



The Tribune's View

The SEC

At last

By Henry J. Waters III

Columbia Daily Tribune Wednesday, November 9, 2011

The story without end apparently will enter another phase. Now that the Southeastern Conference and the University of Missouri have confirmed a new alliance, the fevered questions of when and if will become conjecture about what it will mean and, eventually, the usual reaction to what happens as our Tigers stride into the new wilderness.

Seemingly, Chancellor Brady Deaton & Co. have known for some time that MU would be joining the SEC, but getting to the moment of formal announcement has been harder than Chinese arithmetic. Finally the announcement came Sunday afternoon, and at last Deaton and the rest of us can be relieved of incessant questions and petitions wanting answers and giving advice.

I can understand why it took so long. An association between one of the nation's premier state universities and the nation's premier athletic conference is a big-money deal requiring a careful divorce from yesterday's liaison and a similarly well-crafted prenuptial agreement with the new partner.

I saw interim UM President Steve Owens the other day and 'lowed as how he surely would be happy to have the announcement behind him. Having become an expert in avoiding such traps, he smiled that Owens smile and agreed in the noncommittal way that high UM-MU officials have learned so well. We went on to other topics.

The moment is right to issue another blessing to Owens and Deaton for their competent and classy performance during this prolonged fracas. Deaton in particular — he was given the unenviable authority to make the decision with the full imprimatur of the institution — has presented an admirable and honest face for the University of Missouri. He displayed his most important characteristic, not always fully appreciated by those who want quicker decisions they favor: his integrity.

Our state university could not have had a better representative during a difficult time.

For his part, Owens is doing a great job filling in as UM president while the UM Board of Curators chooses a successor for recently retired Gary Forsee. As Owens and his board have simultaneously played Sphinx regarding the presidential selection and the SEC question, they have had continuing opportunity to practice enigma. They have spent almost as much time in closed session as open.

Owens is not a candidate for the permanent position. He took himself out of the running at the outset of the search, a proper stance for an interim chief officer. Owens will happily return to his position as UM general counsel when the new president is named.

The curators heard from many more fans who wanted to move to the SEC than the few who favored remaining with the Big 12. Sadly, the Big 12 had become disorganized and Tiger Nation, to use a phrase that sets my teeth a-grinding, is ready to move on.

I suppose the largest remaining question is how the new culture will suit the parties. The old culture had gone sour, and euphoria always surrounds a new partnership. The SEC does play big-time sports, and MU will make more money.

So far, so good.

Prehistoric "Shield"-Headed Croc Found

"One of a kind" creature may have hunted like a pelican, paleontologists say.

Brian Handwerk for [National Geographic News](#)

Published November 9, 2011

A new prehistoric croc sporting an odd head "shield" has been found in [Morocco](#), paleontologists say.

Dubbed ShieldCroc, the animal's head appendage was surrounded by blood vessels and covered with a sheath like those seen in frilled dinosaurs, including *Triceratops*.

At 30 to 35 feet (9 to 11 meters) long, the river-dwelling monster would have preyed on other giant animals of the late [Cretaceous](#), such as 13-foot-long (4-meter-long) [coelacanths](#). But ShieldCroc likely boasted relatively weak jaws, at least compared with those of today's crocodiles.

"It's fairly certain that it belonged to a group of crocodyliforms—including the flat-headed crocs—that had really thin, weak jaws and weak chin joints," said researcher Casey Holliday, a paleontologist at the University of Missouri. Crocodyliforms are part of a group known as the crocodylians, which includes modern-day alligators, caimans, and more.

"So they weren't wrestling dinosaurs on the water's edge. They would have been quick, snap feeders waiting for prey to come by and then grabbing it and swallowing it with large, basket-shaped mouths—something like a pelican would do," Holliday said.

ShieldCroc's Headpiece for Show?

A piece of ShieldCroc's skull landed in Canada's [Royal Ontario Museum](#) in the early 2000s, but Holliday and colleagues have only recently studied the specimen and its odd headpiece.

It's difficult to determine what purpose the shield served when the animal lived, some 99 million years ago, Holliday noted.

But after rigorous evaluation of the fossil and studies of comparative behaviors with modern crocodilians, scientists suggest the shield may have helped ShieldCroc regulate its temperature and communicate with other ShieldCrocs.

For instance, some crocodyliforms and living crocodilians, such as the Cuban crocodile, have horns on the sides of their heads, which males use to impress females and scare away other males.

"We kind of see ShieldCroc having similar behaviors and showing off the roof of its head," Holliday said.

Despite these possible similarities with modern crocodilians, the animal appears to have been one of a kind, said Christopher Brochu, a University of Iowa paleontologist, who wasn't involved in the study.

"There's nothing quite like this among the birds or the crocodilians, which are the two closest living relatives of this thing."

ShieldCroc Highlights African "Melting Pot"

ShieldCroc's discovery in Morocco could suggest that modern crocs evolved in what's now the Mediterranean—a theory that remains hotly debated among crocodilian experts.

But there's no doubt the animal provides evidence of astonishing crocodyliform diversity in the Southern Hemisphere during the late Cretaceous, said Holliday, who described the new species this week at the 71st Annual Meeting of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology in Las Vegas.

"It definitely points to ... Africa [as] a melting pot of different crocodyliforms living in the same region at the same time," Holliday said.

"One lineage, including DogCroc, BoarCroc, and others tended to be terrestrial, while another group, including SuperCroc, were big, aquatic, predatory crocs. ShieldCroc represents another group and a more modern flavor of crocs."

Bizarre Crocodyliforms Ruled Southern Hemisphere

With the discoveries of ShieldCroc and related species, University of Iowa's Brochu said, "We're beginning to realize just how diverse and even bizarre the crocodyliforms were in the Southern Hemisphere," he said.

"The group was extremely widespread, and in some places crocodyliforms may have been among the major predators and even herbivores. And in some places they really were simply bizarre."

For instance, "in the southern Mediterranean, including North Africa, we're seeing these animals that look nothing like any living crocodilian."

Teachers can help abused kids adjust

Published: Nov. 9, 2011 at 10:30 PM

COLUMBIA, Mo., Nov. 9 (UPI) -- Abused children can return to school and do well academically if teachers can help them control their emotions, focus and stay motivated, U.S. researchers say.

Stephen Whitney, an associate professor at the University of Missouri College of Education, compared the duration of abuse with math and reading scores in 702 children, ages 6-10.

The study, published in the journal Child Abuse and Neglect, found the length and type of abuse had the most effect on the children's academic achievement, but that students who were successful in daily management skills had the most achievement.

"The first step, of course, is for teachers to watch for signs and stop the abuse to the child," Whitney said in a statement. "My colleagues and I worked with Child Protective Services to examine test scores to determine what factors indicate future achievement, and of those factors, what ones actually translate to the classroom. Teachers and counselors can help the student succeed by focusing on daily living skills."

Whitney suggested teachers or family members can help abused children by focusing on the following daily skills:

- Self-regulation, or controlling thoughts and behaviors.
- Attention to detail, or accomplishing tasks with focus on all aspects of the tasks.
- Motivation, or finding challenges that inspire learning, including a focus on strengths.



Study Spots Early Signs of Math Disabilities in Kids

Certain difficulties in kindergarten predicted problems by fifth grade

November 9, 2011 [RSS Feed](#) [Print](#)

WEDNESDAY, Nov. 9 (HealthDay News) -- A number of factors associated with math disability in children have been identified by researchers.

The study included 177 children in 12 public schools in Missouri who were tested one to three times a year from kindergarten through fifth grade.

The results showed that those who had trouble understanding the fundamental concept of exact numerical quantities -- for example, that the printed numeral 3 represents three dots on a page -- when they started school were diagnosed with a math learning disability by fifth grade.

Additional early factors associated with a math learning disability included: difficulty recalling answers to single-digit addition problems; distractibility in class; and difficulty understanding complex math problems that can be broken down into smaller problems that can be solved individually.

The students with a math disability did make limited progress but, by fifth grade, were not at the level of their classmates in being able to recall number facts or in their ease of adding sets of dots and numerals together. The math-disabled students did match their classmates in other areas by fifth grade, such as the use of counting to solve problems.

It's not clear whether the factors identified in the study actually cause math disability or are associated with other, unidentified factors, the University of Missouri researchers noted.

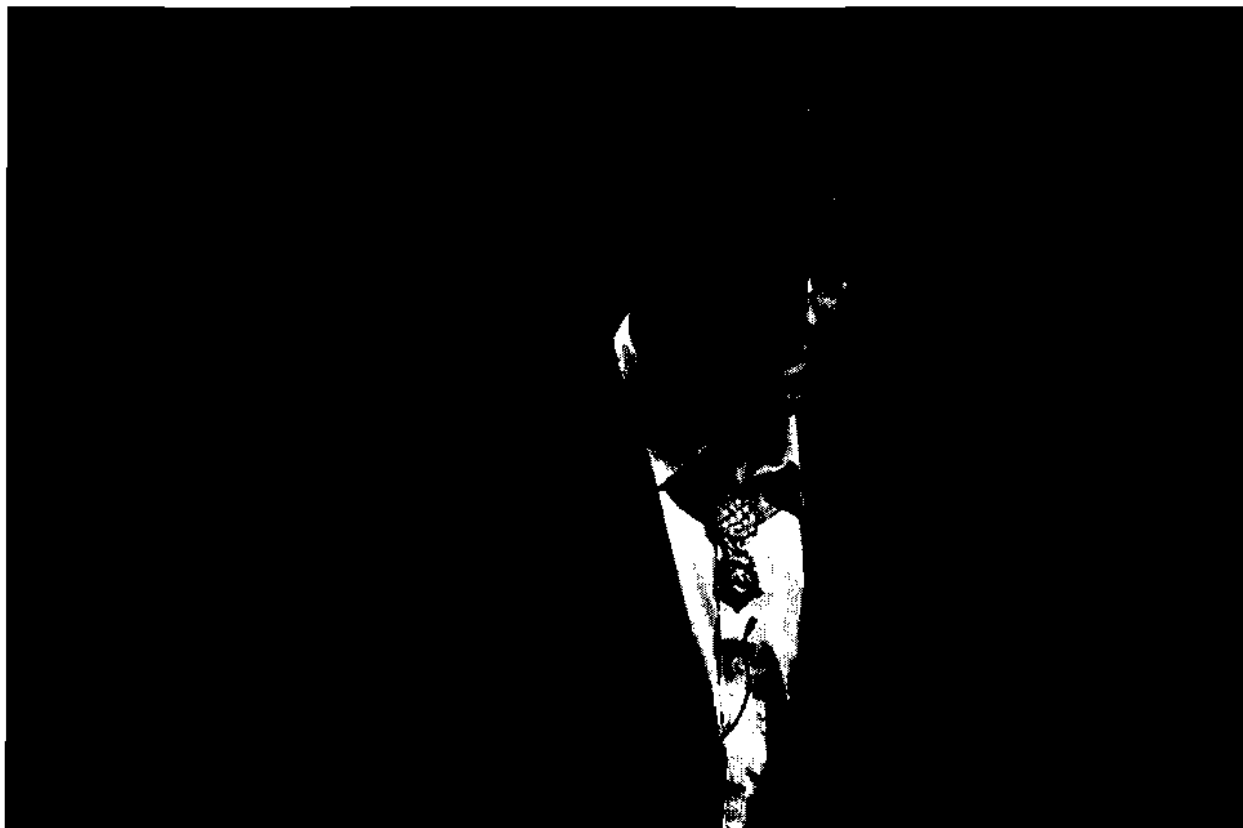
The study, published in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, was funded by the U.S. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).

"The search for factors underlying difficulty learning mathematics is extremely important," Kathy Mann Koepke, director of the NICHD's Mathematics and Science Cognition and Learning Development and Disorders program, said in an institute news release. "Once we identify such factors, the hope is that we can modify them through appropriate teaching methods to help people who have difficulty learning and using math," Mann Koepke added.

"Math skills are important for higher education and for entry into many higher paying technical fields," she noted. "Math skills have many health implications. For example, many American adults lack even the basic math skills necessary to estimate the appropriate number of calories in their diets or to calculate the time intervals at which to take their medications."

Medal of Honor recipient recounts tale at MU

Don Shrubshell | Buy this photo



Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta won the Medal of Honor for his actions during an ambush in Afghanistan in 2007. Giunta spoke Tuesday night at Jesse Auditorium on the University of Missouri campus.

By Janese Silvey

Columbia Daily Tribune Wednesday, November 9, 2011

The nation's first living Medal of Honor recipient since Vietnam told a University of Missouri crowd last night he did nothing out of the ordinary when he ran through gunfire to help two comrades in Afghanistan.

"That night wasn't spectacular or amazing," Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta said. "That's what happens."

At times, he almost sounded angry.

“It seems ridiculous I’m the only one standing here,” he said. “I know who was on that mountain.”

That mountain was in Afghanistan’s Korengal Valley — known as the “Valley of Death” to American troops — where Giunta and his platoon were on a watch mission in October 2007. After 14 hours of inactivity, around 2 a.m. Oct. 25, the soldiers began to leave, only to be ambushed.

“When you’re tired and hungry and sore, that’s when the fight comes,” he said.

During his hourlong presentation at Jesse Auditorium, Giunta described a chaotic scene as the troops scrambled to get control of the situation. At one point, Giunta saw his squad leader, Staff Sgt. Erick Gallardo, twitch his head and fall to the ground. He had been hit in the helmet and was stuck in a dangerous spot. Giunta left his covered position and rushed to pull Gallardo back to safety.

Giunta then proceeded forward and recalls moving into a clear area where light from the moon revealed human figures in front of him. That’s when he realized two enemy fighters were trying to drag away an injured comrade, Sgt. Joshua Brennan.

“I don’t get it, why they wanted to take him,” Giunta said. “That crossed a real line.”

He ran forward yelling and shooting at the enemies, killing one and wounding the other. He then grabbed Brennan by the vest and began running backward toward safety. Brennan was alive when he was taken away on a medical helicopter but had died by the time Giunta and the platoon returned to base three hours later.

Giunta insisted any one of his platoon members — or any U.S. service member, for that matter — would have acted the same way. His Medal of Honor, he said, belongs to everyone who has served their country without the awards or accolades they deserve.

Giunta calls himself an average soldier. He signed up in 2003 as a senior in high school in Iowa after hearing a commercial for the Army while working at a Subway. He liked the notion of making a difference, he said. The prospect of war was exciting and intense, and he was more than happy to be deployed. A year later, he lost his first friend in combat.

“I thought I had the world on a string at 18,” he said. “At 19, I realized what war really is.”

Audience members, many of whom were ROTC cadets, at Jesse Auditorium gave Giunta two standing ovations — the first before he ever said a word.

Giunta was introduced via a video clip of President Barack Obama awarding him the medal last November. In his remarks, Obama praised him as a “low-key guy, a humble guy, and he doesn’t seek the limelight. And he’ll tell you that he didn’t do anything special, that he was just doing his job.”

Although Giunta was the first living Medal of Honor recipient since Vietnam when he was recognized last year, two others have been honored since.

ST. LOUIS AMERICAN

STLCC, MU announce articulation agreement for Interior Design

Posted: Wednesday, November 9, 2011 4:15 pm

Representatives from St. Louis Community College and the University of Missouri signed an articulation agreement that will help train a more vibrant work force in the design and construction industry.

Students who complete STLCC's Associate in Applied Science degree in Interior Design will be able to seamlessly transfer to MU to complete the Bachelor in Human Environmental Sciences degree in Architectural Studies, strengthening their credentials and prospects for employment in the very competitive design and construction marketplace.

"St. Louis Community College, as part of its commitment to accepting the College Completion Challenge, continues to explore avenues that will produce more students with quality degrees and certificates," said Myrtle E.B. Dorsey, Ph.D., STLCC chancellor. "This articulation agreement with the University of Missouri-Columbia provides our students with a plan for how to complete a bachelor's degree, thereby adding even more value to their associate degree. We look forward to working with our colleagues in Columbia to advance our mutual goals of student success and greater accessibility."

"For more than 100 years, the University of Missouri has been Missouri's land-grant and flagship university. MU is proud of its heritage and tradition of providing bachelor degrees and beyond to Missourians who need to thrive in the fast-changing technology-driven environment of the 21st century," said Brian Foster, Ph.D., MU provost. "Our partnership with St. Louis Community College takes this tradition forward in an important way. Here we have two Missouri institutions with unique missions, taking a new approach to serving both the community college students in St. Louis and the same student who chooses to stay in the vicinity, work in the St. Louis region, but when ready, feel confident they can transfer to Columbia and earn a bachelor's degree in Architectural Studies. The transfer agreement reflects our institutions' particular opportunities to expand and strengthen options for Missourians, and enhancing the central mission of both STLCC and MU."

The transfer agreement acknowledges both institutions' commitment to develop an educational pipeline for differentiated professionals throughout the interior design industry, including new and remodeled residential and commercial construction business through St. Louis. It enables Missourians to take advantage of the lower tuition costs afforded by STLCC so graduates can

dollar-cost-average their overall college expenses when they earn a four-year bachelor's degree. With more and more students starting their academic careers at community colleges, transfer and articulation agreements are extremely important mechanisms that help assure seamless transition to other four-year institutions like MU.

Graduates of the Interior Design AAS degree program and MU's Architectural Studies CIDA interior design accredited baccalaureate program are qualified for entry-level positions in residential and/or commercial interior design and related fields. Some of the careers in interior design include: residential design, commercial design, health care, hospitality, kitchen and bath, office design, architectural firms, retail stores, wholesale showrooms and lighting design. Graduates also may be employed as manufacturers' product representatives, freelance designers or facilities planning assistants. Other MU graduates may wish to continue their education at another school to pursue the M Arch degree and become a licensed architect.