BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — After weeks of waiting, Missouri’s move to the Southeastern Conference became official on Sunday.

The SEC released a statement saying the conference’s president and chancellors acted unanimously, and Missouri will join the league effective July 1, 2012.

“The Presidents and Chancellors of the Southeastern Conference are pleased to welcome the University of Missouri to the SEC,” Florida President Bernie Machen said in a statement. “The University of Missouri is a prestigious academic institution with a strong athletic tradition and a culture similar to our current institutions.”

Missouri will be leaving the Big 12, a conference it has been a part of since 1907, including its days as the Big Eight.

“The Southeastern Conference is a highly successful, stable, premier athletic conference that offers exciting opportunities for the University of Missouri,” Missouri Chancellor Brady J. Deaton said. “In joining the SEC, MU partners with universities distinguished for their academic programs and their emphasis on student success. The SEC will provide our student-athletes with top flight competition and unparalleled visibility. We came to this decision after careful consideration of the long-term best interests of our university.

“We believe the Southeastern Conference is an outstanding home for the Mizzou Tigers, and we take great pride in our association with this distinguished league.”

The addition of Missouri will increase SEC membership to 14 schools, including Texas A&M, which announced last month that it was also leaving the Big 12 for the SEC.

Asked what division Missouri would be in, Arkansas Athletic Director Jeff Long posted on his Twitter account that Missouri will be in the “East initially.”

Interim Big 12 Commissioner Chuck Neinas declined comment.

Sunday’s announcement comes as no surprise. Last month the Missouri board of curators gave Deaton the permission to change leagues and from that point on it seemed only a matter of time before the Tigers said goodbye to the Big 12.

Apparently, legal issues and other details took time to work out.
The Big 12 needed to have a replacement for Missouri lined up, because the conference needs 10 schools to fulfill its TV contracts.

The Big 12 took care of that and bid farewell to Missouri 10 days ago, when it invited West Virginia from the Big East to join the conference.

The league did not even list Missouri among the schools it anticipated would be competing in the Big 12 next year.

But despite what the SEC and Big 12 plan, the Big East still will have a say in when Missouri and West Virginia will be allowed to start competing in their new conference homes.

Big East Commissioner John Marinatto has been adamant about enforcing the league's 27-month notification period and holding West Virginia in the conference for the next two years.

West Virginia filed a lawsuit challenging that rule and the Big East countered with a lawsuit asking the courts to make the school abide by its contract.
Missouri officially will be member of the Southeastern Conference

Finally, Missouri has joined the Southeastern Conference.

A process that took several weeks and included multiple meetings of the school's curators, the SEC presidents and the Big 12 board of directors finally concluded Sunday. The SEC, in an unanimous vote of its CEOs, said the Tigers will join the conference effective July 1, 2012 with competition in all sports beginning next school year.

The latest move in a four-month dance of conference realignment leaves the Big 12 with 10 schools and takes the SEC to 14. That will allow the SEC to play with seven-team football divisions next year. It is unclear where Missouri will go. Texas A&M, another former Big 12 member, joined earlier this fall.

"The Presidents and Chancellors of the Southeastern Conference are pleased to welcome the University of Missouri to the SEC," said Dr. Bernie Machen, President of the SEC Presidents and Chancellors and president of the University of Florida. "The University of Missouri is a prestigious academic institution with a strong athletic tradition and a culture similar to our current institutions."

Said Missouri chancellor Brady Deaton in a statement:

"The Southeastern Conference is a highly successful, stable, premier athletic conference that offers exciting opportunities for the University of Missouri. In joining the SEC, MU partners with universities distinguished for their academic programs and their emphasis on student success. The SEC will provide our student-athletes with top flight competition and unparalleled visibility. We came to this decision after careful consideration of the long term best interests of our university. We believe the Southeastern Conference is an outstanding home for the Mizzou Tigers, and we take great pride in our association with this distinguished league."

The Tigers sponsor 20 varsity sports. Men's sports include baseball, basketball, football (4-5 this season after losing to Baylor on Saturday), golf, swimming and diving, wrestling, indoor and outdoor track and field and cross country. Women's sports include basketball, golf, gymnastics, soccer, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, indoor and outdoor track and field and cross
country and volleyball. Missouri participates in every sport sponsored by the SEC except men's tennis and the SEC sponsors every sport the Tigers participate in except wrestling.
SEC accepts Missouri for 2012-13

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- Bye-bye Big 12, hello SEC.

After weeks of private flirtations and the college sports' equivalent of prenuptial negotiations with their respective lawyers, Missouri and the Southeastern Conference took their mutual attraction public Sunday.

First the SEC released a statement welcoming Missouri as its newest member. Later there was a campus pep rally in Columbia, replete with a new SEC banner, the school's marching band and exploding confetti.

"We are pleased, and we are proud to welcome you to the family of the Southeastern Conference," SEC commissioner Mike Slive told hundreds of students and alumni packed into the campus union. "We know that homecoming is a special tradition here at Missouri. So let me say to the entire Missouri nation, 'Welcome to your new home.'"

Missouri will join the league effective July 1, 2012, by unanimous agreement of the SEC's presidents and chancellors, including Bernie Machen of Florida, who joined Slive at Sunday's announcement in Columbia.

Missouri will compete in the SEC's East division, according to Slive, though a cross-division rival in the conference's West division hasn't yet been chosen. The other East schools are Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Vanderbilt.

Missouri will be leaving the Big 12, a conference it has been a part of since 1907, including its days as the Big Eight and earlier incarnations such as the Big Six.

The school could also face the end of annual athletic contests with neighboring Big 12 survivor Kansas, a rivalry with roots in the Civil War. The teams first met on the football field in 1891, the sport's oldest traditional matchup west of the Mississippi River. Their college basketball battles also began in the 19th century.

The Big 12's uncertain future drove the move, said Missouri chancellor Brady Deaton, who until last month was the conference's board chairman -- and public face of the league's fight for survival after losing Nebraska (Big Ten) and Colorado (Pac-12) last year and later Texas A&M, which will join Missouri next year in a 14-team SEC.
"We were looking for long-term stability as a university and who we were associated with, who we're going to develop long-term partnerships with, where we could have financial security," said Deaton, who cited "continuing instability in the conference we were in" while avoiding any mention of the Big 12 by name.

The announcement came as no surprise after Missouri's governing board gave Deaton the permission to change leagues in early October and then granted him broad authority two weeks later to negotiate directly with the SEC.

From that point on, it seemed only a matter of time before the Tigers said goodbye to the Big 12 -- especially after an SEC vendor mistakenly posted a congratulatory press release on the conference website that welcomed Missouri. The premature announcement was hastily removed.

The delay was likely due to concerns over the timing of Missouri's departure as well as the amount of the financial penalty the school must pay the Big 12 for breaking its contract. A confidential report provided to The Associated Press suggested the school could owe the Big 12 as much as $26 million, though both Nebraska and Colorado negotiated significantly lower exit fees than what they were legally obligated to return.

Deaton said Missouri and the Big 12 have not determined amounts but that all such costs will be covered by the school, without help from its new conference.

The Big 12 needed to have a replacement for Missouri lined up, because the conference needs 10 schools to fulfill its TV contracts. The conference took care of that and bid farewell to Missouri 10 days ago, when it invited West Virginia from the Big East to join. The league did not even list Missouri among the schools it anticipated would be competing in the Big 12 next year. Texas Christian -- which had pledged a move to the Big East -- will instead join the Big 12, effectively taking the place of Texas A&M.

"The decision by the University of Missouri to leave the Big 12 Conference is disappointing," interim Big 12 commissioner Chuck Neinas said in a statement Sunday. "I personally believe this decision is a mistake and that Missouri is a better fit in the Big 12."

Despite what the SEC and Big 12 plan, the Big East could have a say in when Missouri and West Virginia will be allowed to start competing in their new conference homes.

Big East commissioner John Marinatto has been adamant about enforcing the league's 27-month notification period and holding West Virginia in the conference for the next two years. West Virginia recently filed a lawsuit challenging that rule and the Big East countered with a lawsuit asking the courts to make the school abide by its contract.

The Big East is in rebuilding mode now and is expected to start adding new members in the next few days. The league last week approved inviting Boise State, Navy and Air Force for football only and SMU, Houston and Central Florida for all sports.
Its goal is to form a 12-team football league, but even if all the schools it is targeting accept invitations, there are various hurdles that would have to be cleared -- including waiting periods and exit fees -- to have them in the Big East by 2012.

Deaton said he doesn't expect the legal dispute between West Virginia and the Big East to derail Missouri's plans for a quick exit, alluding to "assurances" that the Big 12 won't try to block an imminent Missouri move.

"While there's ongoing work to be done, we are confident that we will be able to successfully erase any concerns about those issues," he said.

News of Missouri's move wasn't received very well in Kansas, which released a statement by Deaton's counterpart decrying the "century-old conference rivalry(s) end." Like her men's basketball coach Bill Self, Kansas chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little suggested the Jayhawks' disappointment -- and Missouri's unspoken betrayal -- could scuttle the border showdowns.

"Missouri's decision may have implications for fans and for the Kansas City area, but it won't affect the long-term strength of the Big 12," she said.

Missouri athletic director Mike Alden, by contrast, spoke of his school's "tremendous amount of respect for the University of Kansas" and pledged to keep the annual rivalry alive in all sports.

A carry-over rivalry with the Aggies can only help Missouri's football recruiting efforts in Texas, which has become fertile ground for coach Gary Pinkel and his staff over the past decade.

Conversely, SEC coaches now have recruiting inroads to St. Louis and Kansas City.

"We can recruit where we want, but it's nice to have Texas and St. Louis and be able to say now that those areas you're going to be in playing in and have press coverage," Kentucky men's basketball coach John Calipari told ESPN.com on Sunday night. "I just think those two schools are like us -- with solid TV following and great fan support. Texas A&M and Missouri have unbelievable followings and great academic programs. I think they'll both come in and be NCAA tournament teams."

Georgia basketball coach Mark Fox said the addition of Missouri in particular is extremely good for the SEC.

"Mizzou adds more territory to our footprint, brings high quality academics and a good athletic program to our league," Fox said. "As a former assistant in the Big Eight, and as a guy who grew up in that region, I think I understand pretty well that we've added a good one."

In basketball, Arkansas will likely become Missouri's top SEC rival, with former Tigers coach Mike Anderson taking over the program this year after a successful stint in Columbia.
Calipari said he still wants to see the SEC add two more schools to get to 16, while Alabama coach Anthony Grant suggested revisiting the division split after the addition of Texas A&M and Missouri.

Vanderbilt vice chancellor David Williams, who oversees athletics, said he doesn't expect further SEC expansion— for now, at least.

"I think we're set at 14," Williams said. "Our thoughts were we need to go to 14 (after adding Texas A&M) for balance and scheduling."

He also acknowledged that further changes in the conference realignment landscape could easily scuttle that prediction.

"Actions push reactions. I don't know what happens elsewhere," Williams said.
Nov. 6, 2011 - Southeastern Conference commissioner Mike Slive (left) and University of Missouri Chancellor Brady J. Deaton smile as confetti flies during an announcement that Missouri will join the SEC. Missouri will join the conference effective July 1, 2012, with competition to begin in all sports for the 2012-13 academic year. (AP Photo/Jeff Roberson)

BY VAHE GREGORIAN • vgregorian@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8199 | Posted: Monday, November 7, 2011 12:40 am

COLUMBIA, Mo. • In what Mizzou Chancellor Brady Deaton described as a momentous, bold and defining moment in the history of the university, MU and the Southeastern Conference on Sunday at last directly and deliberately announced their future together.

"Welcome to your new home," SEC Commissioner Mike Slive said at a combined news conference and celebration at the MU Student Center.

Slive was alluding to Missouri's century-old homecoming tradition, even as MU was bidding farewell to a century-plus alliance with the Big 12 in its various compositions and perhaps bidding goodbye to one of the school's and the state's most cherished traditions: the heated rivalry with Kansas.

Yet the combination of turmoil in the Big 12 and what Deaton, Slive and other key Mizzou and SEC decision-makers saw as a compatible, financially sensible and energizing fit trumped other considerations.

"I grew up a Mizzou fan, I'm still a Mizzou fan, and other than when you play the Gators, I'll always be a Mizzou fan," said Florida President Bernie Machens, a Webster Groves native who chairs the SEC board of presidents and chancellors.
The crowd of about 1,500 or more cheered further when Machens added, "It looks like we might be playing you guys next year."

Ten days after the SEC inadvertently posted on its website a news release that MU had been admitted, Slive confirmed Missouri will be in the SEC Eastern division with Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Vanderbilt.

As for whether MU indeed will begin playing there next year, the SEC announced in a statement early Sunday that the change will begin July 1. But Deaton was less definitive when asked whether all details had been settled with the Big 12.

"While there's ongoing work to be done, we're confident that we'll be able to successfully erase any concerns about those issues," he said.

The Big 12, which already has lost Colorado, Nebraska and Texas A&M in the last 11 months, has said it needs to have 10 schools next year to fulfill its television contractual obligations.

Texas Christian will join the Big 12 next year, and West Virginia has been admitted. But West Virginia's current conference, the Big East, is trying to hold West Virginia to the 27-month notice of departure required by Big East bylaws. Each is suing the other over the issue, leaving the Big 12 membership roster in flux for next year.

"I personally believe this decision is a mistake and that Missouri is a better fit in the Big 12," Big 12 interim commissioner Chuck Neinas said in a statement that suggested the Big 12 yet is battling to keep MU another year in the event West Virginia can't get out. "Once we have received a formal notice of withdrawal from Missouri, we will furnish it to our board of directors. The board will review the situation and take appropriate action."

Of course, the Big 12 also omitted MU from a list of teams expected in the conference next year in its Oct. 28 news release announcing West Virginia's admission.

Much of the posturing might simply be seen as negotiating ploys for exit fees, which Deaton acknowledged had yet to be settled. Millions will be in the balance.

MU will be challenged to compete in most sports in the SEC, most visibly in football. SEC schools have won the last five national titles, and MU's athletics budget and stadium capacity at least initially will be in the bottom third of the SEC.

But the accent Sunday was the ways the league is a match with Missouri, which touches three SEC states — Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee.

"I think this culture stuff between the Midwest and the South is way overdone," Machens said, jokingly adding, "We have more Midwesterners in Florida than you do up here right now."
Slive noted that Missouri is among many land grant institutions in the SEC and that it enhances the SEC academically as the fourth of its 14 schools to enjoy membership in the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Numerous details remain to be sorted out and understood among the institutions, but MU and the SEC at least were ready to get started in earnest Sunday.

Alluding to Columbia institutions such as Shakespeare's and Booches, Slive said, "You're going to have to show us where all that is, but we're going to find it."

Even as MU leaves its history behind, maybe more of it than it would like, MU reiterated Sunday that it wants to maintain the competition with Kansas that began on the football fields in 1891 and has roots to the Civil War.

But Kansas said on its official Facebook and Twitter pages: "Missouri forfeits a century-old rivalry. We win."
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU Chancellor Deaton celebrates Missouri's 'historic' move to SEC

By Harry Plumer

November 6, 2011 | 8:52 p.m. CST

Southeastern Conference Commissioner Mike Slive and MU Chancellor Brady Deaton celebrate Sunday evening at the MU Student Center after the formal announcement that Missouri will join the SEC effective July 1, 2012.

COLUMBIA — Years of discussion, weeks of speculation and seemingly endless anticipation all disappeared Sunday.

Finally, Missouri officially had a new home for its athletic program effective July 1, 2012 — the Southeastern Conference.

Missouri's part in the ongoing conference realignment musical chairs ended in a combination between pep rally and press conference at the MU Student Center, complete with appearances from Marching Mizzou, the Golden Girls and student athletes from nearly every sport.
MU Chancellor Brady Deaton called the moment "historic" three times in his opening statement.

"We know the tradition of homecoming is very strong here at Missouri," SEC Commissioner Mike Slive said. "Let me say to the entire Missouri nation, 'Welcome to your new home.'"

After opening statements, Slive and Deaton posed for a photo opportunity as confetti shot from a cannon and showered the two men as well as the crowd, which broke into wild applause.

Despite the pomp of the celebration, questions still surround Missouri's departure from the Big 12. Those questions weren't answered in great detail by Deaton or Athletics Director Mike Alden.

There are no guarantees that the Big 12 is going to let Missouri go immediately or cheaply. Deaton declined to discuss any numbers related to exit fees, but even the July 1, 2012, departure date is a question mark at this point.

According to a statement released by Interim Big 12 Commissioner Chuck Neinas, Missouri had yet to submit a letter of withdrawal to the Big 12 as of Sunday afternoon.

"Once we have received a formal notice of withdrawal from Missouri, we will furnish it to our board of directors," the statement read. "The board will review the situation and take appropriate action."

Deaton didn't have anything specific to say regarding that aspect either.

"Let me say that we've had discussions on that issue and been given assurances and discussions and while there's ongoing work to be done, we're confident that we will be able to successfully erase any concerns about those issues," he said. "We hope that that can be resolved effectively with other teams and other conference alignments."

One thing that was settled was that Missouri would play in the SEC East division.

"That allows us to maintain our divisional rivalries, and I think serves us very, very well at this point with the least amount of disruption," Slive said.

Disruption and instability are exactly what Missouri was looking to avoid. Three schools – Nebraska, Colorado and Texas A&M – departed from the league this past year. No school has left the SEC recently.
"We were looking for long-term stability as a university," Deaton said.

That stability will include future facility upgrades, according to Alden.

"Certainly, we understand that there's a constant commitment toward what we're trying to do, and we've seen that, let's say, over the course of the last 10 or 15 years," Alden said. "I will tell you that stepping into the SEC, it's important that we recognize how important that is."

In the SEC East Division, Missouri will be matched up with South Carolina, Georgia, Vanderbilt, Florida, Tennessee and Kentucky.

Missouri will have a "cross-division" rival from the SEC West that it plays in football each season, but it is has yet to be determined who that will be, Slive said. Speculation is that it will either be Texas A&M, which is also new to the league, or Arkansas, Missouri’s most natural geographic rival in the SEC.

As far as old rivals go, Alden made it clear that Missouri would like to continue playing its most traditional rival: Kansas.

"We have a tremendous respect for the University of Kansas. It is our hope and our intention that we have an opportunity to play against the University of Kansas for many years to come," Alden said. "I think that to suggest that conference affiliation be a requirement ... I don’t know that necessarily holds water."

Kansas Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little stayed diplomatic with a statement on KU’s website.

"We're sorry to see a century-old conference rivalry end. Missouri's decision may have implications for fans and for the Kansas City area, but it won't affect the long-term strength of the Big 12," the statement read.

The university's news bureau, however, wasn't as tactful on its Twitter feed.

"Missouri forfeits a century-old rivalry. We win. #kubbalk #kufball #mizzou," the tweet from @KUNews read.

Only time will tell what happens to the rivalry.

What is assured for now is that the waiting for the SEC decision is finally over.
Mizzou says move to SEC is about 'stability'

BY VAHE GREGORIAN • vgregorian@post-dispatch.com | Posted: Monday, November 7, 2011 12:10 am

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Mizzou's adventurous maneuver from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference is about many things.

"This move is the result of the university's detailed and thorough process of identifying the best opportunity for long-term stability in the future," Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon said in a statement Sunday.

Indeed, the Big 12 has been in near-constant tumult over much of the last 18 months as long-simmering issues bubbled to the surface in the realignment scramble spawned by Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany's statement in late 2009 that the league was studying expansion.

After Nebraska announced in the summer of 2010 it was leaving for the Big Ten and Colorado for what would become the Pac-12, a sense of peace briefly prevailed before all was undone by Texas A&M's issues with Texas' Longhorn Network and further ruptured by Oklahoma President David Boren's comments in early September that Oklahoma would explore options.

All of which, MU athletics director Mike Alden said Sunday, left MU considering such issues as who is at the table, how much they are really committed and whether all are being treated equally.

And it led, SEC commissioner Mike Slive said Sunday, to MU contacting the SEC "very early in the football season. We began some conversations."

In the fanfare of the announcement Sunday, no one wanted to talk much about an obvious corollary to the pursuit of stability: money.

But between what MU might face in exit fees from the Big 12, what it stands to make in the SEC and what it will have to upgrade to compete in the SEC, money, too, is and will be a factor going forward.

The Big 12 announced in September 2010 that Nebraska would give up $9.25 million of its final year of conference income and Colorado $6.86 million of its income after the league initially sought $19.4 million and $15 million per the formula in its bylaws.
The withholding from Texas A&M, also SEC-bound, has yet to be settled, and A&M president R. Bowen Loftin told the Post-Dispatch on Oct. 26 that he had suggested to MU chancellor Brady Deaton that the two institutions work in concert on the matter if MU were to leave.

It's not known whether Deaton has or will take up Loftin's offer, and on Sunday he said only that the matter had not been resolved and that MU understands the league bylaws "regarding some range of exit fees."

Last month, a Mizzou-produced document leaked to The Associated Press might have shed some light on that understanding. It said Mizzou could risk losing $25.9 million if it leaves next year and $10.4 million if it goes in 2013.

The same document also projected MU would make $17.26 million in conference-distributed revenue in fiscal year 2012 in the Big 12 and $19.25 million in the same time frame in the SEC.

It also suggested Missouri could make up to $12 million more a year in the SEC, which is in the third year of a 15-year television contract with CBS and ESPN that allows for "look-ins" for renegotiation.

Whatever the full basis of the reasoning, in part it's because the SEC distributes revenue equally as opposed to a model the Big 12 only now is changing, which distributed revenue based essentially on the number of television appearances made by individual institutions.

"One of the great hallmarks of this league is that when you're a member of the SEC, you are a member in every sense of the word. ... We share in just everything that we do in an equal way," Slive said, adding, "In our bylaws, there's about half a sentence about what it takes to leave. If you don't want to be with us, you don't have to be with us. And nobody left."

To be in the league, though, MU will have to ratchet up its athletics budget, which at about $65 million is in the lower third of the SEC.

And it would do well to add amenities and seats at Faurot Field, where the current capacity is just over 70,000 in a league that features five schools with a typically filled capacity of about 90,000 or more.

Alden on Sunday did not directly answer questions about whether MU already has initiated a campaign for that cause, saying only that the school may need to take its ongoing efforts and "turn that up even another notch."

Deaton referred to expanding facilities if the fan base "responds in a way that makes that worthwhile."
SEC welcomes Mizzou

By Mike DeArmond - Posted on 06 November 2011

Finally, inevitably, the Southeastern Conference on Sunday morning announced it has unanimously approved Missouri as its 14th member.

And, in what could be considered as a shot across the bow of the Big 12 Conference, SEC commissioner Mike Slive said in the league statement:

“We look forward to having the Tigers compete in our league starting in 2012.”

The Big 12 Conference, which on Sept. 25 also lost Texas A&M to the SEC for next season, has frequently inferred Missouri might not be free to depart the Big 12 until 2013. In fact, interim Big 12 commissioner Chuck Neinas said as much.

There was no reference nor any acknowledgement of that in the SEC statement Sunday morning. However, the SEC and Missouri jointly confirmed Mizzou plans to join the SEC effective July 1, 2012 and begin competition in all its sports for the 2012-2013 academic year.

The news — announced around 9:30 a.m. central time — spread quickly, especially on American Airlines flight 1627 from Dallas to Kansas City.

Several Missouri fans were on board and got the news in midair or as soon as they hit the terminal at MCI.

“Now that I live in the Midwest I love getting more exposure to the SEC,” said Sam Mowad, 39, who works for Harrah’s in Kansas City and is a graduate of SEC power LSU. “I hope it doesn’t mess up the Border War (with Kansas) and what goes on at Arrowhead, and the benefits that Kansas City gets especially when it comes to basketball.”

On that same flight was Harry Hite, of Belton, and the grandfather of Missouri linebacker Andrew Wilson. He too was pleased by the news upon returning from Waco and Missouri’s 42-39 loss to Baylor.

“I think it’ll be new and exciting,” Hite said.

“There maybe some down side. We will see. Kansas City is a little bit wondering about it.
"But I’m glad and I’m glad its over."

That put some humanity of boilerplate that had so long been anticipated.

"The Presidents and Chancellors of the Southeastern Conference are pleased to welcome the University of Missouri to the SEC," said Dr. Bernie Machen, President of the SEC Presidents and Chancellors board and president of the University of Florida. "The University of Missouri is a prestigious academic institution with a strong athletic tradition and a culture similar to our current institutions."

Machen is a graduate of Webster Groves High School in St. Louis and has long had a close relationship with Brady Deaton, the Missouri chancellor who was authorized by the MU Board of Curators to guide the school through negotiations with the SEC.

In early September The Star reported Missouri has an informal offer from the SEC, but the process of negotiating the details had stretched on for more than two months.

Deaton, in a statement of his own, underlined the primary reason Missouri sought to depart the Big 12 Conference, which now has lost Colorado, Nebraska, Texas A&M and Missouri to other conferences in the past 16 months.

"The Southeastern Conference is a highly successful, stable, premier athletic conference that offers exciting opportunities for the University of Missouri," Deaton said. "In joining the SEC, MU partners with universities distinguished for their academic programs and their emphasis on student success. The SEC will provide our student-athletes with top flight competition and unparalleled visibility.

"We came to this decision after careful consideration of the long term best interests of our university. We believe the Southeastern Conference is an outstanding home for the Mizzou Tigers, and we take great pride in our association with this distinguished league."

Slive said: "I am pleased to officially welcome the University of Missouri to the SEC family on behalf of our presidents, chancellors, athletics directors, students and fans. Missouri is an outstanding academic institution with a strong athletic program."

A celebration/press conference featuring Machen, Deaton, MU athletic director Mike Alden and Slive will be held in Columbia today at 4:30 p.m.
Missouri pulls up Midwestern sports roots for SEC stability

By MIKE DeARMOND

COLUMBIA | For more than 100 years, the University of Missouri planted its athletic and academic feet in the rich earth of America’s heartland.

You simply didn’t get more Midwestern than Ol’ Mizzou, which, thanks to a pledge of $117,921 in cash and land by the citizens of Boone County in 1839, became the first public university west of the Mississippi River.

On Sunday that culture changed, taking on the scent of magnolias and the athletic traditions of the modern South.

Missouri took one last look over its shoulder at a Big 12 Conference that had lost Colorado, Nebraska and Texas A&M in the past 16 months while adding TCU and West Virginia in whirlwind courtships beset by dueling lawsuits.

Then with a smile that spread across the vast lobby of the MU Student Center, Missouri Chancellor Brady Deaton pledged the Tigers to the Southeastern Conference with an exuberance that must have stung old Big 12 friends and foes alike.

“This is an opportunity to fulfill the expectations and the promise and the potential of the University of Missouri and its athletic program,” Deaton said, “in a way that we have not had the opportunity in the past to do.”

Missouri beat Texas A&M in football 10 days ago and will join the Aggies in officially becoming SEC members July 1. The Tigers will be in the SEC East Division, which consists of Kentucky, Vanderbilt, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina and Florida.

A&M will join LSU, Alabama, Auburn, Mississippi, Mississippi State and Arkansas in the West Division.

SEC football teams currently play each of their division opponents and one permanent cross-division rival once every season. SEC commissioner Mike Slive, who also appeared at the rally, said Missouri’s cross-division opponents were not yet set.
Critics of the move — which Slive said was the result of an inquiry made by Missouri in early September — have often suggested MU is neither a competitive nor a cultural fit with the SEC.

It does not help that Missouri’s football team is 4-5 and faces a battle to qualify for what has become an expected bowl appearance under coach Gary Pinkel. But Pinkel’s success at Missouri has made him the nation’s 11th-highest-paid football coach.

As for academics, the SEC’s credentials will improve with the addition of Missouri and Texas A&M. Both are members of the prestigious 61-member American Association of Universities and will join Florida and Vanderbilt to give the SEC four AAU members next year, more than the Big 12’s remaining three — Iowa State, Kansas and Texas.

Bernie Machen, president of the SEC presidents and chancellors board and president of the University of Florida, noted that having graduated from Webster Groves High School outside St. Louis, he saw more commonalities than differences in Missouri and its new neighbors.

“This culture stuff,” Machen said, “between the Midwest and the Southeast, is way overdone.”

You can argue over why this has come to pass — whether Mizzou is making a mistake or whether it felt it had no choice but to walk away from a conference it felt was controlled by the whims of the University of Texas and had up to eight of its teams either leave or explore opportunities to do so.

You’ll be sorry, Mizzou, some are saying. You’re going to be an outsider in the SEC.

That certainly is a point Norm Stewart — the pride of his native Shelbyville, Mo. — first thought about.

“The fans are going to be the concern,” said Stewart, who as a pitcher helped Missouri win the 1954 College World Series, who as a basketball player at Mizzou was a Helms Foundation All-American in 1956, and who as a basketball coach won 634 games at Missouri and five Big Eight titles.

“Our fans. ... The travel. There are a lot of places in our league (the Big 12) that people get to.”

Jon Sundvold — once a young, sharp-shooting guard out of Blue Springs who played on four straight Big Eight basketball championship teams for Stewart before going onto the NBA and then dual careers in finance and broadcasting — spoke to the tradition that will be lost in this move.

Missouri, along with Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Washington University, formed the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association in January 1907 at the Midland Hotel. That conference evolved into the Big Six, Big Seven and Big Eight before merging with four members of the Southwest Conference to form the Big 12 before the 1996-97 season.
The Tigers' departure will leave KU as the only remaining member of that 1907 group in the Big 12.

"Any time you leave a league you only keep your tradition by your own fans," Sundvold said. "Much like Nebraska did in the Big Ten.

"The Big Ten fans care very little or nothing about the tradition of Nebraska. They really can't go anywhere else in their league and talk about their tradition.

"I think that's very similar to what Missouri will go through in the SEC. No matter what that tradition is, they'll lose all that. And they'll never get that back."

Those concerns were drowned out Sunday by the celebration in Columbia.

"We're not abandoning our past at all," Deaton said. "In fact, we're building upon it and we're fulfilling that historical, frontier tradition that's marked the University of Missouri from its very beginning."

Although the official announcement of Missouri's move to the SEC came Sunday, the landscape seemed destined to change Oct. 4 after a four-hour closed session of the Board of Curators in St. Louis. The board authorized Deaton to explore alternatives to the Big 12.

Deaton said he was flooded with emails and that this move came in response to those who demanded it.

The protracted nature of the negotiations helped create hard feelings in some of Missouri's Big 12 contemporaries.

That continued Sunday with a dismissive statement from University of Kansas chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little that implied the Big 12 would be fine or even better without Missouri. KU athletic director Sheahon Zenger echoed that sentiment.

"This news doesn't surprise us. We wish Missouri all the best in the future," he said. "The University of Kansas can now focus on TCU, West Virginia University and the other members of the Big 12 Conference who choose to be with us."

Alden expressed hope that Kansas would continue to play Missouri as a nonconference opponent.

"To suggest that to have conference affiliation be a requirement by why one would have to continue to participate against another institution," Alden said, "I don't know if that necessarily holds water."

Alden promised a bigger commitment to expanding MU's sports facilities and increasing travel budgets, which will have to accommodate longer trips to SEC campuses.
The cost of leaving the Big 12 has not been agreed to, Deaton said. He added the financial burden — with some estimates as low as $14 million and as high as $30 million — would be Missouri’s responsibility.

Missouri received $10.4 million in Big 12-generated revenue for the 2009-10 academic year, based on the Tigers’ television, bowl game and NCAA basketball tournament appearances. The SEC’s average share to each of its schools for that year was $18.3 million.

Ultimately, Deaton focused on the uncertainty of remaining in a Big 12 whose traditions less and less seemed as important for Missouri as compared with finding a firm foundation for the next 100 years.

“'We looked at the continuing instability of the conference we were in,' Deaton said. ‘Now we are taking a step with one of the fastest-growing regions of the country and one of the most promising, illustrious, athletic conferences in our country today. The Southeastern Conference."

“And we’re very proud to be where we are.”
It's official: SEC welcomes Missouri

By DAVE MATTER
Published November 6, 2011 at 9:41 a.m. Updated November 6, 2011 at 10:35 p.m.

Coming straight from Birmingham, Ala., and sporting a bright gold tie, Southeastern Conference Commissioner Mike Slive forever changed the course of the University of Missouri with one sentence Sunday.

"Ladies and gentleman," he told an overflow crowd gathered at the MU Student Center, "we are pleased and we are proud to welcome you to the family of the Southeastern Conference."

By then, the worst-kept secret in college sports had already been revealed, but the presence of Slive and Florida President Bernie Machen in Columbia Sunday punctuated the school's historic move, one that was celebrated with a pep rally production in the center of campus. Trailing behind Marching Mizzou as it blasted the school fight song, Slive and Machen joined MU campus leaders for what was billed as a public celebration and press conference to announce Missouri as the SEC's 14th member, a move both parties expect to be effective July 1, 2012.

In a press release posted on the SEC website Sunday morning, the league announced that its presidents and chancellors voted unanimously to add Missouri, with competition to begin in all sports for the 2012-13 academic year.

"We were that first university west of the Mississippi river, setting the pace for a nation as it developed," MU Chancellor Brady Deaton said in a prepared statement before a crowd of MU athletes, coaches, students and fans. "Now we are taking a step with one of the fastest growing regions in the country in one of the most promising illustrious athletic conferences in our country today, the Southeastern Conference. And we're very proud to be where we are."

Slive confirmed earlier reports that Missouri will indeed be part of the SEC Eastern Division, joining Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina, Tennessee and Vanderbilt. The SEC East makes less sense geographically, but with fellow Big 12 exile Texas A&M set to join the Western Division, the SEC can maintain historical cross-division rivalries by shipping MU east. Slive said an SEC transition team is working on future schedules to determine which Western Division member MU will play annually as a permanent football rival. Texas A&M figures to be the leading candidate.

Deaton said Missouri and the Big 12 have not settled on an exit penalty, but he does not expect any legal hurdles brought about by the Big 12 or its existing members to impede MU joining the SEC next year.

"While there's ongoing work to be done, we're confident we'll be able to successfully erase any concerns about those issues," he said.
Missouri’s conference migration has been in the works for weeks, but it was on Oct. 21 in Kansas City when critical steps were taken. That’s when the UM System Board of Curators met for a third time in a month to discuss the conference situation and agreed to grant Deaton authority to handle negotiations for the remainder of the process. By that point, Deaton had stepped down as the chairman of the Big 12 board of directors and stopped participating in significant conference policy decisions.

MU’s entry into the SEC severs a century-long association with original members of the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association, which formed in 1907 and reconfigured into what became the Big Six, Big Eight and, in 1996, the Big 12. The Big 12 has been picked apart since the summer of 2010 as Nebraska (Big Ten), Colorado (Pac-12) and Texas A&M (SEC) preceded Missouri’s departure.

Deaton and Athletic Director Mike Alden touched briefly on the Big 12’s divisive issues that led Missouri to contact the SEC about applying for membership. Missouri initiated the contact “very early during the football season,” Slive said.

“We were looking for long-term stability as a university, who we were associated with, who we were going to develop long-term partnerships with, who we could have financial security in our planning,” Deaton said.

Alden said MU’s decision to leave the Big 12 was less about making more money in the SEC and more about equality and security. He described the Big 12’s insistence on members granting their media rights to the conference for a certain number of years as “kind of like a prenup.”

“That’s not necessarily something we see as being strong for what you’re looking for in a league,” he said.

Machen, a St. Louis native who also serves as president of the SEC presidents and chancellors, said MU will be “a fully functioning member of the SEC” starting next year. Slive confirmed, saying MU will immediately take home the same share of league-generated revenue as current SEC members.

“One of the great hallmarks of this league is that when you’re a member of the SEC you are a member in every sense of the word,” Slive said.

In a statement released shortly after MU announced its plans to leave for the SEC, interim Big 12 Commissioner Chuck Neinas called the decision disappointing.

“Mizzou has been a valuable member, with a Conference connection to schools in the Big 12 that dates back to 1907,” Neinas’ statement read. “I personally believe this decision is a mistake and that Missouri is a better fit in the Big 12. Once we have received a formal notice of withdrawal from Missouri, we will furnish it to our Board of Directors. The Board will review the situation and take appropriate action.”

Among the unresolved issues is Missouri’s century-old rivalry with Kansas. KU officials and coaches have indicated they’re not interested in playing Missouri in non-conference games, a sentiment Alden said he hopes will change.

Deaton’s opening remarks touched on a similar desire to bridge Missouri’s past with its future, which becomes MU’s next challenge now that its future course is defined.

“We’re not abandoning our past at all,” Deaton said. “In fact we’re expanding upon it. And we’re fulfilling that historical frontier tradition that has marked the University of Missouri from its very beginning. And we’re building a new future, one that we can be very proud of and that we’re here to celebrate today with a spirit of inclusivity.”
At Student Center, cheers of 'MIZ-ZOU' for Missouri's move to SEC

By Lindsey Armentrout
November 6, 2011 | 7:31 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Whistles, clapping and loud cheers of "MIZ-ZOU" resounded through a crowd of people wearing black and gold Sunday night at the MU Student Center, as Missouri made its official move from the Big 12 to the SEC.

Cameras and cell phones out, students, alumni and fans crowded closely toward the makeshift stage or stood on tables and chairs. Others overlooked from the third floor as the celebration took place. The excitement throughout the room never wavered. Claps and cheers followed each address to the crowd of supporters.

Families and friends seemed excited about the move and hope for a bright future in the SEC.

"The move to the SEC will bring stability and the celebration was pretty awesome. That's the only way to describe it," said Willie Hamm, an MU fan.

Not only were supporters excited for the transition of athletics but also for the university as a whole.

"It's a very exciting day," said Katie Bradley, an MU alumnus. "The ceremony was really great and as for the move from an institutional standpoint, I think Commissioner Slive really welcomed us and appreciates what the institution brings not only in athletics but as a land grant university that we are."

The exciting and hopeful atmosphere was constant, even as the celebration ended. The room echoed with MU's fight song. As the band played and the enthusiastic crowd participated, a small cannon burst showering them with black and gold confetti.

"I think it's special how they implemented the traditions of the SEC and Mizzou," said Corinne Dunn, an MU student. "It will be a great move in general."
The Southeastern Conference announced Missouri would join its ranks via a news release on its website Sunday morning. The announcement, the latest development in the conference realignment saga, came after a complicated back-and-forth on what would happen to the Big 12 Conference and weeks of speculation that Missouri would leave the Big 12 for the SEC.

Regardless of whose fault it is — and news outlets like ESPN have theories on the subject that often include Texas and Oklahoma — Missouri is metaphorically packing its bags for the Deep South.

The Tigers will face some tougher opponents — such as Florida, Alabama, Auburn and Louisiana State — farther from home. The move also potentially ends Missouri's longstanding rivalry with Kansas, as lamented by the university's chancellor.

Grantland writer and former Missourian sports reporter Robert Mays offers insight into whether Missouri will mesh with the SEC. The football culture in Columbia does not quite compare to the level of fanaticism found in the SEC. However, the school does fit in with SEC universities off the field, ranking sixth-highest in academic standing.

Recruiting is one of the more uncertain issues surrounding the move. Being in a conference with Texas schools has given Missouri a direct connection to one of the most important states for football recruiting, and moving to the SEC could disrupt that. However, AOL Sporting News points out that changing conferences also gives Missouri access to a new frontier of recruits in the Deep South.

For the SEC, the addition of Missouri generates some exciting prospects, including potentially creating a separate TV network, as reported by CBS Sports. The SEC's website also points to great games Missouri has played against SEC schools, although the Tigers haven't played many of them in decades.
Ultimately, the move means increased stability and more money in Missouri's future. According to documents obtained by The Associated Press, a move to the SEC could mean $2 million more in revenue each year for Missouri or up to $12 million if the SEC renegotiates its TV rights.

And although the future of the Big 12 remains uncertain, the Kansas City Star said the SEC has been very stable because of its equal partnership approach. It remains to be seen how Missouri will fit in with its new competitive home.
Chuck Mehrer likes to say he bleeds black and gold, and this is only false in the literal sense. Hardcore Missouri fans will recognize his name. Mehrer's father, also Chuck, played defensive line and won the 1956 game against Kansas with a last-minute safety.

Chuck was born at the hospital on Mizzou's campus the next year, and every morning came into the living room and looked at the crossbar from that KU game, hanging on the wall with the words: CHUCK MEHRER DEC. 1, 1956 MU 15 KU 13

A few years ago, Mehrer and his four siblings pooled money together and had the same inscription put on a brick in front of the MU Alumni Center.

Now that Missouri's move to the Southeastern Conference is official, Mehrer is so angry at the school he loves that he wants the brick ripped out. He is promising MU will not get another dime from one of the most treasured names in school history.

"I'm done with them," he says. "I was raised on this, and I know it's an emotional decision for me, but I'm just thoroughly disgusted they would even consider giving all this up just for dollars."

This is the inner conflict that MU must now manage. The easy narrative is that all Mizzou fans are celebrating the SEC glitz and stability, but that's not true.

We've all known that this day was coming for months. Now that it finally happened, at least two states and three fan bases will begin to work through the complicated and layered emotions of a decision that permanently changes Kansas City sports.

... every word you hear about billion-dollar television contracts and $25 million payouts to schools only dilutes the message. Money and stability are convenient talking points, but Big 12 contracts are about to inflate and, as the only major program in a state with 6 million people and two major TV markets, MU would never be left out of a power conference.
This is about emotion. Ego. Insecurity. Pettiness. Facts are misrepresented, or distorted to fit specific and inherently biased perspectives. This is happening on all sides. And it’s OK.

College sports are beautiful because of the emotion.

“Missouri forfeits a century-old rivalry,” says KU’s official Facebook status and Twitter feed. “We win.”

That’s transparent pandering, of course, not to mention delusional and dishonest, but it’s also no worse than some of what’s being said around Mizzou. Nothing brings out self-serving hallucinations like college sports.

Mizzou is a better cultural fit in the Big 12 and has no historical ties to the SEC, so it is not stronger selling a product in a new league. The Tigers go from perhaps the third- or fourth-best league in college football to the undisputed best, so access to the Bowl Championship Series will be more difficult and recruiting ties to Texas strained.

The Big 12 failed Missouri in some clear and important ways, but Missouri also failed the league to which it pledged “proud” membership just 17 months ago.

There are no winners in this, just different sides pointing out the failings of the other.

Locally, the most important thing is how this impacts the Missouri-Kansas rivalry. It won’t be played after this academic year, and each school’s leaders have done just enough for their fans to blame the other side.

That’s fine, of course, all part of the fun. But what nobody seems to notice is that that ending the football and basketball games doesn’t end the rivalry — it enhances the rivalry.

The Border War is now the Border Cold War, insults tossed across the state line from message boards and barstools.

The sentiment from non-MU fans saying good riddance to the Tigers, don’t let the door hit your tail on the way out, may feel good to say but also misses the point. Mizzou isn’t leaving Kansas City, isn’t losing its presence locally.

Recruiting strongholds will remain. It is still a local school whose teams will play at least half their games within a short drive, and a few more in Kansas City.

The emotions on all sides surrounding Mizzou’s decision will be worked through in a very raw, real and public way. And anybody who attempts to paint any side with absolutes will be missing the nuance of one of the best rivalries in college sports.

Because even among Mizzou diehards, there is no consensus.

Even within the Mehrer family.
This will be one of the hardest decisions of Chuck Mehrer’s life. He knows this. His father’s passing five years ago only makes it harder, because the five Mehrers agree they should do what he would want and not what they think is right.

An on this point, they are split.

One of the brothers agrees with Chuck. Forget MU. If money is driving them to another league, they’ll do it without the Mehrers’ support. Leaving the Big 12 means MU is becoming a different school from the one their father knew.

Another brother disagrees. MU is only doing what’s best, only making a logical decision that will strengthen the school’s future. This is exactly what their father would want from the school he loved.

Chuck still needs to get in touch with his sister and other brother. Majority wins, Chuck figures, but this whole thing already has him in a terrible spot, permanently at odds with the only institution he’s ever truly loved.

This is one intimate example of the emotions that will be worked through across the Midwest in the coming weeks and months and years.

“I hate to say this, but I’m kind of like KU in this situation,” Mehrer says. “I wish them the best, but I’m not really going to follow them anymore. To me, it won’t be the same thing without the Big 12.”
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Columbia residents speak out about Missouri joining SEC

By Kelly Cohen
November 6, 2011 | 12:54 p.m. CST

MU students and Columbia residents share their thoughts on the news that Missouri will join the Southeastern Conference in 2012.

- "We will be a good warm-up team for the other teams. We are now a small fish in a big pond." — Steve Reeves
- "The SEC is a great league, but I wanted us to join the Big 10. I think we will get stomped in most games." — Merritt Moll
- "I think it's good for our sports in the long run because we will get better recruits. But my two gripes are that I still want to play Kansas and we will now have to adjust to be in a different culture." — Mark White
- "It's kind of stupid. We are definitely not ready to join the SEC." — John Tenny
- "I don't know much about it, but I think it's the wisest decision we could have made at the time. But we are going to face a lot of uproar at the beginning." — Jaime Henry-White

- "I would have preferred to have joined the Big 10, but I understand that we wanted the stability of a conference like the SEC. I thought we would have stayed for the history of the Big 12, but I do believe we will be better off long term." — Brian Bourne
- "I don't think this move improves academics, books or overall balance. It will cost us more money with no return." — James Stilwell
- "I have mixed feelings. I believe the tradition will go away, but I understand why we left the conference because of Texas and Oklahoma." — Joe Burger
Behind Mizzou’s big sports move is agriculture economics expert

By BLAIR KERKHOFF

COLUMBIA | Missouri chancellor Brady Deaton handed a Tigers football helmet to Southeastern Conference commissioner Mike Slive, and on cue, confetti was released from overhead.

It’s a scene Slive will repeat next month when the conference crowns a football champion, but on Sunday the celebration signaled an invitation: Missouri to the SEC.

And for all in the university’s community responsible for this momentous occasion, from athletic officials to school administrators and the Board of Curators, the man who wears the public face of the move and was delegated the authority to move from the Big 12 is an agricultural economics major who speaks fluent Thai.

Little about Deaton’s background suggests that he would one day be the central figure in perhaps the biggest sports story in the Tigers’ history.

Deaton received an undergraduate degree in agriculture at Kentucky but interrupted his studies to spend two years in the Peace Corps in Thailand. He also spent time in Colombia and Ecuador. He got a master’s in international diplomacy and added a master’s and doctorate degrees in agricultural economics at Wisconsin.

Deaton taught at Tennessee and Virginia Tech before joining Missouri’s faculty in 1989 as a professor and chair of the Agricultural Economics department.

And athletics comes into play...?

It doesn’t, at least until Deaton became Missouri’s chancellor in 2004 and, by extension, Missouri’s first fan.

High-stakes conference realignment, with no less than the university’s athletic financial viability on the line, has pushed schools’ chief executives into the sports pages and, in happy moments, confetti showers. In football film-review parlance, Deaton has graded out well, say those who love Mizzou.
“He’ll have a wonderful legacy, and this will be a part of it,” said Steve Owens, interim president of the University of Missouri system.

With Missouri coaches and athletes joining students in a packed Student Center, Deaton and Mizzou athletic director Mike Alden teamed with Slive and Florida president Bernie Machen, chair of the SEC presidents and chancellors, for a news conference and pep rally. None of them had been in a more difficult spot than Deaton.

Only two months earlier, Deaton chaired the Big 12 board of directors and was charged with helping keep the conference together in the face of losing Texas A&M to the SEC. But in early October, Deaton resigned the post to avoid a conflict as the Tigers’ SEC candidacy was heating up.

The last month was spent analyzing the move, financially and historically. Twice Sunday, Deaton referred to Missouri’s role as the first state university founded west of the Mississippi, the first established after the Louisiana Purchase.

Throughout the process, Deaton was deliberate and thoughtful. Some wondered why it took Missouri this long to make a decision that seemed inevitable once Deaton separated himself from the Big 12. Owens said Deaton’s approach was the proper one.

“He’s been very thorough and very patient,” Owens said.

In the end, it came down to Missouri desiring a more stable environment in which to park its athletic teams. Twice in the last 18 months, the Big 12 appeared on the brink of dissolution. A difficult decision awaited, one that Missourians believed was in good hands.

“When Brady took the job, he was aware of the facts of life at a large state university and the importance of athletes,” said Phil Grubaugh, former president of the Kansas City Tiger Club.

Grubaugh said that when Deaton became chancellor, he would make the rounds at booster clubs and show enthusiasm.

“But he didn’t have particular expertise,” Grubaugh said. “It wasn’t his area of interest. A chancellor’s job is the administration of campus.”

More and more, it’s also about athletics. And in some cases, tough decisions.

Deaton hadn’t been on the job for more than a month when he had to deal with a controversy about the new basketball arena, named for a booster’s daughter who was caught in a cheating scandal at another school. That’s how Paige Sports Arena became Mizzou Arena.

There was the messiness of basketball coach Quin Snyder’s firing and fan displeasure with Alden’s handling of the situation. Earlier, there were calls to dump football coach Gary Pinkel after a third losing season in his fourth year.
Deaton stood firm in supporting Pinkel and Alden, and the university’s football success — six consecutive postseason appearances — symbolized the athletic strength that made Missouri attractive to the Southeastern Conference.
For Kansas City and Border War, now what?

By BLAIR KERKHOFF

COLUMBIA | **The Big 12’s loss of Missouri didn’t make Chuck Neinas a happy interim commissioner Sunday.**

“I personally believe this decision is a mistake and that Missouri is a better fit in the Big 12,” Neinas said.

But the Tigers are taking their teams and games to the Southeastern Conference, and the move wasn’t unexpected. After all, Neinas was in Morgantown, W.Va., last week welcoming the Mountaineers to the conference and a league statement with next year’s lineup didn’t include MU.

Still, Neinas, who was Big Eight commissioner throughout the 1970s, understands the meaning of this move. Missouri is leaving a conference with roots planted in Kansas City in 1907.

What this means for Kansas City is unknown.

Missouri plans to move into the SEC next year, which means the Big 12 basketball tournament in March will be the Tigers’ final appearance in an event that they won six times in its first 17 years, when it was the Big Eight tournament.

The men’s tournament is set for the Sprint Center through 2014, with the women at Municipal Auditorium through 2013. Next year, the events are expected to come up for bids beyond those dates, and the Big 12 must decide if it wants to hold a tournament in a state without a league member.

Last month, Missouri chancellor Brady Deaton expressed interest in continuing the school’s athletic relationship with Kansas City in the form of a basketball tournament and regular-season football game “against key rivals.” He reiterated that call Sunday.

“The extent of our involvement (in Kansas City) is not going to diminish in any way,” Deaton said. “There’s nothing going away there as far as we’re concerned.”

Neinas said last week that he expects West Virginia to be a Big 12 member next year, and the Mountaineers have sued the Big East to avoid adhering to that league’s 27-month notice. The Big East in turn filed suit against West Virginia, claiming breach of contract.
Missouri hopes to continue Border War

By STEVE WALENTIK
For the, November 7, 2011

They remain some of the seminal moments in Missouri sports history.

In 1987, when basketball player Lee Coward hit his last-second jumper to clinch the 1987 Big Eight Tournament title at Kemper Arena in Kansas City.

In 1997, when basketball player Corey Tate made his own shot in the waning seconds of the Tigers' double-overtime upset of nation's top-ranked team at the Hearnes Center.

In 2007, when football player Lorenzo Williams sacked Todd Reesing in the end zone to cap a victory at Arrowhead Stadium that vaulted MU to the top of the national polls.

Each was made more memorable because it occurred in the context of Missouri's Border War rivalry with Kansas. It's a series that goes back more than a century and has produced countless other moments in all sports that MU fans still cherish.

But Sunday's announcement that the Tigers are heading to the Southeastern Conference beginning in 2012 has put the future of the rivalry in doubt. There's been growing talk that the Jayhawks, left behind in the Big 12 Conference, won't continue to schedule their eastern neighbors.

KU basketball Coach Bill Self started it when Missouri's conference switch was still in the hypothetical stages.

"If they choose to be somewhere other than with us and with the other schools that they've been a part of and could jeopardize the future of the other schools ... I'm not going to make a commitment now that we'd ever play again," he said in an interview with the Lawrence Journal-World early last month. "I'm not saying we won't. I'm certainly not going to pretend that we would."

He reaffirmed his comments weeks later at the Big 12's annual Media Day in Kansas City.

It seemed feelings had grown even stronger among the Kansas hierarchy by the time news of Missouri's acceptance into the SEC came Sunday.

Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little said in a statement: "We're sorry to see a century-old conference rivalry end. Missouri's decision may have implications for fans and for the Kansas City area, but it won't affect the long-term strength of the Big 12."

Actually, Kansas' initial reaction was a little more raw.
"Missouri forfeits a century-old rivalry. We win," read a message on the school's Twitter feed, @KUNews. As they gathered for the SEC announcement and press conference Sunday evening at the MU Student Center, schools officials weren't ready to sign the rivalry's death certificate just yet.

"I think everyone in here recognizes that our rivalry with the University of Kansas is one of the great rivalries in our country," Athletic Director Mike Alden said. "It's gone on for, I believe, 119 years, and it's certainly our hope and our desire to continue to participate against the University of Kansas in every sport that we play — and for the next 119 years."

He took issue with the idea that shared conference affiliation should be a prerequisite to continue such a series and pointed to long-standing nonconference rivalries between Florida and Florida State, Georgia and Georgia Tech, Kentucky and Louisville and Clemson and South Carolina to prove the point.

But the Tigers will have to get cooperation from the Jayhawks for the rivalry to continue.

There are no guarantees, either where it's most heated, in men's basketball, or in football.

"I'm not saying we will" play Missouri. "I'm not saying we won't," Self said Oct. 20 at Big 12 Media Day. "I'm just saying I'm not going to make a decision on that now. I may feel like we need to continue playing them. I may feel like that we don't need to continue playing them. ... I know that what we do will not be based on what other people want us to do. It will be based on basically what's best for our program."

Kansas' basketball program, which consistently plays one of the strongest nonconference schedules in the country and has sold out every game at Allen Fieldhouse since 2002, might not stand to gain much by continuing to play the Tigers.

But the football program could decide it doesn't want to give up the guaranteed $1 million payout it has received for facing Missouri at Arrowhead Stadium. The two schools still have a contract to play each other next season and would have to compensate the Chiefs for breaking it.
LAWRENCE, Kan. — Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little commented on Sunday about Missouri's decision to leave the Big 12 Conference. The statement appeared on the University of Kansas website:

"We're sorry to see a century-old conference rivalry end. Missouri's decision may have implications for fans and for the Kansas City area, but it won't affect the long-term strength of the Big 12."
State funding formula worries MU faculty

By JANESIE SILVEY
Friday, November 8, 2013

Missouri is set to implement a plan that distributes increases in state funding to colleges and universities based mainly on how many bachelor’s degrees they award.

**It’s a formula that doesn’t represent the mission of the University of Missouri, MU Faculty Council members agree. As written, the model ignores graduate-level education.**

“I do take exception with the notion that you’re only looking at undergraduate education,” said Rebecca Johnson, an associate professor of nursing. “If that’s all you care about, revise our mission. Why allow ourselves to be lumped in with a system that only considers half of our mission?”

Questions challenging the methodology of the proposed performance-based funding system were directed at Nikki Krawitz, UM System vice president of finance, who outlined the plan at yesterday’s Faculty Council meeting. Krawitz said she understands faculty’s angst and at one point reminded them that she was just the messenger.

Krawitz sits on a committee formed to develop a performance funding model at the request of Gov. Jay Nixon. A year in the making, the formula is set up to reflect goals for all four-year institutions, separate goals for community colleges and a special set of criteria for Linn State Technical College.

For four-year universities, performance measures include either maintaining high retention and six-year graduation rates or improving them, as well as some measure of academic quality. The latter will be tricky, Krawitz said. The committee has discussed using professional licensure exams, but not all students take those. Some faculty members suggested using the number of student publications or research projects or using results of satisfaction surveys that could be given to graduates.

Each entity can develop a single goal to reflect its mission. But because the UM System gets one appropriation from the state, that goal would have to apply to all four UM campuses.

The performance funding plan heads to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education next month. If approved, the Missouri Department of Higher Education will base its recommendation for UM’s state appropriation on three years’ worth of performance data. The funding recommendation will then show up in the governor’s 2014 budget draft.

That seems to strip from lawmakers the chance to decide whether they even want Missouri to base increases in state funding on performance. By the time they see recommendations for funding when
they're drafting the 2014 budget in the 2013 legislative session, the calculations using performance will already have been made.

But Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia, isn’t ready to buy into the plan just yet.

“There’s no reason to believe that the General Assembly is going to take this seriously,” he said. “This is far more political than the legislature ever makes funding for higher education.”

Kelly also accused Nixon of attempting to control budget decisions that are supposed to be made by the legislature.

“Higher education is one of the areas in which governors have not had complete political control,” he said. “The purpose and effect of this is to transfer economic decisions for higher education to the governor unilaterally. And that’s why it’s a bad idea.”
COLUMBIA, MO (AP) — One of the only living recipients of the Medal of Honor for wartime valor is scheduled to speak Tuesday night at the University of Missouri.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta (JIHN'-ta) received the medal in November 2010 for his service as a rifle team leader in Afghanistan. He exposed himself to enemy fire to save a soldier when his platoon came under attack in 2007 and also shot two insurgents attempting to carry off another U.S. soldier.

Giunta was the first living service member from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to receive the highest U.S. military decoration. Two other Afghanistan war veterans have since received the medal.

He is scheduled to speak at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in Jesse Auditorium on the Missouri campus. The public lecture is free.
Are ethical people happier?

By Jessica Stillman  
November 7, 2011 7:54 AM

Being ethical is often perceived as the brown rice or brussels sprouts of the business world, worthy and good for you but not exactly particularly pleasurable. Doing the right thing might be tough and feel like a struggle but is necessary for our long-term interests, goes the usual thinking. But new research out of the University of Missouri turns such ideas on their head.

For the study, economist Harvey James sifted through data from the 2005-06 World Values Survey, which periodically asks hundreds of thousands of people in more than 80 countries about their beliefs, values and happiness, looking specifically in four North American countries (the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Brazil) and at questions related to life satisfaction and whether respondents felt actions like cheating on your taxes or accepting a bribe were acceptable.

Miller-Mccune spoke to James, who summarized the results:

I found a correlation between how people responded to ethics questions and their satisfaction with life.... generally, people who believe that these particular ethical scenarios are not acceptable also tend to indicate they are more satisfied with life. That's with controlling for other factors that scholars have shown are also correlated with happiness, including relative wealth.

Being ethical, it seems, isn't just worthy but just might make you happier. James cautions that the data he used only measures what people say about their behavior, not what they actually do, but he still feels that the correlation between life satisfaction and a strong ethical sense is worth noting.

"My personal belief is that not being willing to justify ethically questionable behaviors may improve a person's psychological well-being, perhaps because he or she avoids feelings of guilt or shame," he explained to Miller-McCune. "This could in turn produce an increase in happiness."

He also notes that the findings are consistent with other studies showing that meeting our personal definition of doing well is more likely to bring us happiness than acquiring stuff or chasing short-term pleasures. So if you were sitting around waiting for the selfish case for good behavior, James is your man. His findings show that doing good actually often feels good.
New 'One Mizzou' strategic plan will include website, community meeting

By Melissa Gilstrap
November 4, 2011 | 11:27 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — After three years of discussion, planning and rewriting drafts, MU has launched a new strategic plan.

"One Mizzou: 2020 Vision for Excellence" has three main goals:

- Enhance all programs at the university that would improve the lives of those living in Missouri, the nation and the world.

- Build on Mizzou Advantage, a program made up of five initiatives including: food for the future; media of the future; one health, one medicine; sustainable energy and managing innovation.

- Make sure sufficient infrastructure, human and financial resources are in place to support the future of teaching, research, outreach and economic development.

In the next few weeks, a website for "One Mizzou: 2020 Vision for Excellence" will be created to detail the plan's progress, Thomas Phillips, progress committee chairman, said. Phillips, a biological sciences professor, has been involved with the strategic plan since 2009.

"We envisioned a website where one can say, 'I'm interested in this school. Here's the actions that are needed.' You click on it and it says, 'Here's what we've done on that,'" Phillips said. "The website would be updated at least annually, if not more frequently."

The site is not yet named.

MU Faculty Council members have started to plan how they will provide solutions to a number of objectives, chairman Harry Tyrer said. The strategic plan will also help ensure that MU is a good steward of the funds it receives from taxpayers and students' tuition, he said.
"We are examining many of the aspects of university life," said Tyrer, a professor of computer and electrical engineering. "We're going to try to make education better for students."

The first community-wide meeting to discuss the plan's progress will be held this spring, Phillips said. The town hall-style forum, which Phillips said will be held annually, is meant to get community feedback for the strategic plan.

Earning 21 merit badges is just one step to becoming an Eagle Scout and many require work outside of the class. Some merit badges have prerequisites, such as the personal management merit badge, which requires a Scout keep a three-month record of expenses and income, or the emergency preparedness merit badge, which requires Scouts to prepare and talk about an emergency plans with their family members.

After earning his first aid badge, Brian Roth, a 16-year-old Scout from St. Louis, was only four merit badges away from the required 21. Roth previously attended a merit badge university at Saint Louis University in 2010 where he earned his communications merit badge.

"For me it is good because it is a lot smaller time investment," Roth said. "It's almost like taking a really short class — you do your homework in advance and bring it to class, and you either pass or fail."

Jerry Ryan, Scoutmaster of Troop 336 from St. Louis, brought seven Scouts from his troop of 14 to the event.

Ryan's son, Patrick, 17, was three merit badges away from the 21 required to be an Eagle Scout before earning his citizenship in the world badge on Saturday.

"I thought today was a good achievement because I have been needing this badge for two years," Patrick Ryan said, "As soon as I get signed off, I only need two more."

Patrick Ryan's friend David Walz also needs only three more merit badges to become an Eagle Scout. He said he was able to apply things he learned in his high school world history class to the citizenship in the world merit badge class.

"It was fun seeing what I learned from other places and applying it here," Walz said.
WashU, Mizzou aim to protect names from porn links

BY TIM BARKER • tbarker@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8350 | Posted: Monday, November 7, 2011 12:10 am

The world is getting closer to the launching of a new Internet address system for pornography providers, and there are some eye-opening names being registered. Among them: washu.xxx and mizzou.xxx.

Don't, however, expect to find naked co-eds at either of these sites.

In what amounts to a defensive maneuver, schools across the nation are snapping up the .xxx domain names that match their federally registered trademarks. It's simply a matter of trying to keep them out of the wrong hands.

"We don't want someone coming across our trademark on a porn site. God only knows what they'd come up with," said Terry Robb, director of information technology at the University of Missouri-Columbia, which also has registered missouri.xxx and missouritigers.xxx.

Local colleges and universities are no different than other organizations in this regard. With the impending launching of the new .xxx top level domains later this year, everyone with a trademark had a chance to reserve names in what’s called a 'sunrise phase.' Essentially, it provides some protection for organizations against domain prospectors who grab sites to use or sell at a profit.

In theory, the .xxx top level domain will give adult content providers a natural place to be on the Internet. But it has been criticized by the porn industry, which worries that this is the first step in forcing all adult providers to move to the more easily blockable domain addresses.
Against this backdrop, universities and other organizations have been forced to decide whether it’s worth the time, trouble and money (about $200 per domain) to take control of their .xxx sites.

Some experts don’t think there’s a lot to be worried about for the vast majority of institutions.

"Then again, it’s just a couple of hundred bucks. So I don’t see any reason not to do it," said Greg Jackson, vice president for policy and analysis at Educause, a nonprofit that promotes the use of technology in higher education.

That has been the motivating factor for the St. Louis College of Pharmacy, which recently picked up stlcop.xxx. That’s not exactly a name that screams porn.

"Not really," agreed Chad Shepherd, the school’s vice president of information technology. "But, you know, it’s better to be safe than sorry."

The school has made a practice of grabbing all the stlcop versions it can get its hands on, including .org, .tv, .info and .biz. Unfortunately, it has not been able to get .com, which still belongs to a domain prospector.

The decision to buy a domain also can be about protecting a school from unintended harm. Consider the case of Washington University. It may be that no one would ever think to combine pornography with the St. Louis institution.

But the school does share a name with a female character, Washu Hakubi, from the world of Japanese animated cartoons. The anime genre has inspired a subset of cartoons heavy on sex and violence, leaving open the possibility that Washington University could find itself an accidental victim.

"It wouldn’t necessarily be anyone who even knew much about us," said Karen Daubert, the university’s trademark and brand manager.

That’s just one of the reasons for the school’s decision to register washu.xxx, along with washingtonuniversity.xxx and wustl.xxx.

And don’t expect to find much if you visit any of those addresses. It’s one of the differences between the .xxx sites and mainstream sites with .com, .edu and .net extensions. Often, organizations will set up their various domain addresses to all point to the same Web page. Not so with the .xxx addresses.

"In this case, they won’t point to anything," Daubert said.