Forsee letter sparks debate

Posted By Jason Rosenbaum

University of Missouri system president Gary Forsee’s letter opposing federal legislation aimed at reducing carbon emissions is still attracting attention several weeks after it was released to the media.

Paul Sloca, the spokesman for U.S. Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer, R-St. Elizabeth, circulated Forsee’s letter to media outlets earlier this month. Sloca said in the e-mail that Luetkemeyer had received the letter from Forsee. The letter came out against “Cap and Trade” legislation, which in a nutshell would cap the amount of carbon emissions an entity could produce. If that company or service wants to go over that amount, they would have to buy credits from entities that produce less pollution.

Luetkemeyer, a first-term lawmaker, voted against “Cap and Trade” legislation when it came through the U.S. House in June.

In the letter, Forsee says the bill as proposed would have a “detrimental impact” on the four-campus UM system, which includes the University of Missouri-Columbia.

“The proposed cap and trade model will significantly increase the energy expenditures for all four of our campuses,” Forsee wrote, noting that the bills could increase electricity and power costs for the four-campus system. “Given the impact of such unsustainable increases on the University’s already hard-pressed budget, we urge you to oppose these bills or ensure specific exemptions are included.”

The letter garnered praise from some right-of-center politicians and luminaries. Rich Chrismer, a spokesman for U.S. Rep. Roy Blunt’s U.S. Senate campaign, sent out a statement saying that Forsee was correct in saying the bill “would hurt the university, just as it would hurt Missouri families by costing them thousands of dollars in higher energy bills.” Rush Limbaugh, the popular conservative radio host, praised Forsee for his stance against Cap and Trade on his show last week:

“This is a gutsy move for Gary Forsee to make, because colleges all over the country basically beg for money,” Limbaugh said. “They beg for money. Even if they’ve got a successful football program they’re out there begging for money, and who do you beg for money from? Members of Congress. Yet Forsee is putting his university and the state (and even the country) ahead of what might otherwise be a personal pursuit to go out and make a deal to get some money here. This is a really gutsy and courageous move.”
But Forsee's letter has rankled supporters of "Cap and Trade." Fired Up! Missouri, a political site critical of Missouri Republican politicians and policies, made several posts criticizing Forsee's letter. The first noted that Forsee signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment. The other pointed out that Forsee is a board member of a holding company that owns Kansas City Power and Light and questioned whether the statement amounted to a conflict of interest.

The debate may be rhetorical for now. Even though "Cap and Trade" passed the House in June, the legislation is effectively stalled in the U.S. Senate.

Posted on Monday, November 30th, 2009 at 10:16 am
Monday: Around the political blogosphere

Forsee's potential conflict of interest on climate change bill

Fired Up! Missouri believes that University of Missouri system President Gary Forsee has a potential conflict of interest in opposing climate change legislation while serving on the Board of Directors for Great Plains Energy Inc.
Letter to the Editor:

Forsee's opposition of federal climate legislation disappointing

By Brian Roach, senior
Published Dec. 1, 2009

In a letter to federal lawmakers, UM System President Gary Forsee expressed his opposition to federal climate legislation to limit greenhouse gas emissions, citing concerns that the bill may impact an already hard-pressed budget. For those individuals who have been fighting for clean energy on Mizzou's campus, this development should come as both a shock and a reminder of the work that needs to be done.

Though it is understandable that President Forsee is concerned about the budgetary matters of our university system, this announcement acts as a direct contradiction to his previously stated commitment to reducing emissions at MU.

As a signatory of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, President Forsee has pledged to exert leadership in addressing climate change, not stand for the status quo. It is disappointing that the highest-ranking official in the University of Missouri system would abandon his promise in favor of out-dated, dirty technology and irresponsible environmental policy.

For Forsee, now is not the time to stand in the way of real leadership on the issue of climate change.

As the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment states, "While we understand that there might be short-term challenges associated with this effort, we believe that there will be great short-, medium-, and long-term economic, health, social and environmental benefits, including achieving energy independence for the U.S. as quickly as possible."
9 Ways Spending Changes in Retirement

Some retirees end up spending more after they leave the workforce

By EMILY BRANDON  Posted: November 30, 2009

Retirees don’t have to pay for professional work clothes, dry cleaning, or transportation to the office. So some workers reason that they will be able to get by with a lower income when they retire. But spending on basic necessities typically increases in retirement. The budget for food, housing, and healthcare is larger for retirees at every income level, according to research by Deanna Sharpe, an associate professor of personal financial planning at the University of Missouri. "What we can't say is that people will spend drastically less," she says. "Estimate that you will be spending anywhere from 100 to 110 percent of your working budget if you are planning to have an active lifestyle. If you are planning to stay home, then maybe 80 to 90 percent." Here’s a look at how your spending is likely to change, for better and worse, after you leave the workforce.

Seeing it all. When you’re at your desk five or more days a week, you can’t always get away to the Caribbean or Hawaii. "My husband and I, when we retire, want to get some traveling in," says Theresa Krueg, a financial adviser and vice president of WealthTrust-Arizona in Scottsdale, Ariz. "We have four kids, but [in retirement] we can pick up and go." World travel and visiting grandchildren are both top priorities for many young and healthy retirees. But expensive trips are one of the biggest contributors to higher spending in retirement.

More dining at home. Retirees spent about 9 percent of their budget on food eaten at home in 2008, according to the most recent Consumer Expenditure Survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, compared with 7 percent for working Americans. Yet seniors spend less at restaurants than their working counterparts. That’s a good transition to make if you’re trying to cut expenses in retirement.

Higher housing costs. Seniors actually spend a greater share of their budget on overall housing costs than working Americans. Although many retirees have finished paying off their mortgage, they still face property taxes and devote a bigger share of their income to home maintenance and repairs than those who are still working. "People forget to budget for what it costs to maintain their home and home improvements," says Roy Williams, CEO of Prestige Wealth Management Group in Pennington, N.J. "You also hire out lawn services or other things that you can’t do anymore as you age."

Soaring healthcare costs. Workers who retire before age 65 must pay their own health insurance premiums, unless a former employer picks up the tab. Retirees spent almost three times as much of their income on healthcare as workers. Seniors generally spent more on health insurance, medical services, drugs, and medical supplies. And even after qualifying for Medicare at 65, many seniors still face high out-of-pocket costs "You may have higher deductibles and copays than while you were working," cautions Williams. And you may find new coverage gaps when you leave your group health insurance policy behind. "A lot of times, plans don’t cover dental expenses or eyeglasses," he says.

Fewer clothing expenses. When retirees no longer have to dress for success, it’s easy for them to slash their clothing budget. "You no longer have to pay for dry cleaning or dress up," says Sharpe. People who have left the workforce spend just 3 percent of their annual budget on clothing, compared with 4 percent for workers.
**Lower transportation costs.** Giving up your commute saves time, aggravation, and money. Retirees purchased fewer cars and spent less on gasoline and motor oil than workers did in 2008. But seniors also spent slightly more on vehicle maintenance, repairs, and insurance—perhaps because they hold on to their cars longer. Retirees also increasingly rely on public transportation as they age.

**Keeping entertained.** With eight or more free hours in the day, retirees have plenty of time for hobbies. But retiree spending on entertainment remained the same as that of working Americans in 2008—both amounting to about 6 percent of all spending. Set up plans for volunteer work, list projects that need to be completed around the house, and renew your public library card before you retire to avoid cultivating expensive entertainment tastes.

**Giving to grandchildren.** When grandchildren appear on the scene, their chubby cheeks and gentle coos are often budget breakers. "Retirees give their grandchildren clothing and gifts at all the major holidays and take more trips to see them," says Williams. Include money for gifts and a plan for bequests in your retirement budget.

**Less saving.** Workers, of course, spend some of their income saving for retirement. About 13 percent of employee spending went to pension, Social Security, and life or other insurance contributions. For retirees, just 3 percent of spending was devoted to their continued retirement security. Finally, saving for retirement can be crossed off your "to do" list.
Film has chaste appeal in a promiscuous time

'Twilight' fans may be reacting to 'hookup' culture.

By Jonathan Zimmerman

Do you want to "hook up"? If you're like lots of American high school and college students, the answer is "yes."

But when you look at their reasons, you'll find an enormous gender divide. Girls have sex to score a boyfriend, and boys simply want to score. And the boys are winning.

That explains the overwhelming success of Stephenie Meyer's Twilight books for teenagers as well as the most recent film adaptation, The Twilight Saga: New Moon, which sold a whopping $140 million in tickets during its first weekend in North American theaters. Eighty percent of the audience was female, and half of it was under 21.

Why are young American women flocking to a movie in which the hero - Edward, a hunky dude who also happens to be a vampire - refuses to have sex with the heroine, a loner named Bella, lest he harm her with his supernatural powers? The answer lies in a University of Missouri survey of 4,000 Twilight fans, to be published next year. And it's not that complicated: Girls want love, not just sex.

"This series represents a backlash to the hooking-up culture," explained one author of the Missouri study. "Twilight has been a way for young girls to acknowledge their emerging sexuality without actually having sex."

In other words, it's a female fantasy. It's also every boy's nightmare. After all, the hooking-up deal works pretty well for guys: lots of sex without all that messy relationship stuff. What's not to like?

On this subject, I've heard plenty of my 40- and 50-something male peers complain that they were born several decades too early. But I have never, ever heard a woman my age say she would prefer today's hooking-up system to the dating rituals we grew up with.

Remember dating? As quaint as it might sound today, dating required a guy to get to know a girl before he did anything else. The goal might have been the same - indeed, it often was the same - but he had to follow several other distinct steps to get there.

That was far better for girls, who could decide if they liked a guy before physical intimacy began. Now, the order is reversed: you hook up first, then decide if you want to "go out."
And it turns out - surprise, surprise - that most guys don't want the second part, so long as they get the first. "They're in college; they don't want a girlfriend," one female college student told La Salle sociologist Kathleen Bogle. They just want to have sex.

Why do women put up with this? As Bogle explains in her indispensable 2008 book Hooking Up: Sex, Dating, and Relationships on Campus, part of the reason is that they overestimate the frequency of sex among their peers. Nationwide, about one-quarter of college students remain virgins. So when women presume that "everybody is doing it" - and that they have to do it, too - they're wrong.

Moreover, "it" can mean many different things. In one survey at a large Northeastern university, 78 percent of students said they had "hooked up" at least once. But among those students, only 38 percent reported that the encounter involved sexual intercourse.

No matter what you call it, though, many women feel that they must engage in a certain degree of sexual activity to have any hope of finding a boyfriend - and, down the road, a husband. They certainly understand that most hookups will not lead to the type of relationship they really want. But they just don't see any other way to get there.

It doesn't help that women outnumber men on most college campuses, with about 80 men for every 100 women. So men are the scarcer resource, and they get to make the rules. And they know it, too.

"No real commitment, no real feelings involved - this is like a guy's paradise," one male student told Bogle. "I mean, this is what guys have been wanting for many, many years. And women have always resisted, but now they are going along with it."

He was right. Since the sexual revolution of the 1960s, women have made enormous strides in education, income, and professional achievement. But when it comes to sex itself, it's still a man's world.

And that's why young women are celebrating an imaginary one in the movies, where the guy actually loves the girl before he makes love to her.

Even if he is a vampire.
Friends remember wife as strong but struggling

By T.J. Greaney

Monday, November 30, 2009

Karen Kahler, the slain wife of former Columbia Water & Light Director Kraig Kahler, was remembered today as a courageous survivor, a hard-driving personal trainer and devoted mother.

Karen Kahler, 44, moved to Columbia with her husband and three children in July 2008. Working as a personal trainer each morning at the Activity & Recreation Center, she was known for leading brutally tough “boot-camp” workouts and motivating older clients to exercise to develop bone strength. She was also a student at the University of Missouri, pursuing a bachelor’s degree in health science.

“She was just one of those people who touch your life and you will never forget them,” said Linda Hutton, who had trained one on one with Kahler since April.

But Kahler’s perpetually sunny personality hid a dark secret. Traci Wilson-Kleekamp, who worked out with Kahler in the group sessions for about a year, said that this spring she noticed dark bruises on the trainer’s arm. Kahler confided that her husband was violent.

“It was very clear to me the things that she told me about him, that he was dangerous,” Wilson-Kleekamp said. Kahler also told Wilson-Kleekamp that she suspected her husband was trying to frighten her by slashing tires, cutting her utility lines and accessing her e-mail account.

Wilson-Kleekamp became so concerned that in June she approached three Columbia City Council members and asked them to push for action against Kraig Kahler. The warnings followed an incident in March when Kraig Kahler was arrested on suspicion of third-degree domestic assault.

Kahler was asked to resign from his post in September by City Manager Bill Watkins, who cited personal problems that had affected his job performance. City officials this morning declined to comment on the killings or about Kahler’s time in Columbia.

According to multiple sources, Kraig Kahler seemed fixated on a relationship his wife had with a Texas woman who is also a personal trainer. Kraig Kahler believed the relationship was romantic. In early October, an anonymous e-mailer sent the Tribune photos of the two women and scanned images of love letters and e-mail correspondence between them.

Karen Kahler’s attorney, Dan Pingelton, said Karen — who had begun divorce proceedings — in January was most interested in seeing him get help.
"When I met her, she was struggling to find the best way to deal with an abusive spouse," Pingelton said. "She had no interest in retribution. To the contrary, she wanted her spouse to receive psychological help so that he could have a better relationship with his three children. She especially wanted him to spend time with his daughters Emily and Lauren, in addition to the small amount of time he was spending with his son, Sean."

Emily Kahler, 18, was a freshman pharmacy student in St. Louis. Lauren Kahler, 16, was a student at Rock Bridge High School. The girls had played together in a rock band in their previous home of Weatherford, Texas.

Sean Kahler, 10, is the lone survivor of the attack and was said to be an avid baseball player.

Wilson-Kleekamp said the Kahler daughters had begun receiving counseling to cope with the trauma of their parents' situation.

"I drew a lot of inspiration from what she was fighting because she didn't carry it on her, she didn't wear it," Wilson-Kleekamp said of Karen Kahler.

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Criminal psychologists explain triggers for family violence

By Tram Whitehurst
November 30, 2009 | 10:57 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — For many, the level of violence that ended with the deaths of Karen Kahler and her two teenage daughters Saturday in Burlingame, Kan., is hard to comprehend. It leaves a series of seemingly unanswerable questions.

But the job of psychologists who study criminal behavior is to try to make sense of the senseless. Their research has shown that while each case is unique, there are certain common elements that help shed light on crimes of this magnitude.

This type of research could be related to the allegations against James Kraig Kahler, who was charged Monday with first-degree murder in the deaths of his wife and two daughters.

Men are the most common perpetrators in crimes involving the murder of family members. Psychologists say men are not necessarily more aggressive in domestic relationships, but their aggression tends to be more damaging and lethal.

Of all women who are murdered, 30 percent are killed by their spouses, said Denis McCarthy, an associate professor at MU who studies law and psychology.

Psychologists say, however, that men tend to commit suicide after killing family members, making Kahler’s case — if the allegations are true — unusual. Kansas authorities said that after the shootings, Kahler was spotted fleeing by a Shawnee County sheriff’s deputy. He was arrested after a 12-hour manhunt.

A common misconception is that people who commit these types of crimes are insane and have a history of violence. In fact, the opposite is sometimes the case.
“Rarely are these people psychotic,” said Longin T. Kucharski, chair of the department of psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. “They are angry and resentful and start to see the world in a hopeless way.”

So what can lead a person who has raised a family and achieved professional success to allegedly kill members of his own family?

Often just one or two traumatic events can trigger a chain reaction that may eventually end in violence, psychologists say.

“Generally, the people who commit these types of crimes are individuals who, as a result of acute situations and extreme losses, spiral down and become very depressed,” Kucharski said.

Those acute situations can include the loss of a job and marital troubles — both of which Kahler recently experienced. The resulting public shame and embarrassment is one of the most common motives for murder, McCarthy said.

As the depressed person looks for someone to blame for his troubles, his focus often shifts to family members. The holiday season can then become a flash point because it reminds people of the extent of their loss, Kucharski said.
Few students turn out for H1N1 vaccine

By Rachel Allred
Published Dec. 1, 2009

Vaccines for the H1N1 virus were provided free of charge to students Monday evening at Center residence hall, but at the close of the clinic, fewer than 10 students had attended to receive the vaccine.

Columbia/Boone County Department of Health and Human Services spokeswoman Geni Alexander said the department ordered the vaccines from the federal government and distributed them to various locations throughout the county.

The health department sent 400 of the vaccines to the MU Student Health Center, prevention nurse Joan Pais said. After the first vaccine clinic, held Nov. 19, 140 vaccines were left. There are no future clinics scheduled.

"We had some more scheduled, but they're canceled for now," Pais said. "We're down to 140, and I think we'll run out or get pretty low."

Alexander said the health department distributed vaccines to the health center because many students fall into broad priority groups.

"We knew the student health center would help us reach a large number of the 17 to 24 year olds in the broad priority group," Alexander said. "Another broad priority group is people between the ages of 25 and 64 with chronic illness. A lot of non-traditional students might fall into that category."

Pais said it would be beneficial for students, especially those living in residence halls, to receive the vaccine.

"Hopefully it will prevent them from getting H1N1," Pais said. "If they do get H1N1, it's shown to reduce the symptoms. They won't be out from school, they won't miss class."

Junior Anna Downer received the vaccine and said other students should take the opportunity to be vaccinated.

"I hate being sick, and it's free," Downer said. "Why not get it, especially since the flu can spread so easily and get so many people sick?"

Downer said the availability and the proximity of the clinic was beneficial for students.

"I think it's good for the university to have this resource for students," Downer said. "It's really convenient. If it was off campus I probably wouldn't have gone."
The clinic did not receive a lot of publicity partially because the health center wasn't sure how many vaccines it would receive or when. Pais said the lack of specific details available for advertising might have contributed to the low student response.

"We didn't have as much advertising as we would have liked," Pais said. "We knew they were going to do it, we just didn't know when or how much we were going to get."

Downer said she heard about the free vaccines from her roommate, who saw the clinic and more advertising would have been useful.

Pais said the Student Health Center might receive more vaccines, but the certainty of this is unclear.

H1N1 vaccines are available at the health department through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., so students who were unable to attend the free clinic still have a chance to receive the vaccine, Alexander said.
Athletics returning annual subsidy to MU budget

The department was one of 25 major college programs to profit in 2008.

By Zach Toombs
Published Dec. 1, 2009

Profits from the athletics department will translate into more money for the university's general operating budget in the next few years, Chancellor Brady Deaton said.

Athletics department spokesman Chad Moller said the department will begin to return its annual $1.5 million subsidy for construction projects debt to MU's budget.

Although the athletics department is pulling in higher profits, the UM system is facing a 5.2 percent budget cut from the state in the next academic year. Moller said this decision comes in part due to the university's troubled financial state.

"This is a sacrifice that athletics is making to help the operating mission of the university as a whole," Moller said. "We're obviously going through some very challenging times, and while it creates a definite challenge for us, it is the right thing to do for the greater good."

MU's athletics department was one of 25 major college sports programs to turn a profit in 2008, according to an NCAA study. The study stated the department reached a $1.4 million profit in 2008 and a $2 million profit in the 2009 fiscal year.

Deaton said there is no specific use in mind for the money returned by the athletics department.

"It would help support our general operating budget, not earmarked for any specific item," Deaton said in an e-mail. "This provides general support for classroom teaching, improved infrastructure and other components of our operational budget."

Moller said the athletics department's decision to return the subsidy reflects the program's move toward more financial independence from the university. The department's subsidy for debt service has been cut to $1.25 million this year and will be cut to $750,000 in 2011 and eliminated by fiscal year 2012.

"I can't speak for anyone but Mizzou certainly, but from day one when (Athletics Director) Mike Alden took over, he has been very adamant about us running a fiscally-responsible operation, and I think you can directly attribute our financial security to that mindset," Moller said.

Moller said the department's solid financial state comes from a variety of sources.

"This involves being conservative in terms of spending and aggressive in seeking creative and alternative revenue sources, and we've done a pretty sound job overall in all of those areas over the years, which has allowed us to be profitable," Moller said.

Associate Athletics Director Tim Hickman said planning ahead for the recession also helped the department financially.
"When we have a high-water year like we did last year in ticket and TV revenue it contributes to a surplus," Hickman said. "We put those surpluses in our reserves to help us smooth out the peaks and valleys. This year we have budgeted to utilize some of our reserves anticipating the slower economy and expecting our giving to be down."

Moller said the timeline for the athletics department's return of the annual subsidy is not yet set.