Senate committee approves budget plan

Bills include boosts for higher ed, K-12.

By Rudi Keller

Wednesday, April 23, 2014 at 2:00 pm

JEFFERSON CITY — Foreign college students living in Missouri could find school more expensive next year, but students who have the highest test scores would get a break under the budget plan approved Wednesday by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The committee finished its work on 13 spending bills for the year beginning July 1. The spending plan includes a $100 million increase for public schools under the foundation formula and a 5 percent increase for state colleges and universities.

I would say we are in a very good position, especially going into conference, because we have quite a few items that are different from the House, and that is always the case every year, and that is part of the process," said committee Chairman Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia.

Under language included in the Department of Higher Education budget, state colleges and universities would be required to charge out-of-state tuition to undocumented foreign students regardless of how long they have lived in the state. The restriction is similar to one included in the House budget, modified so the schools will be penalized only if they "knowingly" allow an undocumented student to pay in-state tuition.

The Bright Flight Scholarship program, targeted for expansion by Gov. Jay Nixon, would get a $5.3 million boost to $20 million, enough to provide full stipends to all qualifying students. Students who score in the top 3 percent on college admissions tests are eligible for as much as $3,000, and students scoring in the top 4 percent or 5 percent are eligible to receive as much as $1,000.

The larger awards have not been fully funded since they were increased from $2,000, and the state has never funded the smaller awards. Nixon wanted to add a forgivable loan program for students eligible for Bright Flight, and the House included $7 million to fund the loans, but the necessary legislation is still pending final action.
"If the loan forgiveness thing does pass, then we've got flexibility with the House in conference to determine in that conference if we want to go with $7 million and loan forgiveness or with $5.3 million for the existing program," Schaefer said.

The University of Missouri System would receive $428.8 million in state aid in the coming year, up from $407.5 million this year. Like the House, the committee did not include Nixon's planned 3 percent permanent increase for science, technology, engineering and math education or his proposed funding to train mental health professionals.

The House approved about half that amount for colleges and universities, putting the money into scholarship programs. Schaefer said meeting the 5 percent goal for increased funding was important because schools have based their tuition decisions on that much more state aid.

"I think it is very important. As a lot of us have been looking at the issue of tuition increases, there is no doubt that greater instability in state funding leads directly to increases in tuition," Schaefer said.

The budget does not include expanded eligibility for Medicaid, proposed for the second year by Nixon.

As lawmakers reach the final stages of setting next year's spending, revenue is becoming more uncertain. Lawmakers are expecting 2 percent growth in revenue this year and 4 percent in the coming year. Nixon's budget anticipates 2.8 percent growth for this year and 5.2 percent growth in the coming year. As of this morning, revenue for the year was down overall. Schaefer said he has tried to be frugal with the budget to keep as much legislative control on spending as possible.

"One thing we don't have an interest in doing is funding something we know the governor won't release because then we have simply left money on the table that could go to other valuable programs," he said.

The Star

VAHE GREGORIAN

Few certainties in MU search, but don’t count on Gregg Marshall, Tim Floyd
Five days-plus after University of Missouri men’s basketball coach Frank Haith made his escape to Tulsa official, the search process either is a brilliant stealth campaign, a clinic in diversionary tactics or just clunked up in gridlock.

Pick one, any one of those assessments, and you might be right.

The same goes for candidates. Mizzou literally is taking applications on the University of Missouri system website.

If I had to hazard a guess in the void right now about whose potential candidacy MU is exploring with the most energy, I’d say Ben Howland.

Why? Well, why not? And because he guided UCLA to three Final Fours and is available, maybe even at a reasonable price.

But mostly just because his camp is eerily silent, and his agent hasn’t returned a number of messages from The Star.

So there is no real basis to suppose Howland, of course, but that sort of speculation remains what we’re left with as MU has bunkered down even as supposed other candidates “emerge.”

An informed source continued to say Wednesday that presumed prime target Gregg Marshall of Wichita State and his camp have not been contacted by MU or anyone affiliated with the search.

Along with that, the brief surge in political traction that UTEP coach Tim Floyd enjoyed also crumbled by Wednesday night.

Three sources in position to know told The Star that Floyd had not been contacted by MU despite an ESPN report Tuesday night that characterized him as a “strong candidate” for the job.

The Floyd ruckus came and went in a flurry, but Marshall’s name still seems to remain on people’s minds.

It probably shouldn’t.

Even as we acknowledge it’s almost impossible to know anything with certainty, even if you believe Marshall is the man for the job, one of the few things that seems safe to reason now is that it won’t be him.
There are many more and better reasons to believe that than that he will.

For starters, he has no compelling rationale to leave a school — which adores him, rewards him handsomely (about $2 million a year in base pay and semi-automatic incentives) and that he’s taken to the Final Four and a No. 1 NCAA Tournament seed — and try to overhaul a program in flux.

He’ll almost certainly want too much money for MU to afford, especially after the school has drained its donors for hundreds of millions in facilities in its transition to the Southeastern Conference.

Moreover, Mizzou is coming off what might be considered a contentious contract extension process with coach Gary Pinkel and his staff. Money was part of that.

Marshall likely would demand about $3 million year and a long-term deal. Those figures would put him near what Pinkel is making.

And wouldn’t that then mean Pinkel has to be given more yet in appreciation of what he’s done for the program over the long haul?

Nothing is impossible, of course, but if Marshall becomes the Mizzou coach it would represent an incredible bridging of gaps.

So … what else do we think we know?

Mostly just that this is all a hazy maze and that nothing should really shock you.

This is where we’re supposed to recite a few more names, maybe Xavier’s Chris Mack, Nebraska’s Tim Miles, Louisiana Tech’s Mike White or Stephen F. Austin’s Brad Underwood. But there is nothing to base any interest in them by Missouri as of Wednesday night.

Missouri, through a search firm, has contacted Central Missouri’s Kim Anderson though.

A report by ESPN’s Andy Katz on Monday said Anderson “is one of a few finalists for the opening, according to a source with direct knowledge.” Katz went on to say “a decision on the next Missouri coach could be made within a week.”

This report has all the tracks of coming from inside MU, in part because of the specifics.

But it raised questions, too, most notably … why did it only name Anderson?

It would be nice if it could be read at face value, because I think Anderson would be a very good hire for a lot of reasons and merits serious consideration.
Still, the skeptic in me can’t shake the idea it was a shrewd trial balloon, cast to try to
gauge sentiment towards Anderson, who just coaxed the Mules to the Division II
championship but has been given virtually no consideration for the job three times
before.

That’s the theory of several interested observers from major programs.

“I think (athletic director Mike Alden) is floating it and getting the pulse of the people,”
said one, adding, Alden “right now is probably reading blogs and doing all that, getting
the pulse of that leak.”

So we still don’t know anything Missouri doesn’t want known. That even applies behind-
the-scenes to well-placed sources normally kept apprised.

Frustrating as it might be on fans and media, that kind of discretion and discipline is the
right move by MU.

That’s especially true after the inadvertently transparent process last time around
became a fiasco.

Alden invested everything in Purdue’s Matt Painter only to be virtually publicly jilted as
potential alternatives such as Cuonzo Martin, then at Missouri State, made other moves.

Mizzou had to scramble and ended up with Haith, whose name inspired little faith in the
fan base and bailed for Tulsa after three years rather than take his chances on what
would come after a fourth year at MU.

News of the hiring of Haith was a stunner after Missouri’s search group went dark in the
wake of Painter’s snub.

But it was a stupefying for all the wrong reasons.

Let’s hope that the public lull now means a more methodical, meticulous plan that leads
to a better outcome — even as we can only guess what that will be.

Read more here: http://www.kansascity.com/2014/04/23/4978534/very-few-certainties-in-mu-
search.html#storylink=cpy
Missouri offers open online application for head coach position

Wednesday, April 23, 2014 | 7:27 p.m. CDT; updated 12:18 a.m. CDT, Thursday, April 24, 2014
BY CHRISTIAN CLARK

COLUMBIA — In the five days since former Missouri basketball coach Frank Haith left for Tulsa, rumors have pegged Wichita State's Gregg Marshall and Central Missouri's Kim Anderson as potential replacements.

But even if you just have Internet access, you can at least apply. You don't need Final Four experience like Marshall or a Division II championship like Anderson to fill out an application to become the Tigers' fourth coach since 1999.

Are you available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday through Friday and also willing to work nights and weekends? Those are some of the requirements listed on the application, which was posted to the University of Missouri System website Tuesday.

Candidates are expected to oversee the recruiting process, implement strategies to motivate student-athletes and make efforts to promote diversity throughout the program. Three questions before asking about candidates’ recruitment history, the applicant must specify their age range; their choices are less than 14 years old, 14 to 17, and 18 or over.

Missouri also expects applicants to possess "knowledge of NCAA rules and regulations." The application was posted nearly six months after the NCAA announced Haith must serve a five-game suspension at the start of the 2013-14 season for a "failure to promote an atmosphere of compliance" during his tenure as head coach at Miami.

Users who register by providing their name, age and email address can also apply to be a research assistant in the Lab for Infectious Disease Research department or an administrator with MU Libraries.
Candidates that apply for Missouri’s head coaching job are informed that the position is an equal employment opportunity. No salary range is specified. Marshall likely wouldn't come so cheap.

MONEY MATTERS

The madness of rising tuition costs

April 23

BY MARC C. SHAFFER

NO MU MENTION

During the recent March Madness basketball tournament, I saw an interesting take on the familiar bracket.

Instead of a blank bracket to choose your picks for the basketball winners, it was filled with each competing team’s current 4-year cost of tuition.

A quick scan showed that only one university fell below a total of $80,000, with many ranking from $100,000-$260,000. Of course, many of these colleges are high profile schools where you might expect a high tuition, but some, like Kansas State University, Wichita State and University of Kansas are right in our backyard.

Tuition is a cost many people underestimate or forget to include in their planning. With the cost of education rising at a rate traditionally higher than inflation, it is a cost that can’t be overlooked.

Have you considered what the average cost for your children or grandchildren’s education will be when they reach college age? In 18 years, a college that currently costs $29,500 per year to attend may cost $110,674.46 per year (assuming 7% inflation).

If you plan to help them pay for their education, it’s beneficial to start saving as early as possible. There are numerous online calculators that can help you calculate the future costs and necessary ongoing savings to reach your goal, but make sure you are aware of the assumptions made and check on the numbers through the years to note significant changes.
One option for saving that is specific to education is a Section 529 Plan which allows you to save and invest money in a format with special tax benefits, as long as you satisfy the basic requirements for use. You can open an account in any state; it is not limited to your state of residence.

Considering the benefits, requirements and limitations of each state’s plan can help you determine which is right for your needs. To establish an account, there must be an account holder and a beneficiary, but the beneficiary can be changed as needed. The education expenses covered include tuition, room and board, mandatory fees and books or computers, if required.

These plans can be opened by anyone, regardless of their income, and most have very low, if any, minimum investment requirements. Starting to save even a nominal amount as early as possible gives you the advantage of time and compounding interest, tax free if used for qualified educational expenses in the future.

As you are able, you can increase contributions up to the contribution limit set forth by the plan you establish. Because of the tax advantages of Section 529 plans, they can help make a great impact on the amount you are able to save for college expenses.

Kansas and Missouri are currently two of the states that allow contributions to be deducted from income, up to certain limits, for any state’s 529 plan. Therefore, if you are a resident of either state, you may be able to minimize your tax liability by making contributions regardless of which state plan you choose.

There are many options available to help save for future college funding needs, but the key to covering the costs when the time comes is developing a strategy to save the amount needed.

This gives you a goal to work toward and helps you determine the amount you need to invest each month or year to reach your goal. You can also combine different savings options to meet your goals, because your entire financial picture should be considered when planning for a financial goal. Perhaps you want to consider savings bonds, custodial accounts or other education savings accounts. If you employ other options for saving, you’ll want to make sure each works toward accomplishing your goal in conjunction with the others.

Knowing that you have to start saving early and understanding the available savings vehicles for acquiring the necessary funds is a big step toward having enough to send your children, grandchildren, or even yourself to college. What are the current out-of-state yearly tuition, room and board and fees at University of Connecticut? Only $40,454…Go Huskies!
MU lab uses lasers to detect metastasized skin cancer faster

Thursday, April 24, 2014 | 6:00 a.m. CDT

Researchers at the Viator Lab at MU’s School of Biological Engineering are working to detect cancer cells using lasers. John Viator now works at Duquesne University, where the lab will move in May. This is the step-by-step process involved in the procedure.

BY HEATHER ADAMS

COLUMBIA — Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer, killing more than 12,000 people in the U.S. each year. According to the American Cancer Society, 9,000 of those deaths are caused by melanoma.

Once melanoma spreads, or metastasizes, only 15 percent of patients survive, according to the Skin Cancer Society. So early detection is the key to survival.

John Viator and MU's Viator Lab have developed a technology, the Viator Technologies Inc. Circulating Tumor Cell System 3.0 (VTI CTCS 3.0), which they say detects metastasized cancer cells faster than current methods in use.

"We've built the machine, we've convinced people that it does what it does, and now they can buy it," Viator said.
Viator, Viator Technologies Inc. chief scientific officer, has been applying photoacoustic technology to the detection of circulating tumor cells since 2005. At the International Molecular Medicine Tri-Conference in San Francisco in February, he announced the market launch of the VTI CTCS 3.0.

"We have launched as a product for research use," Viator said. "Although the market is small, there are a lot of researchers who want to use it to study melanoma for scientific use."

Viator is working to take the technology to a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments laboratory within the next two years and to the FDA in the future for diagnostic use.

"We want to make sure that no one has to die from (skin cancer) because they know soon enough that the treatment can be introduced before it gets really bad," said Ben Goldschmidt, graduate researcher in the Viator Lab.

Currently, detecting metastasized skin cancer is expensive and can take months as it cannot be detected until a tumor has formed. The VTI CTCS 3.0 will allow doctors to determine whether cancer has spread to a patient's blood stream within a matter of seconds, adding significantly to a patient's treatment time and chance for survival.

"We are focused on creating an actual solution to a problem," said Mark Messler, undergraduate researcher. "It's a very broad problem and we get to design a solution to it — you really get to use your creativity."

The device, which Goldschmidt nicknamed the "Viatron," works by flowing cells through a small tube, directing a laser at the tube and monitoring the reaction.

"The tool itself is cool to look at," said Amanda Kappele, a Hughes Research Fellow who works with the Viator Lab. "I also really liked what they were applying it to."

As the laser hits the cells, an ultrasonic microphone detects the dark, cancerous cells and emits a sound wave while clear, non-cancerous cells will produce little to no sound.

"It's really kind of a game changer in cancer detection," Goldschmidt said. "If you know even a single week in advance, that's an extra week you can be getting treated."
Because the VTI CTCS 3.0 is much cheaper than MRI tests, patients will be able to monitor their risk for cancerous tumors more frequently.

"No one should have to wake up every day for six months and wonder if they have cancer," Goldschmidt said.

In June, Viator Labs is planning to relocate to Duquesne University in Pittsburgh where Viator is currently creating a biomedical engineering department for the university. They will continue to further develop the laser technology to detect all types of cancers.

"The better we get at detecting skin cancer, the better (we will be able) to detect other types of cancers in the future," Messler said.

Drones being used again for University of Missouri classes

Ashley Jost

Wednesday, April 23, 2014 at 2:00 pm Comments (1)

University of Missouri instructor Bill Allen is confident that recent rulings prohibiting drones from flying outdoors will be overruled. And he hopes that when it happens, his students will be prepared to use drones in their industries of choice.

This semester, Allen is teaching a one-credit hour introductory class in hopes of giving his students some basic information about drone use and getting them to think creatively about how to implement drones in their own fields of study.

"There has been mounting interest within the science community on campus, especially in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, to do research and teach using drones," Allen said. "I've been playing with this idea since last December, when a group of about 25 faculty members got together and discussed the interest and need for a class like this. These are faculty from all over campus, but especially CAFNR and other life sciences."

Allen, an assistant professor of journalism studies, said the half-semester class was finalized just before spring break, and he anticipated having only four or five students enroll because of the
short notice. He ended up with 17. The students range from communication or journalism students to those studying business, agriculture science, life sciences and teaching.

This isn't Allen's first attempt at a drone class. He previously taught a class through the MU School of Journalism. The journalism school operated a Missouri Drone Journalism Program in collaboration with the Information Technology Program-sponsored Drone Lab and KBIA radio until the university received a cease-and-desist letter from the Federal Aviation Administration last summer.

The university had to apply for a "certificate of authorization," or a federal permit, to continue using the drones for news-gathering purposes.

Matthew Dickinson, system administrator and instructor for the Information Technology Program and Computer Science Department, said the application was filed with the FAA last fall in an effort to file a larger application including technical documentation from the instructor of a course.

Dickinson said he has been working on an application for a class he will teach this coming year. He will submit the application before the end of this semester and expects to hear back within 60 to 90 days.

The applications are class-specific, Dickinson said, so every instructor must make one. Making the document is "just silly because you can't predict 60 to 90 days ahead of time what you're going to need to cover. But they're not giving up. There is still active collaboration ongoing over there on how to make this work," he said.

In early March, a federal judge ruled that the FAA lacks the authority to ban commercial drone use. The FAA, which is responsible for U.S. airspace, previously enforced a ban while it developed regulations for use of commercial drones. According to previous wire reports, it was expected to take until 2015 for the rules to be created.

Because the FAA has since appealed the judge's ruling to the National Transportation Safety Board, the initial ban is still in place.

Drones may still operate inside. In fact, Allen said students who try to fly drones outside the Trowbridge Livestock Center practice spot will fail the class.

The flying time supplements a weekly lecture class, during which Allen brings in multiple speakers from different disciplines to talk about their experiences with drone use in their fields.

One of the final student projects is a proposal for how to use drones in their fields.

Jennifer Henderson, one of Allen's students, said she is looking forward to exploring how others in her field, biological sciences, have used drones in areas such as conservation and for biological communication.
Henderson, a graduate student, said the idea of monitoring animals in a conservation area intrigues her, as does tracking the perimeters of enclosures for poachers.

Since the class started, Henderson has learned about the legal battles and how to fly an unmanned craft. And yes, she has crashed it a time or two.

Allen said he and other professors will assess the course and decide whether it should be expanded or continued as it currently exists.

"I hope people separate their thoughts on military drones versus civilian drones and keep their mind open about civilian drone use in the U.S.,” Allen said. "I think it can have a positive impact on public service and the economy.

"And our responsibility at MU, among others, is to prepare young people to be as formidable as possible in the marketplace. We owe it to them to think ahead and spot places where new technology has a good chance of prospering. Even if laws say you may not fly now, it's not going to be that way for long, and they will be ready."

Anglers snag for giant fish in the Mississippi that predate dinosaurs

By Jesse Bogan jbogan@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8255

WEST ALTON • Scott Rayfield, 49, has a taste for wild game and the many fish that he catches. Last week, standing on the rocky bank of the Mississippi River below the Melvin Price Locks and Dam, he lived up to the writing on his shirt: “fillet and release.”

With ease, he cast a heavy line 60 yards or more until a giant hook and handmade sinker splashed into the middle of the river. He jerked the line a few times and soon snagged into the flesh of a paddlefish, or spoonbill, whose ancestry predates the dinosaurs.

Rayfield, unsure how big it was, yelled after R.J. Hynes, 28, who was having a tough first day, to grab the gaff.

“Hook him right in the gut and pull,” Rayfield said as he drew the catch closer to land.

The paddlefish turned out to be about 20 pounds and a little over 4 feet long, measuring from the tip of its flat snout to tail. It was a small one, but it whetted Rayfield’s appetite.

“I think there are a few fish here today,” he said, eager to cast again.
Fly fishing beneath a majestic mountain range this is not. Snagging, as it is called, is a bare-knuckle sport done here just up stream from a refinery and power plant. Anglers, many of whom seem as stout as the primitive fish, don’t rely on bait or lures. They yank bare treble hooks through the murky water, hoping one of the sharp points will randomly lodge into the side of a paddlefish.

When that happens, they wrangle the slippery gray beasts to the bank with grit and strong fishing rods.

Excitement over the annual tradition, which is in season, can be intoxicating and addictive. The fish vary greatly in size. The Missouri state record weighed 139 pounds, 4 ounces. Somebody pulled it out of Table Rock Lake in 2002.

Stories of man-size fish keep the mystery of the catch alive. Ignoring diet, absence of teeth and the long snout, paddlefish resemble sharks. They are boneless, scaleless and, fishermen say, quite delicious.

The fish are native to the Show-Me State and mainly found in the Mississippi, Missouri and Osage rivers, as well as large bodies of water. The paddlefish is Missouri’s official “aquatic animal,” not to be confused with the state fish — the channel cat.

Hynes had heard Rayfield tell stories about many of his huge catches and the rare ones that got away. On this day last week, Rayfield finally enticed Hynes to come along and try near the dam, about 20 miles upriver from St. Louis.

But Hynes didn’t have the cadence needed to snag. The 10-foot-long fishing rod and open-face reel didn’t feel right in his hands. He kept hooking into rocks and who knows what else on the bottom of the river. He spent most of the time retying line and listening to Rayfield, who kept shouting to cast farther out.

Rayfield, who works at Mississippi Lime Co., and Hynes, who works at a salvage yard, are neighbors near Ste. Genevieve. They also share an unlikely bond: Hynes survived a fatal wreck coming home from school when he was a teenager. One of Rayfield’s sons, also in the vehicle, did not.

At one point, when Rayfield had another fish on the line, he yelled over to Hynes with a kind offer.

“You want to reel this one in?” Rayfield asked.

Hynes laughed, spit tobacco juice on the rocks.

He’s not a kid anymore.

“No,” he said. “I catch my own fish.”

‘REGULAR GOOD OL’ BOYS’
Paddlefish are some of the oldest fish around. Fossil records date the species back 300 million to 400 million years. The fish is named after its distinctive snout, or rostrum, which makes up about a third of its length. Scientists still aren’t sure what the snout does.

In the past decade or so, invasive big head and silver carp, instead of paddlefish, have been getting hooked at the end of snagging lines in increasing numbers and sizes. Last week, fishermen here caught carp left and right. Somebody took one home that appeared bigger than a fourth-grade child.

Both paddlefish and the carp are plankton eaters.

“There could be potential problems to paddlefish because they are consuming the same things,” said Quinton Phelps, a fish scientist at Southeast Missouri State University.

Paddlefish cover a lot of water. One that was tagged last year downriver from Memphis on the Mississippi was recently caught hundreds of miles away near Kansas City on the Missouri River.

Chris Morrow, supervisor of the Missouri Department of Conservation’s regional office in St. Louis, said male and female paddlefish try to swim upstream to historic spawning areas every spring. Unless the river is at flood stage or gates are open, the fish tend to bunch up below dams.

“That’s why people go there at Alton and Chain of Rocks, because those are the upstream barriers in this area,” Morrow said.

The most popular spot in the state to snag paddlefish is the Lake of the Ozarks, below Truman Dam, an area where the fish are mainly stocked. Anglers travel long distances because of the abundance of fish and the bag limit compared with other states, said Mark Morgan, an associate professor in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Missouri-Columbia who has studied the social and cultural aspects of the topic.

According to a survey of more than 400 people snagging there, most of them were middle-aged men from rural areas.

“There’s a certain look to the trout angler. It’s all about new stuff,” Morgan said, whereas snagging tends to attract “regular good ol’ boys. They aren’t into the social status. The gear is not so important.”

Especially below Melvin Price Locks and Dam, where most anglers don’t use boats, nor electronic fish finders. They heave their hooks out as far as they can from the bank.

Many of them are mesmerized by the mystery of what’s out in the water to catch. And they like the taste of paddlefish, which aren’t bottom feeders.

“They are probably the best-tasting fish you’ll ever get out of the river with the exception of walleye,” said Robert Acker, 48, of Alton, who has been taking a break from driving a big rig since a rollover accident.
He said he’d been snagging nearly every day for the past month. In Missouri, the current season ends April 30, or May 15 along the Mississippi River.

“The only time I don’t come is when my back won’t let me do it,” he said.

People fishing quickly brushed off comments that suggest snagging isn’t sport.

“Let them try and see,” said Bill Bowser, 62, of Florissant, who retreated to drink beer after an hour of losing hooks and wearing his arm out.

There are spectators. Students from McCluer High School who briefly stopped by during a field trip were speechless at the sight of the fish and the rugged catching method.

Joseph Clemons, 73, a retired landscaper from St. Louis, watched from a chair and sometimes tied hooks for a few rookies. He doesn’t snag anymore. Instead, he gets the carp that nobody wants. He cuts them into pieces and buries them in his garden as fertilizer. Last year, he said he had bumper crops of cucumbers and tomatoes.

“I just sit out and wait,” he said. “So far I have two.”

A SPARK OF PROMISE
On his first day of snagging, Hynes lost about 20 treble hooks and as many half-pound lead sinkers.

Rayfield, who made the sinkers by melting wheel weights gleaned from the salvage yard, assured him that it was fine. They had plenty of tackle.

Hynes got a little better at casting and eventually a spark of promise: one round fish scale stuck on the tip of a hook barb.

Rayfield told him to use a file to sharpen the hook tips.

“If he’d listen to me, he’d catch more fish,” Rayfield said.

Finally, Hynes’ luck turned.

“All right, first fish,” he said, reeling it in.

No gaff needed to drag the fish ashore. It was only a small silver carp.

When he landed a paddlefish, it was way below the minimum size limit and needed to be released.

Almost at quitting time, Hynes finally snagged something worth keeping.

As he pulled it in, he must have not kept the rod tip up like Rayfield had coached him to. Near the bank, the paddlefish rolled free and swam back into the deep, hook-filled stretch of river.