Snowstorm causes traffic headaches, closes college campuses

By Alicia Stice

Monday, February 16, 2015 at 8:36 am

Steve Sapp, spokesman for the Columbia Public Works Department, wants people to know that the nearly half-foot of snow blanketing Columbia is not melting any time soon.

The snow stopped Monday morning, but bitter-cold temperatures predicted for the rest of the week likely mean the snow will stick around for a while.

“The cold weather for us means our melting agent, our salt, gets dramatically reduced in its effectiveness,” Sapp said. “People really need to pay attention over the next few days. The snow is not going to melt quickly. It’s going to stick around.”

The snow stopped by mid-morning and gave city crews a chance to finish clearing major thoroughfares in the city, Sapp said.

The snowfall triggered the city’s tow-away law, which bans vehicle parking on roads categorized as designated priority routes. Sapp said the city had ticketed 74 cars and towed 12 as of 10 a.m. Monday.

City crews treated roads with salt after last week’s light snowfall, which Sapp said prevented ice from forming on pavement.

“It’s designed to stop the snow from binding to the pavement as a layer of ice,” he said.

During the last major snow event in town, plow drivers started clearing residential streets in central Columbia before moving their way out. This time, Sapp said they started on the outer-edges of the city and worked their way in, in an effort to be fair.

**The University of Missouri closed its campus Monday, as did the rest of Columbia’s larger higher education institutions, because of the inclement weather.**

According to an MU campus announcement, only “situationally critical employees” were required to report to work. Though the campus was closed, the MU Student Center, Student
Recreation Complex and dining facilities in residential halls stayed open. Ellis Library also was open for limited services until 4 p.m.

MU Health Care hospitals and outpatient clinics, as well as MU’s Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital remained open as well.

“Having a full campus closure will allow us to properly prepare the campus for Tuesday,” Gary Ward, vice chancellor for operations, said in a statement.

Stephens College and Columbia College’s daytime campus classes also were canceled. Columbia College spokesman Jeff Branscom said a decision on evening classes at the main campus would be made Monday afternoon.

The weather was not an issue for Moberly Area Community College’s Columbia campus, which already was closed for Presidents Day. A number of area school districts also were closed for the holiday.

It was a different story for Sturgeon School District, which was scheduled to be open. Superintendent Shawn Schultz canceled school on Monday. He said Presidents Day initially was a day off, but school was scheduled to be in session to make up for a previous snow day.

“Today was going to be a snow make-up day,” Schultz said. “Now we’ll have to make up two. We had every intention of having school today.”

Monday was already scheduled as a day off for Columbia Public Schools. Superintendent Peter Stiepleman said because of the federal holiday, crews were not required to drive roads at 4 a.m. to check their conditions.

He said staff members were busy Monday preparing buildings, parking lots and sidewalks for school on Tuesday.

“We will be assessing all day,” he said. Stiepleman said outdoor trailers are particularly challenging because of the time and effort it takes to clear snow and ice from metal steps and areas near the entrances to ensure they are safe.

Sapp said the closures, along with state and federal employees having the day off, helped simplify the snow-removal process.

“It’s really taken a lot of traffic off the road, really helped reduced the number of crashes,” he said. “We haven’t seen a lot of them.”

Columbia police Officer Latisha Stroer said the department responded to 12 vehicle accidents between 4 p.m. Sunday and 9 a.m. Monday; none resulted in serious injuries. A 41-year-old man suffered serious injuries in a rollover accident about 4:15 p.m. Sunday on Interstate 70, and he is recovering at University Hospital.
A Missouri State Highway Patrol accident report does not mention if weather conditions were believed to have contributed to that accident. Spokesmen from the patrol and the Boone County Sheriff’s Department did not immediately respond to messages seeking information on accidents in the area.

MU closed for employees and students Monday

COLUMBIA - **MU closed campus Monday following snowfall overnight and into the morning, marking the first snow day of the 2014-2015 academic year.**

Columbia's largest employer made the announcement just before 6 a.m. Monday, marking the university's ninth snow day since 2011. In a news release, MU said only "situationally critical" employees should come in.

Dozens of students, who said they lived on campus, were out on MU's campus taking pictures of the quad and even throwing snowballs around.

Some said they had been up early Monday morning waiting for an announcement.

MU student Kiersten Kuc said she found out about the closing from a text on her phone in the morning. She and a friend made it down to the Francis Quadrangle.

"Once we walked around campus getting closer to the alumni center, the sidewalk was completely cleared," Kuc said. "They really did a good job cleaning it up."

University Hospital, along with other facilities on and near campus, remained open and staffed.

Mizzou explains their reasons for canceling

COLUMBIA, Mo. - "I think it's awesome. I mean, I was really tired and I kind of wanted an extra day to sleep in so that was nice," said Ashley Yallay, an MU student enjoying the snow day at the University Monday.

**Snow caused the University of Missouri to cancel classes for the day.**

This was the 12th time in the last 66 years the campus has closed.

Of those 12 times, Monday's closure comes after the least amount of snow.

Students, though, were still enjoying making snowmen on the quad Monday.

Chancellor R. Bowin Loftin made the final decision to close campus just before 5:30 Monday morning.

"We have a large majority of students who are living off campus. Many of them are several miles away, so all of that has to be taken into consideration when we look at the road conditions, where our students are at and our faculty and staff as well, and safety. Safety, again, is our number one priority," said Loftin.

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Mizzou campus closed due to snow

Alexandra Martellaro, KSDK
7:56 a.m. CST February 16, 2015

**Watch the story:** http://mms.tveys.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=fc3d807b-7e82-4cd2-ba22-695fdd63adcd

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- **The University of Missouri has announced the campus will be closed Monday and all classes will be canceled.**

This is only the ninth time since the university opened in 1839 that the campus has shut down due to snow, but the fifth time in the past decade.

"With the current road conditions, we are concerned about the safety of our faculty, staff and students," Gary Ward, vice chancellor for campus operations, said an alert sent
All Mizzou hospitals will remain open.

MU cancels classes for 13th time in history due to snow

Only "situationally critical" employees are required to report to work.

**MU officials cancelled classes Monday due to snow for the 13th time in university history.**

All of campus, except MU Health Care facilities and the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital, will be closed for the day. Only “situationally critical” employees are required to report to work, according to MU Alert.

According to social media, dining halls, MU Student Center and the MU Student Recreation Center will remain open despite campus closing. Ellis Library will also be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MU spokesman Christian Basi said the open forum on race relations and open forum for School of Journalism dean candidate David Kurpius will be postponed until further notice.

Snowfall continued throughout the night into Monday morning, for a total accumulation of 5 to 7 inches in Columbia, according to the MU Weather Service. University officials cited dangerous road conditions as the reason for closing campus, since many students and faculty commute to campus each day.

“With the current road conditions, we are concerned about the safety of our faculty, staff and students,” said Gary Ward, vice chancellor for campus operations, in an MU News Bureau news release. “We’re very appreciative of our crews who have worked throughout the night. Having a full campus closure will allow us to properly prepare the campus for Tuesday.”

Basi said it is currently unclear whether the snow days will need to be made up.

Last year, officials closed campus for two days in a row after reviewing Missouri Department of Transportation reports. Faculty Council voted not to make up those snow days, and called on faculty and students to flexible in adjusting their schedules and curriculum.
COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU tours brave snowfall Monday

Monday, February 16, 2015 | 10:17 p.m. CST; updated 10:40 p.m. CST, Monday, February 16, 2015
BY CAROLYN HEGER, DANIELA SIRTORI

COLUMBIA — About 250 people visited MU on Monday, despite the university being closed because of Columbia’s first major snowfall of the season.

The university was expecting three to four times more visitors because many families across the country use the President’s Day holiday to make college visits, Director of Admissions Chuck May said.

But the reduced numbers and the snowfall didn’t compel the Office of Admissions, which coordinates campus tours, to close. Many of the visitors traveled to MU from out of state, mainly from the Chicago area, but also from places such as Iowa and Minnesota, May said.

"We always have families that come down the night before a snowstorm, and we have to open up to make sure they get tours," May said.

The snow didn’t affect Kylie Riordan’s travel plans. She arrived in Columbia on Saturday from Los Angeles, California. Riordan, who is 17 and interested in studying business, was impressed with the campus visit.

"I’m amazed," she said. "I didn’t think it was going to be this beautiful, but it’s gorgeous. ... The snow especially makes it beautiful."

Starting Saturday morning, the Office of Admissions called and emailed groups signed up for tours to inform them of the heavy snowfall forecast. At 6 a.m. Monday, admissions office staff began making phone calls informing prospective students and their parents that the tours were still on, May said.

"They were very good about keeping us informed," Chris Dreves, who was visiting campus with her daughter, Lauren, said.
Although tour guides — all of whom are MU students — had the day off, about 20 to 25 of them showed up to lead the visits, May said. He said there are 57 trained tour guides.

With classes being canceled, the campus was nearly empty most of the day. Sophie Millsaps, a high school senior form West Lafayette, Indiana, said she went to several study spots on campus but didn’t see anybody.

"It is nice not to have to push through people on campus like I would if classes were in session," she said.

"You do not get a sense of what the school's vibe is when the campus is closed," Mary Millsaps, Sophie's mother, added.

Lisa Riordan, Kylie's mother, was not expecting to like MU, but she said it is now one of her top choices. She was “blown away” by the performance of the admissions office and the tour guides, who had the “daunting challenge” of showing a few hundred people the campus when the school was closed.

"I have to give them an A+, because they knocked it out of the park," she said.

May thanked campus facilities for making the visits happen. When his staff arrived on campus early Monday morning, the sidewalks were cleared and the paths from the parking garages into the Reynolds Alumni Center — the point where the tours began — were clear.

"Without that happening, we wouldn’t be able to have a successful visit," May said. "Campus facilities does just an amazing job on the university campus."

Campus Facilities workers started removing snow at about 3:30 a.m., said Duff Bergendahl, leader of the crew in charge of clearing white campus and Hitt Street Parking Garage. The workers planned to stay out until all roads were clear. They will return at 6 a.m. Tuesday to take care of frozen spots.

Bergendahl, a Vermont native, didn't mind being at work removing snow.

"I'll take this over being stuck in the house any day," he said. "It’s beautiful out here."

*Carolyn Heger contributed to this report.*
Missouri researchers want to put more carp on the dinner table

COLUMBIA, Mo., Feb. 16 (UPI) -- Some scientists suggest the best way to beat the Asian carp is to eat the Asian carp. But the question remains whether diners will oblige.

Asian carp, of which there are several varieties, are probably America's most infamous invasive species. Disruptive populations of bighead and silver carp have been propagating throughout the Mississippi basin for several decades now. And policy makers in the Midwest are lobbying the federal government spend billions to protect the Great Lakes from the fishes' arrival.

But while dams and other protective measures could prove sufficient farther north where rivers meet lakes, Asian carp are already entrenched in much of the waters -- still and flowing -- of the South and Midwest. Researchers at the University of Missouri have been looking to make the best of the situation by encouraging the marketability of several Asian species.

Researchers and chefs at the Columbia-based school recently offered up Italian fish stew, pasta putanesca, and seafood chowder (all featuring Asian carp) to hungry students, faculty and staff. Taste-testers were asked to rate each dish. All three fared moderately well -- the chowder and pasta more so than the stew.

"No one disliked the stew," Tim Wall, who helped collect and analyze the ratings data, explained in a press release. "It was more so-so for the stew, perhaps because everyone so liked the chowder."

The research was organized by Mark Morgan, an associate professor at the university's School of Natural Resources, with the help of the Campus Dining Services. Morgan says the latest testing shows the fish is palatable enough for a wider audience. Previous findings have shown that the carp varieties are healthy too -- less mercury than tuna and more omega-3 fatty acids than salmon.

Scientists say other conservation methods are necessary to eradicate the scaled invaders, but eating a few more bowls of carp chowder could speed things along. Commercials fishing has nearly extinguished other (well-liked) species of fish, after all. So why not hone the resource-hungry power of the market on a more deserving target -- grass-eating, ecosystem-wrecking invasive fish.
"Human consumption alone won't solve the problem," Wall told the Columbia Tribune. "But also, we don't want people to become dependent on the carp, because the idea is to eradicate them. This is just a way to use them in the meantime while eradicating them."

Now, if scientists can just find a way to market pureed kudzu to juice-crazed Hollywood B-listers, America's ecosystems would be well on their way to full health.

Researchers hope to make a leap with fish

MU eateries to serve up carp

By Ashley Jost

Monday, February 16, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Diners at University of Missouri bistros can expect carp to land on the menu sometime in the next month or so, MU executive chef Eric Cartwright said.

Cartwright is toying with soup, stew, pasta and even a taco option using Asian carp, which MU researchers are pushing for greater consumption to help alleviate the environmental damage the invasive fish is causing in Midwestern and Southeastern rivers.

“I think we’re going to start this as a special of the day, as we do with almost any new product on the menu,” Cartwright said about potential fish dishes. He still is experimenting with menu options that will stick.

The carp have “a mild fishy flavor,” comparable to a wild-caught catfish, Cartwright said. But the draw is the cost. At $2 per pound, the invasive carp are about half the cost of the typical seafood protein on the market. Whether his customers will respond well to the new fish option is Cartwright’s biggest concern.

“When we move to putting something on the menu, we sample it and promote it, then see how it sells,” he said. “We like verbal feedback, but as cheesy as it sounds, the wallet speaks the best opinion. At the end of the day, no matter what we do, it has to taste good.”

Integrating these fish into the marketplace is a goal for a handful of MU researchers, led by Mark Morgan, professor in the MU Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

Tim Wall, a graduate student working with Morgan, said the idea to promote marketplace
sales of the invasive fish started more than a year ago and led to Morgan and others working to promote the use of the fish in area restaurants.

The invasive Asian carp are unlike the bottom-dwelling carp that many Americans have developed a negative stigma about, Wall said. These are not bottom-feeders, covered in mud, but they are a problem.

The fish, which come in several types, are infiltrating the rivers, breeding and causing damage to river ecosystems because they are eating the plant options other river dwellers thrive on.

“Imagine some species comes and eats all of the grass,” Wall said. “It just takes out all of the grass, and there’s nothing left for the cows or other animals to eat. It’s a problem.”

Because Americans have a negative impression about carp, Wall said, those working on the project tried pushing the fish in Chinese and Mexican or Latin restaurants where the perception of fish is different. In eastern Asia, the fish is considered a premium meat, and Latin America has minimal experience with the meat, Wall said. But the researchers found most of these culturally diverse restaurants do not typically take risks with their menus.

However, they were able to promote the fish in local grocery stores, Wall said. Mosers carries the meat, harvested from an Illinois distributor, Schafer Fisheries. Gerbes also is carrying a ground version of the meat, which is common because the bones in the fish make it difficult to filet, Wall said.

Despite a few wins with the fish surfacing in grocery stores and soon in MU’s kitchens, Wall said it is not enough to make a dent in the overgrown population.

“Human consumption alone won’t solve the problem,” he said. “But also, we don’t want people to become dependent on the carp, because the idea is to eradicate them. This is just a way to use them in the meantime while eradicating them.”

Companies also are using the fish in cat food and as a fertilizer, and are finding ways to package the food and send it overseas, Wall said.

Asian carp might show up in MU dining halls
COLUMBIA - **An MU professor may have found a tasty way to solve an environmental problem.**

Professor Mark Morgan has been working with MU to add Asian carp to the university dining hall menus.

Last week MU conducted a taste test where students tried various dishes made with Asian carp. Morgan said these results seemed promising and were generally positive. The results will help determine if the fish will show up in dining establishments on campus.

Asian carp are a nuisance species that have infiltrated the Mississippi river. Along with crowding out native fish species, they have caused a lot of problems with recreational boaters.

Morgan said the 30 pound fish jump out of the water and hit boats and people, which causes major damage and injuries.

But this is not the only reason the fish are threatening. Morgan said Asian carp are a problem all over the United States, and the main concern is that they will invade the Great Lakes.

Morgan's idea to help solve this environmental issue is to eat the fish to help reduce the population.

"It's a tasty, and it's cheap...it's a fun way to solve an environmental problem," Morgan said.

Morgan said last fall MU conducted a taste test and found the carp tastes better than catfish.

In addition to helping the environment, Morgan said Asian carp has other benefits. He said the fish is low in mercury, high in omega 3 fatty acids and costs $1.99 per pound.

Morgan said if Asian carp is added to dining hall menus, MU would be the first university in the country to address invasive species by eating them.

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**Mizzou reinstates freshman guard**

By Dave Matter

COLUMBIA, Mo. • **Missouri coach Kim Anderson has reinstated freshman guard Tramaine Isabell, who has sat out the last five games for disciplinary reasons. Anderson announced the decision on his radio show Monday night. The backup guard from Seattle will be in uniform Wednesday at Arkansas.**
Anderson said.

“He and I have had some very good conversations about not just basketball but how important it is to be a member of the Missouri basketball team,” Anderson said. “After numerous conversations we met again today and I decided to reinstate him to the team. He’ll be in uniform Wednesday at Arkansas. Depending on how practice goes the next day or so we’ll see how much he plays. He’s a guy who’s talented. He’s a young man that has a lot of potential. So i’m hopeful this experience of not playing for a few weeks will help him understand and grow a little bit as a person.”

Anderson sat out Isabell for what he’s described as unacceptable attitude and behavior toward coaches and teammates. He missed games against Ole Miss, Alabama, Texas A&M, South Carolina and Mississippi State. Isabell has averaged 4.5 points and 1.5 assists in 15.4 minutes per game off the bench.

During Isabell’s five games away from the team, Anderson also suspended freshman guards Montaque Gill-Caesar and Namon Wright for two games for violating undisclosed team rules. He reinstated both players over the weekend and they both played in Saturday’s loss to Mississippi State. The Tigers were down to four guards on Saturday in their first game since losing sophomore guard Wes Clark to a season-ending dislocated elbow suffered last Tuesday at South Carolina.

“It’s really hard when you lose,” Anderson said. “Losing’s hard. These kids probably haven’t lost 11 games in a row. It’s challenging and when you’re out there playing maybe you don't have the success you want to have and you want it so bad sometimes you react in the wrong way. It’s good to have Tramaine back. It’s good to have Teki back. It’s good to have Namon back. Obviously with the injury to Wes it gives us more firepower at the guard spot. I’m hoping those guys will continue to grow.”

The Tigers (7-18, 1-11 SEC) have lost 11 consecutive games heading into Wednesday’s game, one short of the team record. Arkansas (20-5, 9-3) has won seven of eight games and climbed to No. 18 in this week's Associated Press poll. The Razorbacks defeated Missouri 61-60 on Jan. 24 in Columbia.

50 Missourians You Should Know

MISSOURI’S GREATEST NATURAL RESOURCES ARE THE PEOPLE LIVING HERE

The stories of 50 Missourians You Should Know are the stuff of inspiration, no matter what their vocation.

Some find fulfillment at the molecular level, advancing the cause of science in the University of Missouri system. Some find it on the lake, some in corporate offices, some in hospitals, or in the field with elk, deer, bears and even mountain lions.
The personal journeys of this year’s 50 Missourians You Should Know again show us that the state is brimming with smart, talented, ambitious people who draw on their natural talent and their own inspirational figures to do the work that makes Missouri a successful center of business, an unparalleled place to live and raise a family, a nexus of innovation and a repository of both high art and refined culture.

Some have overcome personal challenges with the hand dealt them early in life, or after career setbacks, and they have prospered in spite of the burden. Some have taken the bounty they inherited at birth, and found ways to turn it into additional value—not only for themselves and their families, but for the betterment of the 6 million other souls who call the Show-Me State their home.

They hail from private companies and publicly owned companies, from non-profit groups and universities, and from organizations they’ve founded after their careers, because they weren’t done giving back to a land that they believe has given them so much.

From every corner of the state, they show us that the best of what Missouri has to offer is not solely confined to the C-suites of Fortune 500 firms in the major metropolitan areas, but also can be found in tiny burgs, in college towns, in the thriving suburbs and in the vast rural stretches that encompass river lowlands, national forests, and productive farmlands.

If there is one thing that the 50 Missourians You Should Know teach us each year, it’s that there is no one stereotypical Missourian. And for that, we should all be grateful.

**Kattesh Katti**  
*University of Missouri, Columbia*

Thinking back to pre-college days in India, Kattesh Katti recalls the organic chemistry lectures of a Purdue-educated professor. "His lecture was like watching a great movie," Katti recalls. "He really impressed me about the nuances of science, nuances of chemistry, what chemistry can do to life." That gave direction to a career that would see Katti make it big by thinking small—nanotechnology small. A highly-decorated researcher in green technology at the University of Missouri, Katti lives and breathes the desire to learn, instilled by his grandfather—who had two doctoral degrees—back in Dharwad, India, but he also credits his wife and children for invaluable support.

After earning his doctorate from South Asia’s most prestigious research organization, he looked to opportunities in the U.S. and chose MU's medical school because of its culture of excellence in clinical translation research, he says. "The interdisciplinary focus of my research," Katti says, "has allowed me to transition very smoothly on the application of nanotechnology to solving vexing medical problems."

**Eldon Cole**  
*MU Extension Office, Mt. Vernon*

As a young MU extension agent, Eldon Cole had a hankering for beef—not the dinner-plate version, but the real deal. Since 1968, he’s been rooted in southwest Missouri as a livestock specialist based in Mt. Vernon. There, he straddles the nexus of university animal research and hands-on applications of it in the field for an industry that generates nearly $2 billion in cash receipts in the state.

"We try to take research information and technology and get the farmers to adopt them to improve their overall income and profitability," says Cole. A native of Potosi, he holds agriculture and animal-science degrees from MU, and spent four years with the Saline County extension office before moving south.

One aspect of his job he particularly enjoys is the ability to inspire future generations of farmers and ranchers through groups like 4-H. "That’s a place to reach the boys and girls and get them to think about things like genetics in a beef project," Cole says. "They might pass that along to their moms and dads, and all of a sudden, they take an interest in doing some of the things we’ve promoted."

**Stephen Owens**  
*University of Missouri, Columbia*
Inspired by Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird"—"I wanted to be like Atticus Finch," Stephen Owens says—a law career was almost a given. "I felt the intellectual, competitive and teamwork aspects of a legal career would fit well with what I enjoy," he says. "Fortunately, that has proven to be true."

For 27 years, that was in private practice in Kansas City. "I loved the Stinson firm—its people, its clients and what the firm stood for—and I anticipated working there for many more years," he says. But when the opportunity came to return to Columbia as general counsel for the MU system in 2008, he couldn't say no. "In a way, it was a calling," he says.

Since then, he's served as interim president both for the Columbia campus, and for the four-campus system, paving the way for new hires at each. University administration is a field now fraught with financial peril, as state support for students has fallen by half since 2001, adjusted for inflation. "The challenge, he says, "was (and still is) how to manage the increasing demand for, and the increasing cost of, our services in a time of decreasing state resources."


COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Missouri's measles-mumps-rubella vaccine rate falls below national average for preschool-age children

Tuesday, February 17, 2015 | 6:00 a.m. CST; updated 6:46 a.m. CST, Tuesday, February 17, 2015
BY ALYSSA SALELA, THERESA NGUYEN

COLUMBIA — In late May 1977, Columbia's public health director declared that the city had a measles epidemic.

Local high schools held immunization drives where more than 5,650 people were vaccinated. Children who weren't immunized couldn't participate in activities like summer athletic camps and were warned they might be suspended from school in the coming year until they got the shot.

The problem at the time, said Michael Cooperstock, pediatric infectious disease specialist at MU Women's and Children's Hospital, was that it wasn't clear it took two doses of the MMR vaccine — used to protect against measles, mumps and rubella — to give a person 100 percent protection.

The problem now is people who lack access to medical care and what Cooperstock calls the "vaccine worriers."
"One group is the poverty groups," he said. However, he added: "In general, public health services are very good and sometimes the poverty groups are well or better vaccinated than anyone else because they are being watched over."

The "vaccine worriers," or anti-vaxxers as they've been dubbed, seem to present a more complicated challenge.

Cooperstock said the MMR vaccine has been shown repeatedly to be very safe. The assertion that it could cause autism came from a faulty 1998 study. According to a 2010 article in the British medical journal BMJ, the physician who conducted the 1998 study disregarded ethical standards by receiving funding from a stakeholder and failing to use random sampling. The physician was later barred from practicing medicine in England.

Still, the belief persists among some parents that there is a link between autism and vaccines. Research has shown that it is difficult to change the perception of the safety of vaccines. According to an article published this month in the journal Pediatrics, the number of children in the UK who receive the MMR vaccine has declined enough that the British medical community is worried of a reemergence of an epidemic of measles.

"Bad things happen once in a while during childhood," Cooperstock said. "By chance alone, someone's child gets a vaccine and then a bad thing happens. If you look, it happens just as often around the time of a vaccine as it does not. People are set to think correlation is causation, but it is not."

**Measles on the rise**

Measles have been reported in 17 states so far this year. While there have been no outbreaks yet in Missouri, the state is tied for 35th in vaccination rates for children 19-35 months. With an 89.8 percent MMR vaccination rate for that age group, Missouri falls under the national average of a 91.9 percent MMR vaccination rate in 2013.

According to state law, the MMR vaccine is one of six vaccines required for children attending public, private, parochial or parish schools. The percent of school-age children fully immunized for MMR in Boone County was 98.56 percent for the 2013-2014 school year. There are typically three types of exemptions from vaccinations. Missouri is one of 19 states that allow a philosophical exemption. However, it is the only state that allows
that exemption in preschools, day cares and nurseries, but not in kindergarten through 12th-grade schools.

To fill out a philosophical — or parental — exemption, a parent or guardian must file a written objection to immunization with the facility administrator. The day care administrator must then approve the exemption following the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Service’s guidelines.

Trina Teacutter, nursing supervisor at the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services, said parents with preschool-age children can come to the Health Department to obtain a parental exemption from vaccines for their child. Parents are not required to give a reason for wanting a parental exemption, but they are required to meet with a nurse to talk about the benefits and risks of vaccinations before signing the exemption form.

Preschools are required by the state to have their immunization records on file. Any child-care facility with more than 10 students is required to be licensed and, therefore, to follow this procedure.

"Our licensing representative comes in periodically and pulls the records to check that everyone has the right immunizations," Director of Green Meadows Preschool Carla Tigue said. "Once a year we also send in a report of all our updated immunization records."

According to state law, private institutions do not necessarily need to allow children, even if they have exemptions, to attend their school. However, public schools are required to admit them.

"We do not need to allow exempt children to attend our school," Tree Top Innovative Learning Center administrator Angeline Hatcher said. "It is a business; people are paying to come here. However, we have never had to make that choice. All of our children are vaccinated."

There are two other exemptions allowed for children attending preschool and kindergarten through 12th grade: religious and medical exemptions. Religious exemptions can also be obtained through the Health Department, Teacutter said.
To qualify for a religious exemption parents must fill out a form with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. According to the department’s county immunization records, 1.07 percent of students in Boone County had a religious exemption for the MMR vaccine for the 2013-2014 school year. And the number of people claiming such an exemption has risen in Boone County over the past three years from just under to slightly more than 1 percent.

On the state's religious exemption form, the parent/guardian reads a paragraph encouraging immunization, and then marks which immunization violates their religious beliefs. The only required signature is of one parent/guardian.

A medical exemption requires the signature of a licensed physician who will attest that such immunization would seriously endanger the child's health or life. For the 2013-2014 school year, 0.22 percent of students in Boone County had a medical exemption for the MMR vaccine.

"The main answer is people who are immunocompromised," Cooperstock said. "Some people have to be immunosuppressed as part of their treatment like with cancer."

As for colleges and universities, there is no state law or requirement for immunizations. MU, Stephens College and Columbia College all require students to be vaccinated with two doses of MMR before starting classes.

Fears of vaccination
Teacutter said parents come into the Health Department to seek exemptions or to delay some vaccinations, but she has not noticed that there are more parents reluctant to get their children vaccinated than in the past.

Several parents and a family practitioner declined to comment for this article because of the sensitivity of the subject and controversy over the issue of vaccination.

Teacutter has heard parents cite several reasons for wanting an exemption, including:

- They've done research and aren't sure of the safety of vaccines.

- They're worried about the components of the vaccines that they think could be harmful.
They want to wait until the child is older.

They don't think there's much risk of contracting the disease.

They would rather the child develop an immunity by contracting the disease.

Teacutter said the Health Department provides resources to help parents make informed decisions on whether to vaccinate their children, like brochures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the websites immunize.org and chop.edu that address common concerns. In the end, though, it may not be possible to change minds about vaccination. A November 2014 article in the Journal of Pediatrics about vaccination promotion stated: "None of the intervention increased parental intent to vaccinate a future child, and, among some parents, there was increased misperceptions or reduced vaccination intention."

The Pediatrics article mentioned earlier cited a study in which polio survivors who spoke to anti-vaccine medical students weren't able to change the students' minds about the importance of vaccines. In fact, the presentation strengthened the anti-vaccination attitudes.

"I personally haven't seen any parent get the exemption and come back to get the vaccine," Teacutter said. "But there are nine other nurses here so they could have met with me and come back and seen a different nurse."

The same Pediatrics article pointed out that an unimmunized child is not at a high risk while living in a well-immunized community. Outbreaks occur when measles, for example, reaches a community where groups of people are unvaccinated, according to the CDC.

In response to the current measles outbreak, the CDC reported that the majority of the people who contracted the disease were unvaccinated. Travelers with measles can bring the disease into the U.S. from parts of the world where it is still common.
"We know that vaccines are one of the most well-studied things around," Teacutter said. "Vaccines are safe and effective, and we really want to make sure that children do not get sick or hospitalized or die from things we could prevent from vaccination."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Months after its passage, Amendment 10 still raises questions

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BY DANIELA SIRTORI

JEFFERSON CITY — Months after 56.8 percent of voters approved Amendment 10, legislators and observers are still debating how and when the measure can be used. Amendment 10 allows the legislature to override a governor's decision to freeze or slow spending on items in the state budget.

"It raises so many questions that have to be answered that nobody's really quite sure how to play out," MU political science professor Peverill Squire said. "The mechanics of it are probably a little more daunting than most members think."

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One of the key questions is whether the General Assembly can override withholds made to the fiscal year 2015 budget, which the legislature approved in May.

Opponents have argued that the legislature can’t retroactively apply Amendment 10, as it was only added to the Missouri Constitution in December, months after the passage of the current budget.

Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia, however, thinks Amendment 10 is "clearly applicable" to fiscal year 2015 appropriations because that cycle hasn’t ended and because the governor is still withholding about $480 million from that budget.

As much as Schaefer would like to use Amendment 10, the clock is running down for the legislature to do so, he said. Legislators can invoke their power to override withholdings during the regular session, which, according to the Missouri Constitution, can run from early January until May 30.
The General Assembly is reviewing Gov. Jay Nixon’s supplemental budget request for fiscal year 2015, Schaefer said. This means the legislature might not get a chance to bring up Amendment 10.

In theory, the legislature could make room in its schedule to override withholdings. As Republicans have a super majority in both chambers, they could push more withholdings at a faster pace "than they would if they had to scramble more for votes," Squire said. That would buy lawmakers time to invoke Amendment 10.

If the legislature decided to invoke Amendment 10 during the session, some other bills might not get time on the floor, Rep. Gail McCann Beatty, D-Kansas City and assistant minority floor leader, said.

"The one thing that the legislature has to do is the budget," McCann Beatty said. "We don’t have a choice in that matter."

But that’s not a concern for Sen. Ryan Silvey, R-Kansas City and vice chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, who said taking up a line-item veto wouldn’t kill a lot of time, especially in the Missouri House of Representatives, where debate can easily be ended.

Whether Amendment 10 causes other bills to get less time on the floor might not be an issue for Missouri residents. Squire said most of the state won’t pay close attention, unless issues that generate public interest, such as education, come up.

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Amendment 10 is not dead if legislators don’t use it during the regular session.

According to the Missouri Constitution, the General Assembly can also override withholdings during veto session, which happens in September.

The legislature usually passes the budget on or very close to the deadline set by law: 6 p.m. on the first Friday following the first Monday in May. This year, that’s Friday, May 8, according to the House website.

If the legislature passes the budget around that date, the governor would have 45 days to return the bills with his vetoes. The legislature could then attempt to override these
blocks during veto session. This year’s session is set for Sept. 16, according to the website.

But this year, lawmakers at the helm of the majority party are trying to pass the budget by April. By law, because the legislature is still in session and within the dates to take up appropriations bills, this would compel the governor to return the budget with his vetoes within 15 days, instead of 45. That would give the legislature enough time to override the governor’s vetoes before the regular session ends on May 30.

The goal? Use veto session to override withholdings instead of vetoes.

"If we override him on some of the withholds in September, it will be much more useful for those entities that were targeted to get the money to have it that much earlier," Schaefer said.

The new timeline also serves another purpose. Last year, Nixon vetoed about 120 budget line items. Because the General Assembly passed the budget by its usual May deadline, it had to wait until September to act on the vetoes. Silvey said the new timeline would change that.

"Overriding those votes upfront sends the message that these are priorities of two-thirds of the legislature, and he should be funding them," Silvey said.

Last year’s veto session was "dominated by budget line items," Silvey said. In addition to the budget vetoes, Nixon blocked about 30 other bills. Taking care of budget vetoes earlier would allow the legislature to focus more on policy during veto session, Silvey said.

Democrats are not on board with passing the budget by April, Sen. Joseph Keaveny, D-St. Louis and minority floor leader, said. The new timeline would make it easier to invoke Amendment 10, which the senator opposes. He said Amendment 10 might lead to an unbalanced budget because it doesn’t require the legislature to make cuts if it releases withholds.

"I support my governor as a Democrat," Keaveny said. "I think the chief executive of the state has a very real responsibility, and I think this chief executive takes it seriously. Now, he has to make some very hard decisions, and it’s easy for the General Assembly to second guess him."
"But I think we need to keep in mind that it was constructed this way, for just the reason that it is — to maintain a fiscally responsible state," he added. "I think it’s very dangerous for the General Assembly to be able to override his decisions."

Silvey, who sponsored Amendment 10 in the Senate, has a different view. "It’s not about the legislature trying to bust budget or the legislature trying to put things out of balance," Silvey said. "It’s more a matter of the legislature dictating what the priorities are. So if we say you have to let this money go, we all assume by default that he’ll withhold from something different."

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After veto session, lawmakers would have yet another opportunity to use Amendment 10: a special session.

Governors can restrict funds at any point during the fiscal year if revenues are less than expected. If the legislature wanted to override a withhold after the end of veto session, it could call itself back for a special session.

The chief executive has always had the authority to summon the General Assembly for an extraordinary session to deal with emergent issues, but the legislature only got the right to call itself back in 1988. That power has never been used.

Calling a special session requires a petition with signatures of three-fourths of the members of each chamber. Coordinating the effort could be difficult, Squire said.

"Republicans have very large majorities they get to work with, but they can’t always get everybody to agree," he said.

Calling special sessions is generally not popular among lawmakers, Squire said. Missouri legislators are not paid full time, and many have other obligations while the legislature is not in session, he said.

There’s another potential issue: the cost. The state reimburses legislators a daily fee for lodging and meals and provides a weekly stipend for gas for a round trip from their district to Jefferson City. The cost of a session is determined by the number of members present and the number of days the legislature meets.
The 2011 special session, which lasted 23 days, cost the state about $275,000. For the five days of the 2013 special session, the state paid about $89,000, according to emails from Senate Administrator Marga Hoelscher and Chief Clerk of the House Adam Crumbliss.

If the governor announced withholds after the end of veto session in late September, the legislature is likely to wait until it comes back for regular session in January to override, Silvey said. And although there might be issues important enough to compel the legislature to call itself back, he said he doesn’t see that happening in practice.

Overall, there are a lot of "ifs" regarding Amendment 10, Squire said.

"I know the governor has withheld money that irritated (the legislature) — that irritated a lot of people that work for the state government," Squire said. "It’s not clear whether the time and effort that would be required to invoke Amendment 10, put it into action, withstand any legal challenges that there might be — is really going to be worth fighting over, what is generally a not terribly large sum of money."

February 16, 2015

Colleges Call in Legal Pros to Handle Sexual-Assault Cases

By Robin Wilson

NO MU MENTION

It’s a story like those many colleges are hearing. A young man and woman were hanging out in her room, talking, doing shots. She drank so much, she says, that she passed out—and woke up to discover she was bleeding. The man, she says, had sexually assaulted her. But he says she’d had just a few drinks and consented to sex.

How does the college determine who is more credible? In this case, administrators hired Allyson Kurker, a lawyer who investigates reports of campus sexual assault by conducting extensive interviews and reviewing cellphone and swipe-card records,
photos, and videos. Interviews with students led her to two other women who described similar but as yet unreported experiences with the same man. The college found him responsible in all three cases and expelled him.

Legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual assault, colleges often find that students rely on them rather than law-enforcement agencies, which are seen as intimidating and unlikely to pursue charges. To meet the demand, colleges are turning to experts, setting up a kind of shadow justice system. It is now possible for an institution that receives a report of an assault to hire a former prosecutor to investigate the case and a former judge to help decide it.

The University of Pennsylvania just brought on staff a sex-crimes investigator from the Philadelphia district attorney’s office. Ohio University and Southeast Missouri State University recently advertised investigator jobs. At Harvard University, where a panel of faculty members and students used to hear sexual-assault cases, that is now the duty of a specially trained team. A retired Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice has presided over hearings at Swarthmore College.

Such moves reflect the high stakes. Colleges that get cases wrong can face lawsuits from either side. The U.S. Department of Education is investigating 96 colleges for possible violations of the gender-equity law known as Title IX. Coping can be costly, in terms both reputational and financial. United Educators, an insurance and risk-management firm, determined that in a recent three-year period, the company and about 100 of its member institutions spent more than $17-million defending against and resolving claims involving sexual assault.

"The complexity of investigating and adjudicating these cases is so great that it is consuming student-affairs divisions, equal-opportunity offices, and Title IX professionals," says Gina Maisto Smith, a lawyer and former sex-crimes prosecutor who works with colleges. "Schools are trying to manage this, but they don’t have the tool kit, the time, the resources, or in some cases the skill set to do it."

To minimize risk as well as to better serve students, many colleges are moving away from traditional hearing panels and creating procedures separate from those for any other type of disciplinary charge, with new staff or outside consultants whose qualifications would seem to help.

Brown University announced in December that it would begin using trained investigators this semester; it plans to establish a special hearing process next academic year. "We’re trying to address what we think were gaps and burdens on students and hearing panels that were not fully equipped" to conduct an effective
hearing process, says Russell C. Carey, executive vice president for planning and policy and co-chair of a task force that recommended the changes. The university said in a statement that "the use of investigators presenting comprehensive and unbiased accounts of the facts will make hearings better informed, less burdensome, and potentially less traumatic to students."

Educators often contend that they have a role in trying sexual-assault cases because it is their job to protect students, and they have long dealt with campus misconduct of all kinds. But given the increasing dependence on experts, some observers wonder if colleges should really be in this position at all.

"If you have an entirely different process for addressing sexual assault than for plagiarism, it becomes much harder to make the argument that what’s going on here is somehow an educational process that colleges have been engaged in for decades," says KC Johnson, a history professor at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, who has criticized colleges for their handling of assault cases. "What we are getting is the functional equivalent of a law-enforcement structure embedded within colleges."

**Then and Now**

When Congress passed Title IX, in 1972, no one expected that colleges would end up adjudicating sexual assault. Lawsuits in the 1980s and policy decisions by the Obama administration have moved colleges in that direction. Since the Education Department’s Office for Civil Rights admonished colleges in 2011 to take sexual assault more seriously—promptly and fairly investigating and resolving students’ reports—colleges have been struggling to handle the task.

The way many have traditionally decided such cases is with some kind of panel (of students, faculty members, and/or administrators) reviewing allegations of assault, as it would other infractions. Panels wouldn’t necessarily conduct substantial investigations; most would simply hold hearings to question the alleged victim and perpetrator. In general, over time, colleges have sought to make their disciplinary systems less courtlike.

But then came a wave of attention to campus sexual assault, with heightened expectations for campus administrators to do things for which they often lack training and experience, as well as legal protection, says Robb Jones, senior vice president and general counsel for claims management at United Educators. "Unlike judges and prosecutors," he says, "they aren’t shielded from being sued by parties who may dispute the outcome."
Students’ Title IX complaints and lawsuits describing colleges’ missteps have prompted changes, as have recent regulations and guidance from the Education Department requiring or recommending special training for adjudicators, for example, and removing students from hearing panels. Colleges must also now allow alleged victims and perpetrators to bring lawyers to meetings and hearings, a point of debate last spring, when federally appointed negotiators hashed out new rules.

That last change in particular has made campus officials feel they need to hire professionals. "Colleges were worried; we are going to have a chemistry professor trying to run a hearing with lawyers in it," says Dennis C. McAndrews, a prosecutor and criminal-defense lawyer who started the Higher Education Decisions Group late last year to work with colleges on sexual-assault cases.

The approach now becoming more common goes something like this: When a student reports an assault, an investigator delves into the details and turns over the findings to an administrator, panel, or consultant to decide the case. That might involve a hearing, or the decision may simply turn on the investigator’s report.

Pennsylvania State University plans to hire a full-time Title IX investigator and is replacing its five-person hearing boards, which had included students, with a "panel of trained decision makers" that will rule without hearings. Students have endorsed the new process, in part because victims will have to tell their story to only one person rather than a roomful.

At Penn, the new sexual-violence investigative officer will provide information to a panel of three faculty members with intensive training who will operate independently of the student-conduct office. "That’s not to say our office of student conduct isn’t professional," says Joann Mitchell, vice president for institutional affairs. But now, "if people have questions or concerns, they recognize there is someone with special expertise handling the process and ensuring these cases are handled with the sensitivity and care they deserve."

The credentials of one independent investigator, a psychologist working with Duke University, came into question in December. The North Carolina Department of Public Safety sent a cease-and-desist letter to the psychologist, Celia Irvine, saying she wasn’t properly licensed, according to a local television station, WRAL. The state’s Private Protective Services Board, which has jurisdiction in the case, is expected to hold a hearing in April.

Most consultants in that role, it seems, are lawyers. About a third of colleges that have used hearing panels are shifting to the investigator model, says Brett Sokolow,
president of the National Center for Higher Education Risk Management, a consulting and law firm, which last summer announced "resolution services" for campus sexual assault. Outside investigators typically charge $5,000 to $20,000 per case. And at least one insurer seems to think the expense is worth it. United Educators will reimburse member institutions up to $10,000.

‘Best Panelists’

Not everyone believes in that kind of expertise. Faculty members and students, too, are capable of judging responsibility in sexual-assault cases, says Chris Loschiavo, associate dean of students at the University of Florida. "If they can sit on a jury trial and send someone to the electric chair with 30 minutes of instructions," he says, "it doesn’t make sense to me that we can’t train them to handle a civil-rights case on campus."

At Florida, the campus-conduct staff investigates a complaint and determines whether it should go before a hearing panel of professors and students. Before students can serve, they must pass a semester-long three-credit course that covers how to weigh evidence, ask appropriate questions, and determine credibility. Professors get 10 hours of similar training.

"Students have unique insight that makes them the best panelists and decision makers," says Mr. Loschiavo, "because they know what the culture here is like."

Still, some people argue that doing this work well takes years of training and experience. The lawyers that colleges are hiring may be less likely to blanch when discussing explicit details. In one case that Djuna Perkins handled for a college, a female student had been texting with a male classmate about S&M. Ms. Perkins, an outside investigator, determined that while the two had exchanged messages about their interest in such sexual activities, the young man was responsible for assault because the woman had never consented to an actual encounter.

"I know how to ask the questions in a way that makes students feel comfortable but that also makes them as candid as possible," says Ms. Perkins, who was a trial lawyer for 20 years before she opened a law firm in 2012 exclusively to help colleges handle sexual-assault cases. She has worked with about a dozen colleges on 35 investigations, she says.

Campus panels may fail to ask tough questions of the students on both sides of an accusation, says Mr. Sokolow, the consultant. He often works with colleges when they are finishing an investigation or a hearing to review their process.
In a recent case, a young woman had accused a male classmate of forcing her to perform oral sex. The college’s panel had found him responsible, and the young man had appealed. When Mr. Sokolow went over the evidence and the findings, he had several questions for the panelists: Had they asked the young woman how long the encounter took? What position was the couple in? Was she on her knees, or were they in bed? Was he holding her head to force her?

The panelists weren’t sure, says Mr. Sokolow. "They looked at me like, How can we possibly ask those questions? I said, Because that’s the job."

The panel on that campus has reopened the case. It has yet to issue a final judgment.

February 17, 2015

In Rape Cases, Students’ Texts and Emails Face the Court of Public Opinion

By Andy Thomason and Robin Wilson

NO MU MENTION

Because of the nature of the crime, campus rape cases can be complicated for colleges to adjudicate. In the absence of witnesses or physical evidence, determining whether an accused student is responsible is often a matter of weighing one party’s word against another’s.

But what happens when the words they exchanged privately—emails or texts or Facebook messages, for example—are posted online for anyone to see?

In recent weeks, national news outlets have published two accounts of campus rape cases that drew on the individuals’ electronic correspondence, before and after the alleged rape, in an effort to characterize their relationships.

Earlier this month, The Daily Beast published an article that detailed the rape allegations by one Columbia University student, Emma Sulkowicz, against another, Paul Nungesser. The university eventually cleared Mr. Nungesser of Ms. Sulkowicz’s
allegations, but her subsequent protest—carrying a mattress around the campus until, she says, Mr. Nungesser is expelled or they both graduate—has become a symbol of campus rape activists nationally.

For the article Mr. Nungesser provided transcripts of Facebook chats between himself and Ms. Sulkowicz suggesting their relationship was friendly even after the alleged rape. For example, one sent more than a month after the incident reads: "I love you Paul. Where are you?!?!?!?!"

But an annotated version of the transcripts that Ms. Sulkowicz provided to Jezebel, in response to the Daily Beast article, purports to put the chats in proper context. Ms. Sulkowicz told Jezebel she had adopted a friendly tone so that she could arrange a meeting where she would be able to confront him.

And an article published last week in The New York Times Magazine profiled the case of a student at Stanford University, Ellie Clougherty, and a technology entrepreneur, Joe Lonsdale, who mentored her for a class there. After she filed a sexual-abuse lawsuit against him, Mr. Lonsdale created a website that presents some of their correspondence in an effort to discredit her claims.

As the two cases illustrate, private statements can be used to support vastly different interpretations of an incident—or a relationship. Further complicating matters is that dealing with the aftermath of a traumatic episode can cause a victim’s behavior to seem erratic.

**Weighting Digital Evidence**

Away from the court of public opinion, in campus judicial proceedings, transcripts of private conversations are often fair game. Colleges’ investigators try to get their hands on anything and everything related to a case, including digital correspondence.

"I’d rather have all the cards on the table, and be able to look at all the cards, than have someone like in a court system choosing what the jury gets to hear and what they don’t," says Gary G. Dickstein, assistant vice president for student affairs and deputy Title IX coordinator at Wright State University, in Ohio. "In a conduct case, we will use any piece of information that is provided to try and determine its impact on whether, more likely than not, a student is responsible."

It would be "remarkably irresponsible" not to consider digital communication between a victim and a perpetrator in a hearing, says Allyson Kurker, a lawyer who helps colleges investigate sexual-assault complaints. But not all digital communication can be given the same weight, she says.
"I’ve seen text messages exchanged very, very soon after an alleged assault, and I put less weight onto those," she says. If a woman is saying things like "It’s OK" or "I’m fine," says Ms. Kurker, "they don’t mean anything except the person just doesn’t want to deal with the situation right now."

But if, weeks on, the alleged victim is sending friendly texts to the alleged perpetrator, that could mean something different. "It doesn’t make sense," she says, "that they would be exchanging flirty text messages after that time if something had gone wrong."