Faculty delay decision on evidence rules

By JAN ESE SILVEY

Friday, February 24, 2012

University of Missouri professors yesterday agreed the chancellor should accept a committee's decision that an engineering professor's teaching duties be reinstated, but they weren't ready to interpret rules for future cases.

The MU Faculty Council voted 10-9 to table a resolution that would have required "clear and convincing" evidence to be the standard in all cases where tenured professors face severe sanctions.

The council unanimously approved a letter to Chancellor Brady Deaton, though, that urged him to accept that standard of evidence in Greg Engel's case.

Engel, an associate professor of engineering, was suspended from classroom duties after three Asian female students accused him of racial and gender discrimination when he gave them zero grades for alleged plagiarism.

A student grievance committee cleared him of those charges.

Engel's co-workers lodged a separate complaint against him, known as a faculty irresponsibility charge, accusing him of not being an effective teacher.

A campus committee on faculty responsibility ruled there wasn't enough clear and convincing evidence against Engel and recommended he return to the classroom immediately.

That committee did not have power to dismiss Engel but rather was asked to recommend the dismissal process begin. Had it done so, a separate UM System rule would have come into play that says clear evidence is needed to fire tenured professors.

Complicating the case is the fact MU's rule governing the faculty responsibility committee is vague about what type of evidence is needed to move cases forward.

Provost Brian Foster appealed the Engel decision, saying the committee should have used a lower standard known as "preponderance of evidence," which basically means members would have based their decisions on whether accusations against Engel were likely accurate.
Deaton has yet to decide whether to accept, modify or reverse the committee's decision or to send it back to the committee for a rehearing.

The Faculty Council letter, written by Vice Chairman Joe Parcell, urges Deaton to accept the decision because the committee acted in good faith.

The council wasn't ready to interpret standards for future cases, though. Some members said they didn't want to rush into a decision without understanding all of the ramifications.

Others thought the resolution was a no-brainer.

"If any of us were being judged, we would like it to be clear and convincing," said Eddie Adelstein, an associate professor in the Department of Pathology and Anatomical Sciences. "It's hard to understand why anyone would want to be judged on anything other than clear and convincing evidence and not on rumor, not on anything but fact. It's difficult to know why this is difficult."
Wolfe no-show stumps profs

By JANESE SILVEY

Friday, February 24, 2012

University of Missouri professors were scratching their heads yesterday when, seconds before a Faculty Council meeting began, they learned their guest of honor would not be coming.

Adding to the confusion was that no one at the meeting, including Chancellor Brady Deaton, knew why new UM System President Tim Wolfe wasn’t there.

“I’m sorry the president couldn’t be here,” council Chairman Harry Tyrer told the group. “I’m sure he has a wonderful reason.”

Wolfe attended a public announcement yesterday morning and went to a dinner event last night. He missed the afternoon faculty meeting because of a minor medical issue, his spokeswoman, Jennifer Hollingshead, said.

She said Wolfe did not want her to disclose details.

The UM System sent word to Deaton’s staff that Wolfe would not be able to attend the meeting, but the message apparently got lost in translation. Deaton, who was supposed to introduce Wolfe to the Faculty Council, also learned just before the meeting that Wolfe would not be there.

The Faculty Council meets every other week in a second-floor room in Memorial Union’s south tower. Yesterday, the council spruced up the room in anticipation of the visit, and several non-council guests showed up to hear from Wolfe.

“A lot of people came,” Tyrer said. “There was a lot of hoopla and all that. I think the chancellor was disappointed.”

Tyrer said this morning that he received an email from Wolfe that apologized and said he “wants to reschedule as soon as his schedule will allow.”
Mizzou Advantage spurs numerous projects

By JANISE SILVEY

Sunday, February 26, 2012

Fewer than three years after University of Missouri Provost Brian Foster unveiled the plan, Mizzou Advantage seems to have its tentacles all over campus these days.

A 10-week "Reboot Mizzou" game going on right now was the direct result of a Mizzou Advantage event where two employees from different departments brainstormed about ways to help students form earth-friendly habits.

A digital storytelling program that links MU with Hallmark Cards also was developed through the initiative. At a recent College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources training event, researchers talked about a handful of projects that are funded with Mizzou Advantage dollars.

"We've had some very substantial successes so far that lay the foundation," Foster said. "We're further along that we hoped to be."

And the momentum isn't expected to end — even as the UM System looks to plug a $47 million budget hole this coming year.

UM System President Tim Wolfe has repeatedly said his No. 2 budget priority — just behind student success — is to make sure each campus' long-term goals are funded.

And there's no question Mizzou Advantage is part of MU's long-term goals — it's embedded in the most recent campus strategic plan. The program is allocating just under $4 million, although it is expected to expand to a $6 million budget in the future.

Mizzou Advantage began in 2009 after Foster spent three years working with faculty members to develop the idea. Originally, it was comprised of five key areas but has since been whittled down to four. That's because Foster realized one area, which dealt with advancing technologies, already was embedded in the other four, which focus on the future of food, health, media and energy.

Ultimately, campus leaders want Mizzou Advantage to boost MU's reputation by focusing on the campus' strengths.

There are signs that that's starting to happen.
Earlier this month, MU announced that Glen Nowak, a senior adviser within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, would spend time on campus this year visiting faculty and students in medical and communications-related fields.

And Foster just announced that Christine Elsik, an associate genomics professor at Georgetown University, will join the College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources faculty this summer. Elsik's expertise is in computational biology and bioinformatics, and she will have joint appointments in plant and animal sciences, informatics and biological sciences.

"She's an emerging superstar by all accounts," Foster said, noting her multi-disciplinary research "is exactly what we wanted to do with Mizzou Advantage hires."

There's no question, he added, that the initiative lured her to MU.

Foster said two more key hires are "almost nailed down" as well, and that another potential Mizzou Advantage faculty slot is under discussion.

The program's budget also allowed Foster to hire Bill Duncan, former head of the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, to do some consulting work that links MU with corporations in that area. MU's Vice Chancellor of Research, Rob Duncan, and a UM-Kansas City administrator also teamed up to secure Mizzou Advantage funding to host an international conference on the UMKC campus.

Administrators recently launched a new website — mizzouadvantage.missouri.edu — to help the public keep up with Mizzou Advantage projects.

Although it will take time for larger successes of Mizzou Advantage to show up, Foster said administrators at other schools and corporate leaders are starting to take notice. "It's recognized as being really an out-front way of thinking."
FDA inquiry led MU to shut down drug website

By JANESE SILVEY

Sunday, February 26, 2012

A letter from the Food and Drug Administration about possible violations of federal marketing rules prompted the University of Missouri to pull the plug on a website that catered to parents of infants with acid reflux problems.

That's a different version of a story the Tribune reported in December. At that time, MU researcher Jeff Phillips said the website, www.Marci-Kids.com, went offline because it wasn't affordable. After the story ran, several anonymous sources notified the Tribune about potential FDA violations. A letter to MU from the FDA was obtained through an open records request.

The website, as well as another known as Reflux Solutions, sold CaraCream and BufferBaby — products aimed to make it easier for infants to take proton pump inhibitors such as Prilosec and Prevacid. Another product worked with Zegerid, a heartburn medicine that Phillips developed.

In August, the FDA sent a letter to MU Health Care warning that the site could be violating the FDA's Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act and requested information about MU's contracts with Santarus, the company that markets Zegerid.

Specifically, the violations would have had to do with regulations prohibiting direct-to-consumer advertising, an FDA spokeswoman said. In response, the university requested that Phillips discontinue activities associated with the website, said Kathy Miller, UM chief of staff. She said the system got word earlier this year that the FDA has ended its investigation.

Phillips referred questions to Rich Gleba, spokesman for the MU School of Medicine. Gleba said the university did not have resources to make sure the website complied with federal rules, and it was shut down to avoid "even the possibility of conflicts."

A separate website that continued to sell the products to parents willing to participate in research remained online last week but was taken down Thursday after the Tribune inquired about it.

Parents of babies who suffer from acid reflux issues panicked last fall when they learned Marci-Kids — which also included tips on mixing the buffers and medications — no longer was available.
Some wrote letters to MU asking that the site be funded again, and several parents posted their frustrations on online forums. The Marci-Kids products, many agreed, were the only way they could deliver medications to infants who otherwise would spit it up.

Earlier this month, a new website came online to sell different buffer products. The site, www.infant-acid-reflux-solutions.com, belongs to Kira Volpi of Florida. Content on the website, including an order form, was available Tuesday but no longer was online Wednesday, a day after the Tribune contacted Volpi. Volpi said she did not get the buffer formula from Phillips and that he is not involved in her company or receiving profits from the sales.

The two are at least acquainted. Parents on online forums refer to her as a "loyal follower" of Phillips and pass along her contact information for those wanting to save Marci-Kids. A photograph on her Facebook page shows Volpi and Phillips having drinks with another friend last summer.

Zegerid hit the shelves in 2004 and has made Phillips somewhat of a university poster child for lab-to-market possibilities. Since Santarus began selling the medication, UM licensing income has skyrocketed, hitting a record of $10.4 million in 2009.

That's dropped to $7.76 million in 2011, in part because the pill has since been made available in a cheaper, over-the-counter form.

The medication's legitimacy has been challenged, though. In 2010, Santarus and MU filed a lawsuit to prevent another company, Par Pharmaceutical, from shipping pills with a similar formula. A federal judge deemed that the five patents covering Zegerid were invalid "due to obviousness" in light of prior discoveries.

Santarus and MU have appealed the judge's finding. The company and university also filed a separate suit in December against another company attempting to sell generic versions of the drug, but asked that it be dismissed earlier this month in anticipation of the appellate court decision.
JEFFERSON CITY — Last week, the Republican-led House Budget Committee wrestled with a hard choice — health care for blind people versus softening deep cuts to higher education.

Crumbled limestone from a wall lies on the ground Wednesday on the northwest side of the Missouri Capitol. Several steps of the Capitol have cracked, and staircases are closed to foot traffic.

In a year when the budget will consume $198 million of precious general revenue just to keep school district aid at $3 billion, only the essentials can be funded. And that $3 billion for public schools is almost $470 million less than state law says should be allocated.

Budget writers are reduced to condemning each other for the places they are choosing to cut. Gov. Jay Nixon is damaging higher education, Republican leaders have been saying since he unveiled his spending proposals Jan. 17. Nixon, in turn, called the proposal to eliminate health care for 2,858 blind people "just plain wrong."

All that spending woe is not new. The state budget has been propped up by federal aid for three years. That money is exhausted, and so is the treasury. The official estimate of the general revenue fund balance for July 1 is zero.

Against that backdrop, the first legislation the Missouri House sent to the Senate would prevent lawmakers from spending money even when the treasury is fat.

When it was passed in January, no one — not the sponsor, Rep. Eric Burlison, R-Springfield, or opponents — could say where the state would be today if the restrictions had been in place for any significant period of time.
Burlison said he wanted to provide predictability to total state spending and save money in peak years to use when revenue falls. But he couldn’t say whether that account would be full or empty now, when the state needs it.

With the entire debate taking place in the realm of government theory, the Tribune analyzed the proposed constitutional amendment by comparing it to the real-world experience of Missouri. Along with setting a limit on appropriations, the measure directs surplus funds to special state savings accounts, each with different restrictions. The results, the analysis showed, can vary widely depending on which year is used as a base.

The Tribune calculated two scenarios, looking back 10 and 20 years, respectively.

In the 20-year scenario, one savings account, called the Taxpayer Protection Fund, could have amassed $7.1 billion. Other factors likely would have reduced that amount, but whatever was there today could not be spent except to add that $470 million that would fully fund public schools.

Even in the fourth years of cuts, appropriations proposed for next year are above what would have been allowed had the cap been in place.

Under the 10-year scenario, the state would have no accumulated savings, and the cap for the current year would be larger than actual appropriations.

'SIGNIFICANT UNCERTAINTY'

The proposed constitutional amendment was passed in January on an almost pure party-line vote. The only Democrat to cross the aisle was Rep. Chris Kelly who saw in the measure a long-cherished goal of creating a savings account for the state to tap in tough times.

Kelly worked with Burlison to soften what would have been a spending lid limiting general revenue appropriations to current low levels.

Exceptions were carved out for public schools and voter-approved taxes, and the lid was tied to the relatively high spending year of fiscal 2008.

Those sweeteners couldn’t persuade any other Democrat to swallow it. During debate, Rep. Mary Still, D-Columbia, criticized Burlison for taking away the discretion of future lawmakers.

In the past 100 years, she said, the state has vastly expanded its higher education system. That would not have been possible if future spending is always tied to the past, she said.

Rep. Jamilah Nasheed, D-St. Louis, said the proposal would not allow future lawmakers to restore some of the items cut in tough times. "We have a broken system when it comes to the Department of Corrections. We have a broken system when it comes to mental health and senior citizens. Why can’t we fix our systems?"
During that debate, Kelly said opponents were talking only in "generalized and catastrophic and hypothetical terms."

As the Tribune prepared its analysis, the work was shared regularly with Burlison, Kelly and the Missouri Budget Project, a progressive group that opposes the measure, to prevent errors and gauge reaction.

"You cannot possibly have any good idea of what happens under this, which makes our revenue situation in this state more dangerous," said Amy Blouin, director of the budget project.

Her organization likens the measure to the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, which was passed in Colorado in 1992 and refunded $2 billion that could not be spent before voters agreed to modifications.

And after reviewing the analysis, Kelly found troubling aspects to the measure.

"The 20-year scenario suggests it would be very harmful," Kelly said. "And the 10-year scenario suggests it would be good. The research demonstrates there is significant uncertainty and a couple of technical problems."

If the proposal is to move forward, Kelly said, it will need considerable rewriting. "It's time to step back and take a much more analytical look," he said.

Burlison, however, sees promise in the scenarios, aside from technical drafting errors.

One problem the analysis uncovered is that the proposal exempts debt payments from the cap but makes no allowance for those payments when calculating revenue surpluses.

He's not bothered by the scenario that generates large, untouchable accounts, nor is he concerned that the 10-year scenario generates no savings account.

"What they tell you is that it is very important what year you base it on," Burlison said.

CURRENT FUND 'ESSENTIALLY USELESS'

The appropriations limitation proposal has been around for a few years. It has new momentum this year because Nixon has rebuffed lawmakers who called on him to tap existing state savings accounts to pay for disaster relief.

Nixon has set aside $150 million from current revenue to cover extraordinary expenses caused by tornadoes in Joplin, Sedalia and St. Louis and major floods in northwest and southeast Missouri.

If he had tapped what is known as the Budget Reserve Fund, the money would have to be repaid in three equal amounts in subsequent years. That would have added a $50 million problem to the issues confronting this year's budget.

"Because of the payback provisions, which must be done in good times or bad, it makes it essentially useless," Burlison said.
The Budget Stabilization Fund was born in 1982, at the bottom of another recession. State government had been so strapped for cash that tax refunds were delayed for months, and the University of Missouri was forced to borrow money on a short-term basis while it waited for state allocations to be paid.

At that time, it was known as the Cash Flow Reserve Fund, and the provisions forced state government, in good times or bad, to set aside an amount equal to 5 percent of general revenue to prevent future delays in state payments.

The idea of having money for emergencies also gained traction in the late 1980s, when Kelly was in the House for the first time and played a major role in budget decisions. That led to the creation of a Rainy Day Fund, later combined with the Cash Flow Reserve Fund, which holds 7.5 percent of annual general revenue receipts.

A third fund, known as the Facilities Maintenance Reserve Fund, also exists to support upkeep of state buildings. But it has provisions that make allocations to the fund voluntary, and today it is empty.

There is very little money to fix major problems on any building, and that includes the Capitol. On the west entrance, stairs have been closed for more than a year. Stone is falling off the building, and the shards are allowed to remain where they fall. Final bids on a repair project, expected to cost $1.1 million to $1.5 million, are due tomorrow.

"It is a disaster," Kelly said. "This is in really bad shape."

Burlison said his proposal would not prevent the state from asking voters for a bond issue to make repairs. "If the state has needs, I think it is the governor's responsibility to make the pitch," he said. "If it is truly needed, the legislature will respond."

But the spending restrictions in Burlison's bill won't solve those needs, and conservative lawmakers are unwilling to ask voters for money for any reason, Blouin said.

There are ways to build a state savings account without imposing artificial restrictions, Blouin said. "The legislators clearly were empowered by voters to make tough decisions. That doesn't mean they should make wrong decisions. This would not allow them to respond to voter priorities, or even constituent priorities."

A simple way to create a state savings account would be to require annual allocations to the fund, even in bad revenue years, until it reaches a fixed level. That is how the current reserves were created.

But that method would do nothing to limit the growth of government, Burlison said, and that side of the proposal is as important as the savings accounts it would create.

"Part of the reason we are in this situation is that we have expanded government, at times overexpanded it," he said.
UNDER THE 20-YEAR SCENARIO: If the proposed appropriations cap had been put in place 20 years ago, Missouri would have seen its savings nearly equal the amount the state spends each year. The net result would have been $7 billion in savings that lawmakers would not be able to touch because of limitations on how the funds could be used.

1 What lawmakers actually appropriated in each year’s budget for all functions of government except debt payment and money used to cover judgments against the state.

2 The maximum amount lawmakers would have been allowed to appropriate for all functions of state government had the proposal been in place. The cap is based on the previous year’s spending, with an allowance for inflation, population growth and a small additional adjustment.

3 The total amount that would have been in the savings account had the constitutional amendment been in place. When revenue exceeds spending under the plan, this is where excess cash is saved in anticipation of future downturns.
Editorial: Missouri needs to make education its top priority

By the Editorial Board | Posted: Monday, February 27, 2012 12:15 am | (2) Comments

For far too long, Missouri's top elected officials have been ignoring six of the most important words in the state constitution. They are in Article III, Section 36: "For the purpose of public education."

That is the second-highest priority for the spending of state revenue established by this state's early leaders. First is debt. Second is schools.

Missouri is failing its children.

Every single year, governors and lawmakers proclaim their dedication to the cause of education, whether it be at the K-12 public school level or colleges and universities. But their collective actions rarely match the rhetoric.

Last week, the University of Missouri Board of Curators voted to raise in-state tuition by 3 percent in response to yet another cut in state funding for higher education. The proposed cut takes the state back to almost 1997 funding levels. In that year, tuition in the state's flagship university system was $3,630. Next year, tuition will cost almost three times that amount.

The tuition hike could have been much worse, but that sentiment is hardly worth celebrating.

In nearly every measurable category, state funding of education in Missouri lags behind the other states in our region and the rest of the nation. Over the past 15 years, our legislative leaders have created a structurally unsound state budget the puts more of an emphasis on locking up felons than it does educating our young people and providing our businesses the workforce they need.

Missouri lawmakers, its business community and its civic leaders must turn their attention to education, the single topic that holds the key to building a stronger state.

The problem is not just financial. Students in Missouri's two largest cities are served by unaccredited school districts, a problem that has been festering for decades. But
lawmakers, school officials and education bureaucrats can't seem to find the energy, focus and drive to make serving those children the top priority it should be.

There have been attempts to fix the problems, and there are serious proposals this year, but it's still hard to see true progress through a cloud of partisan bickering.

The biggest problem is that Missouri's focus on being a low-tax state literally is leaving its children behind.

There are three primary areas in which lawmakers truly have discretion when it comes to state spending: schools, corrections and health care. So much of the health care costs are tied to the broken national model and federal spending that rising costs in that area are virtually impossible for state lawmakers to control.

But when it comes to schools and prisons, Missouri legislators have made a stark choice in the past decade and a half, ignoring the constitution and placing an increasing emphasis on the corrections budget to the detriment of education, particularly higher education.

Spending on colleges took its biggest hit under Gov. Bob Holden, a Democrat, between 2001 and 2002. Gov. Matt Blunt, a Republican, raised the higher education budget incrementally each year he was in office, choosing instead to whack health care for poor people and disabled people. Gov. Jay Nixon, a Democrat, is chipping away at both higher education and Medicaid.

No matter the governor, though, the corrections budget climbs.

In 1997, the general revenue budget for higher education in Missouri was $703 million — 12.3 percent of the overall general revenue budget. The state spent only $296.9 million on prisons, taking up 5.2 percent of the budget that year.

Since then, the amount of spending on higher education as a percentage of the overall budget has declined, while corrections has eaten up more and more taxpayer dollars. Under Mr. Nixon's proposed budget, higher education will take up 9.7 percent of the general revenue budget; corrections will eat up 7.5 percent.

Missouri's problems mirror the nation's. The price tag on colleges has been skyrocketing as state aid declines. Parents are willing, and able, to pay the increases because of the ease with which they can obtain government-backed student loans. Enrollment goes up, and lawmakers look the other way as they pass on massive back-door tax increases.

It doesn't, and shouldn't, have to be this way.

Study after study has shown the benefits to a state in investing in higher education. Better, more affordable state schools offer opportunities to low-income and middle-class kids, keep talent close to home, provide employees for businesses and increase the overall tax base by raising incomes over the long haul.
Putting more people in prison does nothing to help the state’s economy. It has little effect on the crime rate. And it mostly ignores the root causes of much of the crime, such as alcohol and drug abuse and rampant poverty. Bad schools contribute to those problems.

If Missouri’s budget priorities today were what they were in 1997, the proposed higher education budget would be $992 million and corrections would be $419 million. As it is, the two budget paths are headed the wrong way, with corrections likely to pass higher education in total outlay just a few years from now.

This trend must be reversed.

After years of lobbying by Missouri Supreme Court Judge William Ray Price Jr. and others, lawmakers in both parties finally have acknowledged that their tough-on-crime policies haven’t been very smart. Responding to a Pew Center study, they are considering a plan to reduce the out-of-control growth of the state’s prisons’ budget.

The proposal, however, falls far short of where it needs to be, particularly when the higher education budget again is being slashed, and K-12 public schools barely are keeping pace.

Missouri needs to close prisons, reduce its inmate population, cut its corrections budget and put the money where it belongs: in schools.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Robbery occurs close to MU

By Celia J. Darrough
February 26, 2012 | 7:31 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — A robbery occurred close to campus early Sunday morning, according to a Clery release from MU police.

The robbery took place at 1:30 a.m. at the corner of Watson Place and a private drive south of 904 Elm Street, near the building that houses Newsy, The Upper Crust Bakery & Cafe, Magictan Studios and Cold Stone Creamery.

MU police received information Sunday afternoon that the Columbia Police Department was taking a report about the robbery, according to the release.

The suspect is described as a white male, 5 feet 10 inches, clean shaven and between the ages of 18 and 25. He was wearing a black Mizzou hoodie at the time of the robbery, according to the release.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Columbia Police Department at 874-7652, or Crime Stoppers at 875-8477 or 875tips.com. Those who call with information may be eligible for a reward.
Some University of Missouri professors seemed confused when the campus' top administrator said he wasn't concerned about Tiger Town just minutes after urging faculty to help curtail student alcohol abuse.

But Chancellor Brady Deaton isn't up to speed on the latest Tiger Town plans that involve turning downtown Columbia into a party zone, spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said.

Deaton addressed MU Faculty Council members on Thursday. After recapping the budget situation, he repeated instructions he gave faculty members in the fall in light of a string of alcohol-related incidents on campus: Hold more classes on Fridays, he said, and don't joke around with students about drinking.

"If we can reduce alcohol consumption and inevitably save a few lives and prevent accidents that occur every year, it's worth doing," Deaton said.

That's when Dennis Miller, an associate psychology professor, questioned how that sentiment aligns with plans for the MU football game day fan zone nicknamed Tiger Town.

Deaton said the two weren't related and that Tiger Town is a chance to cheer for the team. "Hopefully there will not be any more alcohol consumption than any other time," he said.

But Deaton was referring to earlier information he'd received about Tiger Town involving a Friday night pep rally, Banken said.

"The chancellor had been out of town and completely booked with events all week and had not been briefed on the latest Tiger Town discussions," Banken said in an email.

The latest Tiger Town ideas include beer tents on streets closed to the public, parties on the top floors of parking garages and open alcohol containers allowed downtown. The environment aims to better align with traditions found in the Southeastern Conference, the conference MU will call home next fall.

But it's also the type of atmosphere "we have to be very cautious about," said Kim Dude, director of MU's Wellness Center. "People can have a good time in a safe manner and make money in a safe
manner. There are a lot of different issues that need to be discussed to make sure things are done safely."

Dude has not been part of Tiger Town discussions but said she hopes to have a chance to weigh in.

"I just hope in the discussions of plans for Tiger Town that we keep in mind that, yes, we're going to have a lot of new people coming into our town and that could be a good thing for our community, but we need to be proactive in ensuring it's done in a safe and responsible manner," she said.

Miller told the Tribune he went to an SEC school and remembers alcohol being a big part of the game day experience in the conference.

Miller didn't weigh in on whether that's good or bad, he just doesn't want the university to send conflicting messages.

"If we're going to be concerned about decreasing student alcohol abuse and overconsumption," he said, "the university and Mizzou Athletics shouldn't sanction a party town at the same time."

This page has been revised to reflect the following correction:

SECOND THOUGHTS:

A story yesterday about Tiger Town misrepresented a comment from associate psychology professor Dennis Miller. It should have said Miller told the Tribune he went to an SEC school and remembers alcohol being a big part of the game day experience in the conference.
Film honors ‘living legend’ Eliot Battle

By JANSE Silvey

Sunday, February 26, 2012

Some people in Columbia didn’t treat Eliot Battle and his family very well when they were still fairly new in town. Real-estate agents wouldn’t show him homes outside of black neighborhoods; former colleagues at Douglass School called him a traitor for getting a job at Hickman High; and children didn’t invite his kids over to play, regardless of their race.

What a difference a half century makes. Last night, more than 500 people squeezed into Bush Auditorium on the University of Missouri campus to watch a documentary featuring Battle’s life and career, which sparked a standing ovation.

"Eliot Battle is a living legend — just look around," said Juanamaria Cordones Cook, an MU professor who teamed up with others on campus to make "Battle: Change from Within."

The 55-minute film captures a roller-coaster time in American history and the Battles’ calm, albeit stubborn, ride through it. Originally from Alabama, the family reluctantly moved to Columbia in 1956 after then-Columbia Public Schools Superintendent Neil Aslin repeatedly offered Eliot Battle a job and agreed to give his wife, Muriel, one, too. Even then, the Battles only planned to stay one year after seeing the city’s segregated neighborhoods.

The film tracks both their integration into the school system and into the community. Eliot Battle was the first black faculty member at Hickman, where he helped the 78 students moving from Douglass after desegregation.

The documentary puts viewers on a roller coaster of sorts, too. There are lighter moments, such as when Battle recalls seeing Muriel, first as a pig-tailed girl, then all grown up for the first time.

But there also are some gut-wrenching moments in the film. Perhaps the toughest to hear was Eliot Battle Jr. recalling the family’s transition into a white neighborhood, where a "gentleman" across the street shot his dog — a collie named Bingo the family got when the younger Battle was born — when it ran across his lawn. Audience members gasped — some wiped away tears — as he remembered his father telling him the incident wasn’t an excuse to get angry.
The Battle children, like their parents, were expected to set good examples. Donna Battle Pierce, a journalist, recalled having to join a swim club even though she didn't want to. If an organization didn't include a black student, she said, the Battles were expected to participate.

Callean Britton, who stood to watch the film when she arrived too late for a seat, said the documentary highlighted Battle's compassion. "It was fantastic," she said. "He's really able to connect with a lot of people."

Battle — quick to share the spotlight with his wife, who died in 2003 — said he was humbled by the attendance. Perhaps, though, it's not surprising Columbia attitudes have evolved. After all, Battle says in the film, "leadership means to do things that ought to be done with hopes that others will see what you've done and will follow some of the example you've set."
City leaders stop in Lawrence to see KU on Wheels

By Andrew Denney

Saturday, February 25, 2012

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Columbia city government officials, transit advocates and two University of Missouri students traveled to Lawrence, Kan., yesterday for the second of three planned day trips to Midwestern university towns to observe transit systems that are partly funded by student fees.

AT A GLANCE

COLUMBIA TRANSIT

Operating budget: $4.8 million (fiscal year 2012)

Number of buses: 36

Ridership: 2.2 million (fiscal year 2011)

Population: 108,500 (2010 census)

KU ON WHEELS

Operating budget: $6.8 million

Number of buses: 52

Ridership: 2.6 million (estimated for fiscal year 2012)

Population: 87,643 (2010 census)

Sources: City of Columbia, KU on Wheels

Unlike the trip last week to Ames, Iowa, the delegation’s observations were limited to a meeting with Lawrence transit officials and one student representative and a short ride on one of the Lawrence’s bus routes in the Doc & Norm Direct bus chartered by the city for the trip.

Drew Brooks, Columbia’s transportation supervisor, said the visitors were not able to get a chance to ride Lawrence city buses and talk to passengers because of the time restraints set forth in the contract with Doc & Norm Direct and also because the trip to Lawrence took longer than expected.
Late-night shuttles offer students safe ride home

By Andrew Denney

Saturday, February 25, 2012

LAWRENCE, Kan. — When finding a way home from a night at Columbia bars, University of Missouri students have a variety of options, including taxis, sober rides home and shoe leather. Unlike Iowa State University and University of Kansas students, they are not offered a free ride home on a city bus.

MU students who went on a day trip to Lawrence, Kan., yesterday with Columbia city government officials to learn more about the partially student-funded bus system were impressed with the city's Safe Ride/Safe Bus program, which gives free rides to all passengers. The Safe Bus runs from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m., and the Safe Ride program — which is similar to STRIPES in Columbia — provides door-to-door service and runs from 10 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.

"We'll get you out and get you home," said Casey Briner, a member of KU's Student Senate and the university's Parking and Transit transportation coordinator, who said she is frequent user.

Moonlight Express, the late-night shuttle bus service offered in Ames, Iowa, to ISU students runs on Fridays and Saturdays until 3 a.m. and also provides free rides to all passengers.

City Manager Mike Matthes said if Columbia's budget would allow it, a late-night bus route to serve students who are out for a night of fun would be a good fit for the city. "I think it's a pretty good idea," he said. "But it costs money."

Todd Oberlin, an MU graduate student and a member of the Tiger Transit Movement — a group that supports mass transit for MU students — said the establishment of late-night service on weekend nights to downtown and student housing areas closer to the periphery of the city, in exchange for a student fee, could be a first step in drumming up support for students contributing financially to Columbia Transit.
City officials were there to learn more about KU on Wheels, a bus system that is partially funded through an $87.30-per-semester fee charged to University of Kansas students. Despite the fact that Casey Briner, a member of KU's Student Senate, was the only KU student that city officials spoke with about the transit system, the officials said they believed the trip still was productive.

Ken Koopmans, Columbia's transportation manager, said he felt the trip was useful because city officials were able to speak directly to Lawrence transit officials.

"I could have picked up a phone, but we wouldn't have had the kind of synergy of having people in a room and asking the same question," Koopmans said.

City Manager Mike Matthes said he found the meeting productive and said he would not have been able to learn more details about the KU on Wheels budget without being able to ask officials directly. But he said he would have liked to have been able to engage KU students to find out what they think about the city's bus service.

"I would have preferred to get on one of the buses and chatted with them," Matthes said. The officials planned the trips after a proposal to the University of Missouri to establish a student-funded bus system in Columbia was not well received by representatives of the MU student body and the university's administration.

Support for the development of KU on Wheels came from the KU student body, officials there said.

Derek Grayson, an MU graduate student who said he is in the process of joining an MU student group that supports mass transit for students, said a transit fee for MU students could gain more support if students were better informed on the financial impact they leave on Columbia Transit, which provides about 800,000 rides per year to students.

"I think students, if properly educated, will do the responsible thing," Grayson said.

Koopmans said the total cost of the three transit system trips will vary depending on how many passengers they take along, but he said the "worst-case scenario" is that it would cost the city $10,000. City officials have scheduled a March 9 trip to Champaign, Ill., to observe its transit system.
MU event highlights workplace diversity

*Business school brings in firms.*

By JANESIE SILVEY

Saturday, February 25, 2012

*Each year, hundreds of University of Missouri students try to impress employers at career fairs.*

*Yesterday, a handful of employers tried to impress Trulaske College of Business students who bring more to the table than résumés.*

The students participated in the first-ever Bottom Line Case for Diversity symposium at the school, an event that focused on cultural competency in the workplace.

The program featured a fair that let companies — including Target, General Mills and Enterprise Rent-A-Car — show off their diversity-friendly workplace policies.

Don't let the description fool you. Sure, there were minority students participating, but there also were white men and women.

Organizer Ashley Cato stressed that diversity is an all-inclusive description.

"That's one of the" college "diversity association's missions, to make you look within yourself," she said. "Regardless of race, people come from different regions, different religions, have different majors. We want to help all students look within themselves."

Cato, a senior, said she developed the idea for the event to create a more intimate setting that lets students learn more about potential employers.

At career fairs, she said, "we don't get to see what they're all about. This is a chance for them to show us what their companies can do for us."

The daylong event also included a culturally competent training session and a keynote speech featuring Andrea Allison-Putman, the chief people officer for the YMCA of Greater Kansas City.

In the 1980s when she graduated from MU, Allison-Putman said, companies hired minorities and women to comply with affirmative action plans and equal opportunity employment rules.
"It wasn't about, 'Is this good for business,' " she said, adding that she has seen a shift in how companies now make inclusion part of their business strategies.

Organizers hope to make the symposium an annual event. This year, it was limited to 65 undergraduate and MBA students who had to apply for a spot.

Still, business Dean Joan Gabel is hopeful the lessons learned rub off on students who didn't get a chance to attend. "I'm hoping the participants' enthusiasm permeates throughout Cornell Hall," she said.
Missouri’s 529 college savings program to offer matching funds starting March 1

By STEVE ROSEN

NO MENTION

College savers in Missouri’s 529 college savings plan may be eligible for up to $500 a year in free matching funds through a program that starts March 1.

The MOST 529 Matching Grant Program is being funded with private money, making Missouri the 12th state to offer dollar-for-dollar matching funds to college savers.

Qualifying applicants would be eligible to receive up to $2,500 over the lifetime of their MOST 529 accounts.

Under the program that was first announced last year, MOST will provide up to $500,000 in matching funds to help people save for college, technical schools and vocational institutions. At least $125,000 in matching funds will be available each year on a first-come, first-serve basis, the Missouri Treasurer’s Office said. Any unused matching money will be rolled over to the following year, the state said.

“These matching funds create an incentive that I believe will produce real results for children,” state treasurer Clint Zweifel said in a statement.

To learn more about the matching grant program, go to www.most529grant.org.
NEWSMAKERS Q&A: Rob Duncan | MU vice chancellor of research

By JANESE SILVEY

Saturday, February 25, 2012

Rob Duncan is vice chancellor of research at the University of Missouri.

Every other week, we'll pose three questions to a Mid-Missouri newsmaker.

Q: Missouri recently was designated as an Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, meaning the state was not getting a large enough percentage of National Science Foundation grants. As vice chancellor of research for the University of Missouri, how can you help make the university and state more competitive for grant funding?

A: Missouri has been very close to the line that is intended to separate the top 25 NSF research-funded states from the lower half. Just recently, we declined slightly in our share of NSF funding, and we became eligible for EPSCoR for the first time in our history. This decline is statewide, even though our overall research funding at MU has steadily increased. For the state to remain competitive nationally, it will be important to do three particular things, in my opinion:

Missouri must start investing in itself. It is very difficult to convince the federal government or anyone else to invest in the scientific infrastructure of Missouri when we do not make such investments in ourselves. We are genuinely in a knowledge-based economy now, so if we do not hold our own in science, then we will continue to decline in our quality of life in comparison to the other states.

We need to collaborate more with other universities, businesses, and nonprofits within our state and simply get over the petty competitiveness between our communities that has been pulling us all down as a state and hurting us terribly in the national agenda.

We need to create a genuine meritocracy on all of our research university campuses and elsewhere throughout the state. The administration should never attempt to pick the winners since that is impossible to do a priori. The faculty members and students on all of our campuses must know that their success is limited only by their innovation, work ethic and creative drive.
Q: It might be easy for outsiders to see the benefits of research that leads to medical and technological advances, but why should Missourians also care about the findings that come out of studies in social science fields?

A: Steve Jobs stressed that real success depended as much on technology as on its appropriate design and its ability to engage people. Clearly, artistic design, and an in-depth understanding of the human and social aspects of what we are doing, is as or more important than just the technical accomplishment.

Sen. Bob Kerrey is a friend of mine and a man that I very much respect. He just stepped down as the president of the New School in New York City. He and the New School clearly understand the importance of artistic design in its ability to enhance our quality of life and to get us to engage each other in much more productive and effective ways.

I love Missouri, and I really wish we had our own version of popular songs such as "Sweet Home Alabama" and other expressions of our love for our state such as that. Our sense of identity, our sense of place and our general well-being that is so important to sustaining the flair of life that keeps us achieving in every way all depend on excellent research and creative works in the arts and in our awareness of ourselves that emerges in our social sciences research.

Q: In addition to being MU's top research administrator, you're also a physicist by trade. I recently heard you say physics might seem like a "pretty package" to those on the outside but that there are lots of unanswered questions. What unexplained phenomenon would you like to better understand?

A: As a physicist, I assure you that much more is unknown in physics than is known. Major discoveries in physics often usher in dramatic new technologies that can be wonderful or terrible, depending on how we utilize them. I recently chaired the National Academy of Science's Decadal Survey that formulated our National 10-year Plan (2011-2020) for the Future of Fundamental Physics in Space. This study, which was commissioned by the U.S. Congress, is part of a larger road map on how we can best use space to discover new knowledge and hence to determine what the "next big thing" may be.

I think that it is also important that we understand the unexplained "excess heat" that has been observed over the last 86 years when we heavily load various isotopes of hydrogen into various metals. These effects are very real, but we have no real understanding yet of what physical phenomena releases these copious amounts of energy in the form of heat.

Once we understand this, we may have a new perspective on how to address our future energy needs in an environmentally effective manner, or not. That is how basic research works: We simply won't know if this will ever be useful until we really know what this is! But we have been suffering recently from a risk-adverse attitude that goes something like this: "Unless we basically understand what this thing is, then we better not carefully study it since we may look foolish if it turns out to be useless." This is as crazy as saying, "I am far too sick to get medical care."
The point is that there is far more that is unknown than is known, so our approach to science should center on the strict application of the scientific method as we carefully explore those things that we observe in nature but that we really have no fundamental understanding of at the current time.

The advancement of science is much more driven by revolutionary advances than by small incremental improvements, but recently our federal funding of science has placed far too much emphasis on supporting incremental improvements in our understanding of things that we generally understand well and far too little emphasis on exploring things that we genuinely have no understanding of yet.

The rest of the world is making bolder scientific investments, and they are taking on harder problems, and hence they are becoming more powerful in the international agenda.
Court ruling on MOSIRA disappoints

By JAKE HALLIDAY

Saturday, February 25, 2012

It is usually my upbeat, optimistic self that brings you exciting developments in innovation and new ventures through this column. Not this time. I can’t find a positive in the circuit court decision striking down the Missouri Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act, or MOSIRA.

MOSIRA — it rhymes with Elvira — is an economic development bill that would boost jobs and increase Missouri’s competitiveness. The life sciences-biotechnology industry is critical to Missouri’s economic future. This industry provides high-quality jobs and above-average wages and benefits. It is in the public interest to make this industry stronger. Under MOSIRA, the state would reinvest future increases in tax revenue from that industry back into the state’s infrastructure for science and innovation, thereby stimulating even greater job creation and economic impact.

While on the board of the Missouri Biotechnology Association, or MOBIO, I was a foot soldier in the army of people across the state who worked for close to 10 years to shape what emerged as the MOSIRA legislation. MOSIRA has enjoyed bipartisan support in both chambers of the Missouri General Assembly for years and was enacted during the special session this past summer. Many of us celebrated the success.

Not so fast, said Cole County Circuit Court Judge Dan Green this week. He declared MOSIRA unconstitutional. The substantive public policy provisions of the MOSIRA legislation, relating to job creation and economic growth, were not challenged. Rather, the judge found that a contingency clause in the act interferes with executive-branch authority. The contingency clause tied passage of MOSIRA to passage of the separate "Aerotropolis" bill and attempted to restrain the governor’s constitutional authority to sign or veto that bill. Many, including Senate Pro Tem Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, who added the contingency, believe MOSIRA would have passed regardless of whether the contingency clause was in there.

Lesson learned. Putting unrelated items in a piece of legislation creates an opening for third parties to bring suit on a technicality and undo the intent of the legislature.

In Columbia, we lose out big time if MOSIRA is not enacted. The University of Missouri stands to benefit enormously from the investments in science and innovation envisioned by MOSIRA. The high-
Tech ventures now springing up in Columbia will miss out on critical seed and early-stage financing from Missouri Technology Corp. programs that depend on MOSIRA.

Almost all parties involved believe MOSIRA is too important to leave foundering on the rocks. There is a strong collective will to put it right in the current legislative session. Let's hope so.

Jake Halliday is CEO of the Missouri Innovation Center, operator of the MU Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place.
A final Mizzou visit to KU's Allen Fieldhouse?

BY VAHE GREGORIAN • vgregorian@post-dispatch.com | Posted: Saturday, February 25, 2012 1:00 pm | (15) Comments

With a 77-66 victory over Kansas State on March 1, 1955, Kansas christened Allen Fieldhouse. Perhaps none of the games played there since will cast a more indelible impression than the one 788 games later, today against Mizzou.

For starters, it’s the 267th and last scheduled meeting between the programs in what MU guard Michael Dixon calls "one of the best rivalries in all of sports."

Then, there’s the fact Mizzou is 25-3 and ranked third in the nation and Kansas is 23-5 and ranked fourth — making for just the fourth time each has been ranked in the top 10 when they’ve met.

The Big 12 regular-season title is on the line, with the bonus stakes of MU (12-3 Big 12) seeking its first in the league before leaving for the Southeastern Conference and Kansas (13-2) working for its eighth straight share of the title or more.

And the winner takes a major step toward securing a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament, the loser likely out of the derby.

"I don’t think there will be anything that compares to it," Kansas coach Bill Self told reporters Thursday in Lawrence. "The only night I can think of that would be close to as energized would be the inaugural event, the opening of the building."

As it has been for most foes at the venue in which Kansas is 681-117, the building hasn’t been hospitable to MU, which is 14-41 in Allen and last won there in 1999.

Just the same, Dixon says, "It’s always fun to play on the road and silence the crowd."

And tapping the mute button best come early.

"I want our guys to go in there focused (and) be ready for Kansas to come with the knockout punch in the first five minutes of the game," MU coach Frank Haith said. "You’ve got to be ready to withstand the barrage of their intensity."

Part of that includes dealing with the hype and hoopla, also a factor for Kansas.

"I certainly anticipate a maturity level being the key intangible in whoever plays the best," Self said. "You have to put blinders on, (so) you can’t look left and you can’t look right."
"You always wonder why race horses, when they get in the stalls, why they have (blinders) on, so that way they can't get distracted. Players have to do the same thing as well."

Mizzou figures to be helped by having a veteran team. Five of the seven Tigers are seniors, and Dixon is a junior.

Dixon apparently also reckons the Tigers will benefit from Haith's more systematic approach than predecessor Mike Anderson's.

"I think it helps that we've got a system now," he said. "And we know what we're going to do coming into the game, and we know what kind of offense we're going to run and we know what we're going to do if they pick us up full-court.

"Just things like that. We've got a game plan."

Part of that means refocused patience and discretion with the ball, each of which lapsed in MU's loss Tuesday to Kansas State.

But a major part of MU's game plan also has to be finding a way to actualize guard Kim English's notion to "try our best to not let the ball go in the basket a lot."

That includes being alert and aware in transition defense, then establishing and maintaining position to offset its lack of size as best it can.

"The closer it gets to the basket, the worse we are," Haith said. "The farther the ball is away from the basket, the better off we are."

Toward that end, Mizzou also will need a more consistent physical presence from forward Ricardo Ratliffe, which Haith said was lacking against K-State.

"We don't have a lot of muscle," he said. "We need his muscle."

In their 74-71 win over Kansas on Feb. 4 in Columbia, the Tigers were scorched for 25 by Thomas Robinson but made a virtual non-factor out of KU's 7-foot Jeff Withey, who was shut out.

Since then, Withey has averaged 16 points, perhaps in part inspired by the MU game and its aftermath.

"Right after the Missouri game, you would think a guy would want to come out and compete and all that stuff (in practice)," Self said Monday. "He didn't go after any balls, he was so, in my eyes, so soft. So we just didn't let him practice. We just made him just touch (and run) steps."

Now, Self said, "He's just being more active."

Led by Robinson and Tyshawn Taylor's 21 points, Kansas was more active than MU for much of the game in Columbia.
But the Tigers rallied from eight down in the final minutes, sparked by Marcus Denmon’s nine points in less than 70 seconds, a streak Self called the most impressive and meaningful sequence any player has had in the Big 12 this season.

One of Denmon’s 3-pointers in that span included him twisting in mid-air, a play that Self brought up in awe Monday.

"My legs were square," Denmon said Thursday. With a smile, he added, "My body just was catching up."

Now MU and Kansas are catching up for the last scheduled time, a game that will put the exclamation point on a series that began in 1907 and is matched in consecutive years of longevity only by Kansas-Kansas State among schools in the six major conferences.

Whatever happens won’t soon be forgotten, the end of an era.

"It’s going to be turned up a notch," English said, "no doubt."
Gov. Sam Brownback says he has no interest in keeping the University of Kansas' rivalry with the University of Missouri alive when the Tigers leave the Big 12 for the Southeastern Conference next year.

Brownback told reporters Friday on the eve of the last scheduled men's basketball game between the Jayhawks and Tigers that Missouri is to blame for the storied series ending after 100-plus years.

He said Missouri nearly "cratered" the Big 12 by first talking three years ago about leaving for the Big Ten. Brownback said had the Big 12 dissolved, Kansas and Kansas State would have been in a tough position.

He quoted Kansas athletic director Sheahon Zenger, that keeping rivalry going would be like a man divorcing his wife, then asking if they can still date.
MU student vies for White House award

Saturday, February 25, 2012

A University of Missouri student who created a charitable organization is a finalist in a White House challenge for college students.

Kam Phillips, who created Dream Outside the Box, is one of 15 finalists competing in the Campus Champions of Change Challenge. The five participants who receive the most online votes by March 3 will have a chance to visit an event at the White House and will be featured on mtvU.

Phillips, a senior from Texas, created the organization in 2009 to expose children in Columbia to new career opportunities and extracurricular activities.

The public can vote online at: campuschallenge.uservoice.com.
Cookie contract crumbles as Cool Stuff closes

Corey Rimmel, who owns Hot Box Cookies with Cool Stuff owner Arnie Fagan, said he is worried that Fagan will kick him out of the property on East Broadway. The two are trying to dissolve a partnership started in January 2011.

By Jacob Barker

Saturday, February 25, 2012

Jan. 1, 2011, is a day Corey Rimmel will not remember fondly.

That was the day the 24-year-old entrepreneur behind Hot Box Cookies finalized a partnership agreement with Arnie Fagan, the downtown retail pioneer who started Cool Stuff in 1988. Rimmel, who launched Hot Box Cookies in October 2008, thought he needed help running the business. He still had one semester left at the University of Missouri and his two former partners had just graduated. They were leaving Columbia, and he and Fagan bought them out and split the ownership 50-50.

Rimmel wanted to grow Hot Box in Columbia and even expand. He thought putting it next to Cool Stuff would be a great fit. And he wanted to partner with Fagan, whom he called "one of the best businessmen in Columbia" and learn from his experience.

One thing he has learned is that a failed partnership can be as messy as a failed marriage.

"I'll be honest with you, it's a pretty terrible contract that I signed, and I regret it every day," Rimmel said.

Fagan announced this week he would close his iconic downtown shop after he sells his inventory. Fagan owns the building at 808 E. Broadway, which houses both Cool Stuff and Hot Box Cookies, and he wouldn't say whether he plans to sell it or lease out the commercial space there.

Rimmel, though, said he has suspected for months Fagan was going to lease or sell the building. But the two don't talk much anymore, he said. They had some disagreements early on about how to run the business, and Rimmel said the two don't get along. They've been trying to get out of the partnership for some time, both said, but disagreement persists. "Some of the offers he's given me are pretty ridiculous," Rimmel said.
Fagan said he thinks he's made fair offers to sell out his share, and "furthermore, I can tell you that I have lived up to every comma of that" partnership "agreement." Rimmel, on the other hand, has not followed the agreement, he said.

Rimmel said he has heard from Fagan's attorney that Fagan has a business to occupy the building and that he wants Rimmel out. One member of a group of people touring the building said he was from Rally House, a Kansas-based sports apparel retailer, Rimmel said. Fagan wouldn't confirm whether he had somebody moving into the building or if he was going to force out Hot Box.

Rimmel said he'll stay as long as he can, and that it would be a shame for Fagan to force out a profitable business. Sales have been going up every month since this summer, he said, and Fagan doesn't put any work into the business.

Fagan points out that he has followed the contract that both sides agreed to and that Rimmel had an attorney present — his father — when it was signed. Fagan no longer wants to be an owner and soon will be out.

"The last successful partnership I want to have in my life is the one I have with my wife," Fagan said. "I think partnerships can be challenging, and they really benefit by having two mature parties in them who will live up to the terms of the agreement."

Rimmel is optimistic he'll find a spot for his business and keep it open in Columbia. But he wants to work out his dispute with Fagan first. If there's a plus side, he said, it's the hard-knock business lessons he's gained from the experience.

"The contract that I signed, I felt it necessary to act quickly," he said. "I didn't think it through. When you sign a partnership agreement, you're basically signing your life away as you sign it away when you get married."

"If this wasn't about money this would have been resolved a long time ago in a fair and equal partnership split," Rimmel added.
MU Extension helps make school meals healthier

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (AP) — The University of Missouri Extension is working with the Nixa School District to make school meals healthier.

As part of the effort, two schools have piloted a salad bar that provides seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Nixa also is working with Rob Corliss, a chef who is volunteering for the district. Corliss provides a monthly special on the salad bar, including space salad, which is made of melon and star fruit.

Nixa Wellness Coordinator Kevin Kopp says that when students have the chance to choose, they are selecting healthy foods and “devouring them.”
MU campus events raise eating disorder awareness

COLUMBIA, Mo. • The University of Missouri will hold a series of events on the Columbia campus this week as part of a national campaign to raise awareness about eating disorders.

The events include a free screening for eating disorders from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Women’s Center in the MU Student Center.

Other activities include a screening and discussion of a film that examines public portrayals of body image, and an event called "Operation Beautiful" in which the public can write positive messages on the mirrors of public restrooms in the student union.

More information and a full schedule of events can be found on the website of the university's counseling center.
MU Extension offers farm classes for women

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (WTW) — The University of Missouri Extension is offering a program aimed at helping women in agriculture.

The six-week program starts March 12 at Newton County Extension Center on the Crowder Campus in Neosho. The courses are part of Annie's Project, a program that started in Illinois in 2003 and has since spread to other states.

The program is named for an Illinois woman who ran a farm and raised six children in the 1950s.

Program topics include farm record keeping and taxes, business plans, how property is titled, pasture leases and how to use spreadsheets for farm records.

A grant through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency helps fund the program. Pre-registration is required, with a deadline of March 6.