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COLUMBIA DAILY
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Pinkel: I failed miserably



Don Shrubshell

University of Missouri head football coach Gary Pinkel answers questions Monday from a throng of reporters during a ten-minute press conference held at Holder Susan Slusher Oxenhandler offices.

By Dave Matter

Columbia Daily Tribune Monday, November 21, 2011

Breaking silence on the news that stunned Columbia last week, Missouri football Coach Gary Pinkel called his arrest for drunken driving one of the most devastating things to happen in his life.

"Folks, I'll be really honest with you," he told reporters Monday afternoon at his attorney's downtown office. "As I told my football team, I'm 59 years old. I can't ever remember once — I asked my sister this today on the phone — I can't ever remember once ever hurting my family, my friends, any team I was associated with as a player as a coach, ever hurting anybody. So, when I did this, this is one of the most devastating things to ever happen to me personally. I've got to live with it."

Speaking publicly for the first time since his DWI arrest last Wednesday night and subsequent suspension, Pinkel took questions for 10 minutes inside the offices of Holder Susan Slusher Oxenhandler. Per the terms of his one-week suspension, Pinkel is prohibited from being at the MU team facilities. He will be reinstated Thursday and cleared to resume his coaching responsibilities in time for Saturday's Border War game against Kansas in Kansas City. He chose to address his arrest and suspension Monday rather than during an interview session Friday night after the team's walk-through at Arrowhead Stadium.

"I've always tried to be a good and positive role model, but last week I failed miserably," he said. "Now it's up to me to begin earning everyone's respect and trust back. And that's what I intend to do. This will never ever happen again."

Pinkel was stopped by Boone County Sheriff deputies after failing for lane and signal violations Wednesday night as he exited Highway 63 onto Broadway. After struggling through several field sobriety tests, Pinkel was placed under arrest and taken into custody. He posted \$500 bond and by Friday morning pleaded guilty to a Class B misdemeanor charge for first-time DWI offense. He was given a 30-day suspended jail sentence and placed on two years probation.

As part of his punishment handed down by Athletic Director Mike Alden, Pinkel was not allowed to coach Saturday's home finale against Texas Tech — a game the Tigers won 31-27 in the final minutes. Pinkel said some friends picked him up and took him to his condo at the Lake of the Ozarks where he watched the game on TV. He called it "gut wrenching" and blamed himself for the team's listless start in the first quarter.

"That's me," he said. "And what I put them through. I just have to live with that burden."

"If we couldn't have won that game," he added, "I don't know if I could live with that for the rest of my life."

Pinkel's arrest came during a turbulent season that's delivered season-ending injuries to several key players, dramatic games, close losses and uncharacteristic struggles for a program that won 40 games from 2007-2010.

"And I added to it," he said. "I added. You don't do what I did to a team 48 hours before a game. You don't do that. To have your team get themselves together with the great coaching you have and the great leadership, it's just remarkable they could do that. ... They were hit in the face, hit in the mouth. And they had to respond."

Pinkel called the support he's received in the form of calls, texts and emails "phenomenal."

"I also understand people who are less forgiving," he said. "I've really hurt this university and hurt a lot of people. I certainly expect that also."

Pinkel said he has not watched the video footage of his arrest that's available on several media outlet websites, including the Tribune's. But he did not object to the scrutiny he's received since his arrest.

"I'm responsible," he said. "We know if you make a mistake it's going to be publicized nationally. And I have no problem with that at all. Because we understand that. And that's part of my failing."

Asked point blank if he has a drinking problem or if he'll seek treatment, Pinkel said no.

"You don't drink and drive," he said. "Gary Pinkel shouldn't. And nobody should."

After Pinkel addressed questions, his attorney Bogdan Susan said he does not have access to the results of Pinkel's blood alcohol test taken at Boone Hospital after his arrest and indicated that result will never be disclosed.

"Generally speaking, when someone's pleaded guilty and accepted responsibility, that renders that evidence moot in any case, not just this one," Susan said.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Pinkel addresses his DWI experience

BY STU DURANDO • sdurando@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8232 | Posted: Tuesday, November 22, 2011 12:30 am

COLUMBIA, MO. • At 1:30 p.m. last Saturday, Gary Pinkel left his home with two friends. They drove to the Lake of the Ozarks and in the seclusion of the Missouri coach's condominium watched the Tigers play Texas Tech less than 72 hours after Pinkel's arrest for DWI.

He described the experience as gut-wrenching and emotional with the Tigers needing a win to become bowl eligible and waiting until the game's final minute to complete the task. He agonized over the slow start and realized his role in the team's lack of focus.

But it couldn't match the moment two days earlier when Pinkel had to face his players and come clean about the decision that landed him a one-game suspension and widespread scrutiny.

"One of the toughest things I've ever done in my life was talk to the coaches, talk to the seniors, talk to the team," Pinkel said at a news conference at his attorney's office Monday afternoon. "It was very emotional. They saw a different side of me they've never seen before. But when you're wrong, you're wrong. I had to stand up to them and tell them how I felt and how I failed them."

Pinkel said he decided to have a news conference early in the week to avoid answering questions Friday in Kansas City, Mo., the first day he will meet the media after returning from suspension.

He said he has not watched the video of his arrest that has made the rounds on the Internet, displaying his inability to recite the alphabet from E to R or count backwards from 73 to 62.

Despite an abundance of supportive e-mails, texts and phone calls, Pinkel said he understands those who are critical of him. And he acknowledged what is necessary to regain the trust of the community.

"Just live the right kind of life and don't make bad decisions," he said. "I'm 59 and I can't ever remember once — and I asked my sister on the phone — ever hurting my family, my friends, any team I was associated with as a coach or as a player. When I did this it was one of the most devastating things to happen to me personally, and I have to live with it."

Attorney Bogdan Susan stood to the side and allowed Pinkel to handle all questions that were not legal in nature. Susan said he was unaware of Pinkel's blood alcohol level and noted that the issue is irrelevant when someone pleads guilty, as Pinkel did.

He added that the quick guilty plea came because Pinkel "wanted to take responsibility for his actions and decisions that night."

The 11th-year Mizzou coach will try to regain some normalcy when he returns to the team Thursday to complete preparation for Saturday's game against Kansas at Arrowhead Stadium. He has given thought to what he will tell his players but said it might just come down to hugs in the locker room.

He seemed to sense the seriousness of the situation from the outset. On the police video, he is overheard saying "My whole world will change."

The story went national the next day. Pinkel was suspended and handed penalties that will cost him up to \$306,538. Athletics director Mike Alden indicated that another similar problem could cost him his job.

"We understand the responsibility you have as a public figure," Pinkel said. "Some might say it's not fair you get treated differently than other people. But we know this. I know this. I'm responsible. And we know that if you make a mistake, it's going to be publicized nationally, so I have no problem with that at all."

Pinkel said the incident probably will alter how he approaches life in the community "a little bit." Asked if he had a drinking problem or would seek treatment, he said no to both.

But he knows the matter will weigh on him for some time.

"I've always tried to be a positive role model, but last week I failed miserably," he said. "Now it's up to me to begin earning everyone's respect and trust back and that's what I intend to do. This will never happen again."

Missouri football coach Pinkel apologizes for DWI arrest

By Andrew Wagaman

November 21, 2011 | 6:54 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — In his 59 years, Gary Pinkel cannot remember ever hurting his family, friends or team.

Last week, he did.

Pinkel, head coach of the Missouri football team, was arrested for driving while intoxicated Wednesday night. He pleaded guilty to the Class B misdemeanor charge on Friday morning.

Speaking to media at the law office of Holder-Susan-Slusher-Oxenhandler on Monday afternoon, Pinkel called his mistake "one of the most devastating things" that had ever happened to him. In his attempt to be a positive role model, Pinkel said he failed miserably.

"I got to live with it," Pinkel said.

Pinkel was pulled over around 10 p.m. Wednesday for not using proper lane and signal violations as he exited U.S. 63 onto Broadway. Pinkel received a 30-day suspended sentence, which means he will serve 30 days in jail if he violates a two-year probation.

"This will never ever happen again," he said. "You don't drink and drive. Gary Pinkel shouldn't, and nobody should."

Bogdan Susan, Pinkel's attorney, said he does not have access to the results of Pinkel's blood alcohol content test results.

"When someone has pleaded guilty and accepted responsibility, that renders that evidence moot and irrelevant," said Susan, who spoke after him.

Pinkel called the support he received in the aftermath of his arrest phenomenal, but he also said he understands those who are less forgiving. Asked what he thought of the public attention his arrest garnered, Pinkel said he recognizes that, as a public figure, he is responsible.

"I know this, OK?" he said. "We know if you make a mistake, it's going to be publicized nationally, and I have no problem with that at all. That's part of my failure."

Pinkel was suspended for one week from MU facilities, including Missouri's Senior Day game against Texas Tech on Saturday. Before leaving the facilities Thursday, he addressed the seniors on the team, which he said was one of the most difficult things he's ever had to do.

On Saturday, he watched the game from his condominium at Lake of the Ozarks with friends. He said every play felt like the last of a close game. In fact, the Tigers didn't secure a 31-27 victory until the final minute, when defensive end Michael Sam intercepted a pass yards away from the Missouri end zone.

"It was gut-wrenching," Pinkel said. "It was very emotional for me. Saw the team play the first quarter, and we obviously weren't focused. And that's me, I put them there. I had to live with that burden.

"If we don't win that game, I don't know, uh ... I'd have to live with that the rest of my life. I'm very thankful to them."

Pinkel is allowed to return to team facilities on Thursday morning and will coach when Missouri plays its rivalry game against Kansas on Saturday at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City.



Big 12 Football Notebook

Business as usual for Tigers

By Dave Matter

Columbia Daily Tribune Monday, November 21, 2011

Until Missouri Coach Gary Pinkel is clear to resume his head-coaching responsibilities, defensive coordinator Dave Steckel and offensive coordinator David Yost will continue running the program.

Filling in for Pinkel, who was suspended after last week's DWI arrest, on today's Big 12 teleconference, Steckel said he and Yost are keeping Pinkel abreast of the staff's game-plan for Saturday's game against Kansas.

"We're just business as usual," Steckel said.

Pinkel scheduled a press conference for 1:30 this afternoon at the office of Holder Susan Slusher Oxenhandler. his attorney Bogdan Susan announced this morning. Other than releasing two prepared statements and a letter addressed to Missouri fans, Pinkel had not publicly discussed his arrest and suspension before today's event.

The Tigers (6-5, 4-4 Big 12) will practice tomorrow and Wednesday without Pinkel. He's allowed to rejoin the team Thursday. By then, the Tigers will be well into preparations for the Border War, a game that could be the final installment of the rivalry. Kansas officials have said they don't want to resume the series in nonconference play once Missouri joins the Southeastern Conference next year. Saturday marks the teams' 120th meeting.

Steckel isn't bothering with that storyline.

"I don't know if we are or we're not" playing Kansas again, he said. "This is Kansas. Kansas has been a great rivalry for the University of Missouri for many, many years. That's what's important. That's what's on our plate right now. We're not worried about the future. We're worried about right here, right now."

Steckel's defense clinched Saturday's 31-27 win over Texas Tech without its best cornerback. E.J. Gaines sat out the final series with a bruised hand suffered earlier on a punt return. Gaines is OK to play Saturday, Steckel said. On the team's most recent depth chart, free safety Braylon Webb is listed as doubtful after undergoing meniscus surgery two weeks ago. Kenronte Walker, the starter in Webb's absence, is expected to start again. Also, backup offensive lineman Jack Meiners is listed as doubtful with an undisclosed injury.

NEXT UP

Turner Gill's days might be numbered as Kansas' coach. The Jayhawks are 5-18 on his watch the last two seasons and 1-15 in Big 12 games. Barring an upset in Saturday's Border War — Missouri is an early 24-point favorite — Kansas (2-9, 0-8) will become the eighth Big 12 team to go winless in conference play since the league formed in 1996. Gill's Jayhawks might not be considered the worst team of the Big 12 era — it will be hard for anyone to match the futility of Baylor's 1999 team — but Kansas could secure a footnote in the Big 12 annals: the first 0-9 conference record, only because the Big 12 added a league game this season.

The other seven winless teams all finished 0-8: Baylor in 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2007; Iowa State in 2003 and 2008; and Kansas in 2002. Only one of those seven seasons ended with a head coach getting fired: Baylor parted ways with Guy Morriss after the 2007 season.

Gill didn't flinch when asked today about his job status.

"I don't get caught up in that," he said. "I'm here to coach them right here for the Missouri game. That's what I'm here to do with our staff. That's what I'm going to focus on and continue to move forward and continue to build a program here that's going to be competing for championships in the future."

Parting ways with Gill won't come cheap. Kansas is on the hook for \$6 million, the remainder of Gill's original five-year, \$10-million contract. Would a win over heavily favored Missouri save his job? Gill didn't address that question. Neither his job security nor MU's future conference was on his mind today — not with a team ranked last in the Big 12 in points and points allowed.

"We get caught up in all those things and it's a distraction to us trying to making sure we execute on the football field," he said. "That's what we need to focus on."



The Tribune's View

Imbibing

Booze on or about the campus

By Henry J. Waters III

Columbia Daily Tribune Monday, November 21, 2011

It's as if some Perverse Organizer suddenly decided to inundate the University of Missouri with issues involving alcohol consumption. On the very week the chancellor acknowledged student alcohol problems, drinking rules were relaxed for fraternity houses, our sports department did a report on serving booze at major college football games and our esteemed football coach was arrested for driving while intoxicated and had to miss Saturday's Senior Day game against Texas Tech.

Despite this sudden flurry, challenges on campus regarding alcohol are no more than usual, meaning they are substantial but perhaps not cataclysmic. College campuses are ripe places for drinking problems. Large populations of underage students live in a state of quasi-excitement awaiting the next chance to whoop it up. Mix in big-time football, and the crowds and excitement are multiplied. If you were to design a more pregnant atmosphere for youthful drinking problems, you'd be hard-pressed.

Even without the sudden excitement of these high-energy weekends, college student drinking poses a continual challenge. Recently an emergency physician reported to the MU chancellor's office a disturbing flow of students suffering from very high levels of blood alcohol poisoning. Chancellor Brady Deaton called on faculty to hold more classes on Fridays so student weekends might be delayed a bit.

Campus lifestyle officers seemed willing to condone relaxed drinking rules in fraternity houses, where infractions might be easier to control. Police officers were not pleased, but prohibition in the houses had led to more off-campus partying. Drinking bans continue in sorority houses, imposed by national officials. Presumably the ladies will find plenty of opportunity at the frat houses and elsewhere. All this to-do seems not to change the general proposition.

MU does a good job trying to dissuade student drinking but is up against an intractable challenge. Official prohibition rules governing individual social behavior are bound to be scoffed. As long as humanity persists, alcohol abuse will continue and marginally successful rules will be made to mitigate its effects.

Ideally, young people will grow up avoiding booze then, after age 21, gradually learn how to use in moderation, never exceeding guidelines laid out in laws on the subject. Yes, and we'll learn how to legislate weather conditions, too.

MU wellness boss Kim Dude issues a steady tattoo of advice urging safer student behavior. This is good work and sure to have a positive effect, but never enough to offset the primal urges of a youthful college crowd learning new ways, not all of them in the classroom.

Tomorrow: Not all university-related alcohol problems involve the young.

What Did Your Thanksgiving Turkey Eat?

Scientists have tinkered with the common supermarket turkey's diet.

By Jennifer Viegas

Tue Nov 22, 2011 07:41 AM ET

THE GIST

- A new diet, called "the Missouri Ideal Turkey Diet" increases use of less expensive grains and relies on amino acid additives.
- The switch to this diet could save the turkey industry \$100 million each year.

The new diet, called "the Missouri Ideal Turkey Diet" increases use of less expensive grains and relies on amino acid additives.

We all anticipate our favorite Thanksgiving dish -- cornbread stuffing, pumpkin pie, sweet potatoes or turkey.

But what exactly does the turkey eat before we eat it anyhow?

In fact, scientists have developed a new turkey feed for mass market turkeys that could change Thanksgiving for many.

The new feed promises to keep prices of the sometime pricey bird low while maintaining quality.

Most commercially raised "turkeys eat a diet that is computer formulated for the least cost and consists of corn, soybean meal, animal by-products, distillers' grains and a variety of vitamin and mineral sources," Jeff Firman, a professor in the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, told Discovery News.

Distillers' grains are leftovers from the ethanol industry. Starch is removed, concentrating protein. The animal by-products come from the rendering industry.

"They include bones, bits of trimmings, and other stuff that we don't eat," he said.

In the wild, turkeys are omnivores whose diet consists of about 80 percent grass rounded out by other vegetation, seeds, insects and small animals.

Some heritage and organic poultry farmers feed their turkeys all vegetarian diets with no synthetic amino acids. The Agricultural Marketing Resource Center suggests these alternative markets continue to grow.

But data from the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association shows that the vast majority of turkey sales are from mass-market suppliers.

That said, a new study released by 1000 Friends of Maryland found that just 48 percent of the foods, including sides like sweet potatoes and apples for apple pie, are commonly found on a Thanksgiving table are grown locally.

Firman's calls his new feed "the Missouri Ideal Turkey Diet." He says it has the same nutritional qualities as typical pellet feed. It's made, however, at a cost of \$13 to \$25 per ton less, thereby reducing expenses by 8 to 10 percent which many consumers will see at the supermarket.

Firman believes the industry could save more than \$100 million, especially since satisfying turkeys' hunger accounts for 70 percent of the cost of producing turkey meat.

The Missouri Ideal Turkey Diet has "no new ingredients," he clarified. "just a different mix."

Firman tested the new diet out on 800 turkeys. He found that the birds met health targets and reached market weight within 18 to 21 weeks. The change would likely therefore not affect how future Thanksgiving turkeys look and taste.

"The industry is slow to evolve, so it could take a few years before any feed changes fully take effect," he said.

Sally Noll, a professor of poultry science at the University of Minnesota, specializes in the nutrition and feeding of market turkeys.

"The key is formulating turkey diets on a digestible amino acid basis, along with the appropriate ratios of amino acids needed to meet the turkey's need for amino acids to grow," Noll told Discovery News, adding that there is very little other work done in this area of turkey nutrition, "but it is needed."

There are many theories as to why Americans traditionally eat turkey on Thanksgiving, but one holds that turkeys born in the spring would usually grow to ideal eating size just in time for fall feasting.

Sex, love and vampire babies: What is Twilight teaching kids?

madeleine white

Posted on Monday, November 21, 2011 9:10PM EST

Everyone knows a Twi-Hard. At least that's a strong possibility since an estimated 18 million people flocked to movie theatres to see *Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 1* this weekend.

While some fans are women over 30 (read: moms) wishing they could relive their high-school years, most Twilight fanatics are girls under 15.

But the newest instalment of the franchise goes from PG-13 to 14A, with scenes of sex and a graphic birth.

For those somehow not in the know, Bella Swan (played by Kristen Stewart) is a teenaged girl whose storyline deals with typical adolescent drama: boys, hormones and mood swings. Plus vampires and werewolves.

Spoiler alert: After marrying her vampire beau, Bella loses her virginity and becomes pregnant. She is told the fetus might kill her before it is born – but never does she consider an abortion.

So just what kind of message does all of this send to young girls pining for their own fanged boyfriend?

"There's always been a bit of a paradox in a certain conservative position on sex," writes Steven Zeitchik for The Los Angeles Times's [24 Frames blog](#). "[It's] one that says it's so sacred it requires waiting for a monumental moment ... but it also carries with it such a taint that it can only lead to, say, a monster growing inside you."

Mr. Zeitchik points out this isn't the first time that Hollywood has blatantly ignored the "abort" button, reminding readers that Katherine Heigl's character in *Knocked Up* chooses to keep her baby, though no real explanation as to why is given.

Feminists have also raised red flags for parents of Twi-Hards.

"Though we do have evidence that fans are thinking critically about *Twilight*," says University of Missouri professor Elizabeth Behm-Morawitz, "it is the subtleties of the [socially conservative] messages about gender and sexuality that remain concerning."

Of course, not everyone is alarmed. In fact, TheBump.com has compiled five handy tips for expecting mommies everywhere based on Bella's nightmarish experience.

Its No.1 piece of *Twilight* advice? Trust your mom instincts and keep that baby.

Los Angeles Times

'Twilight: Breaking Dawn:' Does it send the wrong message?

November 21, 2011 | 7:00 am

It was of course never much of a question whether millions of Americans were going to rush out to see "The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn -- Part 1" this weekend, which they did -- about 18 million people, to be specific. For comparison's sake, that's just slightly behind the number who watched last year's "American Idol" finale -- as studio Summit Entertainment rang up \$139.5 million in box office for the latest Kristen Stewart-Robert Pattinson film.

The bigger question, though, might be what these millions were left thinking after they left the theater, particularly in the areas of sex, love and childbirth, areas in which the Bill Condon-directed, Melissa Rosenberg-penned script has plenty to say.

A quick recap, in the unlikely event there isn't a Twihard in or around you. In this fourth installment of the vampire film franchise, adapted from about half of Stephenie Meyer's final book in the "Twilight" series, Bella Swan (Stewart) and the vampire Edward Cullen (Pattinson) finally consummate their love. Though still a teenager, she marries Edward in a glittery affair while the shape-shifting werewolf Jacob (Taylor Lautner) hovers nearby. The wedding leads to a surprise honeymoon in Brazil as well as to Bella's deflowering (not to mention de-feathering; vampire men and pillows are apparently a dangerous combination).

Most conspicuously, the wedding-night sex results in Bella becoming pregnant with a kind of human-vampire hybrid, which soon threatens the life of its mother. Told of the danger, Bella doesn't even consider terminating the pregnancy.

This last turn has been picked over quite a bit by feminist critics, who point out that Meyer is a Mormon who has been open about her faith influencing her novels. They underscore that the book has an antiabortion message, especially as Bella is prone to running around telling people to call her fetus a baby. As the writer Natalie Wilson put in a new essay in Ms. magazine:

"The way Bella's pregnancy is depicted and discussed -- along with the strong pro-abstinence messages of the saga, the religious underpinnings and the motherhood-is-the-natural-and-happy-ending-for-all-females tone -- result in a narrative that leans far more towards the anti-abortion stance."

A fair enough conclusion, though it should be said that "Breaking Dawn" is hardly the first Hollywood film to wave aside the possibility of abortion in the case of an unwanted pregnancy. "Knocked Up," a movie far from Mormon-authored teen fantasy took a similar approach. Keeping the baby is always a lot more dramatically expedient than the alternative, especially when there's a sequel to be had.

But a more slippery issue arises well before Bella ever gets to the delivery stage. As a fairy tale,

"Twilight" has always indulged in fantasy -- two dreamy guys, their disdain for each other trumped by their love for the girl, who doesn't seem to have to do too much to win their affection. But it has been in the realm of fairy tale. As it follows Bella and Edward into the next phase of their life, though, the fourth movie enters a more adult space. And its message, inevitably, gets more fraught.

In the world of "Breaking Dawn," apparently, sex is so hallowed that it can only be practiced on a wedding night, and after a glorious trip to a beach in Brazil -- a virginity-losing experience about as close to most of our realities as the sight of grown men turning into wolves.

And then of course there's the fact that the sex results in an immediate pregnancy. You don't have to be looking too hard to see the prudishness of this Meyer-Rosenberg turn, which implicitly warns that all sex has major consequences, even sex of the sanctioned, post-marital kind.

There's always been a bit of a paradox in a certain conservative position on sex, one that says it's so sacred it requires waiting for a monumental moment (like on a honeymoon trip to Brazil), but it also carries with it such a taint that it can only lead to, say, a monster growing inside you. In about 10 minutes of screen time, "Breaking Dawn" suggests both.

This is all still pulpy fantasy, of course, not to be taken ultra-seriously. But as University of Missouri professors Melissa Click, Jennifer Stevens Aubrey and Elizabeth Behm-Morawitz wonder in their book "Bitten by Twilight," some of this must get through to the young viewers who flock to it.

"Though we do have evidence that fans are thinking critically about 'Twilight,'" Behm-Morawitz said in a statement last week, "it is the subtleties of the [socially conservative] messages about gender and sexuality that remain concerning."

In other words, there is room, even in a teen allegory, to show the consequences of teen marriage and sex. The emotional complexities, for example, or the effects of peer pressure. In "Breaking Dawn," most of that gets brushed under the rug in favor of a different lesson: You should wait until marriage to have sex for the first time. Then when you do, it can result in a life-threatening monster, a monster that under all circumstances must be carried to term.

Researcher considers dosage for vitamin D

By JANESE SILVEY Saturday, November 19, 2011

Giving obese teenagers a high daily dose of vitamin D3 is a safe and effective way of improving their often-compromised vitamin D status, a University of Missouri study shows.

Catherine Peterson, associate professor of nutrition and exercise physiology, presented the findings at the annual meeting of Experimental Biology.

A deficiency of vitamin D — obtained through certain foods, sunlight exposure or supplements — is common in overweight teens. That's a problem because the vitamin is essential for maintaining healthy immune systems, bones, muscles and nerves. Dietary guidelines from the Institute of Medicine recommend 600 IUs per day with a tolerable upper intake of 4,000 IUs.

Lean teens need about half the level of vitamin D IUs than their obese counterparts, who don't process it as efficiently.

"If obese adolescents only consumed the recommended 600 IUs, they would be in trouble," Peterson said in a statement. "It takes 4,000 IUs to raise their vitamin D status within a sufficient range. This is much higher than the currently recommended daily amount for this age group. This indicates that physicians need to carefully evaluate the vitamin D status in their overweight and obese patients," she said.

Peterson used participants from the MU Adolescent Diabetes and Obesity clinic to test the effects and found that those given 4,000 IU a day of vitamin D3 for six months had significantly greater increases in the concentrations that indicate vitamin D status compared to participants who received a placebo.

The research was funded by the J.R. Albert Foundation, which provides support to not-for-profit programs for projects that encourage healthier living.

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The Boston Globe

Study: Fight afternoon slump with protein, not sugar rush

Afp/Relaxnews / November 21, 2011

(Relaxnews) - To combat mid-afternoon energy crashes, new research suggests reaching for a protein-rich snack instead of sugar-laden treat is the way to go.

It's a common habit among workers who hold day jobs: come 3 pm or so, candy bars are unwrapped and sugar-laden beverages pried open. The objective? A sugar rush to fend off mid-day drowsiness.

But scientists out of the University of Cambridge have found that protein -- not sugar -- is what activates the cells that make people alert and burn calories. The study was published in the November 17 issue of the journal *Neuron*.

Orexin cells secrete an important stimulant in the brain called orexin/hypocretin. When the body doesn't have enough, it can lead to narcolepsy and weight gain. After comparing how different nutrients affect these cells, researchers found that amino acids -- which are found in proteins like egg whites -- stimulate the orexin neurons more than others while glucose lowers their activity.

Moreover, the amino acids also worked by preventing glucose from blocking the activity of orexin cells. In other words, the amino acids worked as a defensive shield against the sugar's offensive assault.

The new findings may explain why protein-rich meals can make people feel less calm and more alert than carbohydrate-heavy meals, researchers added.

"Sleep patterns, health, and body weight are intertwined. Shift work, as well as poor diet, can lead to obesity," said lead researcher Denis Burdakov in a release.

Meanwhile, a study out of the University of Missouri this spring also found that eating a protein-rich breakfast can increase satiety and help stave off hunger pangs throughout the day.

"To combat obesity and insomnia in today's society, we need more information on how diet affects sleep and appetite cells. For now, research suggests that if you have a choice between jam on toast, or egg whites on toast, go for the latter." Burdakov said. ■



Council OKs Regency project after long hearing

Columbia Daily Tribune Published November 22, 2011 at 5:53 a.m.

The Columbia City Council gave approval Monday night to a controversial proposal to rezone the Regency Mobile Home Park to allow for the construction of a 936-bed student apartment complex.

The council decided after nearly three hours of testimony from mobile home residents, University of Missouri students and activists speaking mostly in opposition to the rezoning request and from some Regency residents and representatives for Texas-based Aspen Heights, a student housing company that submitted the rezoning request, speaking in favor. Attendees who opposed the request sported yellow ribbons as a show of solidarity, and most statements on either side were met with applause from a divided audience.

Regency residents found out about the rezoning request in September from a public notice in the newspaper and were told in October by the Colo.-based Churchill Group, the owner of the property, that the residents would have to vacate the property by Feb. 29.

Aspen Heights has offered some incentives that could lessen the burden on the rezoning on Regency residents, such as offering a \$1,800 moving allowance for single-wide trailers and a \$3,000 moving allowance for double-wide trailers. The company has also given more time for the residents to leave the land: Most residents would have to vacate the premises by April 30, and families with school-age children can stay until May 31.

The rezoning request was passed with a 5-2 vote, with Fifth Ward Councilwoman Helen Anthony and Sixth Ward Councilwoman Barbara Hoppe casting the dissenting votes.

Anthony said she was siding with the Columbia Planning and Zoning Commission, which in September unanimously rejected a recommendation to approve the rezoning request. She said more student housing in southeast Columbia could make the area more dense, increase traffic and place additional stress on infrastructure.

"We have too much student housing in that area," Anthony said.

Hoppe, who represents the ward that encompasses the trailer park, echoed Anthony's concerns. She warned that traffic congestion could become an escalating problem if there any service cuts from Columbia Transit to the area.

"I can't vote for a project and have it have so many negative effects on so many people," Hoppe said.

But Mayor Bob McDavid said it was presumable that, if the measure did not pass, Regency residents are "going to be out on the street."

“Their life is tough enough to be thrown out of their homes,” McDavid said.

First Ward Councilman Fred Schmidt argued that the development is consistent with other development in the area and said he did not oppose dense development in the area.

“Density is good,” Schmidt said. “Density is green.”

The measure was passed with several amendments intended to lessen the burden on the redevelopment for Regency residents, including a guarantee that none of the financial incentives offered to residents by Aspen Heights would end up in the hands of the property owner.

The New York Times

A Quiet Push to Grow Crops Under Cover of Trees

By JIM ROBBINS

MU mention page 2

HELENA, Mont. — On a forested hill in the mountains north of Montana's capital, beneath a canopy of pine and spruce, Marc and Gloria Flora have planted more than 300 smaller trees, from apple and pear to black walnut and chestnut.

Beneath the trees are layers of crops: shrubs like buffalo berries and raspberries, edible flowers like day lilies, vines like grapes and hops, and medicinal plants, including yarrow and arnica.

Turkeys and chickens wander the two-acre plot, gobbling hackberries and bird cherries that have fallen from trees planted in their pen, and leaving manure to nourish the plants.

For the Floras, the garden is more than a source of food for personal use and sale. Ms. Flora, an environmental consultant and former supervisor for the United States Forest Service, is hoping it serves as a demonstration project to spur the growth of agroforestry — the science of incorporating trees into traditional agriculture.

The extensive tree canopy and the use of native plants, she says, make the garden more resilient in the face of a changing climate, needing less water, no chemical fertilizers and few, if any, pesticides. "It's far more sustainable" than conventional agriculture, she said.

The idea is to harness the ecological services that trees provide. "Agroforestry is not converting farms to forest," said Andy Mason, director of the Forest Service's National Agroforestry Center. "It's the right tree in the right place for the right reason."

The Department of Agriculture, the Forest Service's parent agency, began an initiative this year to encourage agroforestry.

Depending on the species, trees make all sorts of contributions to agriculture, experts say. Trees in a shelter belt reduce wind and water erosion. Some trees serve as fertilizers — they take in nitrogen from the atmosphere, or pump it from deep underground and, when they drop their leaves, make it available upon decomposition.

Trees planted along streams can take up and scrub out polluted farm runoff. They increase species diversity by providing habitat, and some of those species are friendly to farmers — bees and butterflies that help pollinate crops, for example. (One study showed that 66 species of birds benefit from windbreaks on farms.) Trees can keep a field cooler and more moist.

Some research also shows that cattle farmers can improve their income by introducing trees, both by selling timber and by cooling cows in the shade.

And trees in general help the environment by absorbing greenhouse gases and by cleaning up polluted water — countering some of the effects of large-scale agriculture.

“The biggest problem with food production is environmental degradation,” said Gene Garrett, an emeritus professor of forestry and former director of the Center for Agroforestry at the University of Missouri.

Properly placed belts of trees and other vegetation along streams can filter out 95 percent of the soil sediment that washes off farm fields, studies show, and up to 80 percent of phosphate and nitrogen that runs off.

While the idea of farming with trees is being reborn in the United States, it is not new. It got its start here in the Dust Bowl era, when trees were planted in shelter belts to stop severe wind erosion, Mr. Mason said. And around the world, agroforestry goes back centuries. “Many generations have been on the land,” said Jill M. Belsky, a professor of rural and environmental sociology at the University of Montana who has studied forest farms. “They have deep ecological knowledge and many cycles of these seasons.

“For example, they taste the soil and say, ‘We need a few more chickens in here’ ” for fertilizer.

Elsewhere, “working” trees are being used to replenish eroded or desert landscapes. A program in Niger has greened millions of acres in the last 20 years.

There are several approaches to agroforestry. Grazing livestock under a canopy of trees is called silvo-pasture, for instance. In alley cropping, an ancient technique that is becoming more common in the United States, rows of commercially valuable hardwood trees like oak are alternated with rows of corn, wheat or grasses for biofuel.

Agroforestry operations are also helping raise specialty crops. Nicola MacPherson raises timber in the Ozarks, and grows shiitake and oyster mushrooms on the waste branches; she is also establishing a truffle orchard. Then there are forest gardens like the one the Floras are creating.

Agroforestry is not just as simple as sticking trees in the ground — it can be a sophisticated form of management. “The key to a lot of systems is how they manage shade and light,” Dr. Belsky said. In one common system — teak trees over vegetable crops — as the over-story closes, limiting light, “the types of crops below change.”

Here in Montana, the Floras say they hope that their garden will evolve as conditions change. The climate of the northern Rockies, though, is a world away from tropical forest farms, and the Floras are pioneers.

They have had their share of learning experiences. Bees left their hives and never came back; the Floras had to pollinate their fruit trees by hand, with paintbrushes. One October, trees were killed by a snowstorm and bitter cold. And there are rodents.

“Gophers do a lot of damage,” Ms. Flora said. “They eat tree roots, carrots and potatoes.” Her Yorkshire terrier, Rocky, has been the best remedy so far.

The soil is nutrient-poor, but a forest garden turns marginal soil into much more fertile ground. As the needles and leaves fall and animal waste collects, nutrients increase over time.

One major hurdle to widespread adoption of agroforestry, though, might be conventional thinking about trees.

“Families spent generations removing trees to practice agriculture, and we’re up against that,” said Dr. Garrett, the emeritus professor here. “We have to stress that if you don’t put them in the way, you can use working trees to benefit agriculture.”