

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Authors send letter to President Tim Wolfe to reinstate former UM Press editor

By Keith Reid-Cleveland

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COLUMBIA — Nearly 40 authors will follow through with their request to regain their publication rights from the University of Missouri Press if its former editor-in-chief, Clair Willcox, is not reinstated.

The authors sent a letter explaining their intentions to University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe and other members of the university's administration on Wednesday.

"Now that the Press will remain open, there is no reason to lay (Willcox) off, and in fact we believe you will need him more than ever," the letter states.

After the decision to close the UM Press was announced, the group of 37 authors and series editors, representing 74 publications, threatened to take legal action if not given their publication rights.

In the letter, the authors said they believe Willcox's presence is needed because of his connections to authors and the scholarly community that will be needed to help the press move on into a new era.

"He is the best, perhaps the only, person who has a chance to recruit authors, old and new, and facilitate the restoration of the Press's reputation for excellence," the letter states.

One author who signed the letter, Jane Lago, inherited the rights to the publications that were written by her late mother, Mary Lago, which were published by the UM Press. She said she feels it's essential Willcox is reinstated because he has connections with, and is respected by, many authors.

In July, Willcox was the first member of the UM Press staff to be laid off. A total of 10 employees were expected to lose their positions by the end of October if the press were to close.

For 54 years, the press received an annual \$400,000 subsidy from the UM System and published more than 200,000 books. After it was reported that the press had been operating on a deficit for "several years," it was announced that it would be phased out beginning in the 2013 fiscal year.

The decision was met with opposition, and on Aug. 28 it was decided the press would stay open and responsibility would shift from the UM System to MU.

Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.

Why quake forecast maps often fail

Three of the largest and deadliest earthquakes in recent history occurred where earthquake hazard maps didn't predict massive quakes, scientists say.

Researchers studied why the maps failed to forecast the quakes and how to improve them. Developing better hazard maps and alerting people to their limitations could potentially save lives and money, they say.

“Forecasting earthquakes involves many uncertainties, so we should inform the public of these uncertainties,” says Mian Liu, of the department of geological sciences at the University of Missouri.

“The public is accustomed to the uncertainties of weather forecasting, but foreseeing where and when earthquakes may strike is far more difficult. Too much reliance on earthquake hazard maps can have serious consequences.

“Two suggestions may improve this situation. First, we recommend a better communication of the uncertainties, which would allow citizens to make more informed decisions about how to best use their resources. Second, seismic hazard maps must be empirically tested to find out how reliable they are and thus improve them.”

Maps should be tested against what is called a null hypothesis, the possibility that the likelihood of an earthquake in a given area—like Japan. Testing would also show which mapping approaches were better at forecasting earthquakes and subsequently improve the maps.

In a study published in the journal *Tectonophysics*, Liu and colleagues at Northwestern University and the University of Tokyo detail how hazard maps have failed in three major quakes that struck within a decade of each other.

- Wenchuan, China: In 2008, a quake struck China's Sichuan Province and killed more than 69,000 people. Locals blamed the government and contractors for not making buildings in the area earthquake-proof. Hazard maps bear some of the blame as well since

the maps, based on bad assumptions, had designated the zone as an area of relatively low earthquake hazard.

- Léogâne, Haiti: The 2010 earthquake that devastated Port-au-Prince and killed an estimated 316,000 people occurred along a fault that had not caused a major quake in hundreds of years. Using only the short history of earthquakes since seismometers were invented approximately one hundred years ago yielded hazard maps that didn't indicate the danger there.
- Tōhoku, Japan: Scientists previously thought the faults off the northeast coast of Japan weren't capable of causing massive quakes and thus giant tsunamis like the one that destroyed the Fukushima nuclear reactor. This bad understanding of particular faults' capabilities led to a lack of adequate preparation. The area had been prepared for smaller quakes and the resulting tsunamis, but the Tōhoku quake overwhelmed the defenses.

"If we limit our attention to the earthquake records in the past, we will be unprepared for the future," Liu says. "Hazard maps tend to underestimate the likelihood of quakes in areas where they haven't occurred previously.

"In most places, including the central and eastern US, seismologists don't have a long enough record of earthquake history to make predictions based on historical patterns. Although bad luck can mean that quakes occur in places with a genuinely low probability, what we see are too many 'black swans,' or too many exceptions to the presumed patterns."

"We're playing a complicated game against nature," says the study's first author, Seth Stein of Northwestern University. "It's a very high stakes game. We don't really understand all the rules very well.

"As a result, our ability to assess earthquake hazards often isn't very good, and the policies that we make to mitigate earthquake hazards sometimes aren't well thought out. For example, the billions of dollars the Japanese spent on tsunami defenses were largely wasted.

"We need to very carefully try to formulate the best strategies we can, given the limits of our knowledge," Stein says. "Understanding the uncertainties in earthquake hazard maps, testing them, and improving them is important if we want to do better than we've done so far."



Teens Tell Different Tales About Themselves Depending On Gender

During adolescence, the stories young people tell about themselves reflects their development of a personal identity and sense of self, and those autobiographical narratives vary depending on the teens' gender, according to a University of Missouri psychologist and her colleagues. Parents can use this knowledge of how teens talk about themselves to help understand the tumultuous transitions of their children into adults.

"Autobiographical stories tell us details about adolescent psychology that questionnaires and observations of behavior cannot," said Jennifer Bohanek, assistant professor of psychological sciences in the College of Arts and Science. "Narratives provide information about how adolescents interpret memories as well as how they come to know themselves. Other people then come to know the teens by the stories they tell about themselves. The differences between study participants' stories suggest there may be differences in the way male and female teens understand themselves and present themselves to the world."

Bohanek and her colleagues found that females tended to tell longer, more coherent stories. Females' stories were also generally more detailed and contained more descriptions of their own internal emotional states. Males' stories tended to be more matter-of-fact and showed less self-reflection. These differences were consistent in both positive and negative stories. The researchers suggested that the gender differences may indicate females have a greater inclination to reflect on past experiences and use their memories to give personal meaning to past events.

To conduct her study, Bohanek and her colleagues asked 65 adolescents between 13 and 16 years of age to narrate two positive and two negative stories. The teens came from racially and economically diverse backgrounds. The study was conducted in the teens' homes by one or two female research assistants. The teens' stories were then analyzed for coherence, theme, narrative development and self-reflection.

"Our study filled an important gap in the research on autobiographical narratives," said Bohanek. "Previous studies looked at gender differences in children's and adults' storytelling. Other research has found there are differences in the ways parents tell stories to male and female children as well as differences in how emotional content was explained. Other studies found that families talked about past events every five minutes on average, so reflecting on the past seems to have an important influence on family relationships. Our study suggests that these interactions may affect adolescents as they develop their own definition of themselves."

The study, "Gender Differences in Adolescents' Autobiographical Narratives," was published in the *Journal of Cognition and Development*. Lead author was Robyn Fivush of Emory University. Co-authors were Widaad Zaman of Emory University and Sally Grapin of Brown University.



Adolescents in Foster Care Require Guidelines for Safe Social Media Use, Expert Says

About 73 percent of online American teens use social networking sites, such as Facebook, to share photos, interests and experiences with others, according to Pew Research Center. For youths in the foster care system, sharing information online presents additional safety and privacy issues. **A University of Missouri researcher recommends that child welfare agencies develop policies to guide how adolescents in foster care use social media.**

Dale Fitch, an assistant professor in the MU School of Social Work, says agencies usually advocate restricting how youths in the foster system use social media in order to avoid potential liabilities that could result in lawsuits. However, like other teens who ignore adults' instructions concerning information disclosure online, teens in foster care turn to the Internet to express their identities and share their stories. Social media is a positive tool that helps adolescents in foster care connect with society, but the lack of guidelines leaves them at risk for cyber-bullying, unintentional disclosure of identifying information and personal harm, Fitch said.

"Foster parents and caseworkers might tell teens not to use Facebook, but they're using it anyway, which opens them up to negative consequences," Fitch said. "They need to be able to share instances of unwanted social media contact with their guardians, and they might not reveal information if they've been told not to use Facebook."

Extensive policies regulate how records of youths in the foster system are shared with others such as foster parents, school personnel, health care professionals and caseworkers, so encouraging teens in foster care to use the Internet allows them a sense of privacy and control over their own information, Fitch said.

"Although adolescents in foster care are very much aware of their own safety issues and are very protective of their foster families and biological siblings, they may not know the implications of sharing information online," Fitch said. "Working with them to safely use social media is a huge step."

Additionally, allowing youths in foster care to use social media could give their caretakers insight into the youths' lives they might not have otherwise, which could help adults identify development issues, Fitch said.

"If adolescents have few friends on Facebook, foster parents need to find out whether they have other, hidden online profiles or if they're having problems making friends," Fitch said. "Adults could learn a lot more about what's going on in the teens' lives and what they're thinking about. Those conversations happen on a limited basis now."

Fitch used a tool called Critical Systems Heuristics to create a framework child welfare agencies can use to develop privacy guidelines to ensure the safe use of social media. He says youths in the foster system should be included in the policy-making process in addition to child welfare workers, foster parents or guardians, juvenile officers and judges.

The paper, "Youth in Foster Care and Social Media: A Framework for Developing Privacy Guidelines," was published in the *Journal of Technology in Human Services*. The School of Social Work is part of the MU College of Human Environmental Sciences.

MU researcher gets Hyundai grant for child cancer relapse risk study

By Kari Paul

September 5, 2012 | 8:17 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — In January of 2010, Sarah Talbert took her 6-year-old son Shayden to the hospital for a seemingly innocuous condition: a nosebleed. What doctors discovered changed her life.

"He was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, and as a parent, I cannot tell you how awful it is," Sarah Talbert said, through tears.

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia is the most common children's cancer and has an 80 percent recovery rate.

It is the disease researchers will focus on with the help of a funding boost announced at a ceremony at MU School of Medicine on Wednesday.

Hyundai's Hope on Wheels program awarded a \$250,000 grant to the school for research that will help determine relapse risk for survivors of acute lymphoblastic leukemia, with the ultimate goal of increasing the recovery rate.

Kristen Taylor, an assistant professor in the Department of Pathology and Anatomical Sciences at the School of Medicine, developed a way to determine a survivor's relapse risk by looking at DNA methylation, which the body uses as a means to regulate the expression of genes. She talked about her research at Wednesday's event.

"When (DNA methylation) happens in a way it shouldn't, it can shut off genes that should normally be turned on," Taylor said. "That's a problem if we're talking about something like a gene that's supposed to be suppressing tumors."

Thomas Loew, a professor and division director of pediatric hematology and oncology at MU's Women's and Children's Hospital, said he sees about 10 new acute lymphoblastic

leukemia patients per year, and with Taylor's research, these children should have a higher chance of beating cancer.

"With her work, we will know up front if a patient has changes that tell us that they are going to relapse," Loew said. "Then, you can take their treatment to the highest level and maximize your chances of curing them."

Brian O'Malley, regional general manager for Hyundai, said the Hope on Wheels program has given more than \$57 million to pediatric cancer research since its inception in 1998. About \$10 million of that was given this month in honor of National Child Cancer Awareness Month.

"The selection process for the grant is very intense," he said. Hyundai offers all pediatric hospitals a chance to apply for the grant program, and then a board of nine physicians decide where the grant money could best be spent, O'Malley said. For this year's grant, more than 300 hospitals applied, and 41 were selected.

Mary Jo Henry, director of marketing for Joe Machens Hyundai, said the dealership has participated in fundraising for the Hope on Wheels Program on a national level for two years, so she was thrilled to see a local hospital see benefits.

"While there's so much funding for cancer, only 3 percent is raised for children's cancer, so it's just amazing to be associated with an organization that has taken on this overlooked part of our society with the cancer program," Henry said.

Shayden Talbert is now in remission, but his mother said she still worries.

"(This research) would put us at ease because my biggest concern for when he's done with treatment in May is a possible re-occurrence," she said. "So this grant is a wonderful thing to help ease a lot of families' minds."

Supervising editor is Katherine Reed.

New hope



By Kit Doyle

Wednesday, September 5, 2012

Rylan Newman, 5, tries to hide in his father Mark's shirt this morning while making a handprint on a commemorative canvas after Hyundai Hope on Wheels presented a \$250,000 Hope Grant to the MU School of Medicine. Newman and 9-year-old Shayden Talbert, right, have been treated for leukemia. Area Hyundai dealers donated \$250,000 to the school for childhood cancer research as part of a national effort among more than 800 dealers in support of National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. Hope On Wheels this year is donating \$10.25 million to support 41 pediatric cancer research projects across the country.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Guest commentary: Higher tobacco tax will benefit our children and grandchildren

8 hours ago • [By Dr. Michael Cooperstock](#)

Dr. Cooperstock is professor of pediatrics at Women's and Children's Hospital at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He writes as a representative of the Missouri Branch of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Missouri's tobacco tax is 17 cents per pack, by far the lowest in the nation. The national average is \$1.49 per pack. Proposition B on the November ballot adds 73 cents to the tax. This new tax will generate more than \$250 million, revenue specifically designated for elementary, high school and college education, as well as supporting tobacco prevention and cessation. Price increases at this level always lead to a reduction in cigarette smoking, together with a spike in demand for smoking cessation programs.

But far more important is the enormous health benefit Proposition B will bring to our children for generations to come.

The key numbers to remember are 40,000, 1,800, and 3.

About 9 out of 10 lifetime smokers started smoking by age 18. Tobacco marketers spend more than \$1,000 in advertising for each child or adolescent smoker captured. Our children often become addicted before they have developed the mature judgment to understand the full implications of what they have done. There are 1.5 million children living in Missouri today, and about 300,000 of them are projected to become addicted smokers by age 18. However, conservative econometric estimates indicate that a 73-cent price increase will deter about 40,000 of today's Missouri children from becoming addicted smokers. And smoking, of course, would have affected their health for the rest of their lives. Early death occurs in half of all smokers, who will die an average of about 15 years ahead of their time.

Currently Missouri has one of the highest youth smoking rates in the country, leading to costly diseases: emphysema, chronic bronchitis, cancer, heart disease, asthma and stroke. Smoking also contributes to high blood pressure, erectile dysfunction and aging skin. Tobacco-related illnesses are estimated to cost every Missouri household \$586 a year, which we pay through increased insurance premiums and taxes.

The damage to our grandchildren is every bit as worrisome. Our cigarette-smoking daughters will soon be having children of their own. Each year in Missouri, smoking causes about 1,800

low birth weight and premature babies (450 preterm and 1350 underweight term births). Infants of mothers who smoke are also more likely to have school problems or mental retardation in later childhood. Based on Institute of Medicine estimates, the total lifetime medical and societal economic cost for 450 preterm infants in Missouri is more than \$100 million each year.

How much will a cigarette smoker actually have to pay? A typical pack-a-day smoker spends about \$1,600 per year for the habit, and the new tax will add \$267 per year. Proposition B opponents argue that 73 cents is an "outrageous 729 percent tax increase." However, the actual added cost is the same as just 3 cigarettes per day for the average smoker. Cut out 3 cigarettes, and it costs nothing.

A "yes" vote on Proposition B in November is a vote for the health and well-being of both our children and our grandchildren, and it will improve education and lower health insurance costs for all. Rarely are we given such an opportunity to accomplish so much, so easily, for so many.