myself on something so superficial and subject to change. I would be an emotional roller coaster.

Therefore, I think we should learn to act in a loving manner towards others; however, we should also learn to realize that we are valuable because God made us that way. I have heard it discussed that Mr. and Miss Union and class favorites should not be voted for next year. I would have to say I do not agree with that.

Granted, I do not feel strongly enough to fight over it, but I think superlatives can be a good thing. All of the people voted as favorites this year were people with admirable qualities and have every right to be recognized. It does not mean that they are the only people of value, it means that they exemplify qualities that most people at Union like to see in others.

Furthermore, we live in a democracy and we will perpetuate the Union “bubble” if we try to make people believe that life is not full of disappointments. Actually, campus organizations and class favorites are the least of our disappointments in life to worry about.

Jennifer McClearen “Jmac”
Junior
political science major

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Their computers have been upgraded and are now Y2K compliant. ARAMARK has also made extra precautions by being ready to prepare food with stored water and non-electric lighting in case of a power outage.

- Students will still be able to withdraw money from the FirstBank ATM located in the SUB. FirstBank have made their computer upgrades and have also developed a contingency plan in case of emergency, Thornbury said.

The Y2K task force feels that Union and its students should have no problems when Jan. 1 arrives, Thornbury said. Dean Thornbury suggests that during any time of possible crisis, it is a good idea that students have three days’ to two weeks’ worth of cash and food accessible.

The other members of the Y2K task force were Karen McWherter, director of administrative computing systems, and Nedra Kanavel, former director of news and information.

Letter from page 2 . . .

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Jennifer McClearen “Jmac”
Junior
political science major
Men take six; women take hit

By Brad Gaskins
Sports editor

After suffering a one point loss to Edward Waters College back on Nov. 6, the Union men’s team won six consecutive games.

The Bulldogs, who entered Thursday night’s game against Rust with an 8-1 record, had wins against Selma (three times), Auburn University at Montgomery, Lambuth and Philander Smith.

Union played against Texas College last Friday and Saturday nights. Scores were not available.

Before taking the rest of December off, the Bulldogs will host Claflin on Friday night and Cumberland University on Saturday night. Game time for both is scheduled for 8 p.m.

Lady Bulldogs

After publicly assaulting Texas College, 103-27, on Nov. 16, the Union women’s team picked up wins against Loyola, 68-53, and Oklahoma Christian, 91-75. But the Lady Bulldogs lost a home game against Lambuth, 83-79, on Nov. 22.

Union, which entered Friday night’s game against Oklahoma Baptist with an 8-3 record, also beat Fort Lewis 86-60 on Nov. 26. A day later the Lady Bulldogs lost against Colorado Christian, 98-84.

Union will play Campbellsville on Dec. 10 and Oklahoma Baptist on Dec. 11. Both games are at home and start at 6 p.m.

Dawgs on the Net

WWGM-FM 93.1, which broadcasts Union basketball games, has made it possible to listen to live games on the internet. To listen to a game, go to either www.wwgm931.com or www.uu.edu, which has a link to WWGM’s website.

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eat dinner with them.

“We decorate the small gym and Santa Claus comes and the children sit at their table with their sponsors, so you can talk to them and give them their presents…” Lyons said. “You have a chance to share the gospel with them, and you don’t have to be really profound or anything. Just tell them that Jesus loves them.”

“We put on a lot of big events, but I think this is the most special because you actually get to see the life that you helped touch,” Lyons said.

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