

Women's and Children's Hospital to close adult ICU

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

The adult intensive care unit at Women's and Children's Hospital will close next month, requiring patients at the University of Missouri Health Care facility who need ICU treatment to be taken by ambulance to University Hospital.

The decision, announced to Women's and Children's physicians and nurses May 9, also displaces 11 adult ICU nurses, though MU Health administrators say the nurses will have opportunities to work elsewhere in the system.

"These nurses are highly skilled and experienced, and we want to retain all of them," MU Health spokeswoman Mary Jenkins said. Each nurse has been assigned a recruiter in the human resources department to assist in finding a job in a different department.

Jenkins said the average daily patient census in the Women's and Children's adult ICU was 1.5. The closure is targeted for June 8. The hospital's pediatric and neonatal ICUs will remain open.

The former Columbia Regional Hospital at 404 Keene St. was officially renamed Women's and Children's Hospital in September 2010.

"The adult ICU census has been declining over several years as the patient population has changed with the transition from a community hospital to a specialty hospital," Jenkins said.

After the adult ICU closes, patients requiring critical care will be taken four miles by ambulance to MU Health's University Hospital. Jenkins said "less than one-quarter of 1 percent" of patients require critical care, which will be provided at University Hospital.

She said the closure of the adult ICU "will also avoid duplication of expensive services."

The move by health care systems to consolidate services is happening more frequently, said Becky Miller, executive director of the Missouri Center for Patient Safety.

Miller said she is confident the Columbia hospital's decision to close an ICU "was made with patient safety in mind."

"I know there's a lot of discussion that goes into these decisions," Miller said. "I certainly couldn't second-guess the decision."

Jenkins said several factors influenced the decision by MU Health administrators to close the unit, "but our primary goal is to provide more individualized care based on the needs of the patients."

She said the team of obstetrical/gynecological specialists at Women's and Children's treats many women who have chronic medical conditions and would be considered "high risk" for complications during pregnancy or delivery.

"The focus of our service is early detection and treatment in order to allow for the best possible outcomes for mom and baby," she said. New technology and surgical procedures "have shortened patient recovery times, resulted in better outcomes and reduced the need for lengthy" stays in the hospital.

In the event that a new mother would need care in an ICU — meaning an ambulance trip to a facility away from the hospital's nursery or neonatal ICU — Jenkins said, "we're prepared to handle all our patients' health care needs."

The average daily ICU census at University Hospital is 51.

Adult intensive care at Boone Hospital Center had an average daily census of 21 patients as of April, said Jacob Luecke, media relations manager at Boone Hospital, which also has a number of specialists to deal with high-risk pregnancies and deliveries.

Similar to Women's and Children's, Boone Hospital has labor-and-delivery patients who need ICU care "a handful of times each year," Luecke said.

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Officials set to solidify Tiger Town plans next month

By Emma Ross

May 21, 2012 | 12:03 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — As football season approaches, city officials and **university representatives continue to plan for Tiger Town. So far, not many decisions have been made.**

Planners anticipate that Tiger Town will be a block party showcasing local businesses on days of home football games against Southeastern Conference teams. About six downtown blocks would be closed for the event.

“Tiger Town is really about putting our best foot forward. We want to highlight the best of Columbia to visiting SEC fans as well as our returning alumni and fans,” said John Murray, an MU representative.

MU is represented on all of the Tiger Town planning committees. In conjunction with the city, they are working to create plans for downtown security as well as transportation to Faurot Field.

Fundraising is also under consideration. Tiger Town organizer Greg Steinhoff said total costs are estimated to be between \$150,000 and \$200,000. The marketing committee will seek sponsorships from businesses in an effort to offset these costs, Steinhoff said.

Although there have been no street closure requests filed nor any call for vendors, Community Improvement District board member Carrie Gartner said plans are still in effect to have the event up and running by the first home SEC football game Sept. 8.

Steinhoff said official plans are expected to be confirmed by early June.

Supervising editor is John Schneller.

Hearing postponed for former MU student accused of racist vandalism

By Stephanie Proffer

May 21, 2012 | 5:59 p.m. CDT

A pretrial hearing was rescheduled Monday for a former MU student accused of spray painting racist graffiti on the MU campus. The property damage occurred in February 2011 and appeared to be a slur related to Black History Month.

The hearing is now scheduled for 3 p.m. June 4 at the Boone County Courthouse. A trial has been set for June 7.

Benjamin A. Elliott, then 18, was arrested in connection with racist graffiti spray painted on a statue near Hatch Residence Hall. He faces charges of second-degree property damage, a class D felony because the incident is considered to be a hate crime. Second-degree property damage is normally a class B misdemeanor.

At the time, Elliott was a freshman from Rolla in the College of Arts and Science.

Supervising editor is Jeanne Abbott.

MU grads transition to campus jobs



Ryan Henriksen | [Buy this photo](#)

Craig Stevenson, a coordinator in the University of Missouri's government relations office, sits at his desk Thursday in University Hall. Stevenson was hired at the university after completing his master's degree from MU's Truman School of Public Affairs.

By Janese Silvey

Even though she's familiar with the place, Aly Friend will have some adjusting to do when she returns to the University of Missouri next month.

Lunches with friends will be limited to an hour. T-shirts and jeans will be swapped for business attire. Former professors will be campus colleagues.

Friend is going from college student to university employee under a 2-year-old program that taps recent graduates to work as MU development officers.

"For the first two years, they're learning the basics about development, rotating around into different departments and divisions," said Ron Kelley, an assistant vice chancellor in the development office. "Then they're assigned to a specific school or college to work with development officers and work with donors and alumni."

The idea is for MU to grow its own development officers and potentially long-term employees who already have the key ingredient for a successful career on campus: a passion for the university.

Each year, a handful of new MU graduates make the transition from student to university worker. They're often coveted positions but require a little adjustment.

"It's one of the best opportunities I could have asked for right out of school," said Carrie Bien, who has been working in the Mizzou Alumni Association office since graduating in 2009.

Bien is the coordinator of student programs, spearheading the Homecoming Steering Committee and organizing annual events such as the Tiger Walk for freshmen and the end-of-year senior sendoff.

"It's definitely challenging and interesting staying in a college town, not being an undergraduate student but still working with undergraduate students," she said. "It's challenging to find the balance between being their mentor and being so close in age."

For most students-turned-workers, the toughest switch is probably going from having lots of free time on campus to going to a full-time job, said Craig Stevenson, an MU graduate working in the UM System's government relations office.

Stevenson started his job in the middle of graduate school in 2010 and has remained on after getting his master's degree from the Truman School of Public Affairs. It's a good fit, he said: Stevenson has political ambitions, and the job gives him a behind-the-scenes glimpse at legislative work.

Although he still bleeds black and gold, working at University Hall has given Stevenson a better appreciation of the four-campus UM System.

"I'm a Tiger, No. 1, but at the same time, I see the value at all of our campuses and see what each campus has to offer," he said.

One of the main benefits to starting a career at the university is the opportunity to advance, and, in some cases, those first jobs turn into lifelong careers.

"That's the great thing about this university," said Tim Rooney, MU's budget director. "It's very big, which allows you a lot of upward mobility with the same employer. You don't get that a lot of places."

Save for a four-year stint off campus, Rooney has been an MU employee since he graduated in 1972. He started in the controller's office calculating grant overhead while still in school, then became director of the office when he graduated. He spent 16 years in the School of Medicine before becoming an academic budget officer, a job that was merged with the campus budget director post when his predecessor retired.

Rooney said his pride in MU has only become stronger over his decades as an employee.

"I feel like I'm the most fortunate person in the world to have been able to stay," he said. "The university being my alma mater, my office looks out on the Columns every day — it doesn't get much better for a Mizzou Tiger, really."

Friend, the recent graduate who starts work June 4, said she had considered an MU career since getting involved in leadership roles as a student. She said she is thrilled at the prospects of advancing her education and career.

"Maybe I'll be 'Dr. Friend' someday," the 23-year-old said. "You never know."

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Spectators at MU's observatory watch crescent sun set during solar eclipse

By Claire Porter

May 21, 2012 | 9:22 a.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A crowd of several dozen gathered on the rooftop of the MU Physics Building to watch Sunday's partial eclipse as it peeked through the clouds just before sunset.

Before the eclipse began, families explored the observatory. Children, adults and even a few dogs climbed the curved staircase leading to the 16-inch telescope at Laws Observatory.

Randy Durk of the Central Missouri Astronomical Association streamed a live feed of the eclipse as it passed over Area 51 in Nevada.

Ladders and step-stools stood before telescopes and binoculars equipped with special filters so visitors could view sunspots.

A small, dark disc creeping up on the bottom of the setting sun became visible a few minutes after the eclipse began at 7:25 Sunday evening. On the rooftop, visitors donned solar glasses provided by the astronomical association

During the first phases of the eclipse, special glasses were necessary to see a sliver of the moon as it edged into the bottom of the sun. During the next half hour, the moon's shadow crept up the sun until it resembled a glowing arch.

This promising start excited some of the observers. Eight-year-old J.C. Berg ran back and forth on the rooftop taking pictures of his first eclipse through the lens of his solar glasses.

"It's better without the flash," he said, scanning through his photos.

Just before 8 p.m., a thin line of light violet clouds obscured the eclipsing sun just above the horizon. Some families took the clouds as a sign to leave, but others chose to wait.

The solar eclipse was the first for Raghav Poudyal, who created a time-lapse video of the spectacle. "I went to a NASA conference and that's what got me excited about astronomy and astrophotography," Poudyal said.

His patience paid off. A few minutes before sunset, the darkening sun dipped just below the clouds. The moon's round shadow created an arc-like halo resembling a sideways crescent moon.

As the sun set, only two ends of the crescent-shaped sun shone through the clouds producing two bright dots. Several viewers noted that it looked like there were two suns instead of one.

When the ends of the red-orange arc touched the horizon it was safe to view the eclipse without eye protection. Some observers photographed the sunset with professional cameras and equipments, others with cellphones. Most of the remaining visitors were content to watch the sun sink past the tree-lined horizon of western Columbia.

The crowd trickled off the rooftop. Some stragglers stayed behind to chat or take pictures of the sunset hues. Durk said his goodbyes and left with his dog Charlie, the astronomical association's unofficial mascot, trailing behind.

After almost everyone had left, organizer Val Germann of the astronomical association packed his telescopes and binoculars. He won't have to keep his equipment locked up for long. The astronomical association is hosting another viewing at sunset June 5 for the transit of Venus across the sun, an event that won't happen for another 115 years.

Supervising editor is John Schneller.



Joplin grads take stage year after tornado hit Missouri town

After hosting the world's major economic powers at his presidential retreat in Maryland and the world's pre-eminent military alliance in his hometown of Chicago over the weekend, President Obama came to Joplin, Mo., Monday night for some inspiration.

He got it, he said, from a city that lost 161 of its sons and daughters one year ago, on May 22, 2011, when a tornado with winds surpassing 200 mph tore a 13-mile-long, 3/4-mile-wide swath of destruction.

And in particular, he got it from the high school students whose graduation ceremony he was invited to address.

"The job of a commencement speaker, aside from keeping it short and sweet, is to inspire," Obama said in his prepared remarks. "But as I look out at this class and across this city, what's clear is that you're the source of inspiration today."

From a story of heartbreak that included the loss of one student who had just graduated from the school and another who would have graduated next year, Obama said, Joplin has become a story of hope.

Joplin High Class of 2012: Graduates stand Monday at Missouri Southern State University.

"My deepest hope for all of you is that as you begin this new chapter in your life, you will bring that spirit of Joplin to every place you travel and everything you do," Obama said. "You can serve as a reminder that we're not meant to walk this road alone; that we're not expected to face down adversity by ourselves. We need each other. We're important to each other. We're stronger together than we are on our own."

The story of the devastating tornado, Obama noted, can be told in numbers:

"In only 32 minutes, it took thousands of homes, hundreds of businesses, and 161 of your neighbors, your friends and your family members," he said. "It took Will Norton, who had just left this auditorium with a diploma in his hand. It took Lantz Hare, who should've received his diploma next year."

But so too, he said, can the recovery be marked by some inspiring numbers:

- The nearly 50,000 volunteers who came to help Joplin recover and rebuild.
- The 600 miles Mark Carr drove from Colorado with three children and two chain saws, which paled compared to the distance traversed by a volunteer from Japan who recalled U.S. aid after the 2011 tsunami.

•The \$500,000 donated by Angelina Jolie and Missouri native Brad Pitt, but also the \$360 raised by a 9-year-old boy's car wash and the \$5 in lunch money returned to Carol Mann by members of the University of Missouri football team.

- The 1,000 dresses donated for the prom, as well as 1,500 cupcakes baked by a woman whose home and bakery were lost to the twister.

Obama didn't even mention some other inspiring numbers: the building permits that have been issued for nearly two-thirds of the 7,500 homes that were damaged. The more than 420 businesses that have reopened. The 4,000 weather radios distributed to residents. The 20,000 trees that the city plans to replace.

"It is this spirit that's allowing all of you to rebuild this city," Obama said. "It's the same spirit we need right now to help rebuild America. And you, class of 2012, will help lead this effort."

"America will only succeed if we all pitch in and pull together — and I'm counting on you to be leaders in that effort. Because you are from Joplin, and you've already defied the odds."

Pressures to ‘go big’ — and small — are shaping U.S. farms

By PEGGY LOWE

LOOSE CREEK, Mo. -- A surprising thing happens while touring Chris Boeckmann’s turkey farm, where 50,000 birds are grown each year for Cargill Inc.

After seeing the huge brooder barn, after looking into a second enormous facility for the older turkeys, and after spying the Cargill sign, the obvious conclusion is that this is a corporate farm.

Then the tour takes a turn in the opposite direction.

After a drive past those barns and down a rambling, gutted road, out on the rest of Boeckmann’s 185 acres, is a small herd of cattle. Unlike his turkeys, Boeckmann is raising these 50 animals without hormones or antibiotics, and they are roaming freely in pristine pastures.

Huh?

“When I talk to people about the beef production, I get that exact reaction. ‘Well, aren’t you working both sides of the fence?’” Boeckmann said. “And quite frankly, yeah, we are.”

Boeckmann is a good example of the way food production is trending these days, a hybrid farmer who works with the large multinational corporations that control the agricultural markets but who is also responding to consumers increasing demand for “natural” food.

“There’s seems to be a bifurcation,” said Harvey S. James, Jr., an associate ag economics professor at the University of Missouri. “If you look at trends in the number of farms, we’re seeing an increase in the number of very large farms and the very rapid increase in the number of very small farms.”

Boeckmann has been raising turkeys for 25 years for Cargill, among the top four companies producing turkeys in the U.S. He signed with the company in 1987, soon after he took over his family’s farm in Loose Creek, about 15 miles east of Jefferson City. During an April visit, he was raising 11,500 in the brooder barn and another 11,000 in the second barn, which is 28,000 square feet.

About that same time farms began the intense concentration of markets, producing ever larger amounts of food. The median-sized poultry operation, for example, grew from producing 300,000 birds a year in 1987 to 681,600 birds in 2007, an increase of 127 percent, according to USDA statistics. Production of hogs, cattle, dairy and field crops also grew exponentially.

Running a large operation for a corporation has its pros and cons. Boeckmann's contract with Cargill lessens his risk in a risky business, giving him an annual income he can count on, he said. But on the negative side, the contract is strict and he must abide by Cargill's dictates.

"Kind of a common joke among poultry producers is that we're just contracted labor, and a lot of time it's referred to as that," he said. "It doesn't matter if you're talking about the poultry industry or contract hogs or swine. Realize that the corporation owns the birds, so they have total control of genetics. They manufacture and make the feed. They have total control of nutrition."

That negative feeling is not just with farmers. The term "corporate farming" took on a bad connotation after films such as "Food, Inc." and Michael Pollan's "The Omnivore's Dilemma" criticized large industrial agribusiness. Consumers noticed and began increasingly demanding food free of drugs, raised in an environmentally friendly way and using production methods that consider animal welfare.

Suddenly the locally grown food movement took off, growing into a \$7 billion business last year, up from \$4.8 billion in 2008. A new food culture emerged, with fresh food growing by nearly 7 percent from 2003-2009 and packaged foods declining by 2 percent, according to the Hartman Group, a research and consulting firm for food and beverage industries.

"We believe what is going on in American food culture has been a long-term shift toward wanting higher-quality and fresher-tasting and fresher-feeling foods that do not have ingredient panels with 100 words on them," said James Richardson, a senior vice president at the Hartman Group.

But here's what those same consumers might not know: "Corporate farming" is an ambiguous term, covering everything from Cargill to a long-established family with a large crop or livestock operation that incorporated simply to protect the family legally.

"People who work and run these large farms see themselves as farmers. They wear the cowboy boots, they have the hats. They're in rural America. They're the neighbors," he said. "It's just a more rationalized large-scale operation."

Boeckmann is in a similar situation, but on a much smaller scale. He incorporated his beef operation this year and is selling under his Boeckmann Family Farms label to local customers, restaurants and groceries.

Although his beef customers are asking for natural turkeys, Boeckmann said he can't do that – yet. His Cargill contract says he can't raise any other birds on his farm. But he is exploring that option, and time will tell.

"It's something that in the long run we might take a serious look at. Is that the direction we want to go? There's obviously pros and cons, and I don't have the answer for that yet," he said.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The New York Times

Men Should Skip Common Prostate Test, Panel Says

Men shouldn't be screened for prostate cancer with a common blood test, a widely followed federal advisory panel recommended on Monday. But the report isn't likely to quell a dispute about whether the test's risks outweigh its potential benefits.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended a "D" grade for prostate-specific-antigen, or PSA, testing which has been widely used for almost two decades to screen men for prostate cancer. Previously the task force had recommended against PSA testing for men age 75 and older. Now the recommendation extends to all ages.

A "D" rating means "there is moderate or high certainty that the service has no net benefit or that the harms outweigh the benefits," the group's website says. It also is a recommendation "against the service."

The Task Force report, published Monday online in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, said PSA screening detects many asymptomatic or slow-growing cases of cancer that won't cause men any problems in their lifetimes. Treatments for those cancers can include surgery and radiation and can cause side effects such as impotence or urinary incontinence.

The task force said it conducted a review of clinical studies of PSA testing, including a large U.S. study and a European one. The U.S. study didn't find a mortality benefit. The task force said the European study suggested a small benefit of no more than 1 in 1,000 men screened.

"Many men are harmed by prostate-cancer screening" with a PSA test, said Michael LeFevre, the task force's co-chairman and a professor at the University of Missouri School of Medicine. "Very few will benefit." The task force is made up of 16 nonfederal, primary-care providers who review preventative health services and make recommendations, primarily for primary-care doctors.

Dr. LeFevre said the task force recommended doctors could still offer the PSA test if men are informed about the risks and benefits of the test. The blood test is meant to detect a substance found normally in the prostate that is also made by cancer cells. Men with higher PSA scores

typically have a higher risk of developing prostate cancer. But the test isn't perfect, and in some cases follow-up biopsies find no cancer.

In October the task force released a draft recommendation against PSA testing and took public comments. Many doctors who treat prostate cancer worry that the final recommendation will simply keep primary-care doctors from discussing the issue with patients, even those with high risk for the disease such as African Americans or those with a family history. They argue the test can offer important information about which men are at risk for developing prostate cancer.

"There's a huge difference between over-diagnosis and overtreatment," said Anthony D'Amico, chief of Genitourinary Radiation Oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. Dr. D'Amico is co-author of a paper also to be published this week in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* arguing against the task force's recommendation.

The American Urological Association recommends doctors and male patients discuss PSA testing, but discourages mass-screening events where the tests are offered free, such as at health fairs, says Ian Thompson, chairman of the group's prostate cancer guideline panel.

"Men should be informed of the opportunity" to get the test, says Dr. Thompson, who is also chairman of the Cancer Therapy & Research Center at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

The recommendations can influence coverage decisions by Medicare and other insurers, though under current law, Medicare must cover annual PSA testing.

Prostate cancer is the most common non-skin cancer diagnosed in men. The American Cancer Society estimates that 241,740 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year, with 28,170 expected to die from it.