

MAY 02 2011



THE TRIBUNE'S VIEW

Curators

Schaefer to the rescue

By **HENRY J. WATERS III**

More than three months ago, Gov. Jay Nixon nominated Columbia attorney Craig Van Matre and Cassville attorney Donald Cupps to the **University of Missouri Board of Curators**, but their confirmations are being held up in the Senate by President Pro Tem Rob Mayer, who wants something from the governor.

"I need to talk with the governor about some things," Mayer said. "Some little, small matters," he added. Precisely what Mayer wants is not clear.

Nobody objects to Van Matre and Cupps. The holdup involves opposition to Nixon's nomination of Springfield attorney Tom Strong to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, which is opposed by Sen. Kurt Schaefer of Columbia. Completing the tit-for-tat, Sen. Bob Dixon, R-Springfield, Strong's hometown, is opposing the curator nominations in retaliation for Schaefer's opposition to Strong.

Schaefer and others remain angry over Nixon's appointment of Strong in the 1990s to represent the state in the massive national settlement with tobacco companies, for which Strong's cadre of lawyers received a huge payday. Strong was close to then-Attorney General Nixon and presumably a Democrat.

Now Nixon appoints Strong as an "independent" to the coordinating board, a designation Schaefer and others question but Dixon defends.

While the political warriors fight over Strong, Van Matre and Cupps remain stuck on the sidelines. Though it will be a hard swallow, Schaefer must give up the fight to end the stalemate.

I objected to the tobacco settlement deal with Strong, but the blame for that visits on Nixon, not Strong. Nixon had the power to grant the contract. Strong was the petitioner wanting the pay day.

More to the point today, all the appointments in question are reasonable. By any political designation, Strong is qualified to sit on the coordinating board, and certainly Van Matre is qualified for the board of curators. From what I know, so is Cupps.

Having made their points, Schaefer, Mayer, Dixon and anyone else involved in the mud wrestle should give up and make these appointments happen. Only a few days remain for them to do so in the current legislative session lest the nominees risk permanent disqualification for the jobs they seek. If not confirmed, they are prohibited from ever being nominated for those positions. Nixon could withdraw their nominations and then name them on an interim basis, but that's no way to skin this cat.

Seemingly, it all starts with Schaefer, who must make a compromise he won't like but is necessary for the greater good.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Health Care found to be in compliance with regulations

By Jon Hadusek, [Lainie Mullen](#)

April 29, 2011 | 8:20 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – MU Health Care and University Hospital now meet the cleanliness and safety standards outlined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. An inspection of University Hospital on March 30 found the MU Health Care system in full compliance with all CMS regulations, according to MU Health Care spokeswoman Mary Jenkins and a letter published on the MU Health Care website. Hospitals and health systems must meet certain “Conditions of Participation” set by the CMS in order to participate in Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Acting on a complaint in November of last year, CMS made an unannounced inspection of University Hospital and delivered a 47-page report on violations. These included inconsistent hand washing, dusty surfaces in the surgical unit, expired supplies and inadequately cleaned kitchen areas. MU Health Care took a variety of steps to solve the problems prior to last month’s follow-up inspection report obtained by the Missourian through a Freedom of Information Act request from CMS.

The MU Health Care staff have made, or have promised to make, the following corrections:

- Revising signage and conditions of services (consent forms) to disclose to patients and visitors that they are being video monitored in rooms and hallways for purposes other than safety and security, such as education, quality and clinical care.
- Renovating MU Psychiatric Center bathrooms for safety and privacy purposes, including installing suicide-resistant fixtures.
- Updating the training process to ensure all permanent Neonatal Intensive-Care Unit staff at Women's and Children's Hospital are aware of the emergency evacuation plan. Providing annual training to staff who direct others.
- Revising the Psychiatric Center's patient restraint policy to limit who can order restraint and the behaviors that warrant restraint.
- Installing a full sprinkler system in operating rooms for women and children in the surgical suite at Women's and Children's Hospital.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Low-income students face cuts to financial aid, programs in federal budget deal

By [Alex Keckeisen](#)

April 29, 2011 | 12:49 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A federal budget bill passed earlier this month made substantial cuts to financial aid programs available to low-income students nationwide.

TRIO grant programs will lose \$25 million, second disbursements of Pell Grants will be ended for the 2011-12 school year and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants will be trimmed by \$20 million, [according to the budget bill](#).

More than 10,000 MU students are eligible for these three programs.

James Spain, director of MU's Student Success Center, described the funding situation as "something of a perfect storm." The university is seeing increasing numbers of students in need of the services these cuts affect, he said.

MU receives \$626,935 from the federal TRIO grant, established to provide assistance for low-income and first-generation college students, [according to the Department of Education's website](#).

Another \$100,000 is dedicated to [scholarship funds for qualifying students](#), whose financial need is based on 150 percent of the poverty level.

"We know the TRIO grant improves the retention rates and the six-year graduation rates of the students it serves," Spain said. "If we are cutting student services, we would be concerned about the negative impact."

Although the Department of Education hasn't yet determined how to implement the cuts, a 2.9 percent reduction across the board would trim about \$18,200 from what MU receives, according to Carol Howald, director of the university's TRIO CATS program.

Run by the MU Student Success Center, TRIO CATS provides academic advising and one-on-one tutoring to eligible students. More than 3,500 students qualify for the program, but only about 700 students take advantage of it each year, Howald said. She stressed the importance of the program and the effect it has on students.

“The better their success rate is at MU, the better able they will be to graduate, meet the loan obligations many of them are incurring, and contribute back to society,” Howald said.



NO MU MENTION

Career-ending videos of professors are unfairly edited, university officials say

By Scott Jaschik. Inside Higher Ed

Videos posted by the conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart appear to have ended the teaching career of an adjunct at the [University of Missouri](#) -- even as university officials issued a statement backing the contention of the two instructors of the labor studies course that their comments in the class had been edited to present an "inaccurate and distorted" picture of what was said.

Breitbart posted the videos (here and here) on his Big Government blog and, based on the recordings, called the course "advanced thuggery." In the video, the two instructors can be heard making numerous seemingly positive statements about the use of violence or threatened violence in labor-management relations. [The course is taught by one instructor at the university's Kansas City campus](#), Judy Ancel, and another at the St. Louis campus, Don Giljum. With a video link, the professors and students at the two campuses interact in class -- and the recordings have been available to students through the learning management system used in the course. The videos posted by Breitbart are clearly from different class sessions, as the professors appear in different clothing.

In interviews Thursday, both Ancel and Giljum said that their statements in the videos were a mixture of different teaching techniques, including describing how labor leaders felt during certain periods of time, directly quoting specific individuals (whose views they did not necessarily share), and intentionally taking an extreme position to prompt class discussion.

They said that the full recordings would make this clear, and that they would like the complete class sessions released. The problem, they said, was that the recordings show identifiable students as well as the instructors (which is the case in the excerpts posted by Breitbart, too), so the university can't just post the recordings without violating student privacy rights.

Late Thursday afternoon, Gail Hackett, provost of the Kansas City campus, issued a statement that backed the instructors' description of the class, based on administrators' review so far of the 18 hours of available video (of which Breitbart's two excerpts are together under 15 minutes). "From the review completed to date, it is clear that edited videos posted on the Internet depict statements from the instructors in an inaccurate and distorted manner by taking their statements out of context and reordering the sequence in which those statements were actually made so as to change their meaning," Hackett said. "Such selective editing is disturbing and the release of students' images without their permission is a violation of their privacy rights." (University officials assume that a student either gave Breitbart a copy of the video of the class or provided access.)

Hackett's statement went on to "underscore our commitment to the importance of academic freedom, freedom of speech and the free-flowing discussion of challenging topics in our courses," as well as "the serious responsibilities this places on us to ensure a balanced perspective is offered to our students within our curriculum."

And Hackett said that "[i]n this particular case, we also affirm our belief that studying labor unions, their history, and their role in society is an important subject given the role they have played and continue to play in the United States and the world. As a result, we continue to review the appropriate place for such an offering within our curriculum."

Breitbart did not respond to a request from Inside Higher Ed for a response to the allegation that the videos he posted are distorted.

This is not the first time that he has been accused of selective editing. It was Breitbart who posted the excerpt of a talk by Shirley Sherrod, then an Agriculture Department official, purporting to show her expressing anti-white racial attitudes, setting off a furor that led to her resignation. The subsequently released video of her complete talk showed how she was referencing long-ago attitudes and in fact gave a moving call for racial reconciliation.

Breitbart may be on the lookout for other academics. Appearing on Sean Hannity's show on Fox last week, he said that "we're going to take on education next, and go after the teachers and union organizers."

The American Association of University Professors released a statement late Thursday denouncing Breitbart's tactics, and contrasting the alleged calls to violence in the videos with the damage that the association said is really taking place. "The violence that is being done ... is to the academic freedom and employment security of the instructors, and to the privacy and safe classroom environment of the students, some of whom speak on the video clip," said the AAUP statement. "When students voice their views in class, they should not have to fear that their comments will be spread all over the Internet. When faculty members rightly explore difficult topics in class, they should not have to fear for their jobs or their lives."

While the university's statement endorsed academic freedom, it also noted that during "the course of our review the past couple days, UMSL has accepted the resignation of its lecturer." The St. Louis campus declined to elaborate on that resignation, but Giljum said that he was told by a dean that she needed him to resign, and had been told by her higher-ups to get his resignation.

Noting that he is an adjunct, Giljum said that "they could care less about me. I am an at-will employee, and they are focused on preserving funding for the university."

He said that the university sent a message by asking him to resign in the wake of the videos. "Teachers here are no longer going to be able to express comments, theories or counter-positions or make statements to force students to push back and critically challenge the comments and statements of the teacher," he said.

Teaching in such an environment, he said, "I would be guarded about what I would say, and students would be guarded as well."

Ancel, the other instructor, said in an interview that she works on annual contracts and that the university has not taken any action against her. She also released a statement in which she explained the context behind some of the quotes shown in the video.

For example, she noted that one of her quotes in the Breitbart video is: "violence is a tactic and it's to be used when it's the appropriate tactic." Here is what she said really happened: "After students had watched a film on the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers' strike and the assassination of Martin Luther King, they were discussing nonviolence. I said, 'One guy in the film ... said 'violence is a tactic, and it's to be used when it's the appropriate tactic.'" In this instance, she said, "Breitbart's editing has literally put words in my mouth that were not mine, and they never were mine."

Both Ancel and Giljum said that a course about the history of the labor movement would of necessity discuss violence. Ancel said in her statement: "Any examination of labor's past would be incomplete without discussion of violence (which for the most part was directed at workers), and analysis of its roots. At no time did my co-instructor, Don Giljum, nor I advocate violence."

While Ancel's statement said that complete review of the tapes would vindicate both instructors, she added that the videos had caused real pain, "ugly" threats and the loss of Giljum's job. "These videos are no idle prank. They do real harm," she said.

She also stressed that the invasion of privacy extended to her students -- some of whom want to learn about labor without telling their bosses, and who are visible in the videos. "These videos are an attack on higher education and its mission to working adults, putting labor education programs at risk. They create fear and have an enormously chilling effect on freedom of thought and expression," her statement said. "Sadly, they have already shattered the very positive atmosphere of trust and openness that we worked so hard to create in this class. One of my students told me, with some discomfort, 'My boss watches Fox News.'

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Faculty Council feedback sought about release of controversial videos

Friday, April 29, 2011 | 7:58 p.m. CDT

BY [Andrea Braxton](#)

COLUMBIA — MU Faculty Council members were encouraged Friday to help distribute an article that outlines steps leading to the resignation of a lecturer at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Faculty Council Chairwoman Leona Rubin sent the article from [Inside Higher Ed](#) to the council, calling the implications "scary."

The piccc describes fallout from this week's release of videos edited by conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart. The videos portray the lecturer and a professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City as supporters of violent union tactics.

Breitbart's videos are condensed from hours of classroom discussion, and university officials on both campuses have agreed they distort the educators' views.

Don Giljum, the UMSL lecturer, and UMKC professor Judy Ancel presented the lectures seen in the video during a class called Labor, Politics and Society.

The videos created an Internet stir among conservative commentators after they were posted last weekend. In the footage, the educators appear to be in favor of using violent tactics in labor-management relations.

Giljum resigned in the aftermath. He told a reporter with Inside Higher Ed that a dean told him to resign, based on pressure from her superiors.

No action has been taken against the UMKC professor. Campus Provost Gail Hackett issued a statement Thursday pledging to stand behind Ancel. She said the videos posted by Breitbart rely on "selective editing" and are presented in "an inaccurate and distorted matter."

She also said Breitbart violated the students' privacy by using their images without permission.

"It is clear that edited videos posted on the Internet depict statements from the instructors in an inaccurate and distorted manner by taking their statements out of context and reordering the sequence in which those statements were actually made so as to change their meaning," according to Hackett's statement.

"Such selective editing is disturbing and the release of students' images without their permission is a violation of their privacy rights."

Breitbart was the blogger who posted videos of Shirley Sherrod, a U.S. Department of Agriculture employee, that led to her forced resignation in July 2010. Video excerpts portrayed her as an anti-white racist.

Upon review of her full address to the NAACP, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack apologized and offered her another position — which she turned down. She has since sued Breitbart for libel and slander.

Rubin said it was too soon to have gotten much feedback from council members at MU but believes they will be troubled by the issue.

"I suspect no one will like the idea of having their work, classroom or otherwise, distorted by anyone," she said in an e-mail.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Students celebrate in Greektown after Obama announces bin Laden's death

By [Margaux Henquinet](#), [Rachel Lijewski](#), [Shaina Cavazos](#)

May 2, 2011 | 2:38 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – MU was a giant celebration Sunday night and early Monday morning following the announcement of the death of former al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

President Barack Obama's speech from the [White House](#) on Sunday evening confirmed that a U.S. intelligence operation succeeded in killing bin Laden in a mansion in Pakistan.

Soon after, students started celebrating all across campus, from outside Ellis Library to Greektown. Students in Johnston Hall cheered out windows at people passing below on Rollins Street, where cars packed with cheering students rolled by -- more than one of them playing Miley Cyrus' "Party in the USA" from their windows.

Senior Paul Schulz and a friend walked down Rollins Street toward Greektown carrying the American flag that had been hanging on his wall. He said he had a test scheduled for 9 a.m. the next morning but said he wasn't concerned.

"It's my American duty to get out," he said.

As he walked, Schulz often stopped to cheer and high-five people driving past in cars, waving his flag.

"Keep that flag up, Schulz," his friend called after him as he went to high-five one carful of people. "Keep it up."

"It's never touching the ground," Schulz said.

Even from blocks away, cheers could be heard coming from Greektown, where hundreds of students gathered on Richmond Avenue. MU Police Department Captain Brian Weimer said the street was blocked off at all entrances.

The crowd gathered on the street between the Alpha Delta Pi and Gamma Phi Beta sorority houses. They waved American flags, threw rolls of toilet paper, raised chants of "USA," "MIZ-USA" and more.

Sophomore Evan Weiss provided the soundtrack for the party in Greektown, blasting music from the roof of fraternity Delta Sigma Phi. Weiss, who often deejays under the name "UberVice," owns all of his own equipment. After his friends set up his speakers, he started playing music, and more people showed up.

He featured a mix of American songs such as Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA," and victory songs such as DJ Khaled's "All I Do Is Win."

"I feel like this is a big event for our country, and I was here to witness it firsthand," Weiss said.

Freshman Travis Noyes enlisted in the Marines two years ago today. He said several people with whom he went through training all wanted this to happen.

"This is the end goal that we all had in mind," he said. "I'm glad this has happened."

Noyes had just gotten back to Laws Hall when his dad called with the news. He said he turned his TV on and couldn't believe his eyes.

He said the group of people with whom he was celebrating included all branches of the military.

"Even though we're all different, we're all fighting for the same thing," he said.

Senior Brooke Hogrefe and sophomore Taylor Martin said they had been studying at the Student Center when the news came, and they stopped to watch Obama speak. When they went back to Greektown so Hogrefe could get her car and go home, they found they couldn't get her car out because of the crowds. They decided to park and got out to take pictures. They stood back from the main crowd, just taking in the scene.

"Where else do you get to see this?" Martin said, looking out over the crowd.

Hogrefe said she liked seeing everyone get together for one cause.

"Everyone just feels so together right now," she said.

"It's like unity," Martin said.

At midnight, they had already been there for about 45 minutes, and said they planned to stay until the end.

Ashleigh Bartlett, a junior at MU, said she saw the news of bin Laden's death on Facebook and Twitter simultaneously. A political science major, Bartlett said bin Laden's death would have significant foreign policy implications.

"We're going to have to wait for al-Qaida's response," she said.

Senior Matthew Johnson is in the Air Force ROTC. He was in Cornell Hall when he heard the news that Obama was going to speak and said he knew the announcement would be important.

"I thought, 'Either Gaddafi's dead, or maybe Osama Bin Laden.'" he said. "So, I called it."

Johnson said the event was a great lift for the nation's spirit.

"It's going to be great for America's morale," he said over a deafening chorus of whoops and chants.

In the back of pickup truck looping around Greektown and downtown Columbia, about 15 students were cheering, waving flags and celebrating the news. As the truck wove through the campus, the students recounted their reactions to Obama's announcement.

When sophomore Colleen Wood and her sorority sisters in Kappa Alpha Theta saw on Twitter and Facebook that bin Laden was reported to be dead, they immediately switched their TV from a "Harry Potter" movie to the news.

Wood said the 40 girls crammed in the living room were "dead silent."

Junior Andrew Israel said he could hear people screaming in his house after they saw Tweets reporting the death. Woods and Israel said social media played a big role in how quickly they got their information.

"There's no way you couldn't have found out," Wood said.

Leslie Raney, an MU sophomore from Nashville, Tenn., said she thinks the president's speech was the boost the South needed after the week of devastating storms. Raney said she has

friends at many universities in the South and said this week has not been easy for them or her.

“Everyone’s been really scared,” Raney said. “This could really bind the South together and give everybody some hope.”

Junior Ryan Reif summed up the crowd’s sentiments.

“It’s a moral victory,” Reif said. “It doesn’t matter if you are a Republican or a Democrat — we are all Americans tonight.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

GEORGE KENNEDY: Pension picture not bleak, but change likely on the horizon

By George Kennedy

April 28, 2011 | 2:01 p.m. CDT

Public employee pensions are much in the news, though not as much as the royal wedding or even the NFL draft. Those may be more exciting, but maybe we should shift our attention to the problems that hit closer to home.

A headline in Tuesday's New York Times sounded an alarm: "Public pensions, once off limits, face budget cuts." A report this week from the Pew Center for the States explained why. The states, including our own, are described as being at least \$1.2 trillion short of funding their pension obligations and even further from having the money set aside to cover promised health care benefits.

For Missouri state workers, the picture isn't quite as bleak as in some less blessed states. Although the Pew study points out that our pension system for state employees has slipped below the 80 percent level of funding that's considered ideal, we're at 79 percent. That leaves us in better shape than Kansas, which sits at 64 percent, and far ahead of Illinois, the worst in the nation at only 51 percent. Those are 2009 figures, and MOSERS, our state retirement fund, reports investment gains of 16 percent in 2010, so we might be even closer to solid fiscal ground.

In Columbia, a task force has been studying the problem of underfunded city police and firefighter pension funds since last September. No solution has been suggested yet.

Meanwhile, with an interim president and a short-handed Board of Curators, the university seems to be at a standstill in its consideration of changing retirement for future employees. On your behalf, I've just fought my way through the "Frequently Asked Questions" section on the university system's website, and as far as I can tell (which admittedly isn't very far), there's a potential problem but no urgency, no looming disaster.

We should still expect that, before long, change will come. If that change looks like the plan suggested by the committee set up by then-President Gary Forsee, it would be a hybrid that mixes the “defined benefit” we current retirees enjoy and the “defined contribution” model that requires more from participants.

Currently, of course, retirees get and career employees can expect a pension that amounts to 2.2 percent of salary times the number of years employed, with the salary calculated as the average of the five highest consecutive years. For the first time, employees now have to contribute directly, 1 percent of the first \$50,000 in salary and 2 percent of anything over that. We’ve always contributed indirectly, of course, because the money devoted to pension could otherwise have gone into salaries.

I used the term “career employees” because the study committee reported that more than 60 percent of new hires don’t stick around for even the 5 years required to vest in the retirement program, and only 16 percent stay for 20 or more years. For those who hang on for 30 years or more, the current pension isn’t a bad deal at all. For the more mobile, it’s not so good.

The proposed system, as outlined in the committee’s March report, would combine a smaller defined benefit (1.1 percent of salary times years of service) with a new and potentially more lucrative addition. Employees would contribute a minimum of 1 percent, which the university would match, up to a maximum of 3 percent each. Depending on how much the employee contributes and how wisely the money is invested, the payoff could be better than our current system. The vesting period is a little shorter, too.

In the newsroom, we used to call this kind of stuff DBI – dull but important. When it comes to retirement security, dull sure beats panic. Let’s hope it stays that way.

George Kennedy is a former managing editor at the Missouriian and professor emeritus at the Missouri School of Journalism.

Many child injuries due to lack of care

Published: April 30, 2011 at 12:59 AM

COLUMBIA, Mo., April 30 (UPI) -- Although injuries to children may be unintentional, they can be prevented and should not be considered accidents, a University of Missouri professor says.

Patricia Schnitzer of the University of Missouri Sinclair School of Nursing and colleagues says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say about 7.1 million injury-related emergency room visits are made by children younger than 15 each year but most result from inadequate supervision or failure to protect children from harm.

"Persistent references to tragic, freak and horrible accidents indicate there is still important work needed to frame unintentional injuries as preventable," Schnitzer says in a statement. "Understanding and addressing social norms about the circumstances for child injuries -- such as safe sleep environments for infants and the use of car seats, helmets and other safety devices -- is important to creating effective prevention strategies."

Efforts should be aimed at improving caregiver skills, but there are no published guidelines for child supervision, beyond recommendations for constant supervision of toddlers and infants.

"What we know is that child injuries can be prevented," Schnitzer says. "The importance of intervention is huge; recognizing at-risk families -- those with low-income or education levels, and young or single parents -- can help providers take proper action.

The findings are published in the journal Injury Prevention.

Read more: http://www.upi.com/Health_News/2011/04/30/Many-child-injuries-due-to-lack-of-care/UPI-81741304139584/print/#ixzz1LCX1otfJ

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Even discount grocers tweak their shelves for local tastes

shop talk > BY KAVITA KUMAR — kkumar@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8017 |
Posted: Saturday, April 30, 2011 12:00 am

MU mention page 2

It's not unusual for retailers to localize their stores — for example, to put more boots in colder climates and more sandals in hotter locales.

The same holds true when it comes to food. So how are groceries in St. Louis tweaked to cater to local tastes?

I put this question recently to Bill Shaner, chief executive of Earth City-based Save-A-Lot. The limited-assortment discount grocery chain has more than 1,200 stores around the country, including just under 30 in the St. Louis region. But, alas, it doesn't appear we're a unique lot here in St. Louis. Shaner said the local palate is fairly mainstream. But pork steak is especially popular here. As is the company's fish breading mix and some local barbecue sauces, he said.

"In the past, say five years ago, we had the same assortment in every store in the country," Shaner said. "But now about 85 percent is the same, and 15 percent of our assortment is more tailored to the area."

So in Save-A-Lot stores in Mississippi, you might find items like catfish nuggets. In Louisiana stores, you would be more likely to come upon creole spices and crawfish. And in Boston, where the grocery chain has a sizable Puerto Rican customer base, the stores carry more Goya products such as certain beans, rice and seasonings.

In more rural areas, Shaner said, the company would be more likely to sell 50-pound bags of potatoes. But in urban areas, where people tend to buy less at one time but shop more frequently, Save-A-Lot would be more likely to have 5 to 10 pound bags of potatoes in stock.

"Many people in those markets walk to our stores or take the bus," he said. "So they don't want to carry a 50-pound bag of potatoes."

MOTHER'S DAY

What high gas prices?

Consumers are expected to overlook pain at the pump in order to pamper Mom with more indulgent gifts this year.

Moms obviously deserve the attention, but I was still surprised when I saw how much people are planning to spend. According to a survey conducted for the National Retail Federation, the average person is expected to spend \$140.73 on gifts for Mother's Day this year — up from \$126.90 last year.

So I guess flowers and a heartfelt written card don't cut it anymore. Instead, more people are planning to buy Mom electronics like smartphones, cameras and tablets. They are also planning to reach for more jewelry this year.

Another interesting tidbit from the survey is that men (aka "Momma's boys") plan to spend more than women — \$168.84 on average, compared with \$114.01 — this Mother's Day.

ROYAL WEDDING

And finally, a couple of thoughts about the royal wedding:

As I followed the buildup to the nuptials of Prince William and Kate Middleton, I couldn't help but draw some parallels between this grand, lavish wedding and some of the over-the-top Indian weddings I've attended over the years replete with helicopters, pyrotechnics and mind-boggling dessert spreads.

Mary Shenk, an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Missouri-Columbia, has studied why Indians spend so much money on weddings. According to her research in Bangalore, the average Indian family spends about a year and a half of their income on a wedding.

"If you think about that in American standards, it would be \$60,000 to \$70,000 for a wedding," she said.

So what gives? Well, Shenk argues that Indian weddings are a form of "costly signaling," a theory that comes out of evolutionary biology. Think of the showy feathers of a male peacock that help attract females. Now, apply the same idea to weddings.

"A lot of time, people are signaling wealth and social status that they may not be able to show in other parts of their lives," she said.

Sometimes, the motivation may be to help their unmarried children attract better spouses or to ensure that their daughter is treated better by her in-laws.

Now let's apply this to the royal wedding. Nobody doubts that the English royal family is wealthy and well-connected, Shenk said.

But the elaborate wedding is a way to prove that the family has maintained its status, she said. After all, it managed to garner lots of media attention. And the guest list wasn't too shabby, either.



Police investigate attempted sexual assault

Investigators are looking for a suspect in an attempted sexual assault early yesterday morning in the parking lot of Campus Lodge Apartments, 2900 Old 63 S.

The 1:35 a.m. incident happened when the victim went to her vehicle to retrieve an item, said Capt. Brian Weimer of the **University of Missouri Police Department**. The victim told investigators a man wearing a hooded sweatshirt that covered his face grabbed her, spun her around and attempted to place his hand down her pants. She did not see if he was alone, what direction he fled or if he fled on foot or in a vehicle.

None of the victim's property was stolen. She told police the man was about 5 feet 2 inches tall.

Anyone with any information is asked to call Detective Sam Easley at 884-3721, or CrimeStoppers at 875-8477. Tips can be submitted online at 875tips.com.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU student assaulted at Campus Lodge Apartments

By Edward Hart

April 29, 2011 | 5:15 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A female MU student reported being assaulted early Friday morning in the parking lot of the Campus Lodge Apartments on South Old 63. MU Police Department Capt. Brian Weimer said.

The woman was retrieving belongings from her car in the parking lot of the apartment complex at about 1:35 a.m. when she was reportedly assaulted by an unknown man, Weimer said.

"He grabbed her, spun her around and tried to put his hands down the front of her pants. She kned him in the groin and was able to get away," Weimer said.

The woman did not sustain any physical injuries. A friend of the woman's mother reported the incident at 10:32 a.m. Friday, he said.

The suspect is described as a male, approximately 5'2 to 5'4 feet tall, wearing a dark-colored hooded jacket, which covered his face, Weimer said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Aspiring high school musicians gather at MU for State Music Festival

By Jon Hadusek

April 29, 2011 | 3:23 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Disbelief swept over the face of flute soloist Katie Slaughter. After weeks of strenuous rehearsal, the 17-year-old's perfect performance rating was a pleasant and welcomed surprise.

Slaughter was one of thousands of aspiring musicians who made their way to MU for the 60th annual Missouri State High School Activities Association State Music Festival that began Thursday and ends Saturday.

The festival includes more than 4,400 individual and group performances representing 401 schools. Festival participants qualified by earning a division rating of 1 at their respective district-level festival. Slaughter, a junior at Staley High School in Kansas City, qualified at districts but wasn't expecting another perfect rating.

"The pressure of state adds more nerves, so I didn't think that a 1 would be possible," Slaughter said. "I'm really surprised."

The festival evaluates performances in six different categories: woodwinds, brass, percussion, piano, strings and vocal. The festival's assistant executive director Davine Davis compared the event to state finals for high school sports.

"This is their equivalent to state basketball or track, and they get stressed about it," Davis said. "They'll walk away with an educational experience and the critique to be a better musician."

Many high school participants get their first taste of college life at the festival. Judged performances take place in the Fine Arts Building and Memorial Union at MU. Lowry Mall acts as the hub for participants awaiting their performances or final ratings. The performers can be seen practicing their instruments in hopes of working out any last kinks before they're judged.

It's the first festival for Ethan Murphy, 15, a freshman at Kirksville High School. While he thinks he could have done better hitting the high-notes of his tuba solo, the experience of being at MU made the trip worthwhile.

"The buildings are just so cool to look at," Murphy said. "I could see myself as a student here after I graduate."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Pet gathering in Peace Park kicks off national Be Kind to Animals Week

By Katrina Ball

May 1, 2011 | 3:49 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Dogs ranging in size from a great Dane to a Chihuahua mix and one cat congregated out of the rain under trees in Peace Park on Sunday afternoon with their owners.

Pets in Peace, hosted by the Central Missouri Humane Society, kicked off the American Humane Association's national Be Kind to Animals Week. The event featured free nail trimmings for the animals by members of the MU College of Veterinary Medicine's Shelter Club.

Prizes for the oldest animals in attendance will be awarded but were not announced Sunday pending notification of the owners.

Casey Corbin, director of development for the Central Missouri Humane Society, said that despite the inclement weather, he was pleased with the turnout.

Leslie Gully, shelter relations assistant for the Central Missouri Humane Society, brought the only feline in attendance. Mango, a cat Gully fosters, is available for adoption and held her own in a crowd of dogs.

“I bring Mango to almost all the Humane Society events,” Gully said. “She meets all the dogs at an event, hisses and tries to scare them.”

The Humane Society plans to hold a raffle every day this week for anyone who adopts an animal from the shelter. The raffles will end with a grand prize drawing on Saturday. Gift certificates to Main Squeeze, Sycamore and Riversong Spa and Salon are among the daily prizes. The grand prize is a one-night stay at Dauphine Hotel Bed and Breakfast in Bonnots Mill.

Mammograms suggested for women in 40s

Written by Kathleen Doherty
HealthDay

4:13 AM (May 1, 2011)

A pair of studies released Friday could shake up the debate on whether American women should begin regular mammography screening in their 40s.

One study, presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Breast Surgeons in Washington, D.C., found that screening women age 40 to 49 with mammograms detected smaller breast cancers, with less chance of spread to the lymph nodes, than relying on clinical breast exams alone.

That finding runs counter to controversial recommendations issued late in 2009 by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, which advised that women at average risk for breast cancer do not have to begin regular mammographies until age 50.

A second study presented at the same meeting on Friday suggests that the USPSTF guidelines would unfavorably impact minority women in their 40s.

Dr. Paul Dale, chief of surgical oncology at the University of Missouri-Columbia and lead author of the study looking at early detection, said his view on the issue is clear: "I think women in their 40s should get mammography."

In their study, Dale and his colleagues looked at the medical records of almost 1,600 women treated for breast cancer over 10 years. The researchers focused on 311 women ages 40 to 49. Of these, 47 percent were diagnosed via mammography, while 53 percent were diagnosed without mammography. Those diagnosed by mammogram had smaller tumors. They also had less chance of the tumor having already moved into the lymph nodes. While about 25 percent of those who had mammograms had lymph node involvement, almost 56 percent of those who did not have mammography showed this type of cancer spread.

When the researchers focused on the five-year disease-free survival of women in their 40s, Dale found 94 percent of the mammogram-detected group had disease-free survival compared to 71 percent in the non-mammogram group.

According to Dale, the findings suggest that women in their 40s who develop breast cancer "are going to do better if they have a mammogram."

In the second study, researchers analyzed nearly 47,000 women with breast cancer. Of that, 22.6 percent were age 40 to 49, while 77.4 percent were 50 to 74.

"We looked at women who only had early breast cancer, and compared the younger, 40 to 49 group with an older population," explained Dr. Sharon Lum, from the Loma Linda University School of Medicine in Loma Linda, Calif.

"What we found was in the 40 to 49 group there was a greater proportion of minority women (with early cancers) than in the older group (of the same ethnicities)," she said. Therefore, "if you exclude younger women from mammography, it could disproportionately affect minority women."

Service Over Self volunteers find spiritual uplift through repairing homes

By Richard J. Alley, Saturday, April 30, 2011

On a chilly morning in March, the volunteers repairing the house in Binghamton stopped long enough to fill their bellies with sandwiches and chips and their souls with a testimony of faith from a colleague.

"It's much more than just repairing a house," said Samantha Stanford of Grenada, Miss., leading a team of student volunteers from the University of Missouri who were spending their spring break renovating a house on Hollywood Street.

This particular house will become the Eikon Ministries Intern House, a place for future community volunteers and interns to stay as they join in the work of Service Over Self, the nonprofit home-repair ministry that has been sharing the gospel in word and deed for 25 years.

What began in 1986 with a two-week service project by a youth group at Christ United Methodist Church has become a year-round, multid denominational ministry that has overseen the repair of more than 700 homes with more than 20,000 volunteers from 30 states.

That work won't stop today, even as SOS leaders, volunteers and supporters celebrate the organization's first quarter-century. Organizers have scheduled a neighborhood cleanup and various home repair projects from 8:30 a.m. to noon today in advance of this evening's celebration and concert.

"We're a Christian organization, and we look at the life of Jesus and see that he not only spoke to people about following him in a certain way, but he also reached out with his hands and touched people and healed people and met needs and loved people with both his words and his actions," said Philip Walkley, SOS executive director.

"So we seek to do that through our home repair ministry."

The volunteers, most of them high school or college students, work in teams to paint or plaster, patch roofs, fix plumbing or otherwise repair the homes of low-income residents of Binghamton. SOS is expanding to Orange Mound. There are spring camps for college students, summer camps for senior and junior high students, and fall camps for families, campus groups, Sunday schools or any groups willing to serve.

Last summer, SOS repaired Delois Hull's home, expanding the bathroom, repairing pipes in the walls, painting, sheetrocking, reroofing and installing insulation.

"I thank God because I couldn't afford it myself, and they did all this for me," said Hull, who has lived in her Binghamton home for 21 years.

"I feel comfortable in my house. I never allowed people to come in. I'd meet them at the door. But now people come out here to dinner. I had Thanksgiving dinner and Easter dinner here at my house, and I felt good letting people come into my house and enjoy it with me, and it's all thanks to SOS."

The volunteers didn't just rebuild Hull's bathroom; they also built relationships with her. Hull, a longtime member of the Church of God in Christ, participated in Bible study with the volunteers who renovated her house and is still in contact with many of them.

"I think I had the best group of people," she said. "I write letters all the time, and they tell me how their school is going and they're praying for me and I'm praying for them. Everybody's going to say they had the best group, but I had the best group. They went all out for my house."

Going all out goes both ways for SOS, whose vision statement is "Empowered persons. Transformed neighborhoods."

"It breaks down some stereotypes and some fears that a lot of people might have and associate with neighborhoods like Binghamton," Walkley said. "A lot of times these kids come on mission trips because they want to help other people, but a lot of times they end up walking away feeling like they got more out of it than the homeowner because maybe they see a faith and joy in the homeowner that they've never experienced."

Homeowners must apply for the program and complete some basic financial training to qualify. They also are asked to help with the repairs in whatever way they can.

"We had one lady who baked a cake for her team every week," Walkley said. "One of the homeowners we worked with was in the front yard with a hard hat on scooping shingles into a Dumpster with some teenage girls."

The seeds for SOS were planted in Appalachia, not Binghamton.

"I had experienced something like SOS in Eastern Kentucky, in Appalachia, a home-repair project, and it was very impactful and meaningful for my own life," said Tom Marino, who founded SOS when he was director of youth ministries at Christ United Methodist Church.

"We had taken the youth group from Christ Methodist to Appalachia for a couple of years to do that same thing, and we all realized that we've got this great need in Memphis that's very similar of people living in housing that was greatly dilapidated or in need."

Marino, now executive director of the Poplar Foundation, says SOS's two-fold mission is "serving homeowners in Memphis and helping teenagers realize maybe a bigger purpose for their lives."

That purpose extends beyond Memphis.

Doug Vignes volunteered for five summers at SOS and completed a yearlong internship. Now 26, Vignes has put his knowledge, expertise and devotion to work as construction director of a similar program called Blue Print Ministries in his hometown of San Antonio.

"I learned a lot of respect for other people's houses and their lives," Vignes said. "It's about meeting homeowners and hearing and learning their stories and getting to know them. It's an impactful relationship, and there's a lot to learn from everybody you come in contact with."



ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH **The Charlotte Observer**

A version of this story appeared in many outlets across the country.

Columbia unites to honor 1923 lynching victim

ALAN SCHER ZAGIER, Associated Press

Originally published May 1, 2011 at 12:30 a.m., updated May 1, 2011 at 7:24 a.m.

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — An overflow crowd gathered in Columbia at a historic black church to honor a University of Missouri janitor killed in the college town's last lynching in 1923.

Civic leaders have spent the past year organizing the tribute to James T. Scott. He was dragged from his jail cell to a public lynching before he could stand trial on charges of raping a white university professor's 14-year-old daughter.

Scott maintained his innocence to the end and said a cellmate confessed to the attack.

Several hundred people filled Second Missionary Baptist Church in downtown Columbia for Saturday's Scott tribute. A procession to the city's cemetery followed.

Event organizers quickly raised thousands of dollars for a headstone to mark Scott's grave that will explain his historical importance.

"We are here today not to mourn the circumstances of his passing, but to celebrate his life," said the Rev. Clyde Ruffin, a theater professor at Missouri who is also pastor of Second Missionary Baptist Church.

The memorial service included descendants of Herman Almstedt, the German professor who, convinced of Scott's innocence, unsuccessfully attempted to stop the murder after a mob stormed the city jail as police looked on. He was shouted down, threatened with his own lynching.

Ruffin and other civic leaders have spent the past year organizing the Scott tribute. After a memorial service that featured gospel hymns and tributes to Almstedt and a Missouri student

journalist who chronicled the case, the crowd marched with a police escort to Columbia's 190-year-old cemetery for an unveiling of the new headstone at Scott's grave.