MU temporarily using University Village lot for student parking

By Ashley Jost

Monday, January 26, 2015 at 2:00 pm

While University of Missouri administrators mull over a permanent use of the property that housed the University Village apartment complex, part of the land has been opened for student parking.

Karlan Seville, a spokeswoman for MU Campus Facilities, said 11 of the 14 buildings on the property have been demolished. The university has no plans to demolish the last three buildings, which are being used for storage.

There are 155 parking spaces in the University Village lot, Seville said, with 22 being used by students. More of those spaces will be filled when the demolition of Jones Hall dormitory begins. Seville said some of the parking near the Dobbs Group, a handful of high-rise dormitories facing Stadium Boulevard, is taken up by construction equipment.

Demolition of Jones Hall, 502 Kentucky Ave., will follow the removal of any salvageable or hazardous materials, Seville said. Demolition of the building will begin “in late spring and will be complete during the summer months,” she said.

Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin decided to demolish the University Village complex after a walkway collapse killed Columbia firefighter Lt. Bruce Britt last February.

After Britt’s death, a structural engineer report indicated concerns with some of the apartment buildings and prompted the decision to ultimately close the complex last summer. Britt’s wife, Leigh, is suing the UM System Board of Curators for wrongful death for her husband. The suit is ongoing, according to CaseNet.

The apartments were one of four on-campus housing options for graduate students. Seville said a graduate student housing study is in progress to assess the need for another complex.

University Village housed one of MU’s on-campus child care centers, the Student Parent Center, which was also demolished. Seville said the Family Friendly Committee on campus is considering options for another child care facility on campus.
In May, Loftin announced a request for proposals from developers interested in building and operating a new child care facility. At the time, Loftin indicated the university would lease land for a possible center at no cost to a private developer and operator. Seville said the request for proposals is still open, as no proposals have been received.

MU converts University Village Apartments to parking lot

COLUMBIA - Part of the land previously home to University Village Apartments is now being used as a parking lot. Last year, the frail walkway on one building gave way, killing Columbia firefighter Lt. Bruce Britt.

University of Missouri Campus Facilities Communications Manager Karlan Seville said 11 buildings have been demolished, and university employees and students can purchase permits to park on the land.

22 of the 155 parking spots have already been sold.

The last three standing buildings in this area are not being touched and are currently being used as storage, said Seville.

Currently, there are no long term solutions for the entire property.

Lt. Britt's widow, Leigh Britt, filed a wrongful death lawsuit against the Curators of the University of Missouri. She is asking for at least $25,000 in damages.

KOMU 8 News previously uncovered the curators' response to the lawsuit. They deny any wrongdoing directly related to Britt's death.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

TELL US: What questions should we ask about Chancellor Loftin's first year?
Monday, January 26, 2015 | 7:17 p.m. CST
BY KATIE YAEGGER

COLUMBIA — It's been about a year since MU inaugurated R. Bowen Loftin as its 22nd chief executive officer, and the Missourian is checking in. We want to know what you think we should be asking the chancellor.

Whether you're a student, faculty member, staff member or community member, you might have insight into how the past year has gone. We hope your various perspectives can help us shape our coverage.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU student recovers after she was hit by a car
Monday, January 26, 2015 | 6:27 p.m. CST
BY ANNE MARIE HANKINS

COLUMBIA — MU freshman Amy Wasowicz is back in classes and recovering after she was struck by a van at a crosswalk Thursday morning at the intersection of College Avenue and Rollins Street.

Wasowicz, 18, said she was on her way to class chatting with a friend when a silver Chrysler van hit her.

"I was a little out in front of the other people crossing," she said. "I totally did not see it coming."

MU Police Department spokesman Capt. Brian Weimer identified the woman driving as Karla Geerlings. Geerlings, 50, was turning left from Rollins Street northbound onto South College Avenue when she collided with Wasowicz.

"I flew onto the hood of the car then landed on the ground on my back," Wasowicz said.
Wasowicz was taken to University Hospital where she was treated for cuts on her face, bruising up and down her legs and a sprained right ankle.

MU police gave Geerlings a ticket for not avoiding a collision, Weimer said.

"(Geerlings) was clearly distracted," Wasowicz said when asked about the accident. "I definitely do believe there should be consequences because it's not like I was jaywalking."

Geerlings, a senior library specialist at MU, did not wish to comment on the incident.

Wasowicz, a work-study student at the Columbia Missourian, said that although she is recovering, "I have a lot of scabs on my face walking around campus and it makes me feel uncomfortable because everyone is staring," she said.

Wasowicz acknowledged that even though she was not jaywalking, many people crossing College Avenue do.

"I feel like another bridge or underpass would be great for College," she said. "I know a lot of people don't use the pedestrian bridge because it's out of the way."

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**Bones From Era of Alexander the Great Raise More Questions Than Answers**

Analysis of human remains may take years to sort out who was buried in massive Greek tomb

Media reports and the blogosphere are fueling speculation that the remains of a woman found in a massive tomb in northern Greece may belong to Alexander the Great’s mother, Olympias, who was executed when she was about 60 years old.
The Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports reported last week that the remains of five individuals have been found in the burial chamber of the elaborate tomb beneath what is known as Kasta Hill in the ancient city of Amphipolis. Archaeologists excavating the site have dated the tomb to the final quarter of the fourth century B.C., around the time of Alexander the Great’s death in 323 B.C.

But the discovery has failed to settle the issue of whether the monument may have belonged to a family member or close associate of the famous Macedonian conqueror. And many historians are dismissing the rampant hypothesizing as a distracting parlor game.

“We have so far an elaborate monument that’s partially damaged and vandalized,” points out Frank L. Holt, a University of Houston professor who has written several books on Alexander the Great. “It contained bones and cremains of persons unknown who may have nothing to do with the original structure or with each other.

“The chronology remains uncertain,” he says. “The royal status of the bodies, and of the building, cannot yet be verified. Why the headlong rush to judgment?’

**Women and Men, Old and Young, Buried and Burned**

From the 550 pieces of human bone recovered from the burial chamber, researchers have so far identified a woman over 60 years old, two men between the ages of 35 and 45, a newborn infant of unknown gender, and a very small set of cremated remains that most likely belonged to an adult of unknown age and gender.

About a quarter (157) of the remains are intact enough to allow researchers to eventually identify the gender, age, and height of the individuals, while the rest are fragments of vertebrae and other skeletal remains. An unknown number of animal remains, including bones of horses or donkeys, were also found in the chamber.

Complicating interpretation of the remains is the fact that none of the bodies were found in their original burial places, and no significant burial objects have been reported found.

Some of the woman’s bones were found in a small grave in the floor of the chamber, yet her skull, jaw, and the remains of the other four identified individuals were scattered within an 8.5-foot-thick (2.6-meter) layer of sediment inside the chamber. Archaeologists blame this disruption on the digging of early grave robbers, as well as natural phenomena such as earthquakes.

Thanks to looters and Mother Nature, archaeology’s most basic tool, stratigraphy (the relative dating of objects based on their sequence of burial), will most likely prove inadequate for understanding how, or if, the five individuals found in the burial chamber are related to each other.

To answer these questions, researchers are planning to date the remains through accelerator mass spectrometry, a technique for measuring naturally occurring radionuclides, and attempt to extract
DNA from viable samples. Isotopic analysis should also provide information on each individual’s diet and environment.

Those who are expecting quick answers, however, may be in for disappointment: The research is part of a larger multi-year program involving the analysis of some 300 sets of human remains taken from other ancient burial sites around Amphipolis.

Specialists who study human remains are pleased with the Greek researchers’ careful pace. “It will make our discussion and understanding of the biology of the five individuals from the tomb much more relevant,” says Smithsonian physical anthropologist Bruno Frohlich.

More Burials Awaiting Discovery?

The laboratory analysis of the tomb’s occupants may take several years. Plus, another recent discovery at Kasta Hill suggests that the archaeological team will be in it for the long haul—and not just for the additional study, documentation, and conservation of the tomb that must now follow the preliminary excavation.

Geophysical studies made in the past few months indicate that there’s a good chance that the massive hill, which has a circumference of 1,630 feet (497 meters), may contain several more man-made structures for archaeologists to excavate, particularly in the area west of the current tomb.

Meanwhile, specialists are intrigued with the little information that has been released so far by the government regarding the enormous size, unusual features, and stunning decorative features of the tomb.

“Even if we never find out who the skeletal remains belong to, this is an internationally significant find and a win-win for history,” says University of Missouri professor and Alexander expert Ian Worthington.

But tell that to a global audience that has been eagerly awaiting a conclusion to this captivating ancient mystery since the tomb was first discovered in 2012.

“If you rush yourself, you run the risk of making mistakes that could be definitive,” cautioned Greek Minister of Culture and Sports Konstantinos Tasoulas during a November press conference.

He reassured anxious reporters that new revelations about the tomb will continue to emerge—albeit slowly: “That’s the charm of archaeology.”
Forget dogs, cats are man’s new best friend: Scientists are looking at genetic make-up of moggies to help in fight against diseases including diabetes and asthma

Scientists are studying the genetic make-up of domestic cats as they believe it could hold clues in helping understand diseases susceptible to humans such as diabetes and asthma.

Previous studies looking at the genetics of household pets have almost exclusively concentrated on dogs with the first full canine genome being worked out in 2005.

But now researchers have turned their attentions to cats after it was revealed their DNA may contain crucial information about diseases which are suffered by both the animals and humans.

The University of Missouri has now launched 99 Lives, a project where anyone with a cat can provide blood or tissues, which will allow researchers to study the DNA of the pets and trace their origin.

They hope a full mapping of 20,000 genes in different breeds could help pinpoint the genetic cause of distinguishing marks, like fur and eye colours and also health problems.

Stephen O’Brien, a geneticist based at the Theodosius Dobzhansky Centre in St Petersburg told the Observer: 'Until now, genetic research on humans' companion animals - pets such as dogs, cats and rabbits - has concentrated almost exclusively on dogs.

'There has been widespread sequencing of canine genomes as a result. Given dogs' susceptibilities to certain cancers, the benefits were clear.

'But cats were ignored and that was wrong, for they suffer from many diseases that humans also contract, from diabetes to the feline form of Aids. They have a lot to tell us.'

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So far researchers have noticed that there is a shared susceptibility to polycystic kidney disease, a key cause of renal failure in both elderly people and cats.

**Now academics from the University of Missouri are studying the cats genome to see if DNA has an influence on how quickly the condition can spread.**

Last year in the Journal *Nature*, the first full genome sequencing of a cat was published using a pets called Cinnamon, Boris and Sylvester.

Cinnamon, an Abyssinian cat, was sequenced in 2007, but the technology at the time only picked up about 60 per cent of her total DNA.

The team also looked at the genes of Boris, a cat from St Petersburg and Sylvester, a European.

The cat’s genome is of particular interest to geneticists because it hasn’t changed much since the creatures first evolved.

Scientists now hope to be able to compare a cat genome to humans to see whether there are similarities, and why both are vulnerable to similar diseases.

It’s estimated that pet owners in the US spend $26 billion (£15.5 billion) a year on looking after their cat’s health.

In the UK, the average cost of looking after a cat is £17,000 ($28,500) over its lifetime.

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**THE KANSAS CITY STAR.**

**Imagine Schools Inc. ordered to pay nearly $1 million to now-closed Kansas City charter school**

BY JOE ROBERTSON
01/26/2015 5:17 PM

A national charter school chain under fire for its management practices has been ordered to pay nearly $1 million to the local board of the now-closed Imagine Renaissance Academy in Kansas City.

Virginia-based Imagine Schools Inc. recruited and manipulated the local school board, according to a federal court ruling, then profited from a “double-dealing” lease scheme.
The local board “was in fact a captive of Imagine Schools both by design and by operation,” U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey wrote in her decision Dec. 18.

The local board did not know, the court determined, that Imagine Schools was using a finance company that it owned — SchoolHouse Finance — to sell the buildings on Renaissance’s two campuses to obtain lower lease rates.

Imagine Schools benefited from the lower rate but continued to collect the higher rate from the local board, the court said.

“There is no evidence that Imagine Schools ever told any Renaissance board member how Imagine Schools would benefit from the leases,” the court said.

Imagine and the local Renaissance board have since reached a confidential settlement, and Imagine did not appeal the court’s ruling, said James Tippin, attorney for Renaissance. The settlement will aid Renaissance with closing costs, debts, maintaining insurance coverage and other obligations, he said.

“We came to some resolutions and both parties agreed that neither side needs to be appealing,” Tippin said.

The local board was particularly vulnerable to be misled, evidence showed, because the management company wanted a board that served as an inexperienced “rubber stamp,” the judge wrote in the 29-page ruling.

She cited evidence in trial that Imagine obtained “pre-signed, undated resignation letters from board members at the time they joined the board so that board members could be expelled at any time he or she exerted too much authority.”

**Imagine Renaissance Academy in Kansas City closed its doors in May 2012, admitting that the schools’ academic performance was too low and that its sponsor, the University of Missouri, was dissatisfied.**

But its attorneys noted then that the school had in many ways been hamstrung by its management company, which had come under heavy scrutiny over management concerns of six schools it was operating in St. Louis.
The state took action to close those schools in 2012.

In testimony at trial, Renaissance presented evidence that the Kansas City school between 2007 and 2011 was spending only about 28 percent of its funds on instructional costs, compared to the national and state averages of around 65 percent.

The school served 1,100 students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The sponsor of the school, the University of Missouri, became more aware of the unbalanced power Imagine held over the local board and began to intervene, the court said.

But “intervention occurred too late to save the school,” the ruling said.

In a proper school board and management company relationship, the court said, it is the responsibility of the local board to manage its school and give direction to the management company.

Imagine’s control of the local board in effect put Imagine in the role of a fiduciary, the court said, giving Imagine increased responsibility to manage the local school’s accounts and put the interests of the school ahead of Imagine’s interests.

Charter school founders need the support of a management company, charter network or foundations in most cases to manage start-up costs for facilities, hiring, training and other expenses before public funding arrives.

“This is the tension that exists out of the way that charters are set up,” Tippin said. The management companies “have to get some return on their money,” he said. But the ruling reaffirms that “local boards are responsible for the best utilization of those dollars.”

In Missouri today, 34 charter school boards run more than 50 charter school buildings. In the 14 years that charter schools have been operating in the state, 18 have shut down, said Doug Thaman, executive director of the Missouri Charter Public Schools Association.
In most cases, the schools shut down over problems with governance, he said.

The association supported the state’s move to shut down the Imagine schools in St. Louis, and the experience with Imagine in Kansas City stresses anew the importance that charter school board members receive adequate training as required by state rule, Thaman said.

“You have well-intentioned volunteers who may know what it means to be on a nonprofit board, but may not know what it means to be on a school board,” he said.

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**COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN**

**FROM READERS: Civil rights movement remembered through paintings**

Monday, January 26, 2015 | 9:25 p.m. CST

BY JANET BERRY/MISSOURIAN READER

*Janet Berry is the wife of the late William A. Berry, professor emeritus of MU. She gives a peek into his life and some of his art. The images were shared through Professor Berry's portfolio website.*

*On the occasion of celebrating the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., and especially at a time when visual artists have been killed for depicting ideas unacceptable to some, it seems appropriate to note the artwork of William A. Berry (1933-2010), former Chairman of the Department of Art at the University of Missouri-Columbia and Curators' Professor of Art.*

Berry was born in Texas when segregation was still the accepted way of life. After graduating from the University of Texas—Austin and obtaining his MFA degree at the University of Southern California, Professor Berry served in the Counter Intelligence Corps in the US Army.

Subsequently, Berry returned to Texas to prepare a portfolio to seek work in New York as an illustrator. It was the beginning of the civil rights movement, and Berry had an early awareness of its importance. The works here include three paintings and a photograph — all from the early to mid 1960s.
This oil painting of New York police officers and a black male was created circa 1960. The painting was originally 9-by-11 inches in size.

This oil painting of civil rights demonstration in Selma, Alabama, and was featured in The Reporter magazine for Paul Good's article "Beyond the Bridge," published April 8, 1965.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

A war veteran becomes an aspiring farmer, illustrates a national trend

Tuesday, January 27, 2015 | 6:00 a.m. CST BY ALEKSANDR GORBACHEV

COLUMBIA — It seemed to be just another regular day during Cody Waters’ deployment to Iraq.
With his team, he had been sent to the Baghdad International Airport to pick up the mail.

As they left, a mortar hit the spot where they had been standing, wounding the first sergeant and a supply specialist.

"That's how it was back there," Waters recalled. "It’s just random stuff. There’s no rhyme or reason."

When he remembers these war stories now, sitting in the living room of his house near Fulton, it seems surreal.

**Waters spent more than a year in Iraq. He returned home in 2004 and graduated from MU with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering four years later. In 2011, he was again deployed, this time to Afghanistan as a member of the Missouri National Guard Agribusiness Development Team.**

He spent another year in Afghanistan, working with farmers there and helping to build an agricultural infrastructure.

Six years ago, Waters bought 60 acres in Callaway County to become a farmer himself. He still must work full time to provide for his family, in addition to raising corn, soybeans, wheat and milo.

Ultimately, he hopes to get into the cattle business and become a full-time farmer.

"It's tough, but I'm trying to build it," he said. "That's the love of my life."

A number of recent war veterans like Waters are returning home to take up farming. In the past decade, organizations have been established to help to make the transition easier.

The [Farmer Veteran Coalition](#) was founded in 2008 under the slogan, "Mobilizing veterans to feed America." Based in California, the organization provides education, access to training programs, mentorships and other resources to veterans who want to farm.

In November, the coalition held the first Farmer Veteran National Stakeholders conference at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. A Midwest Farmer Veteran
Coalition conference was held in July, also in Iowa, with farm tours, workshops led by agricultural experts and networking opportunities.

Rural roots
The idea that returning veterans are likely to go into farming is not surprising, given that 45 percent of the military population comes from rural communities, according to the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire.

"It’s funny, because this is what America used to be all the time," Waters said. "When the boys came back from the World War II, they went into farming."

Karen Funkenbusch, who works as the Missouri AgrAbility program director at MU Extension, said the number of veterans returning to the state to seek opportunities in rural life is growing. Her office is now working with at least 10 veterans learning to farm or ranch as a way to develop an independent business.

"It’s a national trend that returning-from-war veterans are moving into rural communities," Funkenbusch said. "Because they often don’t find themselves fitting into a traditional job environment, they want to start their own business."

A key factor, according to Funkenbusch, is the affordability of land in Missouri. A support system is in place to train veterans in farming techniques through Missouri AgrAbility and provide them with financial opportunities through the Farm Service Agency, which provides loans to beginning farmers and ranchers.
"Cody is a prime example of how this works," Funkenbusch explained. "He applied for the USDA FSA beginning farmer veteran loan and got it. That’s how he was able to buy land and start his business in agriculture."

However, having a farm — especially a relatively small one — is not easy. The less land you have, the harder it is to produce enough to break even.

"Everybody is fighting for land, and the acreage is hard to get," Waters said. "A farmer is probably one of the best capitalists there is, and it really makes it tough for a small guy."
Allan Sharrock, who was deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan with Waters, has a cattle farm near Moberly. He also said the endeavor can be risky, since it's practically impossible to make ends meet without working a day job with a small acreage.

"Farming can be very therapeutic, and people think it’s kind of romantic, but it’s not always like that," he said. "But it’s a lifestyle you’re born into. Ultimately I’m doing this to make money, but I also enjoy it."

**Lure of farming**

Born and raised in southern Illinois, Waters began working at his great-uncle’s farm at a young age.

"I was a really anxious kid," he recalled. "When I wasn’t busy, I wasn’t happy. But when I was out working on a farm, it helped to calm me down."

When he had enough money saved up, Waters rented a small piece of land and started raising sows on his own. He was still in high school.

It turned out to be a successful, if modest, venture. "I was making a lot of money off them hogs," he said. "Bought almost a brand new truck."

Yet, Waters had known from the start that eventually he would enlist in the Army.

"Everybody in my family had been there," he explained. "And I always thought it was important to serve my country. On Halloween, I was always an Army guy."

Following his father’s advice, he went into the National Guard. He acquired his first ID card during basic training on Sept. 11, 2001, not yet knowing what 9/11 would mean.

"We were locked down on the base, training. But in the office that made those IDs there were civilians, and this lady said, 'You boys are going to war.' And we were like, 'What are you talking about?'

Two weeks later, the soldiers were shown a video of the attack on the Twin Towers. Waters was ready.

**Army duty**

He was sent to Iraq in 2003, his platoon arriving in the country shortly after the military operation began. "It was Valentine’s Day, and my squad leader called me up and said:
'Hey, remember how we asked for volunteers? Well, you’ve been 'voluntold,'" Waters recalled.

Initially, he found adjustment difficult — the food, the mosquitoes, the weather. Before getting to Baghdad, he spent some time in Camp Virginia in Kuwait, where the thermometer could hit 147 degrees, and just a short walk in the sun was "a task."

"Once you get into the rhythm, it’s not so bad," he said. "You should feel different, but here I was, just turned 20, riding in the back of a Humvee with a machine gun ... It was just weird."

When he returned and enrolled at MU, he also went into the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps program.

"I didn’t fit into college that well," Waters said. "So many people worried about things that are so superficial ... And I’ve always been pretty mature for my age anyway. ROTC was like being in a fraternity with people like me."

After graduation, he worked for five years as an engineer for a construction company in Fulton, building bridges and managing construction projects in Missouri, Texas, Oklahoma and elsewhere around the country.

In 2011, both of his passions, military service and farming, came together when he spent a year in Afghanistan with the Missouri National Guard Agribusiness Development team.

"The Army is complicated nowadays," Waters explained. "It’s not just about killing the enemy, it’s about trying to make things better. That’s what we were a part of."

His team trained and assisted extension agents in Nangarhar province. Waters was responsible for big projects such as fixing the agricultural building of the Nangarhar University or setting up a demonstration farm to make the training easier.

"He did a really good job interacting with contractors despite the language barrier and all the business issues that came up," said Sharrock, who went on the same deployment.

"It was nothing like Iraq," Waters said. "There were things going on, but the word on the street was: Don’t mess with these guys because they go out and do good things."
Setting up a full-time farm
Waters and his wife, Nicole, who met in 2002, have been building their farm, renting additional land and growing crops, for the past five years.

Right now he works a full-time job for the state, serves as a battalion captain at the National Guard (his battalion was dispatched to Ferguson when the grand jury decision was announced), raises his two sons together with his wife and farms.

"I'm chasing my tail here. It’s tough," he admitted. "But I need to do what I do to pay the bills."

This could change as soon as next year. Waters is planning to rent more land, try to get into the cattle business and finally become a full-time farmer — which makes sense, since his wife is likely to be accepted into medical school, meaning that their children would become his full responsibility.

"I don’t want to drop my boys off at 6:50 in the morning and pick them up after 5 p.m.," he said.

"So I’d rather be here. We can do home school in the morning, work all day and have a good life."