

## KU license plate idea riles up Missouri lawmakers

By Janese Silvey

5/15/12

Plans to sneak a little redheaded blue bird across state lines have rattled a group of Missouri lawmakers now trying to thwart the University of Kansas Alumni Association's attempts to have an official license plate here.

Sen. Bill Stouffer, R-Napton, and Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, are hoping to pass last-minute legislative amendments that would alter how groups go about getting their logos on license plates. The session ends this week, and the issue was also brought up during House debate this morning.

KU has about 30,000 alumni living in the Show-Me State, said Jennifer Sanner, senior vice president of communication for the KU Alumni Association.

"If alumni want to declare their allegiance and we have a sizable number in a particular area, we're certainly happy to do that," she said. "License plates are certainly not the most important issue that legislators have to tend to. Allowing citizens to claim their alma mater, I don't really see the harm in it."

Stouffer, an MU alumnus, sees it differently.

"The KU alumni who escaped Kansas to come live in and work in and feed their children in the state of Missouri, it's kind of like rescuing people from a cult," he said. "You don't want them slipping back into that lifestyle."

KU started the license plate process a year ago, before rival MU announced it would leave the Big 12 for the Southeastern Conference. Colleges and groups can get Missouri to create special license plates if they find a legislative sponsor, pay \$5,000 and get 200 people to commit to buying them. With Rep. Charlie Denison, R-Springfield, backing the plan, KU's alumni group met the requirements needed to move forward during the 2013 legislative session.

Schaefer said the idea of having a jayhawk on a Missouri plate sounds "inappropriate," but he said the main issue is "it really kind of shows the absurdity of the process that exists in Missouri."

Possible changes might include requiring colleges to go through a legislative approval process rather than the administrative process KU has followed, Stouffer said. Another idea would be to require the lawmaker backing the plate to be present when a committee or body is voting on it. That would block KU's current effort because Denison's term ends this year.

The MU Alumni Association has not discussed the issue, but Executive Director Todd McCubbin said he has heard plenty of feedback.

"We have a lot of alumni who are not in favor of seeing a jayhawk on a Missouri plate," he said.

Some have argued that specialized plates would generate additional revenue for the state. "No. 1, we're not going to sell our souls for a few dollars," Stouffer said. "And No. 2, KU is giving up a whole lot more revenue by not playing MU in football and basketball, so the revenue argument is empty."

Missouri recently gave the green light to plates for Kansas' Pittsburg State University, but Stouffer said that's different.

"They're a rational group," he said. "They don't walk around worshipping mythical birds."

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## MU staff members have week in spotlight



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Genevieve Howard, a senior multimedia specialist in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, sets up some of her knitted and crocheted pieces for the MU Staff Arts and Crafts showcase Monday in Ellis Library. The show runs until Thursday.

By [Janese Silvey](#)

Even though she just celebrated her fifth year at the University of Missouri, Ruth Feldkamp missed an afternoon ceremony yesterday recognizing employees for milestone anniversaries as part of Staff Appreciation Week.

A colored-pencil artwork by Dennis Murphy titled “Tootsie Pop” is on display at the showcase.

No worries. If anyone's appreciative, it's Feldkamp, who restores old books and materials at Ellis Library.

"I actually love my job, and I'm doing something I love all day," she said. "I get to save things."

Staff members across campus are passionate about their jobs, and that reflects well on MU, Chancellor Brady Deaton told a group gathered at Jesse Auditorium for yesterday's awards ceremony.

While faculty members often get the press and accolades, the administrative assistants, groundskeepers, enrollment managers and a slew of other worker bees keep the campus operating.

"I appreciate so much the work you do here at the university and the tremendous work you put in making this university what it is," Deaton said.

Feldkamp isn't missing out on all of the Staff Appreciation Week fun, though. This morning, she set up her collection of miniature watercolor paintings as part of the 3-year-old employee art show.

Through Thursday, visitors can swing by Room 201 at Ellis Library to see the arts and crafts created by MU employees.

This year, 41 participants from 35 departments across campus are participating in the show.

"The whole purpose of the show is to showcase the talents of our staff," said Rebecca Bergfield, who organizes the event.

For Leslie Waller, the arts event is a chance to plug her side business. Waller works in after-school programming at MU and operates Waller Photography.

"It's a small business, so this is an opportunity to get the word out," she said, arranging a table of albums and photographs.

MU benefits from her talent: Waller is the unofficial photographer for her department's events and programs.

Genevieve Howard, who works in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, hopes her display on crocheting and knitting inspires others to take up the hobby.

She taught herself to knit about a year ago after her mom died. During what would have been Mom's birthday month, Howard decided to honor her by trying her hand at knitting.

"It's so relaxing," she said.

It has also given Howard a better appreciation of her mom's talents for the knitted and crocheted pieces she left behind.

"It's something you can carry on," she said, "something that lives beyond yourself."

# MISSOURIAN

## NO MU MENTION

### WHAT OTHERS SAY: Missouri budget pact puts fairness in funding in play

Tuesday, May 15, 2012 | 2:44 p.m. CDT

BY ST. JOSEPH PRESS-NEWS

Who could see this coming?

The Missouri General Assembly was grinding through one of its more unseemly legislative sessions. Matters of real import languished as lawmakers engaged in one political spat after another.

And then this: House Speaker Steven Tilley grabbed hold of a budget bill last week and put in \$2 million for his alma mater, Southeast Missouri State University. By singling out Southeast for its second-lowest funding-to-student ratio, Tilley suddenly put the spotlight on Missouri Western State University — the campus with the lowest funding per student.

A day or so later, the great compromise of the 2013 budget emerged. About \$30 million from the casinos will fund veterans' nursing homes. To replace that money, \$35 million from the nationwide tobacco settlement will fund early childhood programs. And most of the state's 10 public universities will share in \$3 million awarded to address funding inequities.

Western and Northwest Missouri State University each could receive about \$515,000. At Western, the money likely would be used to give faculty and staff their first general pay raise in four years and to replenish reserves.

As important, an amendment authored by Sen. Brad Lager, R-Savannah, requires the legislature to develop an equitable funding formula for public universities to be implemented by 2015.

Gov. Jay Nixon still must sign off on the spending plan. And a budget withholding always is possible; lawmakers have left just \$6 million for midyear adjustments — far less than normal.

You also never can take for granted that lawmakers two years from now will make wise decisions in crafting a new higher education funding formula. You can hope, but you never can be sure.

The one certainty: This late-session development has put the subject of fairness in funding in play.



## Logic of Realignment Won't Be Clear For a Decade

In October, a week after its chancellor agreed to explore leaving the Big 12, the University of Missouri produced a 45-page document, outlining the pros and cons of going to the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

In the report, which the Associated Press said it had obtained, Missouri said it could earn as much as \$12 million more per year from an new TV deal in the SEC compared to the deal it had in the Big 12.

The Big 12 asked to see the report, and asked Missouri to show them who did the study and how they came up with the number. Missouri wouldn't.

In fact, the school, once it started to explore the option of going to the SEC, cut off its communication with the Big 12 and its member schools. In this age of information, where confidential documents almost always see the light of day, Missouri's report, at least in entirety, strangely never even surfaced.

Missouri's study is indicative of many schools that felt like they had to move. Texas A&M was out the door to the SEC, motivated primarily by Texas' Longhorn Network deal with ESPN. That's despite the fact that the network's success was far from a slam dunk (and still isn't), and that the move cost the school its rivalry game with Texas. The excuse was that the Big 12 was falling apart and they had to go to safer ground. Months later, Florida State, unhappy with its new ACC deal that only bumps TV revenue up \$4 million a year, wants to go to the Big 12. Go figure.

While the moving schools want to convince their fans that what they did was the right move, the truth is, they don't know the answer.

### **Let's do some math.**

The 12 schools in the SEC earned an average of \$17 million a year from its 15-year deals with ESPN and CBS. This was signed in 2008, right before the economic meltdown. And let's remind you, the SEC was ready to do an SEC Network then, and didn't, because they got the money that they wanted.

Now the big money is supposedly in ESPN and CBS reopening the deal, but what people forget is that those two networks aren't going to pay more for most of the games they already bought—and allow the conference to start its own network. So let's come up with a total annual rights fee for the SEC.

With the Pac-12 getting \$250 million a year in rights fees, let's say the SEC goes from making \$205 million a year in its current deal to \$325 million a year on a new or extended deal. Divide that by 14 and you have \$23.2 million a year. Under a soon-to-be-announced contract with ESPN, the Big 12—which Missouri and Texas A&M left—will see its teams make \$20 million a year.

Is making (a hypothetical) \$3.2 million more a year worth it to Missouri and Texas A&M? Don't forget, those schools' exit from the Big 12 already cost them a net of \$9 million. One could make the argument that given the competitive landscape of the SEC, whose teams have won the last six national titles, an amount of \$3.2 million is pocket change when schools have to consider how much tougher it will be to win. If they can't win with as much frequency, ticket sales suffer. When ticket sales suffer, sponsorships suffer and donations suffer.

“When a company is acquiring another company, they give them more money than they're worth to draw them in,” said Lee Berke of LHB Sports, a sports consultancy firm that is working with Oklahoma, TCU and Pitt on TV programming strategy.

“These (realignment) deals were done with the promise of something down the road, and momentum and emotion are difficult concepts to build a business on. When alums and boosters and trustees are involved, much of this business analysis is downgraded to the back of the envelope and it may take years to figure out if you are happy or not when the first blush fades,” Berke said.

It's not an easy equation to figure out. For example, what's the value of tradition?

Sure, playing Florida, Arkansas, Alabama and Georgia could fill the stands at Missouri, but for each one of those you have Kentucky, Ole Miss, Mississippi State and Vanderbilt. And when no one in your office in Kansas City went to any one of those schools, and you can't talk water-cooler trash to them, the interest in the games isn't nearly as high.

Fans get upset when realignment is brought up. They think that people who talk negatively about it, as I sometimes do, have an agenda. That's not always the case. The people who have more of an agenda are those who have made these moves who are already saying that it was done in the best interest of the university. They don't know if that's true. I don't know if that's true. We'll probably have the best answer a decade from now.

## **Just give us safe places to have fun, KC teens say**

**Lynn Horsley**

### **MU mention page 3**

Teens in Kansas City are bored and they just don't think there are enough fun things to do in this town.

That's the conclusion of a survey released Tuesday.

Of course, it only confirms what many adults have thought for years. But the survey -- which for the first time reached out to hundreds of Kansas City teenagers -- can now be used to help convince city officials and corporate funders that more needs to be done.

"The most frequent cause of problems associated with flash mobs or other acts of group violence reported by youth was youth boredom," said the report, released to the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners.

The youths who participated in focus groups and in an online survey revealed a craving for more safe, fun activities such as movies, bowling alleys and venues for sports and talent shows. Some cited a lack of transportation as an obstacle, as well as a prevailing feeling that no place is safe.

"There ain't nowhere you can go without having to worry about somebody getting pissed, somebody shooting, or somebody just trippin' for no reason," one participant said.

Mayoral spokesman Danny Rotert acknowledged that youth entertainment options in the city have shrunk and consolidated in recent years, in part due to the economy. And he said there's only so much the city can do.

But he said the city will work creatively and reach out to the corporate community to develop more youth opportunities.

After three youths were shot on the Country Club Plaza in a chaotic incident last August, the city wanted more insights into the causes and possible remedies for youth flash mobs.

City officials wanted civic and philanthropic leaders to help fund solutions, but those groups first wanted a systematic study of the "youth voice."

The Kansas City Area Research Consortium conducted the \$25,000 study, which was paid for by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation.

It featured focus groups in December and January involving 50 youths ages 13 to 24, and a survey in March of 280 youths, primarily high school students.

"It was very important for that youth perspective to be heard," consortium director Leigh Anne Knight told the park board Tuesday.

While the youths who participated in the research remained anonymous, their comments were echoed by several high school students playing basketball Monday afternoon at the Southeast Community Center in Swope Park.

"There's nothing to do in Kansas City," said Tyron Thomas, 16, a Hogan Prep student. "That's why we need things to do like amusement parks and stuff."

Cameron Douglas, 17, a University Academy student, agreed that Kansas City needs more weekend activities and entertainment spots, "something to keep us out of trouble." He said he and his friends would like to go to the movies or an arcade close to home, but the closest venues are on the Plaza or Independence Center.

The study results were released just as large groups are once again starting to congregate on weekend nights on the Plaza.

"The crowds have definitely been out," police spokesman Steve Young said Tuesday. Despite large clusters of kids and some minor scuffles and fights, no one has been arrested.

The curfew for minors unaccompanied by adults currently is midnight on weekends, but reverts to 9 p.m. on the Plaza and four other entertainment districts on Friday night, May 25, the start of Memorial Day weekend.

Young said police officers are maintaining a significant presence on the Plaza to keep the public safe but are not trying to intimidate youths to stay away.

"We're not trying to do anything to keep them from being there," he said. "We want the behavior to be appropriate."

Councilman John Sharp, head of the council's public safety committee, said teenagers are justified in their frustration at the lack of entertainment options.

"The kids are absolutely right," he said.

Over the past few decades, Sharp noted, the central city and south Kansas City have lost "scores" of restaurants, bowling alleys, skating rinks, movie theaters and other places that provided wholesome entertainment. He said many of those places closed even though they were often packed with African-American customers.

So teens say there's a good reason they gather on the Plaza. It's perceived as safe, inexpensive, has a movie theater and is a place to see and be seen.

## Sweeping study

Researchers involved in the Kansas City study said they were not aware of any other such social media study, involving so many youth, being done nationally.

**"Something specific like flash mobs is a new issue. We're not aware of any systematic work on this," said Brian Houston, the report's lead author and an assistant professor of communications at the University of Missouri-Columbia.**

The study defined flash mobs, in general, as large groups sparked by social media.

"Youth now know where to go to run into a bunch of youth," Houston said. "That's new and changes the level of the gatherings."

Houston noted that the youths were "very opinionated and very concerned about violence in Kansas City. That was, for me, the driving thing they talked about."

The study also showed that, just because teenagers use social media to gather quickly, it doesn't mean they're looking for trouble.

Researcher Hyunjin Seo, assistant communications professor at the University of Kansas, was struck by how the teenagers consider flash mobs to be "fun, entertaining and benign" and a positive outlet without violent intent.

"So adults have to realize this is something they want to do," she said. "We don't necessary need to see flash mobs in a negative light."

The problem arises when a few people intrude in a violent way. Some focus group participants called for more responsible parenting, while others recognized that some of the blame rests with the teenagers themselves.

"If we wanna change the way that people perceive us and the stereotypes that people have on us, then we as like an entire generation of African-American youth are gonna have to change," one participant was quoted as saying.

Among the key findings:

- Youths are looking for ways to express themselves by connecting with others, and it's not enough to just warehouse them. They called for more movie theaters, bowling alleys, entertainment restaurants like ESPN Zone or Dave and Busters, community/youth centers and more community center programs. Popular venues could include space for underground rappers and talent shows and sports facilities like the College Basketball experience.
- A summertime curfew alone isn't enough. Youths want safe opportunities, in which there is a positive police presence and relationship-building but not a smothering or intimidating police show of force.
- The problem of violent flash mobs can't be isolated from the larger prevalence of violence in the community, and efforts to reduce violent flash mobs should be connected to other violence prevention initiatives.

While the study was unusual in its outreach to hundreds of youths, its conclusions certainly were not new. They repeated a common refrain from past initiatives, including a 2006 Violent Crime Commission report and a summit meeting convened by former Police Chief Jim Corwin in 2010. Those initiatives also called for the community to come together to provide more safe, wholesome activities, but efforts always seemed to fizzle.

Still, Park Commissioner McClain Bryant said she monitored some of the focus groups and was encouraged by what she heard.

"They were asking for things that we already have," she said. "They don't know all the things that we have to offer."

Bryant said she is working with the park department marketing staff to raise awareness and will reach out to young people from the focus groups to spread the word.

Park director Mark McHenry said the department had some success, particularly at the Hillcrest Community Center, when it provided extended programming on weekends last August. He said the city has budgeted \$200,000 to again offer extended weekend hours at several community centers, mostly in June and July.

He said the programming for those centers is being designed to provide open mike nights, DJs, sports and other activities in line with the survey results.

## Missouri QB arrested for leaving scene of accident

By Dave Matter

Missouri quarterback Corbin Berkstresser was arrested early this morning for leaving the scene of an accident in Columbia and could face a felony charge for damaging another vehicle.



### **Berkstresser:**

QB accused of leaving scene of accident

Columbia police were dispatched to the 2900 block of Lynnwood Drive at 1 a.m. after a parked vehicle on Lynnwood had been struck by another vehicle, Officer Latisha Stroer said. The damaged car was a 1998 Oldsmobile Intrigue owned by University of Missouri student Jeremiah Willis. After hearing a crash outside their house, Willis and his two roommates went outside and saw the damaged car parked alongside the curb. The rear driver-side bumper was damaged badly and the rear windshield was completely knocked out. Willis said there were teal fragments left behind, what he suspected were parts of the other vehicle.

After Willis and his roommates called police, two white males walked down the street and asked about the accident. They said they were looking for a lost dog. After later seeing Berkstresser's mug shot from the Boone County Sheriff's Department, Willis and his roommate, Andy Rosenberg, identified Berkstresser as one of the two males.

"They didn't admit" to the accident, Willis said. "They said they were looking for a black Lab. That's the reason they were walking down the street."

Willis' other roommate, Shaun Heroux, got in his car and drove down Lynnwood looking for a damaged vehicle, Willis said. He found a damaged truck that matched the color of the fragments at the scene and reported the license plate information to police.

Initial damage was estimated at more than \$1,000, according to the probable cause statement. No one was hurt in the collision. Berkstresser later admitted his involvement in the incident.

"He had to once they stopped him and we had his license plate and proof," Willis said.

Willis said he did not believe either Berkstresser or the other unidentified male appeared intoxicated.

"They didn't seem drunk or anything like that," Willis said.

"I don't have a real gripe with him," he added. "I assume it was a legit accident. My only issue is that he didn't come back and say anything."

Berkstresser, 20, was taken into custody at 3:34 a.m. on \$4,500 bond. He was released after posting bail.

Leaving the scene of a motor vehicle accident is a class A misdemeanor, unless there's a physical injury to the other party or property damage exceeding \$1,000. In either case, the violation is considered a class D felony.

Missouri team spokesman Chad Moller said MU is aware of Berkstresser's situation and is handling the matter internally. According to university policy, athletes charged with a felony cannot return to the field until the case is resolved.

Former Missouri cornerback Tristen Holt was arrested after a similar incident in Columbia last September and was immediately dismissed from the team. At the time, teammates indicated the arrest was not Holt's first brush with trouble. Holt pleaded not guilty and is scheduled for a court appearance tomorrow. Defensive lineman Jimmy Burge was arrested for leaving the scene of an accident in 2008 but remained on the team.

Berkstresser took over the No. 1 quarterback job during spring practices when returning starter James Franklin suffered a torn labrum in his throwing shoulder, which required surgery March 23. Berkstresser, who will be a redshirt freshman this fall, ran the first-team offense the rest of the spring and was expected to lead the offense during summer passing sessions, which begin later this month. The team's medical staff expected Franklin back for the start of the season, but it's unclear how much, if any, practice time he'll miss during preseason camp in August.

Missouri has only one other scholarship quarterback on its roster, junior Ashton Glaser, who was third on the depth chart before Franklin's injury. Incoming freshman Maty Mauk of Kenton, Ohio, is expected to join the team this summer.

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# MISSOURIAN

## Missouri quarterback Corbin Berkstresser arrested on suspicion of leaving scene of accident

Tuesday, May 15, 2012 | 10:04 a.m. CDT

BY JAMES AYELLO

**COLUMBIA — Missouri quarterback Corbin Berkstresser was arrested early Tuesday morning on suspicion of leaving the scene of an accident after allegedly driving into a parked car.**

Columbia police were dispatched at 1 a.m. to the 2900 block of Lynnwood Drive where they found Berkstresser attempting to flee the scene without notifying the owner of the vehicle he struck, Columbia Police Department spokeswoman Latisha Stroer said.

According to the police report, Berkstresser, 20, was driving a vehicle on Lynnwood Drive and hit a vehicle that was parked along the curb. The damage to the victim's vehicle was to the rear and front passenger side.

No one was injured in the accident.

Berkstresser was arrested and taken into custody at 3:34 a.m. Tuesday. He could face a felony charge for damaging another vehicle if the damage is assessed at more than \$1,000.

He was released Tuesday morning after posting bail, which was set at \$4,500.

## **Missouri safety Tavon Bolden dismissed from team**

By TEREZ A. PAYLOR

COLUMBIA -- Safety Tavon Bolden has been dismissed from the football team for disciplinary reasons, according to team spokesman Chad Moller.

**The decision brings a disappointing end to an up-and-down career for Bolden, who was named Missouri's most improved player at safety during spring practice last year but was kicked off the team right before the season for academic reasons. He rejoined the team later in the year, but didn't appear in a game.**

Bolden, a redshirt junior from Houston, continued to work to get back in the staff's good graces, as he entered the spring third on the depth chart at strong safety behind Kenronte Walker and Daniel Easterly. However, it now appears he simply didn't do enough, as his tenure at Missouri is now over.

He finishes his Missouri career with 14 tackles in 13 games, all played in 2010.