'College GameDay' might shake up MU Homecoming parade schedule

By Pavan Vangipuram
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COLUMBIA—With ESPN's "College GameDay" television show set to be held at MU on Saturday, parade organizers at MU are considering changing the time of this year's Homecoming parade.

The parade has traditionally started at 8 a.m. the Saturday of Homecoming, but the show is scheduled to air live on ESPN from 8 to 11 a.m. Saturday. The No. 18-ranked Missouri football team hosts No. 3 Oklahoma that evening at 7 p.m. Both teams boast 6-0 season records. The rankings are from The Associated Press poll.

The Columbia City Council approved a request to move the parade to noon. It also approved no parking along Sixth and Ninth streets from 9 a.m. until the parade ends.

Carrie Bien, student programs coordinator for the Mizzou Alumni Association, said the association will announce the start time for the parade Tuesday morning.

Bien said the association was "working toward the direction of moving the parade," but noted that the association did not have a firm parade time set.

"We want students and fans to have a full Mizzou Homecoming experience," Bien said. "We're working to make sure everyone can be a part of everything. We communicated with all of our participants that the parade's time could likely change due to game time and other factors."
Patient load rises after mental health center switch

By JODIE JACKSON JR.

Fifteen months after operation of the Mid-Missouri Mental Health Center was transferred to University of Missouri Health Care, a $13 million capital improvement project is in full swing, and administrators are touting an increase in patient admissions.

John Lauriello, the center's medical director and chairman of the university's psychiatric department, will give local legislators a tour to see the renovation work tomorrow.

It took legislative action and intense negotiations between MU Health Care and the Missouri Department of Mental Health in the first half of 2009 to bring about the transfer that one former employee called a "takeover" by MU Health Care.

"People who are dedicated professionals who had worked at that center for decades were dismissed," said the former employee, who asked not to be identified.

The university hired roughly 75 percent of 196 workers at the former hospital, commonly known as Mid-Mo. Other Mid-Mo staffers had the option of early retirement or transferring to another Department of Mental Health facility, including the Fulton Diagnostic and Reception Center. Some positions were not retained because they were redundant with resources already available to the university, MU Health Care spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said.

Jim Ross, CEO of MU Health Care, said the university "tried to match as many workers as possible" to the new facility. Some were hired at different pay levels and with different job classifications. "We tried to be really thoughtful about that," he said. "At the end of the day, I thought we did a pretty good job."

Meanwhile, many challenges that faced state-run Mid-Mo still present battles for the Missouri Psychiatric Center. A 2009 report from the National Alliance on Mental Illness gave Missouri a grade of C for the status of mental health care in the state. It was the same grade given in 2006.

The NAMI report specifically mentioned Mid-Mo as being "frequently full" and having to find room for patients at other state facilities. Lauriello said the Missouri Psychiatric Center is not over census and that it has managed to treat more people and has added a child outpatient clinic. A recent comparison showed 31 percent more patient visits — 2,100 admissions to the Missouri Psychiatric Center compared to 1,600 for Mid-Mo — during a 12-month period.

Jenkins said the Missouri Psychiatric Center has averaged about 200 admissions per month, compared with Mid-Mo's average of 125 to 150.

The Missouri Psychiatric Center has beds for 59 patients — 46 adults and 13 children — the same count Mid-Mo had when it closed, Lauriello said. The hospital still has the same 21-county area Mid-Mo served.
and the lack of psychiatric care at the Boone County Jail means those patients sometimes get treatment at the Missouri Psychiatric Center. Five Boone County inmates were admitted to the Missouri Psychiatric Center in the first six months of 2010.

When the university negotiated with the mental health department to assume operation of the hospital, Lauriello and other administrators identified $20 million in needed capital improvements. The final figure was $13 million, which will provide a top-to-bottom, mostly interior makeover.

The renovation project for the second floor will be finished in six months. An open house might be scheduled as early as November to show a new nurses' station and a "treatment mall" dedicated to rooms for group, art and recreation therapies.

Even though Mid-Mo was physically connected to University Hospital, there was "a huge firewall" between the two hospitals, Lauriello said. For a patient from Mid-Mo to be treated at University Hospital, he or she had to be discharged from one and readmitted to the other. With the advent of electronic medical records, patient records are accessible for medical staff in both locations. The two facilities are now considered one hospital.

The university also is in a tussle with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services over a reimbursement rate for the second half of 2009, when the hospital was no longer operated by the mental health department.

"We're still talking to them about what that reimbursement rate ought to be," Ross said.

Lauriello said the tough economic climate and uncertainty over health care reform have created an environment that would have made the facility's transfer impossible a year later.

"Mentally ill patients are some of the first people who get cut," he said. "But the patients still need care. The patients do not disappear if the money goes away. In fact, maybe the patient count increases."

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Five years ago, Beverly Clevenger struck a deal with granddaughter Julia Bosley

If Bosley, then in the eighth grade, decided to attend the University of Missouri, Clevenger vowed to perform at Homecoming her freshman year.

It's time to pay up

Clevenger, then known as Beverly Swafford, poses with Marching Mizzou members in fall 1961

Before Saturday's 7 p.m. football game against Oklahoma, the 67-year-old Clevenger will twirl a baton solo to the Marching Mizzou alumni band's rendition of Lady Gaga's "Bad Romance."

"I'm just really excited to see her out there enjoying things like she used to," said Bosley, a freshman sociology major. "I'm excited to see her do her thing."

Clevenger has been doing "her thing" for nearly a half a century. In 1961, as an MU freshman, she was chosen to twirl solo at the Homecoming game against Nebraska. She remembers it well.

"Standing there by myself on the field looking up, the stadium seemed so big," she said last week. "But I knew once the music started, I'd be fine, and I was."

Clevenger has been back several times to perform with the alumni band, and the stadium doesn't seem so large these days. What have grown, though, are the opportunities her granddaughter has that Clevenger did not have when she was a young woman.
Clevenger decided to attend MU in 1960 using her father's World War II benefits. She had hoped to major in business but was told by those in charge of the money that she would have to pick something "more befitting to your gender," Clevenger remembered.

She opted to take home economics with an emphasis in fashion merchandising — which gave her a chance to sneak in some economics and accounting courses.

"It was a back door" into business, "so that's what I did," she said.

Clevenger left MU before graduating, though, to marry and start a family. She ended up in business anyway, running a construction company with her first husband. Knowing the value of education, she returned to UM-Kansas City and picked up a bachelor's degree in liberal arts in 1989.

Knowledge from her fashion courses at MU didn't go unused, though. Clevenger also has worked in interior design and helped coordinate efforts to bring pumice stones from Mexico to the United States to create softer blue jeans. Today, she continues in the construction business with her current husband in El Paso, Texas.

Clevenger was home last October when Bosley found out she'd been accepted to MU. She was excited — and ready to keep her promise to twirl at Homecoming.

Then, in November, Clevenger slipped on her staircase and fell on her ceramic tile floor, breaking five bones along the top of her left foot. She had surgery in December that left her with three screws and two pins in her foot. She spent the next couple of months in therapy.

Clevenger had healed enough by summer to join Bosley for a Summer Welcome orientation program on campus. But the long treks across campus left Clevenger with hip problems that required more trips to the doctor.

Since August, she has been able to practice her routine pain-free, and she is confident she's in shape for this weekend's pre-game performance. "I think I'm going to make it," she said. "After all, a promise is a promise."
MU-based MOREnet to cut jobs

By JANISE SILVEY

The Missouri Research and Education Network is eliminating 11 percent of its workforce after the state eliminated its funding this fiscal year.

The cuts amount to seven full-time and three part-time positions. Additionally, MOREnet is not filling three vacant positions.

“This is obviously a very challenging economic climate for everyone,” Executive Director John Gillispie said in a prepared statement.

Gillispie said administrators reviewed the operating budget “with a fine-toothed comb” and reduced other expenses wherever possible.

“This clearly isn’t something we want to do,” he said. “It’s something we have to do to preserve the organization, ensure we remain viable and continue to serve our members well into the future.”

The eliminated staff positions are in areas where previously manual processes have become automated.

MOREnet learned in June that Gov. Jay Nixon cut the program’s $8.8 million state allocation, part of a total cut of $281 million in state expenses. The state allocation had amounted to about one-quarter of MOREnet’s total budget, Gillispie said at the time. The rest comes from fees from the schools, colleges and libraries that use MOREnet’s Internet services, technical support and network security.

MOREnet began 20 years ago as a collaboration between the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Higher Education and the secretary of state’s office. It operates within the University of Missouri.
Funding cuts cost MOREnet 10 employees

By Caitlin Wherley
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COLUMBIA — The Missouri Research and Education Network notified 10 employees, 11 percent of its workforce, they were laid off Monday because of funding cuts.

MOREnet is a provider of technology services and Internet for K-12 schools, higher education and libraries in Missouri.

Seven full-time and three part-time positions were cut, and MOREnet will not fill three open positions. The eliminated positions are those in which software now does the work of employees and areas where service demand declined, such as Mobius, a library association that moved out of the MOREnet building. Positions were also cut in areas where new strategies are being explored, such as off-the-shelf software, said John Gillispie, MOREnet executive director.

“MOREnet will offer any help we can relative to helping people get their resumes out,” Gillispie said.

Departing employees will have access to the MU Career Center, the Employee Assistance Program and the University Transition Assistance program. University Transition Assistance is based on the employee’s length of service, with at least four weeks of pay provided.

Although the MU Career Center isn’t a placement service, it offers job and internship searches, interview preparation and other services for job-seeking community members, said Megan Anderson, a career specialist supervisor at the center.
Laid off MOREnet workers can also receive one-on-one career counseling. Counselors meet with prospective employees weekly for $20 a semester, or $15 for MU alumni.

MOREnet’s funding from the state has been reduced from about $14 million to nothing over the past two years. The first round of cuts, $6 million, came in the last fiscal year. MOREnet still receives funds from the fees it charges members for technology and Internet usage.

MOREnet, a separate business unit within MU, provided state funding to centralize purchasing and reduce costs for 725 organizations in Missouri. This number will decline in the coming months, Gillispie said.
OPEN COLUMN

Tailgaters could use more portable toilets

Editor, the Tribune: Once again, University of Missouri event planners have failed. And once more, loyal Tigers fans have been shortchanged despite paying for, and reasonably expecting, a modicum of “service.”

Let me explain: Hundreds of tailgaters who pay for reserved season parking in Lot X have to suffer with a woeful health problem: a lack of adequate Porta-potties. What do we get for our yearly $165? Atrociously long lines and, close to the end of the day, unsanitary, not-all-functioning restroom facilities.

By my count, MU provides no more than 20 Porta-potties in Lot X. According to the university, there are 1,000 reserved parking spots there (excluding same-day parking patrons). Using a conservative figure of 4,000 patrons tailgating for up to 10 hours (with an 8 a.m. lot opening and a 6 p.m. game time), most providers suggest 40 to 50 Porta-potties are needed — twice the number MU actually supplies.

With revenue of approximately $165,000 per season, one should expect more. Perhaps MU contractors have never tailgated “among the masses” but instead party in the suites and aren’t concerned with waiting, often with children, for 15 or more minutes to use the restroom. We do donate faithfully and make up the majority of tailgaters and game attendees. Perhaps the city should enact a health ordinance specifying the minimum number of Porta-potties for an event. Wake up, Mizzou. We deserve better.

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Despite downward national trend, KC charities show gains in giving

By GLENN E. RICE

While many of the nation’s biggest charities saw a sharp decline in their contributions, the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation saw its donations jump 14 percent.

A new ranking of the nation’s 400 largest charities released Monday showed donations dropped by 11 percent overall last year. It was the worst decline in 20 years, since the Chronicle of Philanthropy began tracking donations.

“Kansas City has a very unique style in giving that is expansive and inclusive,” said Laura McKnight, president and chief executive officer of the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation.

The Chronicle of Philanthropy ranked the community foundation 83rd among charities that raised the most money from private donations. It generated nearly $200.5 million in private support last year.

Other local groups that saw increased giving last year over the previous year include Children International, by 2.6 percent, and the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging, up 1.2.

Some Kansas City-area philanthropies that are included in the Philanthropy 400 report were down. Fellowship of Christian Athletes, based in Kansas City, was down 0.4 percent. Heart to Heart International of Olathe was down 4.3 percent.

The University of Kansas was down the most at 15.4. The University of Missouri at Columbia was down 2.5 percent.

Although some local groups saw decreases in private support, the drops were significantly less than the national average, except for KU’s.

McKnight said Kansas City is a national leader that has found ways to improve how individuals can give.

“In Kansas City, giving is celebrated, rewarded and full of positive reinforcements,” she said. “We see the people who give $25 inspire those who give $25 million.”