

Summer Reading adventure for new freshmen

'Three Cups of Tea' author will speak at Aug. 24 University Convocation

By Gina Fann gfann@mtsu.edu

What can one person accomplish? MTSU's 2008 Summer Reading Program selection, "Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace ... One School at a Time," by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, has the answer.

The memoir, touted by NBC's Tom Brokaw as "thrilling" and "one of the most remarkable adventure stories of our time," details Mortenson's quest to build schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan.



Mortenson

Mortenson, the co-founder (with Dr. Jean Hoerni) and executive director of the nonprofit Central Asia Institute and Pennies for Peace, has dedicated his life to promote community-based education and literacy programs, especially for girls, in remote mountain regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

His quest began in 1993, when to honor his late sister's memory, Mortenson climbed Pakistan's K2, the world's second highest mountain, in the Karakoram Range. While recovering in a local village called Korphe, the Montana resident met a group of children sitting in the dirt writing with sticks in the sand and made a promise to help them build a school.

Dr. Laurie Witherow, MTSU's Academic Support Center director and coordinator of the Summer Reading Program, is encouraging faculty to incorporate this latest text into their fall 2008 syllabi.

"'Three Cups of Tea' would be a perfect start-

ing point for discussions on a wide range of topics and is especially recommended for use in communications, education, geography, psychology, sociology, political science and history courses," Witherow said. "Students come to us in the fall expecting to discuss the Summer Reading selection in classes

from a variety of perspectives and use it as the basis of assignments.

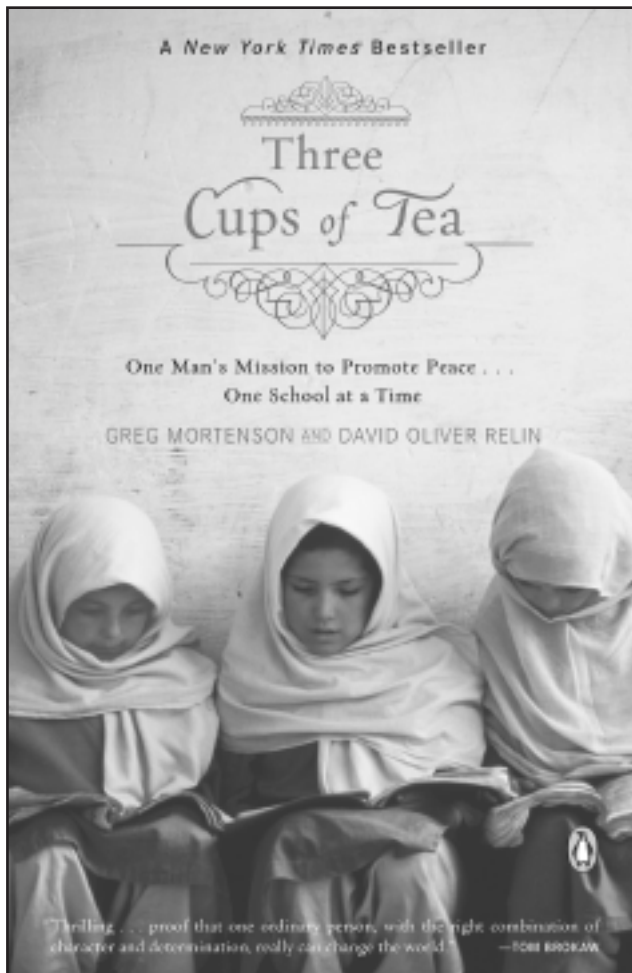
"All new students are required to read the book before their arrival on campus in the fall, so 'Three Cups of Tea' may be perfect as the basis for an early writing or other assignment. This program's success depends on the involvement of faculty who make use of the Summer Reading selection in fall classes, so let us know if you'd like to use the book in your classes this fall. We want our freshmen to recognize that one person can make a difference; they can make a difference."

Incoming freshmen are expected to read the book before fall classes start Aug. 25, and all University 1010 classes once again will discuss the selection.

Witherow is eager to hear suggestions now from professors on the best use for the book in their classes; she can be reached at lwithero@mtsu.edu or at 615-898-2339. Mortenson also is scheduled to address attendees Sunday, Aug. 24, at the annual University Convocation beginning at 2 p.m. in Murphy Center.

"Three Cups of Tea" may be purchased on campus and at local bookstores. It's available in hardback and paperback, and online sellers also may have used copies.

Faculty interested in using "Three Cups of Tea" in their classrooms this fall may contact Sumer Patterson at the Academic Support Center (615-898-2339 or spatters@mtsu.edu) to receive a review copy for evaluation.



CALENDAR

Alumni events

For complete details about upcoming alumni events, go to mtalumni.com.

June

25-27 Alumni Summer College

Come back to college for two fun-filled days of learning without quizzes. For more information, go to www.mtalumni.com.

July

19 MTSU Alumni Day at Nashville Shores

For more information, go to www.mtalumni.com.

August

23 Pigskin Pregame

For more information, go to www.mtalumni.com.

Campus events

June

20 Legends Golf Tournament

For more information, call 615-898-5632.

August

9 Commencement 10 a.m., Murphy Center

24 University Convocation

For more information, call 615-898-2454.

27 Faculty and Guest Recital — Todd Waldecker, clarinet; Keith McClelland, bassoon; Fay Adams, piano

For more info, go to mtsu.edu/music/calendar.html.

AP reporter, Tennessee governor view tornado damage

It's doubtful alumna Kristin Hall ('05), right, had this kind of experience as editor in chief for "Sidelines," the MTSU student newspaper. The Associated Press reporter has flown twice with Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen, this time surveying the damage from tornadoes that struck the state in February. It was the second time Hall had been chosen as the only reporter to accompany the governor on such a trip.



Frederick Breedon/freelance photographer



Submitted photo

Former MTSU student Supoj Khanonwech, left, and Vickie Riggan ('98) visit near Sunflower Trilingual School in Thailand. Khanonwech serves as principal while Riggan is teaching English as a second language for one year. He is a scoutmaster, hence the uniform.

MTSU, Thai connection

Nashville's Vickie Riggan ('98) traveled to Thailand to teach English as a second language for a year at Sunflower Trilingual School.

"Since I traveled over 9,000 miles to get here, the last person I expected to meet was a fellow alum from MTSU, and certainly not one at the same school," she said.

"One day, the principal (Supoj Khanonwech) came to my classroom and told me that he knew about Murfreesboro," Riggan added. "Then he smiled and told me that he studied math in graduate school 30 years ago. ... He's a heck of a nice guy to work for. Finally, he smiled when I said (the name) Boots Donnelly ('65, '67, and former MTSU coach and athletic director). Guess he enjoyed American-style football while he was here."

Riggan said she is trying to make the most of her time, traveling around Thailand on days off ("So much history to see," she said) and has made Thai friends who are trying to teach her the language. ("Boy, do I have a greater understanding of what my ESL students were going through in my classroom.")