Alcohol returns to Missouri fraternity houses

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — University of Missouri fraternity members who are 21 or older will be able to legally drink alcohol in their houses beginning in August and Columbia police are predicting an increase in alcohol-related problems.

The campus Interfraternity Council, which governs fraternities, approved the policy last week. It changes current policy that forbids alcohol in Greek houses, which are not campus property.

Alcohol still will be forbidden at campus sororities, which are prohibited by their national association from having alcohol at their houses, The Columbia Daily Tribune reported.

The new rule will require fraternities to obtain permission from chapter advisers, alumni representatives and property owners before seeking an alcohol permit. Beer kegs and other forms of communal consumption won't be allowed. And fraternity members will be required to undergo risk training and meet some academic standards.

Matt Perkins, IFC vice president of risk management, said the policy was changed because "a lot of people thought it was unfair that 21-year-old people weren't allowed to drink in their own residences."

And the current rules aren't being followed, said Eric Woods, president of the Missouri Student Association.
Alcohol to be permitted at MU fraternity houses if they pass accreditation process

By Raymond Howze
November 16, 2011 | 10:11 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Alcohol will be permitted at MU fraternity houses beginning in August 2012 — but only if the houses meet an accreditation process through the Office of Greek Life.

The decision was recently passed by the MU Interfraternity Council and allows fraternity houses, if they choose, to have alcohol on the premises.

Beginning with the Greek Life Strategic Plan in spring, an alcohol work group was assigned to look at current alcohol policies within the Greek community and determine what was and wasn't working, Janna Basler, assistant director of Greek Life and Leadership, said.

The accreditation process will include requirements for academics, risk management and alcohol education, Basler said. For example, chapters would have to meet GPA requirements, attend alcohol presentations and have judicial standards in place.

"The organization will have to go through a process to be able to allow it," Basler said. "Some chapters have decided they're not going to have alcohol."

All chapters will still have to abide by the national rules required for each.

Steven Glynias, president of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity, said he sees the new policy as a better way to enforce rules about alcohol. Glynias was a member of the alcohol work group that drafted the policy. The group focused on whether to enforce the current policy or to change it, Glynias said.

"There was really no enforcement," Glynias said of the old policy. "You weren't actually being monitored, and it resulted in lots of people breaking rules and huge violations going unnoticed. This will actually be enforced."
Fraternity houses will be subject to random checks, or audits, by an outside security firm. The security firm representative, who will be accompanied by a member of the fraternity’s executive board, will observe and report activities within the houses. The representative will not be permitted to enter any closed rooms without permission.

If something stands out during the audit, such as an excessive number of people drinking at a party, the security firm will submit reports to the students, alumni and Office of Student Conduct, Basler said.

Basler said Signal 88 Security might partner with the Office of Greek Life to carry out the audits, but there is currently no official agreement. The security firm has been hired in the past by alumni of various fraternities to perform similar checks, Basler said.

Andrew Schutte, president of the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity, sees the new policy as a viable option. The chapter would have to go through its housing corps and determine if its lease permits alcohol on the premises, Schutte said.

"I think it's a first step in controlling alcohol in the fraternities," he said.

Many fraternities model their risk management policies after the Fraternal Information and Programming Group, FIPG. The group provides guidelines for fraternities in drafting risk management policies, such as those used for organized socials with third party alcohol vendors.

The Interfraternity Council's new policy will pertain to events on the chapter's property. Houses will still be held to the same standards regarding outside socials.

Greek houses are not university property and fall under the jurisdiction of the Columbia Police Department, not the MU Police Department. The Columbia police will have no relation with the third party security firm, Basler said.

"The first idea is that students and alumni handle it internally," she said. "If it's not, then the cases will be handled by the Office of Student Conduct."

The policy will be reassessed continually over the spring and through August, when it is implemented, Basler said.

The Office of Greek Life will have to assess the issue of underage drinking because it is unclear how the security firm will determine people's ages.
"It's a big question that hasn't been answered yet," Glynias said. "My general feeling from being on the task force is it is not the intent of the officer to ask for IDs."

"We're going to have to work through that. What is the observe and report looking for?" Basler said. "Students don't want someone walking around checking IDs — the purpose is not to have huge parties with underage drinkers."

A recent influx of incidents with alcohol and students being admitted to the hospital with high blood alcohol levels has drawn attention. A recent AP story reported that the Columbia Daily Tribune acquired emails from a University Hospital doctor to Chancellor Brady Deaton. The emails expressed a concern about "a number of excessively drunken students coming to the emergency room." But not all intoxicated students come from fraternity or sorority events, and it's difficult to draw a correlation between greek students and the hospital visits.

"I don't think the new policy is going to create an influx of people going to the hospital," Glynias said. "I think the opposite is true because people won't have to opportunity to attend the large parties."

"Ultimately the new policy looks to have a safer environment for our students," Basler said.
Partying, drinking and work spark smoking

Published: Nov. 16, 2011 at 6:51 PM

COLUMBIA, Mo., Nov. 16 (UPI) -- College students say they smoke while partying, drinking, working, at the beginning of semesters and on weekends, a U.S. researcher says.

Lead author Nikole Cronk, assistant professor of family and community medicine at the University of Missouri, said among college students, the rate of reported smokers spikes to nearly 30 percent.

The majority of lifelong smokers begin smoking before the age of 24, Cronk said.

"Students are using social events and work as cues to remind them about smoking," Cronk said in a statement. "This research is important for those working with college students to recognize when smoking is happening at its highest levels. Targeting interventions during those periods and prior to frequent smoking events would have the maximum impact on student smoking prevention."

Cronk's study is part of a larger research project, which focuses on a behavioral intervention approach known as motivational interviewing.

While a traditional intervention approach tells participants how to behave, motivational interviewing elicits motivation from participants to help them decide on their own whether to continue a behavior. For example, a clinician interviews a participant to discover what's important to that individual and how a behavior, such as smoking, might fit with that person's goals and values.

The findings were published in the journal Substance Use & Misuse.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU faculty members clarify performance funding model

By Zach Murdock
November 16, 2011 | 8:11 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — At the fall general faculty meeting Wednesday, MU faculty members had their last opportunity to speak up about a proposed performance funding model for public colleges and universities in the state of Missouri.

Laughter rattled through Chamber Auditorium in the MU Student Center as Nikki Krawitz, University of Missouri System vice president for finance and administration, answered one short but important question about the funding model.

The question: Does this make any difference whatsoever?

"The short answer?" Krawitz said as laughter subsided. "No."

Because performance measures would only apply to additional funding awarded to higher education institutions each year, Krawitz said she doesn't expect there will be much — if any — new funding to allocate under the performance model.

Much of the focus of Wednesday's discussion was on the state's financial outlook moving forward. Krawitz emphasized to faculty members that state funding has continued to fall and may again in the next fiscal year.

When asked if performance funding as proposed is the final draft, Krawitz hesitated but said she felt confident the measures she presented would be the final measures.

"As a process, I would tell you that I think it's a done deal," Krawitz said. "Whether it actually gets funding approved for it at some point in the future? There's quite a bit that has to happen for that."

At a Nov. 3 Faculty Council meeting, Krawitz presented the model to council members and heard numerous concerns about the model's focus on undergraduate education overlooking MU's graduate and research programs.
At Wednesday's forum, members echoed the same concerns — that the proposed model does not completely reward MU's graduate and research programs.

The Missouri Department of Higher Education will take performance funding measures to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education for approval at the board's December meeting.

If approved, performance funding measures would likely be implemented on fiscal year 2014 appropriations requests submitted next fall.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Aspen Heights holds $500 contest for MU Greek Life

By Hannah Spaar
November 16, 2011 | 9:00 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — Residents of Columbia Regency mobile home park aren’t the only people Aspen Heights is offering $500 for signatures on petitions. Sororities and fraternities are possible recipients of the company’s money, too.

The City Council is scheduled to vote on rezoning the land of Columbia Regency mobile home park Monday night. If the rezoning is passed, Aspen Heights plans to buy the land and develop it into student apartment complexes similar to the ones it runs in college towns throughout the country.

On Tuesday, Charlie Vatterott, executive vice president of development for Aspen Heights, offered $500 to each resident of the park who would sign a paper saying they support the deal offered to them by the company if the rezoning passes.

Aspen Heights is also holding a contest among sororities and fraternities at MU. The winner will receive $500 for a social or philanthropy effort.

The rules? Sorority or fraternity members must like Aspen Heights Columbia on Facebook, like the status about the member’s sorority or fraternity and sign an online petition saying “Aspen Heights would be a great addition for University of Missouri students”.

The chapter with the most likes and signatures will win the money. The petition is linked to the Aspen Heights’ Facebook page.

The petition assures students that it is only a petition and does not indicate an intent to live at Aspen Heights. It says Aspen Heights would like to present the petition to the City Council on Nov. 14, though the Facebook page extended the contest deadline until 10 a.m. Thursday.

Presidents of sorority and fraternity chapters were sent emails informing them of the contest and the rules from Mary Katherine Perry, sales and marketing manager of Aspen Heights San Antonio. Perry said the contest was to get more people to like the Facebook page.
The MU chapter of Grass Roots Organizing has been gathering signatures on campus for a petition against the rezoning. Members Jack Buthod, Curtis Edwards and Andrew Bisto said they do not want Columbia Regency residents to be forced from their homes, out-of-state companies such as Regency of Missouri (based in Colorado) and Aspen Heights (based in Texas) to dictate Columbia policy or more expensive student housing in Columbia that is difficult for students to afford.

They said Wednesday that they had 751 signatures and are still collecting them.

At 7:20 p.m. Wednesday, Aspen Heights Columbia had 591 likes on Facebook. The sorority in the lead was Delta Delta Delta with 194 likes. None of the fraternities had any likes at all. Mason Shank, who spoke on behalf of Aspen Heights at a sorority dinner, has commented on various Facebook posts encouraging the sororities and reminding people that they must sign the petition for their entry to count.

Megan Stroup, president of Alpha Delta Pi sorority, said that while she has heard members of her sorority talking about liking the status, she has not heard them talking about the petition. She said the contest had been posted on the sorority's website and Facebook but has not been largely discussed by the sorority. At 7:20 p.m. Wednesday Alpha Delta Pi was in second place with 56 likes.
The Star’s editorial | Taxpayers win in MAST pension ruling

Kansas City taxpayers and common sense won. The fire union lost. And about 300 former Metropolitan Ambulance Services Trust employees wound up somewhere in the middle.

Those are the outcomes of a reasonable and responsible ruling by arbitrator Robert Bailey, director of the Center for the Study of Dispute Resolution at the University of Missouri — Columbia School of Law.

Bailey weighed all the evidence and decided the city does not have to give retroactive and supplemental pension payments demanded by Local 42 of the International Association of Fire Fighters for the former MAST employees, who now work at the Fire Department.

His ruling will save taxpayers several million dollars. They won’t be forced to give extra, undeserved pension pay to employees who contributed little to the city’s retirement accounts. Employees in the private sector, who finance the bulk of the city’s pension systems, would never get such a good deal.

Even after Bailey’s decision, the former MAST employees walk away with a good deal. They won’t get the supplemental retroactive pensions sought by the fire union. But the workers still will receive the regular retroactive pensions that Mayor Sly James and the City Council endorsed earlier this year.

Even that deal is problematic.

The council’s vote will saddle taxpayers with more than $10 million in future pension expenses. Some MAST workers now at the Fire Department soon will be eligible for retirement benefits of around $40,000 a year, or $400,000 over the next decade, after contributing only a few thousand dollars to the city’s pension systems. That’s simply not fair to other city workers who have poured money into their accounts for years.

As we have noted before, ambulance workers provide crucial life-saving medical attention. But they should not be compensated for prior work at a separate agency when they weren’t even city employees.
The City Council went too far by approving a regular pension package for former MAST workers. Thank goodness Bailey shot down the demands for even more egregious and costly retirement payments for those employees.
Road races on Thanksgiving as popular as turkey

BY CYNTHIA BILLHARTZ GREGORIAN • cbillhartz@post-dispatch.com | Posted: Thursday, November 17, 2011 12:10 am

David Richert asked his doctor to postpone surgery to repair a torn meniscus in his knee until after Thanksgiving.

He's what you might call a committed turkey trotter or gobbler wobbler.

Richert, 54, of Webster Groves, didn't want to miss the 29th annual Kirkwood-Webster Turkey Day Run. He's run so many of them he's lost count, and considers it as much a part of the holiday as cramming too much turkey, dressing and other fixings down his gullet.

"You get a good run in and do not feel guilty about the big meal," he says. "If you have an extra helping of mashed potatoes or an extra piece of pie, you know you've earned it."

For a couple of decades, thousands of local runners and walkers have been hitting the roads on Thanksgiving Day to compete in road races. They do it to burn calories before gorging themselves but also to reunite with old acquaintances. And the races are proliferating. There will be at least 10 of them on Thanksgiving Day this year, including four new races.

Jim Karwoski of Shiloh was prompted by his son Brendan, 14, to create the first Belleville Thanksgiving Day 5K and Fun Run.

"He's big into those things, and we got tired of traveling to Kirkwood-Webster Groves, and I belong to a group that's trying to raise funds for a hockey team," Karwoski said. "I've gotten so much positive feedback from people, happy that there's one on this side of the river now."

BURNING CALORIES

Running or walking on Thanksgiving day is a great idea, since most of us will eat a lot more than we usually do, says Katie Eliot, an instructor in nutrition and dietetics at St. Louis University. But running a 5K or 10K doesn't give them the green light to eat everything they want on the Thanksgiving buffet. A lot of people overestimate the amount of calories they're burning when exercising.
Running or walking a 5K, which is 3.1 miles, will burn about 300 calories for a person who weighs 150 pounds; fewer if you weigh less and more if you're heavier.

"That maybe covers your slice of pumpkin pie," says Eliot. "So pace yourself at the buffet as well the race. There's always the opportunity to eat leftovers the next day."

Running and walking also help control blood sugar levels.

Earlier this year, John Thyfault, assistant professor in the department of nutrition and exercise physiology at the University of Missouri, released the findings of a study which showed that regularly taking more than 10,000 steps a day, which most avid runners and walkers do, helps control spikes in blood-sugar levels after meals.

RACE GROWS BIGGER

Thyfault also found that becoming sedentary, even for a short time, can negatively affects those spikes. Thanksgiving Day road races provide an added incentive for hitting the road on a busy day when it might be easier not to. And the chance to see old running mates is often the biggest lure.

The Kirkwood-Webster run, which began in 1983, is the oldest and most popular of the races.

Murray Pounds, director of parks and recreation for Kirkwood, estimates it will draw about 4,000 participants this year, many returning from other parts of the country.

"We used to think a good crowd was in the 400 range," he says. "But it started growing about 12 years ago. I'd have a tough time saying why. It has become a reunion of sorts for alums of cross country and track teams. We just had someone call from New York asking us to mail their registration bib."

Wayne Baldwin, cross country coach at Kirkwood High School, says that for some people, particularly current and past cross country runners, it's an integral part of the day, as big as the Kirkwood-Webster high school football game.

"Certainly there are people who go for the competition, to win or place," he said. "But many come to interact with their neighbors and people they haven't seen in a long time."

Richert's daughter, Deanna Richert, 23, started running the race with him when she was in high school and on the cross country team at Ursuline Academy.

"Right after their cross country season, she'd take a couple of weeks off then run that," he said, adding that she'd do the same thing while competing at Regis University in Colorado.

She'll run it again this year when she returns home for the holiday and so will her boyfriend. It will be his second time.
"Although they want to run under assumed names because they're not in very good shape right now, and they don't want anyone to see their times," Richert said.

As for himself, Richert doesn't expect to set a personal record.

"I don't know if I'll run but I'll be in it," he said. "It wouldn't be Thanksgiving without the Turkey Day race."
Woman learns through experience

By Denise Baran-Unland For The Herald-News

JOLIET — Talk career goals to University of Missouri journalism major Brittany Brown, 21, and you'll hear, "I want to use my writing to help other people."

The ideal job for Brown, who received a firsthand education in stigma two years ago when she was diagnosed with bipolar disease, would be writing feature stories about people, especially those young people struggling against mental illness, addiction and/or abuse, so she can raise both awareness and hope for them.

Last summer, Brown jumpstarted that goal by filling in for David Stier, director of youth ministries at Messiah Lutheran Church. Her duties included leading 30 high school students at a work camp mission trip in Pennsylvania, something Brown had never done.

Brown also learned how to reach out in compassion to youths who have had a more challenging upbringing than she had experienced and call out for God to assist in her shortcomings. This was in addition to her second part-time media and communications job for Make-a-Wish Foundation in Chicago.

"I realized I couldn't do this on my own unless I gave it to the Lord. I would have crashed and burned," Brown said. "Sometimes, I think God is a distant God, but now I know He's big enough to handle everything."

While Stier traditionally trains an intern during the summer months, last summer was first time he had been absent during that internship or asked an intern to assume his role on a mission trip.

Because the intern is generally not much older than the students he or she leads, the experience is beneficial for all, Stier said.

"She jumped right in and did a fabulous job," Stier said. "She had a few hiccups, but she leaned on the other adult leaders and learned from her mistakes."

This is how Brown landed the job. After studying in London last spring, Brown went online to research summer job possibilities and discovered the internship.

In mid-June, the group joined other youth ministries in working on general home repairs for a group of houses in Pennsylvania. Brown helped oversee a group of 10 students, none of whom were part of the Messiah Lutheran youth group.
"The homeowner was an awesome lady," Brown said. "She couldn't believe they had picked her home and kept taking pictures. She acted as if she had just won the lottery."

Brown bonded easily with the high school girls and felt comfortable sharing her faith with them.

Alessa Smith, 17, of Shorewood, said Brown’s guidance helped strengthen her own faith, which had faltered during her junior year when some close friendships had broken down.

"She helped me get back in touch with building a relationship with God," Smith said. "She showed us how to get into scriptures and develop that personal relationship with Jesus. She’s such a woman of God."

However, Brown had a harder time commanding that same respect from the boys, who were used to looking up to Stier. Yet, Tyler Eickholtz, 17, of Plainfield, felt Brown’s inexperience had certain benefits to the youth group.

"We had to figure out some things for ourselves instead of always calling, ‘Hey, Dave!'" Eickholtz said. "At the same time, she learned to step up and say, ‘No,’ to us occasionally."

About halfway through the trip, Brown had begun despairing her ability to finish the task and her father was about to send her home, but she convinced him otherwise.

"It was like something was whispering in my ear, ‘You’re not good enough,’” Brown said. "So I had the students and other leaders pray for me. I was not going to let my illness get in the way of this."

Today, Brown distresses less over her illness and relies more on the power of God inside her. "I’ve realized how messy I can be on the inside," Brown said, "but I’m overwhelmed by this God who loves me."
True/False adds Jesse Auditorium, church and drops Stephens venues

By Janese Silvey

True/False Film Fest has added two new venues to the event this coming year — including Jesse Auditorium on the University of Missouri campus.

With 1,732 seats, Jesse will top the Missouri Theatre as the festival's largest venue. Organizers also will build a "cinema-from-scratch" in the new addition of Missouri United Methodist Church across from the Missouri Theatre. There will be no venues at Stephens College this year.

The moves aim to consolidate activities downtown, co-organizer Paul Sturtz said. "We feel like probably psychologically it's easier to walk down Ninth Street and to the” Francis Quadrangle “than to cross over College” Avenue to get to Stephens, he said.

In the past, Jesse Auditorium has not been available during True/False dates, said John Murray, who manages Jesse Hall. The timing worked out this year, “and we're penciling in next year, trying to hold those dates so we can continue this arrangement,” he said.

The ninth annual True/False Fest is March 1-4. Passes are available online at http://truefalse.org at the same prices they were offered last year. A $500 Super Circle Pass gives festival-goers full access to the films and more exclusive events, such as the Filmmaker Fete, where attendees can meet filmmakers. Packages then scale down to a $30 Gateway pass, which secures any combination of three tickets. Passes give those planning to attend the ability to reserve tickets for specific films when organizers start taking reservations in February. Single tickets go on sale March 1 at the box office location, which has not yet been determined.

Film submissions are being accepted through Dec. 7 and won’t be chosen until early next year. Buying tickets before films are announced might feel like a “leap of faith, but we always feel like we deliver,” Sturtz said.

“We feel like the festival experience transcends whatever particular titles happen to be picked that year,” he said.

Submissions have come in from Brazil, Canada, Ireland, Australia and across the United States, he said.

“Anyone who’s attended the festival can vouch: We show good movies,” Sturtz said.
This year, a pair of symposiums will serve as festival bookends. On Feb. 29, MU’s School of Journalism will host “Based on a True Story,” to discuss the intersection between journalism and documentary filmmaking.

Then on March 5, some festival guests will stick around for a symposium on digital storytelling.

“We’ll talk about the latest, greatest examples of multimedia storytelling,” said Charles Davis, an associate professor of journalism who is organizing the event. “It will be a show-and-tell day as much as anything else.”

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail jsilvey@columbiatribune.com.
Mizzou Botanic Garden makes campus bloom

By Bill Clark

Pete Millier is the director of the University of Missouri Campus Facilities, Landscape Services and the Mizzou Botanic Garden.

The first two positions Ol’ Clark understands, but — the Mizzou Botanic Garden? Hey, Pete, tell me more.

The Mizzou Botanic Garden is the largest such garden in our state, covering 705 acres, more than 6,000 trees, three self-guided trails and 18 individual gardens — and it is a project still very much in the growing stage.

The Mizzou Botanic Garden is the entire MU campus, not including the golf course and the athletic facilities.

The idea for the garden came during the Barbara Uehling era at MU. She was instrumental in expanding the Columbia campus, purchasing and dismantling older housing, then moving to unify and beautify that expanded campus.

In 1997, Superintendent of Grounds Tom Flood came up with the plan for the botanic garden. Vice Chancellor Kee Groshong gave the project a thumbs-up, as did Chancellor Richard Wallace.

Today, three tree trails are an enjoyable stroll. Most of the trees have identification tags.

The Memorial Union loop has 36 tree stops along its meandering course, but only one of the 18 special gardens.

The Lowry Mall loop has 30 tree stops between the mall and Rollins and between Hitt Street and Maryland Avenue.

The Jesse Hall loop covers the area from Conley Street to Elm Street with 50 tree stops. All but four of the 18 individual gardens are located within the last two loops.

The first two trails are .61 of a mile in length, and the Jesse Hall loop is a mile in length.

The tree trails include six Missouri state champion trees. The sugarberry and black maple champions are found near McAllister Hall in Peace Park; the Friend’s Tree and dogwood are on
University Avenue between Whitten and Waters halls; the black haw is on College Avenue near Hudson Hall; the buttonbush is near the greenhouse east of the Memorial Union.

The 18 gardens are supported primarily by contributions. Eleven of the 18 are funded individually; the rest rely on memberships in the Friends of Mizzou Botanic Garden.

The 18 gardens offer a wide range of horticultural diversity — and an explosion of floral beauty. Around the Carnahan Quadrangle are six plots devoted to Siberian iris, Asian and Oriental lilies, peonies, geranium, coneflower and phlox.

Pete Millier, pronounced Mill-ya, has been director of facilities, landscaping and the botanic garden since 2005. He grew up in Fresno, Calif., and graduated from San Joaquin High School in 1971 and from Fresno State University in 1977 with a degree in plant science.

He managed a landscape company, worked as a nurseryman, a golf course manager and added a master’s degree in public administration while working as grounds superintendent at Fresno State.

All is not gardening and tree-trimming for Pete and his staff. Things such as snow removal, replacing light bulbs and unplugging toilets have their moments as well as planting petunias.

Pete’s sidekick, the communication manager for the department, is Karlan Seville, a former softball player from Wright City with a 1988 journalism degree from MU, where she taught for four years on the Missourian copy desk.

She has been in Columbia since 1994 and, like Pete, is a driving force in the future of the botanic garden.

You owe it to yourself to stroll the MU campus and enjoy this unique botanic experience. Start in the late fall and learn your winter trees, then marvel come spring as the campus erupts in full bloom.

To learn more about the garden, receive maps and dates on the individual gardens, email millier@missouri.edu or call 882-4240. You can join the “Friends” at that number as well.

And you can purchase a calendar featuring a dozen of the reasons why you’ll truly enjoy a visit to a highly visible yet well-kept secret — the Mizzou Botanic Garden.