Record number of sex assaults on and near MU campus

MU taking initiative to inform and stop assaults

Marissa Hollowed, Anchor, marissa.hollowed@kmiz.com


COLUMBIA, Mo. -

The City of Columbia had the highest number of rapes and sexual assaults in its history in 2013. In 2014, that number is on a similar track. Officers received 156 calls around the city for rape and sexual assault in 2013. 67 of those calls turned out to be confirmed cases. So far in 2014, Columbia Police officers have been called 117 times. A number of these rape and sexual assaults are happening where Mizzou students live.

"I thought I chose a safe place, but I'm a little worried about the rapes that are occurring around here, the sexual assaults," said Veronica Long, a freshman at Mizzou. Long says she goes out of her way to avoid certain areas around Mizzou's campus at night. The main area she doesn't go to is 'East Campus,' a neighborhood near campus where many students live.

Long is not the only Mizzou student concerned.

"It's definitely a concern walking home at night. It's always in the back of my mind that someone could sexually assault me or rape me," said Krista Parker, an 'East Campus' resident and student.

"I guess I just get nervous. It's not just myself I worry about, I worry about all my roommates," said Dana Yanow, a Mizzou junior.

Three reports of rapes happened on and near Mizzou's campus this September, one of those was on Anthony Street, where we interviewed Parker and Yanow. Two more occurred in Mizzou residence halls during a weekend in October.

One complaint from students on 'East Campus' is how dark it is. We spoke to Columbia Water and Light. Assistant director Ryan Williams tells ABC 17 someone did make a complaint about the lighting on Anthony Street about 6 months ago. After review, Columbia Water and Light along with other city organizations found the lighting to be "already lit to an adequate level."
Krista Parker mentioned her roommate and her roommate's mother are in the process of collecting letters to send to the city about the lighting on 'East Campus.'

Another topic student residents are worried about on 'East Campus' is the condition of the homes. Many are old, in need of repair and house multiple roommates.

"I feel like there needs to be something else put in motion to stop this. I feel like the police aren't really out here. You don't see them driving around," said Parker.

"Rape and sexual assault is one of the most unreported crimes in the nation," said MUPD Capitan Brian Weimer. The University of Missouri has taken a new approach in the last 9 months in hopes of encouraging more reporting.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin says MU has developed a new website outlining what students should do to learn more about and report rapes and sexual assaults. It can be found at: [http://title9.missouri.edu](http://title9.missouri.edu)

It has also hired a full time Title IX investigator and coordinator. The Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center, also known as RSVP, is a big cornerstone of the initiative. The Center urges students to call, come in, email, text or even tweet a problem they may have encountered.

"People now know what to do. They know where to go. They know what they can in fact expect when they report a sexual assault," said Chancellor Loftin.

ABC 17 News went around campus to see if students do in fact know what to do and what they can expect.

In reference to the Chancellor's statement, Anwar Grimmett-Lee, a Mizzou freshman said, "I could see how he thinks that it's true, but I don't think all students feel the same way. No. not at all."

Freshman Maribel Urrtia said, "Not necessarily. I don't know if I would know what to do."

Carolyn Heger, a sophomore, was a little more informed. Heger said, "I feel somewhat confident about what to do, but I have a general idea, but it's something that I would like to learn more about."

"I think we can always improve. We are so much better now I think, than we were 6 months ago. We will never stop trying to improve," said Loftin.

Students are taking action in the mean time. Male students are making sure their female friends get home safe.
"Late at night or anything, I'll make sure they get home. I'll walk there with them and then walk back by myself," said Grimmett-Lee. "All of my friends carry mace, we all carry mace," said Long.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU forms search committee for Title IX administrator

Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 6:15 p.m. CDT
BY CAITLIN HOLLAND

COLUMBIA — A committee has been formed to recruit and interview candidates for the job of MU's Title IX administrator, according to an email from the office of Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

Gary Ward, vice chancellor for operations and chief operating officer, will chair the committee.

Committee members are: Mary Austin, executive associate athletics director, office of compliance; DeAngela Burns-Wallace, assistant vice provost for undergraduate studies; Tim Evans, associate professor, Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, College of Veterinary Medicine; Deborah Noble-Triplett, assistant vice president of the University of Missouri System; Deborah Pasch, executive director of MU Health Care; Donell Young, Office of Student Conduct, Division of Student Affairs; and Karen Touzeau, associate vice chancellor of human resource services.

The Title IX administrator's job is to ensure that the campus community "responds to incidents of harassment and sexual misconduct in accordance with current best practices and guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Education," the email said.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on college campuses based on a person's sex.

According to the email:

- The committee will begin meeting immediately and hopes to interview candidates at MU in December.
- Campus interviews will provide the opportunity for candidates to meet with "a broad range of constituencies" and will be announced ahead of time.

- Daniel Swinton, managing partner for the National Center for Higher Education Risk Management, will assist with the search. The firm was hired earlier to advise on Title IX compliance in the UM System.

Linda Bennett, an assistant to the provost and an associate professor of learning, teaching and curriculum, was named interim Title IX coordinator of MU in June. At the same time, the position was made full time.

Mount Vernon rehab center closes, 300 lose jobs

The Associated Press

MOUNT VERNON, Mo. (AP) — Mount Vernon city officials are negotiating to acquire a 165-acre campus that housed a rehabilitation hospital since 1907.

The Missouri Rehabilitation Center in Mount Vernon officially closed Thursday, leaving more than 300 people without jobs.

A Veterans Administration clinic will continue to operate on the campus.

The Joplin Globe reports that City Administrator Max Springer says the city hopes to take over the campus and find other tenants.

The University of Missouri Health System, which operated the rehab center, announced the closing in August, citing reduced state funding and a declining patient count.

The Veterans Administration is expected to sign a contract in January to allow the clinic to remain at the site for three years, to eventually be replaced by clinics in Springfield and Mount Vernon.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

SEC Nation comes to Columbia

Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 9:10 p.m. CDT

Workers prep Francis Quadrangle on Thursday for a broadcast of SEC Nation. The pre-game show — similar to ESPN's College GameDay — is visiting MU campus for Saturday's game against Kentucky.

LAUREN KASTNER

BY GH LINDSEY

COLUMBIA — The SEC Network is making itself at home in Columbia.

The network's pre-game show, SEC Nation, is broadcasting from Francis Quadrangle on MU’s campus, and, for the second straight week, the network is carrying the Tigers' football game.

The show is hosted by analyst Joe Tessitore, Heisman Trophy winner and former Florida quarterback Tim Tebow, former LSU defensive end Marcus Spear and radio personality Paul Finebaum with reporter Kaylee Hartung contributing. The show's format is similar to SEC Network operator ESPN's popular College GameDay program. Executing game broadcasts is a carefully choreographed operation, and the network crew uses about 80,000 pounds of equipment, up to 10,000 feet of cable, and more than 110 screens to pull it off.
Manufacturing issues restrict availability of flu vaccine

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Thursday, October 30, 2014 at 11:20 am

A delay caused by flu vaccine manufacturing issues at a facility in Canada has caused the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services to delay some school-based flu vaccine clinics until the end of November or later.

The health department also has made adjustments in the types of flu vaccine it is providing to adults.

“It’s not as if the vaccine isn’t available at all,” said Andrea Waner, health department spokeswoman, “it’s simply that the type of flu vaccine you may want isn’t available at this time” at the department.

The rest of the department’s delivery is expected to arrive by late November. When those doses of preloaded syringes arrive, the school clinics that have been postponed will be rescheduled as necessary.

“Keep in mind, even with the shipping delay, there is still time to get vaccinated against the flu this season,” Waner said. Health department officials also recommend that people check with their health care providers or local pharmacies for availability of the vaccine.

While the local health department and others across the country have been affected by the manufacturing issues, the University of Missouri Student Health Center has not experienced a shortage of vaccine. Pam Roe, senior information specialist at the student health center, said the university has administered more than 3,000 flu shots in the past few months, including 350 at a clinic Wednesday.

With two more clinics and at least several hundred injections on hand, Roe said she isn’t worried about MU having a shortage of vaccines.

The shortage for some health departments and clinics that get some of their vaccines from GSK, formerly called Glaxo Smith Klein, is the result of “manufacturing challenges” at GSK’s manufacturing plant near Quebec City, said GSK spokesman Robert Perry. The issues reduced
the total amount of flu vaccine the facility could make available this year for the U.S. market and delayed some other shipments of flu vaccine, he said in an email.

Perry said GSK originally expected to sell from 28 million to 33 million doses of flu vaccine in the United States this year and is on track to provide between 26 million and 27 million doses by the end of November. He said the company has a limited amount of flu vaccine available for health care providers to order. Perry said GSK is running about four weeks behind schedule on fulfillment of its orders.

Providers order their flu vaccine months in advance, Perry said, and that allows companies such as GSK to know how many doses to make. Most flu vaccines on the market, including GSK’s, are egg-based, “meaning that the vaccine literally is grown inside of eggs.”

“It takes months to produce the quantities of flu vaccines needed for each flu season,” he said.

Perry said GSK began informing customers in July that manufacturing was behind schedule to give them the option to get the vaccine from other suppliers.

Waner said the city/county health department wasn’t notified of the GSK delay until early October. She said the department received the first half of its shipment in August and was expecting the remaining vaccine by mid-October.

MU Health Care has plenty of vaccine on hand for employees and patients, said spokeswoman Mary Jenkins. Boone Hospital Center spokesman Ben Cornelius said he hasn’t heard about shortages at Boone’s hospital and clinics.
manufacturing the dental varnish about a month ago, and on Thursday, Nanova held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its 6,000-square-foot, $1.5 million facility on Mojave Court.

Hao Li, Nanova co-founder and MU associate professor, said the company hopes to have the dental varnish on the market in December.

“Getting FDA clearance is very time-consuming, so we are pretty proud” we got “everything done in a year,” Li said. “That’s pretty fast, I think.”

Nanova Inc. was founded in 2007, and the company created Nanova Biomaterials in 2013. Nanova Biomaterials has already hired 13 people — not including the founders, which include two MU researchers — and hopes to create as many as 50 jobs in the next five years. It expects to double its workforce by 2016.

The company uses nanotechnology, which means it manipulates material on a molecular and atomic scale to produce particles with new properties. The dental varnish, for example, contains more fluoride than other products on the market, Li said.

Nanova also is working on a filling material for dental cavities, and Li said it will last longer than the existing materials.

Li said he thinks that product could be through the FDA approval process as early as next summer or fall. For the time being, the company cannot market or sell it. The staff also is working on developing a bone screw, though that FDA approval process is more extensive, and it might be another six to eight years before they can begin producing it.

The company has qualified for economic incentives from the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

Department spokeswoman Amy Susan said the state has issued Nanova $50,000 through the Development Tax Credit Program. It has also been approved for $11,500 through the Missouri Works Training Program and has since spent $10,000 to train its employees. The program allows a company to keep the payroll taxes that normally are withheld from employee paychecks and sent to state coffers.

Nanova also has been authorized to receive a total of $564,000 in benefits through the Missouri Quality Jobs program, but it has not yet received those benefits, Susan said.

Li is a native of the Chinese province of Shandong and has attracted investors from the country. The Chinese venture capital firm SummitView Capital announced in March 2013 that it would invest $7 million in the company. The Chinese government also put together an $8 million loan package that the company could use to finance its growth, Li said.

In a statement, Mayor Bob McDavid cited the importance of commercializing MU research and cited the investments that have been made in Nanova.
Nanova Biomaterials “further represents the importance of international relationships as much of the investment to support the commercialization of these products has been secured from Chinese investors,” McDavid said. “The relationship between the company, university, community and China is key to building a strong foundation for continued growth for both NBI and Columbia and we are happy to be a part of this relationship.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Military appreciation day features ROTC Hall of Fame, name for new cannon

Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 7:17 p.m. CDT

BY MATTHEW PATSTON

COLUMBIA — Fans at Saturday's football game can celebrate MU’s military members alongside its football team.

Military appreciation day will feature MU ROTC staff and alumni being honored at halftime.

Before the game, the Army ROTC will induct members into its Hall of Fame at 9 a.m. at Crowder Hall. The 2014 class, the third since the Hall of Fame was established in 2012, is the largest yet. Nine ROTC alumni will be inducted, including Capt. Joseph Parent, Capt. Wells Cunningham and Lt. Col. Karl Teepe. Parent and Cunningham died while serving in Vietnam; Teepe died in the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon.

On-field festivities also include the announcement of the ROTC's "Name the Cannon" contest winner. The ROTC has been accepting name suggestions for the new cannon used at football games, which replaced its storied predecessor "Little Joe" last spring. Lt. Col. Rob Boone, MU professor of military science, hopes that annual Hall of Fame inductions continue after he leaves the ROTC program.

"It's building a bridge back to our alumni," he said.

Boone also said that Hall of Fame candidates are considered for both the merit of their military service and exemplary behavior in the private sector.

Overseeing Sex-Assault Cases Is Now a Full-Time Job

By Audrey Williams June

NO MU MENTION

The dean of students at Claremont McKenna College is quite capable of juggling competing demands. But given the public attention on sexual assaults on campuses, her additional role of Title IX coordinator, in charge of prevention and response, was unsustainable.

This month the university announced that Nyree Gray, an associate professor and dean of students and diversity affairs at Southwestern Law School, would take on the newly created position of Title IX coordinator and chief civil-rights officer. "We wanted to bring greater legal sophistication to the role," says Hiram E. Chodosh, Claremont McKenna’s president, "and alleviate the burden on the dean of students’ office."

Activism and heightened federal scrutiny of how colleges respond to sexual assault have paved the way for the newly dedicated position of Title IX coordinator. The job dates back a few decades—the federal gender-equity law known as Title IX was passed in 1972—but its scope has expanded, especially recently, calling for greater professionalization of the role. On a growing number of campuses, what used to be a part-time job or an add-on for a faculty or staff member is now full time. In the last 18
months, dozens of institutions—including Franklin & Marshall College, Stanford University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—have hired Title IX coordinators to handle the evolving expectations and legal obligations regarding campus sexual assault.

The pressure on colleges to prevent sexual assault and handle cases more effectively has grown steadily since 2011, when the U.S. Department of Education indicated stricter enforcement of Title IX, which compels campus officials to investigate and resolve students’ reports of rape, whether or not the police are involved. The department's Office for Civil Rights is now investigating 85 colleges for possible violations of Title IX related to alleged sexual violence. This year the office announced a few harsh settlements requiring institutions to strengthen their policies.

Meanwhile, the White House has issued pointers for colleges, federal and state lawmakers have proposed new legislation, and students—both alleged victims and perpetrators—are filing lawsuits and federal complaints against their colleges.

So the hiring trend appears poised to continue. And the steady stream of job ads has created some competition for the talent that colleges and universities of all types are looking to tap.

They’re scrambling to find people with experience responding to sexual-violence complaints and the ability to interpret federal regulations. Among new hires are former lawyers with the Office for Civil Rights and longtime equal-opportunity advocates. Top administrators want them on campus to update policies and procedures, field students’ reports, create new training programs, and run prevention efforts.

New positions in higher education sometimes stem from a scandal, such as the Clery Act compliance coordinator now responsible for crime reporting at Pennsylvania State
University. Or, as with sustainability coordinators a decade ago, a trend can drive hires. In other cases the law generates jobs: Disability-services coordinators, for example, quickly joined higher education’s professional ranks. This time it’s crisis, trend, law—all three.

"In the current environment, being a Title IX coordinator can be a challenging assignment," says S. Daniel Carter, a national victims’ rights advocate and director of the 32 National Campus Safety Initiative. "But it’s an important challenge for higher education to take on."

With new regulations issued this month, federal legislation pending, and ever more investigations and lawsuits, Title IX coordinators have their work cut out for them. "For the foreseeable future," says Mr. Carter, "there will be a high level of scrutiny from their own campus community, the public, and the federal government, because the stakes are so high."

‘True Commitment’

The qualifications that colleges seek for the job suggest few obvious pipelines. Some campuses want candidates with experience working with students; others all but require a law degree.

Some considerations, like location, are typical in any search. The amount of autonomy the position offers and where it falls in the administrative hierarchy can also make a difference. And of course, salary can be an issue—particularly for the candidates with law degrees.

Finding a good fit can be tricky, says Susan B. May, a principal at the search firm Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates, who has conducted searches for Title IX coordinators. "In many ways, it’s somewhat similar to a presidential search. You can’t just put an ad out and discover your next president," she says. "The talent is out there," she adds, but strong candidates might be "difficult to identify from a distance."
Some are motivated by the broader mission of gender equity. One way to lure top candidates, says Ms. May, is for senior administrators to signal that they are thinking about the position "not only in the narrow compliance sense, but in the spirit of Title IX."

The opportunity to shape campus attitudes toward gender equity and combat gender-based violence drew Belinda M. Guthrie to Santa Clara University this month. From the late 1990s through 2012, she had been at Vassar College, where she served as its first director of equal opportunity and built a student-disabilities-services program from scratch.

"In 1996, colleges and universities across the country were in many ways in a very similar position as they are today with Title IX," Ms. Guthrie says. "They were trying to figure out how to address the needs of students with disabilities."

Now they’re trying to protect victims of sexual assault. That made Ms. Guthrie, who had gone to work for an advocacy group for people with learning disabilities, want to return to a college campus, one with "a true commitment to professionalizing Title IX," she says.

Ms. Guthrie’s priorities for her first month at Santa Clara include minor adjustments in response to the most recent federal regulations and improvements to the university’s sexual-assault-and-harassment-prevention programs for faculty, staff, and students. She’s also planning to examine procedures established years ago to see if they need to be updated to reflect current campus culture. Another factor in California is a law enacted in September requiring colleges to adopt an "affirmative consent" standard, defining consent in students’ sexual encounters in terms of "yes means yes" rather than the traditional "no means no."

With so much in flux, Title IX coordinator is a high-stress position even at a college not on the federal-investigation list, which has grown by 30 since April. "Some happen to be in the spotlight and some aren’t right now," says Ms. May. "But they
could be tomorrow. I think everybody recognizes that."

**Learning Curve**

That recognition drove the first wave of Title IX hires. Colleges want to comply with the law, protect students, and publicly signal their commitment to both. In a sector that’s big on task forces, putting a face to the issue is a bold step.

Title IX coordinators readily acknowledge pros and cons to working in an area with so much scrutiny. One upside, they say, is the platform to discuss sexual-violence prevention and response in depth with various audiences. "I don’t feel like I have to get people’s attention anymore," says Dawn Floyd, the newly hired Title IX coordinator at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. "People are familiar with the issues now," she says. "They are willing to talk about it."

Ms. Floyd, a former student-affairs administrator who most recently worked at a law firm, arrived on campus in June and set about establishing her role and growing office, as well as revising policies and procedures in advance of the academic year.

For Annie N. Kerrick, who became director of Title IX and disability-law compliance at Boise State University in July 2013, the learning curve included getting to know the ins and outs of a public institution with more than 22,000 students. Not quite a year into her tenure, Ms. Kerrick, who had been a lawyer for the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, oversaw the adoption of a new gender-based-violence policy updating the steps for the university to take when students file reports. The change, which had been in the works, came not long after [two former athletes sued Boise State](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/20/us/two-sued-boise-state.html), saying they had been sexually harassed and assaulted and the university had done nothing about it.

At Swarthmore College, Kaaren M. Williamsen, Title IX coordinator since July, is dealing with a federal investigation, which can involve visits and requests for information from the Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights. She is also
reviewing how closely Swarthmore’s response to students’ reports of assault and subsequent disciplinary proceedings match federal guidelines.

"A lot of the national attention is focused on what’s not working, but I also try to pay attention to what’s working," says Ms. Williamsen, who was previously a deputy Title IX coordinator and director of the Gender and Sexuality Center at Carleton College. "These new jobs are really not just about compliance anymore," she says, but also campus climate.

Those are weighty responsibilities. For Ms. Floyd, it helps to be part of a public-university system, with an "automatic network" of counterparts. She has tapped into their knowledge even as she has doled out some herself. "We’re all grateful for collegiality in this area," she says.

Title IX coordinators’ ranks are still growing, even without a career track that prepares people for the job or the pressures that come with it.

Other new positions are Title IX investigators, as many colleges move away from a model in which faculty panels hear sexual-assault cases to one in which professional investigators resolve them. UNC-Charlotte, Claremont McKenna, New York University, and the University of Delaware are among several institutions now hiring investigators. Harvard University has hired temporary help to handle cases while it searches for its second and third investigators, The Harvard Crimson reported. Where Title IX coordinators are in place, the workload shows no signs of easing. "We’re in a period where the laws are changing rapidly, and there are multiple and competing financial demands on institutions," says Ms. Guthrie, of Santa Clara. "Generally most institutions want to do the right thing," she says, but "some schools are struggling to keep up."

Title IX-Coordinator Positions Proliferate
Many colleges are hiring full-time Title IX coordinators to navigate the intricacies of the federal gender-equity law, which compels colleges to investigate and resolve reports of sexual assault. Job ads often list law degrees among preferred qualifications.

**Institution:** Harvard U.  
**Start date:** March 13  
**Title:** Title IX officer  
**Select qualifications:**  
- In-depth knowledge of Title IX regulations and policies  
- Experience working in a large, decentralized research university desired  
- Ability to conduct research and analyze data  
**Reports to:** Chief diversity officer  
**Person hired:** Mia Karvonides  
**Prior experience:** Lawyer in U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights

**Institution:** Occidental College  
**Start date:** February 2014  
**Title:** Title IX coordinator  
**Select qualifications:**  
- Master’s degree in business, human resources, higher-education administration, or other relevant discipline required, law degree preferred  
- Experience in complaint resolution, investigations, and grievances  
- Higher-education experience preferred  
**Reports to:** President  
**Person hired:** Ruth Jones  
**Prior experience:** Law professor for 17 years, associate dean for two years

**Institution:** U. of Colorado at Boulder  
**Start date:** July 2014  
**Title:** Director of institutional equity and compliance & Title IX coordinator  
**Select qualifications:**  
- Three years of supervisory experience
- Experience in responding to sexual-harassment and sexual-violence complaints
- Ability to lead and inspire people with different interests and perspectives

**Reports to:** Chancellor  
**Person hired:** Valerie Simons

**Prior experience:** Founder and managing director of the Education Law Group, a law firm that represents students in federal civil-rights cases

**Institution:** Allegheny College  
**Start date:** September 2014  
**Title:** Title IX coordinator

**Select qualifications:**  
- Higher-education background strongly desired  
- Clear understanding of how recent Title IX developments are changing the conversation on campuses nationwide  
- Proven track record of supporting and working with students

**Reports to:** Executive vice president  
**Person hired:** Catherine Pope

**Prior experience:** Deputy Title IX coordinator, Purdue U.

**Institution:** George Washington U.  
**Start date:** November 2014  
**Title:** Title IX coordinator

**Select qualifications:**  
- Seven to eight years of appropriate experience  
- Administrative experience in higher education preferred, especially in student life or a nonprofit that deals with sexual misconduct  
- Ability to communicate effectively and use discretion and good judgment

**Reports to:** Vice president for diversity and inclusion  
**Person hired:** Rory Muhammad

**Prior experience:** Title IX coordinator at George Mason U.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Lower corn prices bring down cropland values
Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 8:32 p.m. CDT; updated 12:09 a.m. CDT, Friday, October 31, 2014
BY JOSHUA BOOTH

COLUMBIA — For the first time in four years, pasture prices are growing faster than cropland values in Missouri.

MU Extension's annual land value survey, conducted since 1995, saw the best-valued cropland increase 4.6 percent in July compared to a 7.2 percent increase in pasture from the previous year.

The estimated cropland value in Boone County was $5,643 per acre, according to the survey. The Missouri average for the best cropland was $4,717 per acre.

Ron Plain, an agricultural economist for MU Extension, said drought and demand for corn to produce ethanol drove up prices to $7 a bushel in 2012 and contributed to increased values for cropland.

High yields since 2012 have contributed to far lower prices of about $3 a bushel. The lower price for corn was expected, in turn, to push land prices lower.

"Most likely, cropland prices have peaked and are heading down," Plain said.

Dave Miller, a real estate agent with Boone RE/MAX, said there's been fewer buyers for cropland in the past couple of months, while prices have remained steady. He said more landowners are selling cropland through auctions and private treaty because it is difficult to figure out what land is worth.

"It is worth what somebody will pay for it, especially prime farmland," Miller said. While prices seem steady to Miller, he has noticed fewer bidders. "It's not a feeding frenzy," he said.

It can be difficult to get a loan for farmland, so people with cash are the ones buying, he said.
Corn is joined by low commodity prices across the board including soybeans and wheat. Farmers will see less returns on their crops with lower commodity prices despite using the same amount for inputs such as fertilizer and seed costs, said Bob Garino, a state statistician for the National Agricultural Statistics Service in Columbia. There is then less incentive to purchase land in the short term, he said.

Plain anticipates within the next five years cropland prices will be similar to what they are today. Along the way, there will be a few up and down years, he said.

**With cattle prices up, pasture values increase**
Pasture prices are on the rise due to record high cattle prices and lower prices for grain used for food.

The survey estimated the best pasture in Boone County was valued at $2,869 per acre. The Missouri average was $2,672 per acre. "Cattle prices are the key driver and have not been seen like this before," Scott Brown, an MU assistant research professor of agricultural and applied economics said.

Higher cattle prices contribute to higher values for pasture, and Plain said he expects record cattle prices next year as well.

"There is still upside to pastureland, for at least three years," he said.

The annual land value survey was based on 214 respondents from across Missouri including lenders, appraisers, brokers and real estate agents.

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**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

**Hard freeze may be frightful for plants**

By Joshua Booth Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 7:52 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — For Jim Thies and other produce farmers, a long and successful season is about to come to a screeching halt.
A hard freeze forecast for Friday night and Saturday morning promises to end the growing season in mid-Missouri. A freeze warning will be in effect from 1 a.m. until 10 a.m. Saturday, with temperatures forecast to bottom out around 24 degrees in the Columbia area under clear skies.

Thies and his family were already at work on Thursday at the Veggie Patch, 15 minutes west of Columbia, harvesting cold-sensitive crops such as peas, radishes and beets to sell on Saturday at the winter Columbia Farmers Market at the Parkade Center.

An extended fall season allowed Thies to plant peas, turnips, winter squash, radishes, cauliflower and other crops. He plans to use cloth row covers to protect those crops from the cold in hopes of keeping his outside produce market stand operating through December.

Tomatoes and peppers can be picked while they're green and left to ripen inside, said Erin King, an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer with the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture.

With temperatures in the mid-20s, lettuce and spinach should be covered, she said. King even recommends covering cold hardy plants such as cabbage, kale and collards to help ensure their survival.

"I err on the side to cover more," King said.

The key to protection is forming a tent from above crops, David Trinklein, MU associate professor of plant sciences, said. Covers can keep the plants 2 or 3 degrees warmer by encasing heat from the soil, he said.

Thies has had two rounds of fall harvests. He was hoping for more, but knew time wasn't on his side. The average date of the first freeze in Columbia came and went on Oct. 21.

"I can accept the fact I can't keep everything alive," he said.

Thies said there will be an abundance of outside planted produce available from at least 40 vendors Saturday.
Once his fall crop season is over, Thies will switch gears to his winter crops grown in a high tunnel building, which is a temporary shelter. This allows him to produce potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, parsnips and winter squash through the winter. He said the market will have several new vendors who specialize in the winter also.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Spirits share the night with a crowd at Halloween-themed Twilight Walk
Thursday, October 30, 2014 | 11:22 p.m. CDT
BY CAITLIN BUSCH

COLUMBIA — With a chill in the air and a half-moon hanging in the sky the night before Halloween, a group of more than 200 people wandered the streets of downtown Columbia Thursday night.

Steve Sapp, a 23-year veteran of the Columbia fire department, narrated this year's fourth and final Twilight Walk, titled "Ghosts and Other Scary Stories."

The tale began at Daniel Boone City Building where participants were ushered into the council chambers and encouraged to "gather 'round" by Pat Fowler of the Downtown Columbia Leadership Council.

"I'm told he's the best storyteller in the fire department," Fowler said as she introduced Sapp to the crowd.

The lights in the council chambers dimmed. As members of the crowd "shushed" one another, a video depicting the 1892 burning of MU's Academic Hall began to play. A male narrator with a deep, animated voice told the story of Academic Hall's final night. At one point, the flames that engulfed the building were described as "licking their jaws like a ravenous dragon."

After the video was over, the group was led through the streets of downtown Columbia to six locations: Parker Funeral Home & Crematory, the corner of Tenth Street and
Broadway, the corner of Ninth Street and Broadway, the Missouri Theatre, Peace Park and the road outside of MU's Psychology Building on Seventh Street.

Sapp told the gathered crowd stories at each location, ranging from amusing to "something the little ones might not appreciate," when he told a tale in Peace Park of two men caught in a fire in MU's McAllister Hall and described, in detail, the gruesome injuries they sustained.

The story was immediately followed up with one about a test subject monkey who escaped one of MU's labs and disappeared into the steam vents running below the university's campus "where the monkey's spirit still resides," Sapp said.

Outside of Parker Funeral Home, Sapp told the tale of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity's 1947 pledge class. The fraternity's house was on the site of an old crematorium, Sapp said, and as a hazing ritual, the 1947 pledges were forced to stay the entire night in the house's basement. The next morning, when the pledges were allowed to exit the basement, they all dropped the fraternity, though there's no official record as to why.

Two Stephens College ghosts were mentioned by Sapp; the first was St. Clair Hall's Gray Lady who is said to perform acts of kindness in the building.

The second Stephens College story was that of Sarah Wheeler, a student who, during the Civil War era, had an injured confederate soldier knock on her door and ask for help. The two fell in love, and to keep him from being found, she hid him in the tower of Stephens Hall. Eventually, they were found out and tried to flee. They died in the process, said Sapp, though some say they drowned in the Missouri River, while others say they fell from Stephens Hall tower itself.

Jean Leonatti, Lish Tracy and Sarah Spence were among those who attended.

"You don't even realize you're learning," Tracy said. "It's just fun."

The three said Sapp had a "great voice" and did a "wonderful job" narrating the event.

Their favorite story was one that Sapp told outside of the Missouri Theatre. An opera singer named Carlotta took a nasty fall off the stage and sustained injuries that she eventually succumbed to. In 2007, when contractors were removing an old boiler out of the theater's boiler room pit that was "two
stories below street level," said Sapp, all the lights in the pit flickered and died out.

According to the contractor, a calming presence came over him, and he was led from the pit by a light, attributed to the spirit of the opera singer.

Leonatti, Tracy and Spence said Carlotta's story was their favorite because it was scary but that she was a "kind spirit."

Rachel Bacon of the Columbia Historic Preservation Commission said the large crowd was expected.

"For the other Twilight Walks we typically get about 80 to 120 people," Bacon said. The special Halloween-themed tours have gotten large groups in the past, she said.

MU partners with Women’s Foundation to research status of women in Missouri

Studying the status of women involves more than the ladies of Missouri, it impacts her children, entire family and her community.

MU researchers recently started a partnership with the Women’s Foundation of Greater Kansas City to investigate the status of women in Missouri.

The goal of the research is to collect data from counties and communities across the state and provide a website with information to help develop policies that improve the lives of Missouri women and families.

“A woman’s abilities and needs change throughout her life cycle,” said Jacqueline Schumacher, policy analyst at the Truman School of Public Policy. “Understanding this dynamic creates an opportunity to develop effective policies which are informed by sound data and research. I like to call this process ‘examining data with a soul’ because it can create an effective narrative, which can inform policy initiatives.”

The foundation had already begun the inquiry and conducted focus groups around the state in July, but recently decided to commission MU’s Institute of Public Policy to take advantage of its academic resources and support.
Schumacher and IPP Director Brian Dabson led a team of graduate students in the institute to gather the data. Five faculty advisors from various MU colleges were also chosen to help narrow the foundation’s broad goal and find key indicators of the status of women across the state.

So far, Schumacher said, the research is counting employment and income, education and childcare, social and economics, health and leadership and public engagement as five key areas to be considered.

Schumacher said as the data continues to develop, varying by community, the foundation plans to act toward changes.

The researchers hope to use the data to craft an easy-to-access online portal under the direction of the Center for Applied Research and Environmental Systems on MU’s campus. The site would provide real-time information accessible to individuals, companies and nonprofit organizations for their use.

Schumacher said the Women’s Foundation is also known for its “action items,” a variety of policies and initiatives that help develop communities. She said an example of an action item might be seeking a federal grant for skill training connected to a specific growth goal feasible for a particular county or area.

According to an MU news release, action items for this research will be identified and publicly released on Dec. 5 in Kansas City.

Although the plan of action for the partnership remain somewhat ambiguous, the researchers regard this system as innovative and useful.

“It is exciting to be a part of a project that may lead to measurable impacts on the lives of Missouri women,” said Joan Hermsen, associate professor and chairwoman of women’s and gender studies and a faculty contributor to the research. “The Women’s Foundation of Greater Kansas City is innovative and forward-looking.”

Studying women’s status is not new. In fact, this research project draws from several national and statewide studies, including a study in 2011 called the “Missouri Women’s Report”.

Hermsen said the platform of this partnership is unique in its accessibility and movement.

“I am a strong believer that when we improve the lives of women, we also improve the circumstances of families and communities,” she said. “If we want stronger families and stronger communities, we can start by caring about the circumstances that women face and in the strategies we can take to reduce gender inequalities.”

Women’s Foundation President Wendy Doyle said the cooperation between the foundation and MU toward the best possible policies is exceptional.
“The Women’s Foundation really values the partnership with the University of Missouri,” she said. “We look forward to continuing the relationship past the completion of this study.”