Missouri Senate panel blocks UM curator appointment

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 | 12:18 p.m. CST; updated 2:59 p.m. CST, Wednesday, February 5, 2014
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No MU Mention

JEFFERSON CITY — Frustration over past state education policy led to the rejection of one of Gov. Jay Nixon's appointments to the University of Missouri Board of Curators on Wednesday.

The motion to endorse Cape Girardeau lawyer Michael Ponder was defeated on a 5-5 vote in the Senate Gubernatorial Appointments Committee. Ponder needed Senate confirmation to remain on the board, where he has been serving since June. But it was his previous position on the State Board of Education that caused senators to deny his appointment.

"He has made decisions that have cost the people I represent millions of dollars," said Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Glendale. "He has not demonstrated an ability to ask the tough questions."

Ponder was appointed to the education board in 2009. Senators cited board decisions during his tenure, including the adoption of uniform benchmarks for reading, writing and math called Common Core standards and changes to school district funding, as reasons to block his appointment.

During the hearing Ponder told committee members that he shared their frustration, but made decisions based on the available information at the time. He declined to comment further after the committee's vote.

Sen. Ron Richard, R-Joplin, voted to advance Ponder's nomination and said he was qualified to serve on the board of curators. He questioned how Ponder's previous role on the education board affected his ability to be a university curator.
Ponder was appointed to the post by Nixon in January 2013, but the Senate did not act on his nomination last year. Nixon reappointed Ponder in June to serve a term that expires at the end of 2018.

Nixon could now ask the Senate to withdraw Ponder's nomination, which would allow the governor to reappoint him to the position later. A spokesman for Nixon did not immediately respond to a request for comment after the committee's vote. The full Senate would need to grant a withdrawal request.

The Senate panel did advance three Nixon appointments to the State Board of Education, including two former school superintendents. They also endorsed nominees to lead the state Agriculture Department and the Department of Economic Development. Those nominations now head to the full Senate for confirmation.

UM System Board of Curators committee meets Wednesday

By Ashley Jost

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 8:06 am Updated: 2:45 pm, Wed Feb 5, 2014.

The three-member executive committee of the University of Missouri Board of Curators is meeting Wednesday in Columbia.

The public session started at noon, when the members met via conference call and voted to go into closed session. There was no indication about the purpose of the meeting.

John Fougere, UM System chief communications officer, said if there is an announcement after the executive session, a news release will be sent to reporters. There was still no announcement just before 3 p.m.

According to the meeting notice, the session is “for consideration of contract items as authorized by law and upon approval by resolution of the Executive Committee.”
A week ago, the full Board of Curators voted to hire independent counsel to investigate the way the university addressed the alleged rape of MU swimmer Sasha Menu Courey, who committed suicide in 2011.

After last week’s curators meeting ended Friday, board Chairman Don Downing told reporters he hoped the executive committee could hire the counsel within “two to three weeks.” At the time, he said the curators were contacted by multiple firms already.

The executive committee includes Downing, Vice Chairman Donald Cupps and former Chairman Wayne Goode.

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Posted in Local on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 8:06 am. Updated: 2:45 pm.

Darkow quick to judge in Menu Courey rape case

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Editor, the Tribune: I'm wondering if your cartoonist read the story about Sasha Menu Courey. It's always unfortunate to lose a bright young person for any reason, but if he had read the article, it is my understanding he would have discovered the ones she told about the rape were health care providers. The law precludes from telling those who might be in authority — the police or university officials — who are not health care people.

I was at the University of Missouri for a number of years as an adviser/administrator. On at least four occasions, young women came to me with the same story but never the names of the young men involved. I tried to get them to go to police or the university’s rape counselor and never was successful. When I spoke to those higher in authority — and the rape counselor — I was told I really couldn’t say anything without a victim's consent. I always felt so inadequate in trying to help these young women, and I tried to convince them the males in the equation were getting by with a felony and might possibly repeat it in the
I am wondering if, in those cases, I would have been liable. Was I putting the university in a "bad" place?

A disheveled girl used a campus emergency phone: "Hello? Hello? I need help! I've been raped! Is there anyone there?! Hello?"

I can understand the parents' angst, but why did they wait so long to come forth? And why to ESPN instead of the university?

I think John Darkow leapt to judgment, for want of a better way to put it.

Barbara Burlison 391 Villa Drive Troy

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Posted in Letters To The Editor on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 2:00 pm.
Kanye West may be a college dropout, but that doesn’t mean he can’t help foster arts education on college campuses.

**University of Missouri professor Andrew Hoberek teaches a class on the music of Yeezy and Shawn “Jay Z” Carter. The course, known as English 2169 or simply “Jay-Z and Kanye West,” analyzes their songs like a poetry class and examines rap’s place in popular entertainment.**

“I usually teach contemporary fiction, so some of the issues I deal with come into play in this class,” Hoberek says. “It raises questions about the social and artistic judgments that go into calling something art. I do feel that rap is an art form that’s maturing from pop entertainment into art.”

Hoberek says he chose Yeezus and Jigga because they currently sit on the rap throne (and probably watch it) while constantly asking for their music to be compared to other forms of art.

“I want to teach a kind of history of poetry and how it does and doesn’t apply to rap music,” he says. “I want to teach the history of rap as a popular art form. I want them to learn how to do research into popular culture … become more knowledgeable listeners of rap music … move past the celebrity and make judgments on the album.”

Not surprisingly, the class is one of Mizzou’s most popular and fills up quickly.

Missouri junior Olivia Fox took the class and gave it a glowing review, saying she loved the opportunity to learn about the connection between poetry and rap.
“I would definitely recommend the course to others,” she says. “It was challenging and eye-opening. Hip-hop is such a controversial topic and it’s great to be in an environment where we can express ourselves and learn from our peers and professors.”

The Jay and ‘Ye class is just one of many college courses about celebrity culture being offered nationwide. Here are a few more prominent examples:

1.) Rutgers University professor Kevin Allred teaches a class on Jay Z’s wife called “Politicizing Beyonce.”

“When I say ‘politicizing Beyonce,’ I’m just talking about analyzing her music in terms of the political messages it may or may not hold,” Allred says. “The class is really about black feminist theory in the United States and an interrogation of the categories of gender, race, class, sexuality, etc. So looking at Beyonce with this lens opens up her lyrics and music videos to possible political interpretations.”

2.) University of Maryland offered a women’s studies course called “Lady Gaga, Beyonce and Nicki Minaj: Gender and Spectacular Consumption.”

The class examined the public’s obsession with every aspect of these pop stars’ lives, from their performances to their fashion choices.

3.) University at Buffalo, SUNY is trying to keep the memory of Walter White alive with its “Breaking Down ‘Breaking Bad’” graduate seminar.

Besides analyzing every aspect of the acclaimed series, the class will also include guest speakers like representatives from the Drug Enforcement Administration.

4.) University of California, Irvine is preparing students for the zombie apocalypse with “Society, Science, Survival: Lesson from AMC’s ‘The Walking Dead.’”

The course delves into the definition of survival, the role social structures still in play and how disease would spread in such an environment, among other topics.
HB1308 would allow forgivable loans for in-state students

By Joe Clougher

For high-achieving Missouri students, another college financing option could be on its way this year.

The twist: recipients will have to stay in state, working only in Missouri for a set number of years following graduation.

House Bill 1308 would establish a forgivable loan program for college-bound high schoolers on top of the state’s existing Bright Flight scholarship opportunities, which extend financial aid to Missouri students who fall within the top three percent of ACT test-takers.

The additional loan, if passed, would help in-state students manage tuition — again, so long as they take up residence and employment in Missouri. It’s a strategy, said the bill’s sponsor State Rep. Mike Thomson, R-Maryville, that could help alleviate a problem that’s plagued Missouri schools for years: brain drain.

“We just don’t want our best people, who are our best resources, leaving the state if at all possible — because once they leave the state, it’s less likely that they will come back here and work,” said Thomson, the chairman of the House Committee on Higher Education.

Thomson’s proposal, which was backed and largely co-sponsored by his fellow representatives on the Higher Education Committee, would enter eligible loan recipients into a contract with the state that would mandate in-state employment for custom, specified lengths of time.

As a result, those recipients wouldn’t have to pay back their loans or the interest those loans accrue during students’ time as undergraduates. It’s a solution, Thomson said, that could minimize student loan debt at little cost to government.

With the Bright Flight program the way it is now, Thomson said, it’s less enticing for Missouri graduates to stay in state. HB1308’s addition of a forgivable loan, which would presumably be made up for through state tax during recipients’ residencies, would make it more affordable, Thomson said, for in-state students to attend a four-year university.
“The whole intent of this is going back to the original point: I would like to keep these kids in state to be productive here, and not everywhere else,” Thomson said.

Thomson cited statistics that showed 2,500 to 2,600 students as eligible for the Bright Flight loan program. Those students, he said, could be a valuable asset to the state.

**In Columbia, Missouri Students Association President Mason Schara is a supporter.**

“I think that a lot of students aren’t really presented with the concept of staying in Missouri,” Schara said.

An influx of students from MU, he said, could have unforeseen benefits to the state economy.

If HB1308 passes, it would go into effect by the start of the next academic year.

Art rescuers known as 'Monuments Men' had strong connections to Missouri

Thursday, February 6, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CST; updated 6:16 a.m. CST, Thursday, February 6, 2014

James A. Van Dyke, an associate professor at the MU, specializes in 20th century German painting and politics. "I'm part of the larger scholarly community engaged in questions of restitution and looting," Van Dyke said.

SARAH ROTHBERG
BY JOEY FENING
COLUMBIA — During the final years of World War II, 262 Americans joined a group from 13 Allied nations to safeguard millions of the world's art treasures from destruction.

Altogether, a team of 350 tracked and saved more than 5 million paintings, books, manuscripts and other museum-quality items looted by the Nazis — masterpieces by Michelangelo, daVinci and Vermeer, as well as contemporary works by Salvador Dali, Paul Klee, Pablo Picasso and many more.

Known as the "Monuments Men," the rescuers were an assemblage of art historians, architects, artists, curators and educators summoned for duty after 1943.

Two of them would eventually become members of the faculty at MU: Lewis Williams, a professor of art, and Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, a bibliographer and rare book expert who began teaching on campus in 1969.

The men and women who served in the war's Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives program are the subjects of a highly publicized movie, "The Monuments Men," directed by and starring George Clooney, and set for release on Friday.

The film also stars Matt Damon, Bill Murray, John Goodman and Cate Blanchett as characters who risked their lives in many instances to rescue irreplaceable works of art, although those portrayed in the film are fictional.

Some of the actual "Monuments Men" developed strong ties to Missouri. All told, 10 settled in the state after the war; four were natives.

In addition to the two who came to MU, six became affiliated with The Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City. One of them, Paul Gardner, became the museum's first director, and Laurence Sickman was its first curator of Oriental art and ultimately the museum director for almost 25 years.

An exhibit running until March 7 at the Nelson-Atkins takes note of their contributions through relevant newspaper clippings and personal letters. The effort to save European art during the war is also the subject of a documentary, "Hunting Hitler's Stolen Treasures: The Monuments Men," that premiered Wednesday on the National Geographic Channel and airs again at 3 p.m. Feb. 12.
Many of the American "Monuments Men" remained in Europe until their mission was complete, then returned to the states to resume their lives as arbiters of culture and fine arts, said James van Dyke, associate professor of modern European art in the Department of Art History and Archeology at MU.

Van Dyke has conducted extensive research on German art produced in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as the history of art as "spoils of victory" during wartime.

He said the mission of Lehmann-Haupt, who lived in Columbia from his appointment in 1969 until his death in 1992, was to rejuvenate the ravaged cultural landscape of post-war Germany.

"After the Nazis had kind of suppressed a lot of modern artistic institutions – and a lot of artists – his job was to say, 'Let's get that going again,'" Van Dyke said.

According to The Monuments Men Foundation, which supports art recovery and preservation, Lehmann-Haupt was born in Berlin, attended universities in Berlin, Vienna and Frankfurt and worked in Europe before coming to Columbia University in 1929.

He worked in library science and rare books curation until joining the "Monuments Men" in 1946. With the task of reviving post-war culture in Germany, he helped a number of artists re-establish themselves and studied the effects of Hitler's attempt to control the arts.

Van Dyke said contributions to the Monuments Men’s cause were various among its members. Unlike Lehmann-Haupt, however, Lewis Williams' war efforts are not well-documented.

One group of "Monuments Men," however, was responsible for saving "Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland," a prized 18th-century portrait in the Nelson-Atkins Museum. Sixty years ago, the Nicholas de Largilliere piece was sitting in a bomb-rigged salt mine, stolen and stashed away by Nazi forces.
MacKenzie Mallon, a researcher in the European Painting and Sculpture Department at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, has been working on the "Monuments Men" exhibit. It includes memorabilia about Gardner, who helped command the "Monuments Men" in Italy during the war.

Mallon said the people of Kansas City were eager to hear news about the museum director's wartime experiences.

“His activities over there were widely publicized in the press; he was very well-known,” she said. “When he would write a letter to his friends, often they would hand it over to The Kansas City Star, and they would often publish it.”

At one point, he scouted a castle near Naples to see if an art collection belonging to the Guinness family in Ireland was safe.

“He literally crawled on his hands and knees during a battle, with shells falling all around him,” Mallon said. “He knew a collection was in the castle, and he needed to save it.”

Sickman, who followed Gardner as museum director, dedicated much of his life to the preservation of cultural sites throughout Asia. He hunted down stolen art years before his time as a "Monuments Men," Mallon said.

According to "The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: Culture Comes to Kansas City" an art history book by Kristie Wolferman, Sickman helped recover an important limestone relief stolen from a cave in China.

Looters had haphazardly chipped out pieces of the relief and sold them in places such as Shanghai and Germany. With the help of Langdon Warner, a museum colleague and future "Monuments Men," Sickman was able to reunite the fragments.

“At the time it seemed impossible that the relief could ever be reconstructed. Yet, because Sickman had the rubbing and the patience to seek out the pieces over a number of years, he was able to reassemble the limestone relief for the Nelson collection in 1941,” Wolferman wrote.

Mallon calls the people dedicated to cultural preservation inspirational: “The bravery of these men who came from many very modest backgrounds, to go over there, and their
enthusiasm and dedication to the preservation of these cultural objects – it was unbelievable.”

Van Dyke described the efforts of the "Monuments Men" as a unequaled effort to prevent history from repeating itself.

“This episode is a part of that large history of art’s involvement in conquest and war, and the 'Monuments Men' played a role in one episode of this large history,” Van Dyke said.

U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., recently sponsored a bill to award Congressional Gold Medals to all members of the "Monuments Men."

Contemporary military conflicts continue to provide an existential threat to art surrounded by the violence, Blunt said in a conference call last week.

“It’s too bad that in our recent conflicts, particularly in Iraq, where so much was lost of the cultural heritage of Iraq — both buildings and looted artwork — that the work of the 'Monuments Men' hasn't continued as we would hope it would in the modern day” he said.

As war persists to endanger works of art, Van Dyke said, the Monuments Men’s legacy should extend beyond their saved works.

“More important to me than the individual works is the effort to intervene or recuperate millions of objects,” he said.

“Whether they’re well-known or not, that’s what’s really important.”
UMKC’s acceptance of gay and lesbian students is welcome

February 5

BY MARY SANCHEZ

The Kansas City Star

No MU Mention

In the 1970s, the University of Missouri System appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court to keep gay and lesbian organizations off campus.

The curators’ legal arguments failed, but the episode lasted seven years. Their reasoning was wrapped up in blatant homophobia — fear that recognizing gay and lesbian students would “tend to expand homosexual behavior” and “constitute an implied approval by the university of the abnormal, homosexual lifestyle as a normal way of life,” according to newspaper articles.

Wow. Thank God times change. And yes, that is a purposeful reference to deity. Too often God is co-opted as a rationale for such ignorance, even today.

Beginning Friday, more than 2,500 college students are expected to attend the Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference. UMKC is the host.

Now, rather than shaming gay and lesbian students, the UMKC campus has won accolades for its support. Gender-neutral bathrooms are a part of new construction. For a decade, an office has been dedicated to such students’ needs. Faculty and staff training is widespread.

“Prolonged effort” is how UMKC alumnus Jim Giles termed the shift. Giles will appear on one of the many conference panels at the Kansas City Convention Center. He was a co-founder in the early ’90s of the Gay & Lesbian Student Alliance. Megan Cramer, who died in the explosion of JJ’s restaurant nearly a year ago, was also a founder.
The ’90s were an important period in Kansas City, albeit one that likely felt unwelcoming to a young person just beginning to come out. Protesters packed City Hall as the City Council debated whether codes would include sexual orientation as a protected class. Detractors were eventually trounced, and new protections were passed.

And yet bias still exists. It’s just tempered by more allies. A note to media on a conference press release stresses: “For the sake of privacy of attendees, please no crowd shots.” The words “no crowd shots” are underlined. A necessary precaution as no one should be “outed” by media coverage.

Another laudable element of UMKC is alumni donations to the Pride Scholarships for LGBTQIA students. Often these are full-tuition grants for a student who has been disowned by his or her family.

It’s another example of a campus displaying potentially life-altering acceptance.

MU Chancellor challenges students to make snowmen in his likeness

Loftin issues snowman challenge

By Ashley Jost

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 2:00 pm

University of Missouri students had homework during Tuesday's snow day — an assignment passed down from the university's highest office via Twitter.

MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin, whose Twitter handle is @bowtieger, challenged students via Twitter yesterday to build a "@bowtieger snowman" in his likeness.

Students were supposed to take photos of their snowmen and tweet them out, including Loftin's handle or his wife's, Karin (@kcloftin), who is judging the contest. The winner of the challenge gets lunch with the chancellor.
Loftin said via Twitter yesterday that he "always enjoy(s) encouraging creativity and a little safe, spirited competition." He wished he could have been out with the students — and received many requests to do so — but was out of town to "meet with alumni," he said.

Thalia Sass and a few of her Phi Mu sorority sisters were up for Loftin's challenge. After about an hour of work, the women had a 2-foot-tall snowman donning an MU sweatshirt, a pink Phi Mu bow tie and a Phi Mu hat. They were in it to win it.

"We saw his tweet this morning and thought Loftin seemed really personable," Sass said. "He seems like he's trying to get to know or reach out to students with this kind of thing."

Unfortunately, the women said the snow was too powdery to really stick. One of them spent 20 minutes alone on the snowman's head, which was half the size of a basketball.

Alex Deck and more than 10 friends from his residence hall went out to Francis Quadrangle to take up Loftin's challenge as well.

Deck said their snowman was, of course, equipped with a bow tie.

"I think we got it," Deck said about the snowman competition. He and his friends submitted their snowman pictures before engaging in a snowball fight on the Quad.

This morning, Loftin said he received about more than 40 entries. All photos must be sent before 5 p.m. today, and the winner will be announced tomorrow.

This article was published in the Wednesday, February 5, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Loftin issues snowman challenge."

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Posted in Education on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 2:00 pm.
Brutal cold will blanket Mid-Missouri in snow storm’s wake

By Alan Burdziak

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (1)

Although the snow has tapered off, Boone County residents will face a wind chill advisory from 9 Wednesday evening to noon Thursday in which gusts will drop the wind chill to as low as minus 15 to minus 20 degrees, according to the National Weather Service.

_Columbia virtually shut down yesterday as up to 7 inches of snow blanketed the county starting in the morning and continuing overnight into today. City and county offices closed, school districts shuttered and emergency personnel were busy until midafternoon with a flurry of minor traffic accidents. Most schools and offices were closed again today, including the University of Missouri._

Columbia Regional Airport recorded about 5 ½ inches at 6 a.m. today, NWS Meteorologist Ben Miller said from St. Louis, but areas in the city limits recorded up to 7 inches. Today's high was forecast to reach about 20 degrees, with an overnight low of minus 10 degrees, Miller said. A wind chill advisory is in effect until noon tomorrow.

Tomorrow, temperatures will hover around 10 degrees, "If you're lucky," Miller said, with an overnight low of minus 5.

"It's going to be one of the colder days this year," Miller said

However, he said, it is not expected to snow tomorrow in Columbia.

But snow already on the ground has delayed Columbia recycling pickup for an entire week. Yesterday's and today's trash routes will run tomorrow.

Columbia Public Schools closed Monday because of ice and yesterday and today because of the snowstorm. MU was closed today for the second consecutive day, marking the ninth time in its history the school has shuttered the campus for a whole day. Both entities are expected to announce later today whether classes will be held tomorrow.

CPS spokeswoman Michelle Baumstark said crews began removing snow at school parking lots at 10 a.m. today, and administration will decide this afternoon once crews report on their progress.
As of 9 a.m. today, the Department of Public Works, with help from other departments, still had crews out all over Columbia, with snowplows targeting priority routes and smaller equipment plowing residential streets. Public Works began treating roads Monday night in anticipation of yesterday's storm. This morning, roads remained covered in snow, but main routes were passable.

Ten tractor-trailers and 12 passenger vehicles were involved in several accidents that closed Interstate 70 near the Lake of the Woods exit yesterday morning for about two hours. Two people were taken to a hospital with minor injuries.

After that scene cleared, the departments responded to seven accidents combined from about 1 p.m. yesterday through 12:05 a.m. today, according to online dispatch logs. Between 6 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. yesterday, they responded to 14 accidents, including the I-70 pileup. The Missouri State Highway Patrol reported no serious injury crashes on state roads in Mid-Missouri yesterday.

Columbia Fire Department Assistant Chief Terry Cassil said emergency calls in the afternoon slowed to a rate comparable to a typical day. County firefighters responded to a head-on collision between a Missouri Department of Transportation snowplow and passenger vehicle at 4:45 p.m. in the 10000 block of Route N. One person was taken to a hospital with moderate injuries, fire protection district Battalion Chief Gale Blomenkamp said, after the passenger vehicle slid down an embankment and overturned.

Like Cassil, Blomenkamp said the afternoon proved slower than the morning once the roadways emptied.

The snowstorm caused fewer travel problems than Friday's storm that coated the area in up to a quarter-inch of ice starting at rush hour. The difference between the two storms, Cassil said, is that people were aware of this week's snow, which hit in the morning, and were able to prepare for a couple of days.

"When a storm hits at 7 in the morning and the weather people are talking about it for days in advance, that makes a big difference," Cassil said.

Ashley Jost contributed to this report.

This article was published in the Wednesday, February 5, 2014 edition of the Columbia Daily Tribune with the headline "Brutal cold follows storm; Wind chill to plunge."

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Posted in Local on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 2:00 pm.
Columbia Public Schools closed for fourth day in a row

The University of Missouri and city offices will be open Thursday.

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 4:54 pm Comments (5)

Columbia Public Schools has canceled classes Thursday — the fourth straight day school has been canceled because of inclement weather.

The district closed Monday because of ice and Tuesday and Wednesday because of the snowstorm that began Tuesday morning. The University of Missouri also closed campus and canceled classes Tuesday and Wednesday, but all operations will be open Thursday.

Columbia Public Schools spokeswoman Michelle Baumstark said school will not be in session Thursday because of “weather conditions.” She said crews began removing snow at school parking lots at 10 a.m. Wednesday.

Southern Boone R-I, Centralia, Hallsville and Harrisburg schools also have canceled classes for Thursday. Father Tolton Catholic will start at 10 a.m. Thursday.

Columbia city offices will reopen Thursday, and the city government expects a heavy call volume, according to a city news release. The city asks people who are put on hold to leave a message. Trash collection will resume, and snow removal will be focused on residential streets with Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday trash pickup. Recycling pickup is suspended for the week.

People whose vehicles were towed under the no-parking ordinance can call the police department at 573-874-7652 to find out where they can pick up their vehicles.

Columbia virtually shut down Tuesday as now began to fall. The city was blanketed in up to 7 inches of snow as of Wednesday morning.

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Posted in Education on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 4:54 pm.
Missouri digging out from latest winter snowstorm

Another Arctic blast was expected to push temperatures toward zero Wednesday as Missouri worked to recover from a winter snowstorm that spread several inches of snow across the state.

The storm that hit Tuesday forced schools and business to close. There also were cancellations of dozens of flights at Kansas City International Airport, where a Southwest Airlines jet arriving from Denver got stuck in a snow bank on Tuesday evening as it was taxiing to a terminal. The passengers were bused to the terminal. The airport was still reporting a handful of cancellations Wednesday.

The National Weather Service said Hannibal in northeast Missouri had about 13 inches of snow Tuesday, Kansas City had about 8 inches, Columbia had 5.4 inches and St. Louis had 4.4 inches.

Several roadways, including U.S. 70, were covered with snow Wednesday, and Route H in northeast Missouri was closed because of snowpack, the Missouri Department of Transportation said. MoDOT also said high winds were expected to blow snow onto highway lanes, making it difficult for snowplows. MoDot cautioned drivers to expect to see the plows and to give them plenty of room.

Many school districts around the state that called off classes Tuesday also remained closed Wednesday, including the University of Missouri-Columbia and public schools in Kansas City and Springfield.

While little snow was expected in Missouri on Wednesday and Thursday, the weather service forecast "life-threatening" wind chills for Wednesday night and early Thursday when another Arctic blast was expected to hit northern and central Missouri. Lows were expected to nosedive to below zero, with actual temperatures heading toward 10 below north of the Missouri River, the weather service said.

Forecasters also said there was a chance for more snow in many sections of the state late Friday and Saturday and again Monday.
ASK A SCIENTIST Q: How do scientists know what is in the center of the earth if no one has been there to take sample?

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 2:00 pm

This question was submitted by Jennifer Smith's fifth-grade class at Russell Boulevard Elementary School.

A: "The four major layers inside the Earth are the crust, mantle, outer core and inner core. These regions of the Earth are always moving," noted Eric Sandvol, associate professor of geological sciences at the University of Missouri. Even though the surface of the Earth seems to be stationary, it is actually moving at a rate of centimeters per year. "If we go beneath the surface or the Earth's crust to the mantle, we would find that the rock below the crust is very hot and the pressure is very great," Sandvol said.

"Scientists have not drilled into the mantle of the Earth. However, they have a reasonably good idea as to what the mantle is made of because of technology, specifically seismic tomography — analogous to a CAT scan — that is used like X-rays to explore the interior of the Earth," Sandvol explained.

The mantle is heated by the core of the Earth. "Think of the mantle as a pot of boiling soup; the hottest soup rises to the surface, and as it cools, the soup eventually sinks to the bottom of the pot," Sandvol noted. Unlike the mantle, the outer core is made up of molten rock. Scientists use waves to explore the layers of the Earth, and some of these waves — S-waves — do not penetrate liquids, indicating the outer core of the Earth is actually molten rock. So even though scientists have not actually taken a sample from the core of the Earth, they are able to use technology to better understand all regions of the Earth.

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Posted in Editorial Archive on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 2:00 pm.