



**READY FOR WORK**—Colleen Roden, a graduate student in biology, demonstrates a scanning electron microscope using a heart-tissue sample as faculty and guests look on during the grand opening of the MTSU Interdisciplinary Microanalysis and Imaging Center (MIMIC) Feb. 2 in the Forrest Hall Annex behind the Keathley University Center. Watching with interest are, left to right, Dr. Saeed Foroudastan, associate dean of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences; Dr. Bill Robertson, physics and astronomy; Ken Sergeant, engineering technology & industrial studies; and Dr. Ahad Nasab, ETIS.

MIMIC is the first university-supported core facility for state-of-the-art research instrumentation. It builds on biology professor emeritus Marion Wells' work throughout his career as a microbiologist specializing in electron microscopy techniques, according to administrative director Dr. Andrienne Friedli. The nearly \$1 million funding used for equipment came from the MTSU Office of Research. The renovation of the space was funded by the offices of President Sidney A. McPhee and Provost Kaylene Gebert, as well as the MTSU Foundation Special Projects Committee (which awarded its entire 2005-06 budget to the project), matching funds from a National Science Foundation grant, Dean Tom Cheatham of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences and the departments of biology, chemistry, physics, ETIS, geosciences and the College of Liberal Arts.

photo by J. Intintoli

## 'Sheriffs' Murder Cases' is 1st novel in series

# Ex-prof's readers find Cumberland Mountain high

by Gina K. Logue

Dr. Jack Justin Turner, professor emeritus of political science, will discuss his novel, *The Sheriffs' Murder Cases*, at 2:30 p.m. Thursday, March 1, in Room 103 of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building.

Turner, who specialized in international relations at MTSU, will read selected portions of his book, published by Chestnut Hill, which is the first volume of what he calls the "Cumberland Mountain Trilogy." Volumes II and III are slated to be released in July 2007 and January 2008, respectively.

A native of Maytown, Ky., Turner, drew from his roots to tell the story of Jake Herald, high sheriff or chief deputy of Chinoe County from 1920-1945. Herald earns a bachelor's degree from Valparaiso University and pursues a medical degree at the University of Louisville, only to leave to fight in World War I with a year remaining in his studies.

When Herald returns home, he finds the area dominated by coal companies and the overall environment much rougher than he remembers. He thrusts himself into law enforcement to find out who killed one of his friends. It's the first of several murders Herald will try to solve.

"I think of Jake Herald as a kind of a mixture,

and it's a strange mixture, of Hamlet, maybe, and Dirty Harry," Turner says, referring to William Shakespeare's tragic prince and Clint Eastwood's vigilante movie detective.

"He likes to think about things and work them out, but once he gets started, he's capable of taking extreme action, if necessary."

Known as "Justin" as an author and "Jack" to his friends, Turner says he made a concerted effort to avoid stereotypes of mountain people as ignorant and uneducated. For example, the novel is free of any sort of dialect.

"I talked to so many people in getting material for this book [that] I got to where I could speak the way they could again," Turner says. "I just wrote the way they actually talked."

Turner says another overly simplistic image promoted by some authors is the concept of the evil coal-company executives who try to cheat the poor dumb mountaineers out of their land.

"Around where I grew up, that didn't happen very often because the mountaineers were as shrewd as they were," Turner says. "People still owned their mineral rights and still sold them off when they felt like it."



Turner

Also, there are numerous footnotes in the back of the book to introduce the uninitiated to the meanings of terms such as "Blind Tiger" and "ambeer."

"A lot of people will read the footnotes first, and they seem to enjoy that a great deal," Turner says.

Turner earned his bachelor's degree from Berea College in 1959 and his Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky in 1969. He was a full-time faculty member at MTSU from 1965 to 2000.

Turner's campus appearance is sponsored by the Dr. Virginia Peck Trust and the Departments of English and Political Science.

The trust is named for the first woman to receive a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University and a former member of the MTSU Department of English. Her bequest to the university upon her death has been used to provide cash prizes for writing awards, fund an annual workshop on composition theory and practice, and facilitate visits by scholars, creative writers and other artists.

A book signing will follow Turner's talk. For more information, contact Connie Huddleston, events coordinator for the College of Liberal Arts, at 615-494-7628, or [chudd@mtsu.edu](mailto:chudd@mtsu.edu). To learn more about *The Sheriffs' Murder Cases*, go to [www.chestnuthillpublishing.com](http://www.chestnuthillpublishing.com).