



## **MU hospitals reach top tier on records**

Five hospitals within the University of Missouri Health Care system have achieved the highest level of electronic medical record implementation.

HIMSS Analytics, a national company that evaluates hospitals' progress in implementing electronic records, certified that the facilities achieved Stage 7 of the EMR Adoption Model.

The hospitals include University Hospital, Women's and Children's Hospital, Ellis Fischel Cancer Center, the Missouri Orthopaedic Institute and the Missouri Psychiatric Center.

Of the 5,319 hospitals nationwide, 97 have earned this stage of implementation. To reach it, MU Health Care is now using computers to draft doctors' orders and prescriptions, to give all caregivers immediate access to patient's up-to-date medical information and to allow faster ordering of laboratory tests.

## **MU experts explore end-of-the-world theories**

By Janese Silvey

A University of Missouri professor is joining a global chorus of scientists trying to alleviate fears that the world is ending this month.

But Angela Speck, chairwoman of MU's astronomy department, is also taking advantage of the hype. "If this makes people come along and listen to some science, that's all I need to know," she said.

Speck is hosting a series of "Countdown to the End of the World" events starting with a free lecture at 7 p.m. Wednesday in Room 120 of the Physics Building. On Thursday, Alex Barker, director of the MU Museum of Art and Archaeology, will present a follow-up program, "End of Days: Real and Imagined Mayan Worlds" at 5:30 p.m. in Room 106 of Pickard Hall. Speck's end-of-the-world countdown will conclude Dec. 21 with a winter solstice party at the observatory.

For years, cable television — The History Channel in particular — and websites have been warning people that Dec. 21 might mark the end of the world, or at least the world as we know it. They point to overlapping predictions of Earth's pending demise that correlate with the supposed end of an ancient Mayan calendar. Nostradamus, the Hopi Indians, the Chinese classic text I-Ching and other soothsayers have made predictions said to align with that date.

Fears are so widespread, NASA officials last week hosted a question-and-answer session, now posted on its website, to clear up misconceptions.

The Mayans had several calendars that served different purposes, Barker said. The one in question was a long version that gave kings a way to record historical events on unique dates without worry that the same date would be repeated when a calendar rolled over. So, for instance, if a king came into power Dec. 3, that would not be a date happening again any time soon.

In other words, it's just a calendar.

"The calendar on my wall ends on Dec. 31. That doesn't mean the world is going to end Dec. 31," Speck said. "That's the best analogy I can think of."

But what about the pole shifts expected to happen around that time and the wayward planet some say is heading straight toward us?

The latter, planet Nibiru, doesn't exist, according to NASA. If it were fewer than 20 days away from Earth, we would have been able to see it in the sky two years ago.

"At this point — we're talking about something the size of Jupiter that's supposed to be about two weeks out — it should be as bright as the moon," Speck said.

And the magnetic polarity of Earth has changed before without mass destruction, she said. According to NASA, it happens every 400,000 years or so and isn't expected in the next few millennia.

Still not convinced? It's not even clear that the Mayan calendar does end Dec. 21, 2012, Barker said.

"That was a best guess," he said. "It could be 100 years off."

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail [jsilvey@columbiatribune.com](mailto:jsilvey@columbiatribune.com).

# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

## Balmy temperatures to fall, but still put 2012 in line for warm-weather record

7 hours ago • [By Tim O'Neil toneil@post-dispatch.com](mailto:By Tim O'Neil toneil@post-dispatch.com) 314-340-8132

Monday's pleasant afternoon just missed setting yet another high-temperature mark but will help to cinch 2012 as the warmest year on record in St. Louis.

The high Monday was 74, just short of the record of 76 that was set in 1970. Sunday's high of 75 degrees, a record for Dec. 2, marked the 26th time a daily high-temperature record was logged in 2012.

Overall, the year has delivered a mild winter, a record-warm spring, a brutal summer heat wave and not nearly enough rain.

The National Weather Service has kept what it regards to be reliable temperature data in St. Louis since 1874. For months, the office here has said 2012 is shaping up to be the warmest on the books. As of the weekend, the Weather Service says the running average temperature for this year — 63.1 degrees — remains nearly a degree warmer than that of 1921, the soon-to-be second-warmest year on record.

“The year 2012 pretty much has it in the bag, unless we fall into some extreme deep freeze in December,” said Julie Phillipson, a meteorologist at the local office in Weldon Spring. “Even then, I don't know there's enough time to change it.”

The weather forecast through the weekend calls for highs in the 50s and lows in the 40s, with a chance for rain. Normal highs and lows for early December are in the upper 40s to near 30.

Last summer was the fourth-warmest on record in St. Louis. The warmest spring on record and the sixth-mildest winter (2011-12) add up to a warm 2012, even with autumn temperatures that were slightly below normal, Phillipson said.

Overall, annual temperatures in St. Louis have been above average and generally rising for the past three decades. That mirrors a warming trend across North America and, indeed, the world. The Weather Service generally sticks to forecasting weather rather than divining world climate changes, but the local numbers are obvious enough in its record books.

The year 2012 has hit record high temperatures for 26 individual dates, including 10 in spring and 11 in summer. That's twice the number of record daily highs credited to 1936 and 1934,

which were years of dreadful and deadly heat waves. There were 37 days of triple-digit heat in 1936, still the area's worst, and 29 in 1934. This summer had 21 such days.

But the "warmest year" trophy goes to the one with the highest average daily highs and lows.

Phillipson said a big reason for this year's trend has been the relatively static weather pattern — high-pressure systems that don't allow for much change day to day. That has meant fewer thunderstorms or wild swings in temperature, more lingering warmth and less precipitation.

"Rather than seeing big storm systems that force changes, we've been locked into these stagnant patterns," she said. "It's been the same for much of the country this year."

One result was the drought. Total rainfall so far this year in St. Louis is 30 inches, 8 inches below normal. The national drought monitor now lists the metro area as "abnormally dry," but most of Missouri remains in moderate-to-severe drought. St. Louis' rainfall total would be more grim without two heavy storms in April and Hurricane Isaac's arrival on Aug. 31.

**Anthony Lupo, a professor of meteorology at the University of Missouri-Columbia, said average temperatures in Missouri have been rising since the early 1980s, a pattern that was preceded by a downward trend of almost the same duration.**

Lupo said world annual average temperatures rose from the 1970s until about 2000, then generally have held steady.

He said most of the increase in Missouri temperatures over the past three decades has been from milder winters. Despite the heat waves of summer 2011 and 2012, he said, "the overall summertime averages have been pretty steady," said Lupo, who chairs the department of soil, environmental and atmospheric sciences at the UM school of agriculture.

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**



## **Nixon appoints Paul Wilson to Mo. Supreme Court**

14 hours ago • Associated Press

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon on Monday appointed former aide Paul Wilson to the state Supreme Court.

Wilson was chosen from among three finalists to replace Supreme Court Judge William Ray Price Jr., who stepped down in August and now works in private legal practice.

Wilson, 51, of Jefferson City, worked for Nixon at the state attorney general's office from 1996 to 2008. After Nixon was elected governor, Wilson followed and worked for Nixon as senior counsel for budget and finance and as the director of the Transform Missouri Project that focused on federal recovery money.

Nixon, a Democrat, said Wilson has represented Missouri before both the state high court and the U.S. Supreme Court in cases that dealt with federalism, converting nonprofit assets, school funding and the constitutionality of laws.

"He has demonstrated, time and again, both his ability and his dedication to serving the people of Missouri, and I am very pleased to be able to name him to the state's highest court," Nixon said.

Under Missouri's judicial selection process, a state commission interviews applicants for vacancies on appellate courts and narrows the field to three nominees. The governor appoints one of them who later must go before voters in a retention election in which no other candidate appears on the ballot and voters decide whether or not to keep the judge on the bench.

The other finalists for the Supreme Court vacancy were Jackson County Circuit Judge Michael Manners and St. Louis attorney Stanley Wallach.

The appointment to the high court is the second time that Nixon has tapped Wilson for a judgeship. In 2010, Wilson was appointed as a circuit judge in the Capitol's home of Cole County. Running as a Democrat, Wilson lost a subsequent election to Republican Dan Green.

Wilson grew up in Jefferson City, and his father is the late McCormick Wilson, who was an associate circuit judge in Cole County.

In his application for the vacancy on the state Supreme Court, Wilson said he learned from his father about the value of understanding others' points of view and of step-by-step reasoning. He said he learned from appellate judges with whom he has worked the importance of rulings that demonstrate how future cases will be treated.

"Each of them believed strongly that the judiciary best serves the public when it serves the trial courts and the Bar, and that appellate judges best serve the trial courts and the Bar by deciding cases in a way that is not only faithful to the legal principles involved but also serves as a meaningful predictor of how similar cases should be \_ and will be \_ resolved in the future," he wrote.

**Wilson graduated first in his law class at the University of Missouri-Columbia and has a bachelor's degree from Drury University in Springfield. He was a clerk for the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the Missouri Supreme Court Chief Justice Edward "Chip" Robertson.**

## Facebook page facilitates anonymous compliments at MU

By Abby Eisenberg

December 3, 2012 | 1:52 p.m. CST

How about some happy news on this beautiful Monday?

**You'll be sure to find some on the new MU Compliments Facebook page. Designed to "spread the joy" at MU, the page provides a spot for students to positively recognize other students and MU employees.**

It works like this: A person sends a message of appreciation to the MU Compliments Facebook inbox, and a page administrator then publishes the anonymous message to the wall for all of their friends to see.

Created Friday morning by an anonymous do-gooder, the page has sent the warm fuzzies around campus all weekend. By Monday morning, the page already had 1,165 friends and too many posts to easily count.

The project is modeled after a group started by students at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, according to the MU Compliments about page.

"Spread the Happiness!" it says on the page, "Because Nice shouldn't only be a city in France."

Here are some examples of compliments posted on the page. *If you can't see the tweets embedded below, [click here to view them on Storify.com](#).*

**We'd like to know** why you think this has caught on so quickly. If you've posted, why did you decide to participate? What's special about this project? Let us know in the comments below.

*Supervising Editor is Joy Mayer.*