

UM tuition waiver not a done deal

By Janese Silvey

He was a university administrator himself, but Missouri schools shouldn't get too confident that he's automatically going to let them raise tuition beyond inflation.

After all, Higher Education Commissioner David Russell said, the tuition waiver process is about public accountability.

Russell was a longtime vice president at the University of Missouri before taking the helm of the Missouri Department of Higher Education last year. Now, he's the go-to guy for four-year institutions this year that want to increase tuition and fees more than 1.5 percent. It's part of a three-year-old law that caps tuition at the consumer price index.

The UM Board of Curators last month voted to increase tuition and fees by an average of 5.5 percent — 5.8 percent at MU. Administrators submitted that plan to the state, and Russell responded that the increase is over the limit. Now, UM has 30 days to seek a waiver for that hike or face a fine of up to 5 percent of the state allocation. Russell then has 45 days to make a decision, during which time he can seek information from the university or try to negotiate a smaller increase.

"This is the first time we've done this, so we might be inventing things as we go along," he said.

Nikki Krawitz, vice president of finance, said UM believes the increases and waiver are justified for campuses to meet budget needs and maintain quality. The system's preliminary 2012 budget shows a \$42 million shortfall even after tuition increases. That's partly because it includes a 2 percent increase in the salary pool and setting aside more money for buildings.

Russell gets that. It takes money to retain and recruit good professors, and universities haven't been keeping up with maintenance needs, he said. In fact, at one point during an interview, Russell sounded almost sympathetic to colleges.

"No, I wouldn't say I'm sympathetic," he countered. "I happen to be aware that there are institutions that, perhaps in past years, have not done as much as they could or should."

Tough times have forced colleges to become more efficient, he said, but some also raised tuition in the past five or six years. And even if universities are struggling, Russell said, "it still doesn't release them of their responsibility to explain to the public why they feel they need to raise tuition."

The tuition cap “has the potential to make institutions more accountable and more responsible for the cost of their operations,” Russell said.

Gov. Jay Nixon said in a statement he wants Russell to carefully scrutinize UM’s request, which he called “well beyond” the legal limit. Russell said Nixon has not talked to him about the university’s plan, and he doesn’t feel any political pressure to decline the waiver.

“I couldn’t argue with his main point, though,” Russell said. “Certainly, any decision to increase tuition beyond that allowed by” law “should receive very careful scrutiny.”

Russell plans to have two assistants first review waiver requests before sending them to him to ensure more checks and balances. If Russell denies a waiver, universities have three options: lower the tuition increase to the amount allowed under the law, revise the waiver request to seek a smaller increase or appeal the ruling to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. If the board denies the waiver, Russell can recommend a cut in state funding.

Waiver requests will be posted on the department’s website “along with the correspondence that passes between us,” Russell said. “That way the public and legislature can see for themselves what the institutions used as justifications for increasing tuition.”

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Blended families require financial planning

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By **Matt Krantz**, USA TODAY

Donna and Ron McElhancy (left to right) married seven years ago and live with their blended family including sons Nicholas Everhard, 17, and William McElhancy, 11, in Savannah, Ga. More Americans than ever are forming blended families, with some of his kids, some of her kids and some of their kids together.

But now, the makeup of the American household has supernovaed into a web of relationships, forever changing the way families handle their money.

The rise of divorce, remarriage and living out of wedlock have morphed the family unit into an expanded network of step-relatives and introduced a bevy of financial challenges.

More than 40% of American adults have at least one step-relative, such as a son or daughter from a spouse's former relationship, in their family, according to a Pew Research Center analysis published in January. Experts say that is up dramatically from just 50 years ago.

"There's a whittling away of the traditional 1950s-era family," says Kim Parker, researcher at Pew Research. "There's a new fabric of families that we see."

More blended families than ever

These new families, often called blended families, meld kids from one marriage with those from another. Americans are also creating new types of households by starting second families later in life, adopting kids or caring for grandchildren.

And the trend is only accelerating. Anywhere from 52% to 62% of all first marriages will end in divorce, says the National Stepfamily Resource Center. Meanwhile, roughly three-quarters of divorced people will remarry — and about 65% of remarriages will involve kids from the previous marriage.

It's difficult to generalize how these new families look. But one thing stepfamilies and adoptive families have in common is a complex financial situation. There's often money shuffling in and out in the form of child support. These payments can be very large. Julie Reinken, 41, and husband David Reinken of Brooklyn, N.Y., watch nearly \$4,000 a month leave their budget to

help support David's four sons from a previous marriage. "It can be life-changing," Julie says. "You're never really prepared."

Remarrying can mean looking at your overall financial picture.

Ask your financial adviser these questions:

- 1) How should I modify my current financial strategy?
- 2) What type of insurance needs should we think about?
- 3) What estate considerations should I be aware of?

Making things even more difficult is that just 20% of people discuss financial matters before they remarry, a dangerous sign because money will end up being the top source of strife they face, according to research from Lawrence Ganong and Marilyn Coleman of the University of Missouri.

"These families are so complex. Remarried couples are more likely to have multiple savings, checking and banking accounts than first-married couples, just to keep track of the money," Ganong says.

What families need to accomplish

Suggestions for families in these situations:

•**Find agreement.** Just as there's no typical stepfamily, there's no correct way for families to manage their money, says Brian Higginbotham, professor at Utah State University. One solution, such as pooling all the family's money, might work for one family but not another, he says.

Coming to a financial accord in the new marriage is critical because money problems can multiply, making things even more complex. About 60% of all remarriages end in divorce, says the National Stepfamily Resource Center. "The most important thing is to take care of the new marriage," says Brenda Ockun of *StepMom Magazine*. "The last thing anyone wants is a second divorce: It's not good for your kids or your wallet," she says.

•**Make sure everyone is covered.** It's critical to check over the wording in both health insurance policies to make sure that all family members are covered the way parents wish, says Jeffery Carbone, financial planner at Cornerstone Financial Partners. It's vital to check the will, too, for instance, and make sure the wording includes all children, both natural and adopted, says Carbone, who has a 2-year-old adopted son in addition to an 11-year-old biological daughter.

•**Consider estate planning.** Even if you don't think you have enough money to warrant planning, you probably do in many stepfamily situations, says Emily Bouchard of WealthLegacyGroup.net. It's important to meet with an attorney and make sure all the kids from the various marriages are considered. These issues might include college finances, inheritances and, even more important, issues of custody, she says.

Kelsey Johnson, 32, and Sandy Bower-Johnson, 41, of Austin were married nearly five years ago, each bringing a child, both now 12, from a previous marriage. Kelsey says creating a plan of who will take custody of the kids is critical. "You need to think about the situation for whoever is left behind," he says.

•**Plan ahead.** Experts and members of stepfamilies agree that signing divorce papers rarely ends the relationship with the former spouse. Legal battles can rage on and siphon money for years.

It's not just the day-to-day costs either. School costs can multiply for a stepfamily. Ron McElhaney, 46, and his wife, Donna, 56, of Savannah, Ga., are already experiencing this. The two each have two kids from their previous marriages. One is in college and the other three are in private school.

If there's any common financial advice for all families that have kids from other marriages, it's this: Plan now, says Eric Ross, financial adviser at Ameriprise. And that's not all that different than what all families should do. Boggled down by the day-to-day demands, many families put off estate planning and setting a realistic budget, he says. Many of these couples come to seek help when the problems have already begun, which reduces the number of solutions. "Have a plan in place," he says. "Or it can be a nightmare for the kids."



Nixon counts on MOHELA for scholarship money

By Janesse Silvey

A law that requires the state's college loan authority to make payments to a campus building fund is still on the books, but today the agency is spending its money on scholarships instead.

Gov. Jay Nixon's proposed 2012 budget relies on a \$30 million payment from the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority to plug a cut he's proposing in the Access Missouri scholarship program.

That has some Columbia lawmakers scratching their heads. If MOHELA has extra money, why isn't the agency making payments to the Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative to fund campus capital improvement projects?

"Obviously, there's still an obligation to fund those projects," said Sen. Kurt Schacfer, a Columbia Republican.

Five years ago, then-Gov. Matt Blunt unveiled the initiative to sell off MOHELA assets to generate funding for building projects at Missouri colleges and universities. It took him two years to get legislators to approve the plan, and they did so in a sweeping education bill that also capped tuition and created the needs-based Access Missouri scholarships.

MOHELA has, to date, paid nearly \$245 million, which has funded some projects, Executive Director Ray Bayer said. It still owes the state \$105 million under the law — money that was supposed to pay for projects including improvements to the Benton Stadler science complex at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, a UM-Kansas City pharmacy and nursing building and a UM agroforestry center, as well as buildings at Southeast Missouri State and Missouri State universities.

Nixon shelved those projects after he took office in 2009, saying MOHELA wasn't making its payments. But last year, MOHELA was asked to support scholarships with its extra money. Although Nixon didn't personally ask, "we were informed there was going to be a shortfall in funding for Access Missouri, and an inquiry was made as to whether MOHELA could make a contribution to offset the cuts," Bayer said.

The MOHELA board last summer voted to give \$30 million to the scholarships this fiscal year.

But the board hasn't yet voted to contribute another \$30 million to Access Missouri in fiscal year 2012, even though Nixon's budget counts on it. In fact, that decision might not occur until after lawmakers have to approve the state budget.

"We'll consider the need and available funds at the June board meeting," Bayer said.

That creates problems for lawmakers being asked to support a budget based on "mystery money," said Rep. Chris Kelly, D-Columbia. He said legislators should at least be given the option to decide what to do with that funding. "I think if MOHELA has extra money available for state purposes, that's money that ought to be appropriated and should go into general revenues," he said. "It's inappropriate to make a unilateral executive decision about the appropriation of \$30 million."

Schaefer and Kelly said they support allocating state money for scholarships, but the MOHELA dollars are one-time funds that should not be used for an annual scholarship program. Plus, they said, MOHELA has a statutory obligation to make payments to the building fund.

If Access Missouri scholarships were doled out to students equally, Rep. Mary Still, D-Columbia, said she would be OK with using the funding for them. But right now, students going to private schools receive more dollars than public school students because the scholarships equate to a percentage of tuition. Lawmakers equalized the monetary amounts on paper last year, but the change won't go into effect until 2014.

Building projects would stimulate the economy, Still said. She has mixed feelings about it, though, knowing MOHELA was originally set up to help students afford college. That's why she also thinks a public discussion is in order.

"It would be best to have public debate about this, for lawmakers to make choices," she said. "My desire would be to do what's best for Columbia, and maybe in this instance it's to" fund "buildings."

The UM System hasn't waited for the state on some projects. Since July 2009, the university's Board of Curators has issued \$627 million in bonds for building projects, including Ellis Fischel Cancer Center, a project that was supposed to be funded with Lewis and Clark dollars.

That doesn't mean the UM System still doesn't have building needs, though, including the Benton Stadler project. Administrators considered asking students to pay fees for academic buildings but decided against it.

Kelly also has a plan to bypass Lewis and Clark. He has filed a bill asking the state to issue \$800 million in bonds for college building projects.

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MU police release details about robbery suspect

One of the suspects in a Tuesday robbery of a 21-year-old University of Missouri student surfaced about a half-hour after the robbery at a convenience store, where he purchased cigarettes and lottery tickets with the victim's credit cards, police said.

The University of Missouri Police Department has video of a white male making two purchases at I-70 Eagle Stop, 1704 N. Providence Road, around 2:30 a.m. Tuesday, according to an MU police news release.

The Kool cigarettes and lottery tickets — Crossword, Power 7's and Sweet 7's — totaled more than \$84. His vehicle also was caught on video.

A half-hour before the purchases, near Rollins Street and East Campus Drive, the victim told police that two men got out of a white four-door vehicle she believed was a Volkswagen. The men were wearing dark-colored masks and allegedly robbed her at gunpoint, taking two cell phones and the victim's wallet with credit cards.

No injuries were reported.

One suspect was described as a white male, between 5 feet 6 inches and 5 feet 8 inches tall, the news release said. He had a medium, stocky build with short blond hair and a necklace tattoo.

He was wearing a dark-colored sweatshirt and had on a mask.

The other suspect was described as a black male, between 5 feet 4 inches and 5 feet 8 inches tall. He had a skinny build and was believed to be in his early 20s. He also was wearing a dark-colored sweatshirt and a mask.

Anyone with information about the suspects can call Detective Sam Easley at 884-3721 or CrimeStoppers at 875-8477.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU residential hall advisers turn 'situationally critical' in blizzard

By [Laura Oberle](#)

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COLUMBIA — Nathan Antone awoke Tuesday morning to loud knocking from his residential hall coordinator, Patrick Patterson.

It was time to start shoveling snow.

“It was my first college snow day, and I really wanted to sleep in,” Antone said.

He put on three pairs of socks, stuffed his feet into his tennis shoes and bundled himself into multiple hooded sweatshirts.

“I don’t have any official snow gear,” said Antone, a native of St. Louis. “I’m really not down for snow.”

As peer adviser in Hatch Hall, an MU residential hall, Antone and all other peer and community advisers are considered “situationally critical” staff. During the snowstorm they assumed the roles of landscaper, custodian and cook without additional pay, Residential Life Director Frankie Minor said.

“I think some of the students saw the sidewalks were clear and thought a tractor plowed it, but we were out there physically shoveling during the snow,” Antone said.

Across campus at Laws Hall, peer adviser Sarah Ely spent her days shoveling as well.

“Our job is focused on helping students in the building, but it was interesting to see how we could make a difference outside,” Ely said.

The staff was on call around the clock. It worked with the dining halls, as many employees were not able to make it to work.

Antone worked at Baja Grill on Wednesday.

“I had no idea what to do when I got there, so they made me do the dishes,” Antone said.

He said the Baja staff would have been there most of the night closing without the additional help.

“We were truly helping the dining hall staff, and that made it worth it,” Antone said.

By Wednesday morning the snow had slowed.

“We thought that we were done shoveling, and we’d get some freedom,” Antone said.

But the staff’s responsibilities shifted inside to custodial duties: mopping puddles created by snowy boots, vacuuming and collecting trash. They worked to make the best of it.

“The staff really had fun together playing in the snow and being together. It was a bonding experience, an out-of-the-ordinary hangout,” Ely said.

The staff’s number one job was to keep students safe.

“The PAs and CAs are also students, so while most students were getting a lot of rest, they were working to keep them safe,” Minor said.

Antone said their job as advisers in the residential halls really didn’t change that much.

“As staff members we definitely have a purpose, and that’s to always be there for our residents when they need us,” Antone said. “It was an experience I’ll never forget.”



Crews improvise to rescue patient

Heavy snow doesn't stop first responders.

By **BRENNAN DAVID**

Emergency responders in Columbia and Boone County train to respond to all incidents, no matter the weather conditions, and that training calls for improvisation — especially in blizzard conditions.

At the height of Tuesday's storm, Willy Wilson of Blackberry Lane was beginning to become delirious as a result of a fever that spiked at 100 degrees.

His residence sits a quarter-mile off South Rock Quarry Road.

The 67-year-old said he needed to get to the hospital and was shocked by the quick response of emergency crews considering the conditions. But what really impressed him was their ingenuity.

The depth of snow did not allow for the crews to pull up to the residence, and they were forced to abandon their emergency vehicles on Rock Quarry Road, said Willy's wife, Vicky Wilson. After hiking the quarter-mile in knee-deep snowdrifts, carrying her husband to the emergency vehicles was not an option.

"They were exhausted," she said. "The reason we called them was because there was no way we could even get out of the garage. It was dark, bitter cold and snowing."

Crews improvised, she said, and dressed her husband in warm clothes before wrapping him in a tarp. Columbia fire and University Hospital ambulance crews dragged him through the snow to the emergency vehicles while neighbors and family members shoveled a path.

"These were big, strong guys," Willy Wilson said. "It was a little bumpy but not too bad."

He was transported to University Hospital and released yesterday after treatment for pneumonia. Vicky Wilson said.

"The fact that they went to such great lengths to respond and were creative in what they can do I am grateful for," she said. "I thought it was amazing. It would have been very easy for them to say, 'We did the best we can, and we will do it tomorrow when daylight comes.' We are very grateful for them for that."

Adapting and overcoming are part of the job criteria for ambulances crews, said Jeff Hoelscher, a spokesman for University of Missouri Health Care. Crews so far have been able to get to all reported emergencies, no matter the road conditions, he said.

"When dealing with a storm like we had, sometimes it is too difficult to see," Hoelscher said. "Road conditions made for a really bad situation. For these crews to go out, it says a lot about their character."

Columbia fire personnel responded to several incidents Tuesday where patients were dragged or carried through the snow, said Columbia fire Battalion Chief James Weaver.

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Declaration covers few costs

Governments keep adding up total tally.

By **RUDI KELLER**

A federal emergency declaration issued yesterday for Missouri means the state can call on the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help coordinate disaster responses, but that does not include reimbursing state and local public agencies for the mounting costs from the blizzard of 2011.

Overtime, rented equipment and contracted help with snow removal are adding to the final price tag for the University of Missouri, Columbia and Boone County as the area digs out from 17.7 inches of snow that fell Tuesday and Wednesday. Those costs are still increasing today as the city and county crews continue to work long shifts. "We will calculate the overtime after the event," said Jill Stedem, spokeswoman for the Columbia Public Works Department.

Federal emergency responses vary depending on the size of the event and damages sustained by public agencies and individuals. The current emergency declaration allows the state to call on FEMA for direct assistance, said Bob Josephson, spokesman for the FEMA Region 7 office in Kansas City.

The next level of response is a disaster declaration that would make FEMA responsible for 75 percent of the public costs of recovery. In the worst disasters, FEMA also will provide help to individuals who suffered damages in the storm. For a snowstorm, one of the key factors is the amount of snow, Josephson said. The state must request help and show it has substantial costs that are beyond the capacity of state and local agencies.

Columbia budgeted \$355,000 this year for salt and calcium chloride to treat roads, Stedem said. Before the blizzard, the city had spent \$250,000 of that amount, Stedem said.

The city has rented dump trucks and front-end loaders to remove snow and called in employees from the Parks and Recreation Department, the Water and Light Department and the Sewer Department to help as well, she said. All those costs, at this point unknown, will be charged to the Public Works Department budget.

County costs include the overtime for snow removal by the Public Works Department and deputies in the Boone County Sheriff's Department. The county has a contract for additional snow removal services but has not used it because the trucks used by the contractor are small and would have difficulty moving the heavy snow, Northern District Commissioner Skip Elkin said. The costs, in excess of \$300 an hour, also are a factor in deciding not to use the contractor, Elkin said.

Sheriff Dwayne Carey said he would not know how much overtime his deputies have accumulated until the end of the pay period. The department borrowed three four-wheel-drive vehicles from the Planning

Department to augment the four it already had. Chief Jailer Warren Brewer stayed overnight Tuesday, sleeping in a chair, Carey said.

MU has used residence hall employees as well as contracted services to assist maintenance crews working to clear the snow, Mary Jo Banken, MU spokeswoman, said in an e-mail. She was unable to provide the contract rates being charged, and bills won't arrive for several weeks, she said.

Banken said when she asked Assistant Vice Chancellor of Campus Facilities Gary Ward about the price tag, his reply was: "The costs? A bunch!"

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End of MU snow days pleases some

By **JANESE SILVEY**

After spending three days this week watching TV and bonding with their Alpha Delta Pi sorority sisters, Sam Schumacher and Gracie Sorensen had had about all the fun they could take.

Yesterday, the **University of Missouri** sophomores borrowed a couple of shovels from some fraternity guys and spent more than an hour scooping snow off their drive so they could free Sorensen's car and get the heck out of town. The cousins planned to head to Sorensen's house in St. Louis. Not only were they out of quarters and in desperate need to do some laundry, but "I need a break," Sorensen said.

Toting sacks from University Bookstore and cups of coffee from campus shops, students meandered around campus yesterday, some of them relieved classes were back in session. After all, a snow day is fun, but three in a row?

"Three days is a long time to be cooped up," freshman Jessica Puckett said.

It took that long, though, for crews to get MU sidewalks, streets and parking lots clear enough for employees and students to get to classes. And even with crews working around the clock, walkways on campus yesterday were still not totally clear.

"We still have people out there," said Karlan Seville, spokeswoman for Campus Facilities.

University facilities and landscaping workers tried to get a start on snow-clearing efforts by laying calcium chloride and sand down first. Then they followed the official weather plan and hired outside crews to help scoop up snow.

"We have it all very detailed, but this was catastrophic," Seville said. "Even with the best-laid plans, you have a lot of stuff come up."

Campus Facilities budgets about \$200,000 a year for snow removal and storm damage, plus receives funds from other departments that generate revenues. Parking and Transportation allocates \$75,000 a year for snow removal, but after this storm, that budget increased to \$250,000, MU spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said.

It's too early to know, though, how much the storm will cost MU. Five contractors were hired to help remove snow, and those costs range from \$75 an hour for a three-quarter-ton diesel truck with a blade to \$290 an hour for a rubber-tired payloader with a larger bucket, Banken said. Snow is being hauled and dumped on the Hinkson Creek recreation field.

MU has completely closed campus only one other time in the past century, and that was in the 1970s. In 1998, the start of the winter semester was delayed a day because of an ice storm, and classes were canceled in 2006 and in 1995, the year Columbia saw a record snowfall of 19.7 inches.

MU did keep its student and recreation centers open for those brave enough to venture into the cold. The Student Recreation Complex saw more than 19,000 visitors between Tuesday and Thursday, a typical number, Banken said.

Residential hall students also busied themselves by volunteering to shovel entrances and help out in dining halls, she said. Students stuck inside also got creative with entertainment, throwing board game parties, giving one another spa treatments and decorating T-shirts, said Kristen Temple, associate director for residential academic affairs. At Mark Twain hall, students created valentines for nursing home residents.

Some administrators occupied snow days fielding calls from parents, said Laura Page, coordinator of the Office of Parent Relations. She said it was nice to reassure parents that their children had plenty to eat, were safe and had opportunities to work out or visit the student center.

"We stressed that the university's priority was the safety of our students," Page said. "Parents appreciate terms like 'safety,' 'security' and 'well-being.' "

Tribune reporter Rudi Keller contributed to this story.

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MU takes meals to off-campus students

By **JANESE SILVEY**

[See previous versions of this article](#)

Although this week's snowfall stopped short of breaking Columbia's accumulation record, it did create some first-time situations at the University of Missouri.

Campus was closed three days in a row, something that has never happened before. And yesterday, MU's Campus Dining staff delivered box lunches to students living in extended campus facilities.

"We've never had to do anything like this before," said Cathy Scroggs, vice chancellor for student affairs. "It's a first."

For the past several years, MU has been contracting with two private apartment complexes to provide record numbers of freshmen with more residential options. Students living in Tiger Diggs, within Campus View apartments, and a cluster of rooms known as Mizzou Quads inside Campus Lodge are technically considered residential students even though the complexes are not on campus.

Those apartments have kitchens, not dining halls. Students there pay for on-campus meal plans as part of room and board, but without access to campus, they're on their own.

On Monday, Tiger Diggs coordinator Joe Kelley, an MU employee, went around with a bullhorn shouting to students that buses wouldn't be running for a couple of days and that students should stock up on food while they could, said Kevin Boyd, a freshman living there. Boyd and his friends heeded the advice and had plenty to eat, he said.

That was the case with most students living in extended-campus facilities, Scroggs said. Staff checked on those students periodically, and no one complained of running low, she said. Still, worried parents were calling to ask how their off-campus students were getting by, prompting campus dining to take action.

"We thought if we can get it there, let's go ahead and deliver," Scroggs said.

Between 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. yesterday, dining crews delivered nearly 200 box lunches to the residents there, she said. In addition to meat and cheese sandwiches, students were given the option of vegetarian and vegan meals.

Boyd didn't take advantage of the lunch but said he appreciates how the university checked on its off-campus residents over the course of the snow days. Snow removal crews got the parking lot plowed relatively quickly, he said, allowing Boyd to join other members of the Mizzou Black Men's Initiative yesterday when they went around town helping residents shovel driveways.

"They looked after us," Boyd said.

MU was back in session today after being shut down most of the week. It has canceled classes in the past, but this week's closure of the entire campus is the first since the 1970s, spokeswoman Mary Jo Banken said.

In 1998, the winter semester was postponed a day because of an ice storm, and MU canceled classes in 2006 and in 1995, the year a record 19.7 inches of snow fell in Columbia.

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Brawl on the Quad

Snowball fight draws about 200.

By **RUDI KELLER**

Heavy skirmishes preceded the main action as belligerents tested their strength and sought advantage of position.

Battle lines formed slowly, with outnumbered defenders on the high ground. They were short on ready ammunition but successfully held off several assaults.

And as the last red rays of sunlight faded, with the opposing forces depleted by casualties, a counter-charge swept forward and drove off the attackers.

So went the Snow Brawl on the Quad, an event created as a lark on Facebook by bored **University of Missouri students** stuck indoors by the blizzard of 2011. A senior in a long brown coat reminiscent of a Western movie and a junior clad in a penguin costume obtained while working at a costume shop were joined by about 200 of their fellow students for the fight.

And for almost 90 minutes, everyone was 10 years old again.

Today, the originator of the idea, Coie Karr, and the other 30,000 students at MU returned to class. They were out of class for three days, the longest weather closure in MU's history. Karr, a 19-year-old transfer student in his first year, said he was ready.

"Yeah, I've had my fix," he said after recovering from the cold. "We might as well. It's one day and then the weekend. It's good to be a little productive."

Temperatures were in the teens, but shadows of surrounding buildings and trees covered only the western half of Francis Quadrangle as students trickled into the area between the Columns and Jesse Hall. The first to arrive were Karr and four friends who created the event — Caitlyn Stevens, Casey Carpenter, Matt Douty and Clare Murphy — while playing video games at College Avenue Hall. They originally scheduled the snowball fight for Wednesday but put it off a day because the forecast called for high winds and blowing snow.

For two days, the dorm and the dining room were the only places they went. "And it was a test getting there," Carpenter said of the dining hall.

The next arrivals seemed uncertain of whether they were at the right place at the right time. But before long the snowballs began to fly. From that, the melee grew rapidly. At its peak, at least 200 took part. Cold and gathering darkness slowly took a toll.

Many picked up pieces of snow clumped together in odd shapes, as likely to disintegrate in the air as strike their targets. The dry snow was difficult, but not impossible, to pack into snowballs. Many carried enormous chunks plowed up as the snow was cleared from sidewalks.

Engineering student Cameron Olson wore the long coat, with tall lace-up boots and a black stocking cap. He'd been snowed into his house since Tuesday.

"A friend invited me," he said. "I thought it sounds like fun. I can do this."

For Alicia McPherson, a sophomore who works for Residential Life, the brawl was a welcome break from shoveling snow, "volunteering" in the dining hall and keeping watch at an entrance door where the locks were frozen open.

"I would rather be back in class," she said. "They said they are making us T-shirts."

Coming to the snowball fight in a penguin suit made Casey Peetz an immediate target. She's pursuing a double major of biology and classical humanities. When asked where she found the fuzzy get-up, she replied: "The North Pole."

Told there are no penguins at the North Pole, she replied: "That's why I'm not studying geography."

Peetz said she had been inside an igloo built in the East Campus neighborhood and had gone sledding — belly first — during the time off from class. "I'm ready for anything," she said.

Online, the event drew promises to attend from almost 1,300. Karr said he was very satisfied with the turnout.

"Of course 1,000 people didn't show up," he said. "But it was still a blast."

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Snow-day pay not all equal

By **JANESE SILVEY**

Some **University of Missouri Health Care** employees aren't happy that they had to use vacation or personal days when snow kept them home this week while other campus employees not working didn't have to dip into benefits.

Although the academic side of campus shut down completely, university hospitals and emergency rooms stayed open, thus the discrepancy, spokeswoman Jo Ann Wait said.

Under the UM System's policy manual, employees not required to work when campus fully closes still get paid without using vacation or personal time, up to five work days. Campus employees deemed "situationally critical," such as facilities workers, were paid time and a half for all hours worked.

The policy states, however, that MU Health Care is separate from the campus when it comes to closing operations. Because the hospital remained open, employees who worked their normal shifts will receive normal pay, Wait said, and snowed-in employees will have to use vacation or personal time.

Sue Kopfle, chief human resources officer for the health system, said the policy is the norm in health care.

"While we share a common mission, the patient care we provide makes us very different from the rest of campus," Kopfle said in a statement. "Lives depend on us staying open."

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COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU plans snow day rescheduling

By Andrea Braxton

February 4, 2011 | 7:01 p.m. CST

COLUMBIA — A mix of MU administrators, faculty and students will help resolve how to make up the recent snow days — a decision that could come next week.

Making up multiple snow days is a challenge MU administrators haven't dealt with before. Classes haven't been canceled twice in one year, let alone three times in a row.

A group of administrators and faculty met Friday morning to brainstorm possible options for making up the days.

Faculty Council members are considering possibilities, said Leona Rubin, chair of the executive committee. Students and other faculty will also be asked to comment.

Rubin said they hope to reach a decision next week.

“Some professors might have to come up with their own ways of making up those days,” she said. “But we would like to give them an option.”

Missourinet

Report: Average MO payday loan interest rate at 445% (AUDIO)

by Ryan Famuliner on February 7, 2011

in [Business, Finance, Legislature](#)

A state reports shows some interesting developments in Missouri's payday loan industry.

Brenda Procter with the University of Missouri Extension helps educate Missourians on predatory lending. She explains the findings of the 2011 Payday Lender General Assembly report.

"The number of licenses being issued is down by roughly 19% and the number of loans are down. What's, I guess, disturbing to me is that the interest rate being charged on the loans, the typical interest rate, is now 445% APR. So the costs are going up, and the number of participants in that market is going down," Procter said.

Procter says she's not really sure what to make of this; whether it's the payday loan stores trying to keep revenue up as the market shrinks, or whether there's just fewer businesses because the old ones are getting bigger.

"I wonder if it has a little bit to do with some of the regulatory pressure because payday lending has been a hot topic the last two years in the legislature. I wonder if maybe some of them are getting cold feet, because I'm sort of hard-pressed to explain why the number (of licenses) dropped so much over the last two years," Procter said.

She says she doesn't expect any payday loan legislation to pass at the state level this year, but she is encouraged by a new bipartisan workgroup looking at the issue.

"Policy is not my job, making laws is not my job. But any time a report like this comes out that shows that much impact on low-income consumers, I feel like we need to get the word out there. Hopefully those who do make policy will figure out something they can do to protect consumers a little bit better because 445% is not good for anyone," Procter said.

You can view the Division of Finance's summary of the study by [following this link](#) to a .pdf of the letter sent to Governor Nixon.



ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Txt msgs bulk of secondary violations at Missouri

Posted: Saturday, February 5, 2011 1:29 pm

Secondary NCAA violations in all divisions have increased by nearly 50 percent over the past five years, with many of the missteps involving text messages between recruits and coaches, a Missouri newspaper reported.

That was the case at the University of Missouri, where 32 of the 77 secondary violations committed by the school's athletic department in 2009 and 2010 involved either text messaging or the Internet, the Columbia Daily Tribune reported.

Most of those infractions involved coaches sending text messages to recruits, which is banned until a high school athlete signs a letter of intent. The violations also involved improper use of instant messages and Twitter.

The violations found by the newspaper through a public records request include:

_ A sophomore student manager for the football team initiated a public Facebook conversation with a junior prospect and posted photos of recruits at a 2010 home game against Oklahoma;

_ A university employee linked to a newspaper article touting a high-profile commitment on the school's official Twitter account.

_ A women's track and field assistant responded to three texts from a recruit who had become ill overnight during her official visit to campus. Even though the prospect initiated the contact to inform the coach of her illness, the entire track and field coaching staff received a one-week ban from having any written or phone contact with all recruits.

The NCAA considers secondary violations as "inadvertent or isolated," providing only a minimal recruiting or competitive advantage. The penalties are generally far less onerous than cases deemed as major infractions.

"With Facebook and Twitter and eBay, we could have a full-time position just for Internet monitoring, and they'd be 40-hours-a-week busy," said Mitzi Clayton, Missouri's assistant athletic director for compliance.

The Missouri compliance department publishes a monthly newsletter highlighting recent NCAA rule changes and holds group sessions for coaches four times a year. Coaches also must pass an annual exam in order to recruit each season.

Communicating with recruits via texts, instant messages, online chat rooms or message boards is banned. Facebook messages to prospects are allowed because they are similar to e-mails _ but posting on a recruit's wall violates bylaws barring contact in open forums.

Women's softball coach Ehren Earleywine called it a struggle to keep up with NCAA rules interpretations that don't usually keep pace with the technological innovations that can stretch the limits of existing rules.

"We get written up for things, and we have zero knowledge that we broke a rule," he said. "Even if you're a coach and you study them, the book is really big and it's hard to know them all. Sometimes your knee-jerk reaction is not a legal one. It's just to be cordial or courteous, and the next thing you know it's a violation."

One of the softball program's violations involved a coach providing a free meal to a high school coach the staff member had known since college.

In another instance, the team mistakenly billed a recruit and her parents \$1.04 less than the value of their three meals with the softball staff during an official visit. The recruit made a \$1.04 donation to charity to make up for the violation.

The Missouri football team reported 17 secondary violations to the NCAA over the past two years, according to the Tribune. Nine of those violations involved sending impermissible text messages to recruits _ including one instance in which a coach reflexively responded after a prospect informed him that he would be late for an unofficial visit because of a flight delay.

The Tigers men's basketball team reported eight secondary violations in the past two years, including an instance where the team's strength-and-conditioning coaches gave players fish oil supplements over a seven-month period beginning in June 2008, thinking the tablets were legal to dispense because they did not contain any banned substances.

When the NCAA placed Texas Tech on two years' probation in January after coaches sent almost 1,000 text messages to football, softball and golf recruits, former Red Raiders football coach Mike Leach said he often didn't know whom he was texting.

"Somebody would say, 'Merry Christmas,' and I would say 'Merry Christmas' back," Leach said, according to the NCAA report. "Or I would get, 'Nice win against A&M,' and I would reply, 'Thanks.'"

Coaches and other employees from Missouri's 20 athletic programs send an average of 40,000 to 45,000 text messages each month, Clayton said.

Missouri baseball coach Tim Jamieson thinks the text ban will soon be lifted in a further nod to today's digital realities.

"I've got 12-year-old, 13-year-old boys, they don't even know how to talk on the phone," Jamieson said. "They just text. I really envision within a short period of time the text rule will go out the door."

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

No-texting law frustrates MU coaches

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 5, 2011 | 4:13 p.m. CST

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CALGARY HERALD

The Sydney Morning Herald
smh.com.au

JakartaGlobe



INTERNATIONAL
NEWS

A version of this story appeared in outlets around the world.

Human brain smaller, but better

Shrinking size puzzles scientists

By Jean-Louis Santini, Agence France-Presse February 7, 2011

Human brains have shrunk over the past 30,000 years, puzzling scientists who argue it is not a sign we are growing dumber but that evolution is making the key motor leaner and more efficient.

The average size of modern humans -- the Homo sapiens -- has decreased about 10 per cent during that period -- from 1,500 to 1,359 cubic centimetres, the size of a tennis ball.

Women's brains, which are smaller on average than those of men, have experienced an equivalent drop in size.

These measurements were taken using skulls found in Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

"I'd called that a major downsizing in an evolutionary eye blink," John Hawks of the University of Michigan told Discover magazine.

But other anthropologists note that brain shrinkage is not very surprising since the stronger and larger we are, the more grey matter we need to control this larger mass.

The Neanderthal, a cousin of the modern human who disappeared about 30 millenniums ago for still unknown reasons, was far more massive and had a larger brain.

The Cro-Magnons who left cave paintings of large animals in the monumental Lascaux cave over 17,000 years ago were the Homo sapiens with the biggest brain. They were also stronger than their modern descendants.

Psychology professor David Geary of the University of Missouri said these traits were necessary to survive in a hostile environment.

He has studied the evolution of skull sizes 1.9 million to 10,000 years old as our ancestors and cousins lived in an increasingly complex social environment.

Geary and his colleagues used population density as a measure of social complexity, with the hypothesis that the more humans are living closer together, the greater the exchanges between group, the division of labour and the rich and varied interactions between people.

They found that brain size decreased as population density increased.

"As complex societies emerged, the brain became smaller because people did not have to be as smart to stay alive," Geary told AFP.

But the downsizing does not mean modern humans are dumber than their ancestors -- rather, they simply developed different, more sophisticated forms of intelligence, said Brian Hare, an assistant professor of anthropology at Duke University.

He noted that the same phenomenon can be observed in domestic animals compared to their wild counterparts.

So while huskies may have smaller brains than wolves, they are smarter and more sophisticated because they can understand human communicative gestures, behaving similarly to human children.

"Even though the chimps have a larger brain (than the bonobo, the closest extant relative to humans), and even though a wolf has a much larger brain than dogs, dogs are far more sophisticated, intelligent and flexible, so intelligence is not very well linked to brain size," Hare explained.



MU plans Black History Month events

By Rudi Keller

On Jan. 11, 1865, before the guns of the Civil War fell silent, Missouri Gov. Thomas Fletcher issued a proclamation abolishing slavery in the state.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The University of Missouri will present more than 40 events ranging from movie screenings and lectures to study projects in the Columbia Public Schools as part of its Black History Month program. Public events this week include:

Tuesday: "The Sanitizing of Huckleberry Finn,"

presented by Thomas Quirk of the Department of English. Noon to 1 p.m., Walter Daniel Resource Center, 325 Gentry Hall.

We Speak Spoken Word Series, with a reading by Anand Prahlad, Department of English, and an Open Microphone Contest, 7 to 9 p.m., Stotler Lounge II, Memorial Union.

Wednesday: "The Underground Railroad" film and discussion, 6:30 p.m., Armory Sports Center, 701 E.

Ash St.

Thursday: "Invisible and Voiceless: Disenfranchisement Today," David Mitchell, School of Law, noon to 1 p.m., Black Studies Conference Room, 313A Gentry Hall.

African Mbira musical presentation, Anand Prahlad, Department of English, 5:30 p.m., State Historical

Society of Missouri.

Stories from Missouri Black History, featuring storyteller Gladys Cogswell. 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., location to be announced.

"Hotel Rwanda," and "Rwanda, the True Narrative: From 'Civil War' to Genocide," films, 7 to 9 p.m.,

Rangira Gallimore, Department of Romance Languages and Literature.

Saturday: Meet Ellis Marsalis: Patriarch of the First Family of Jazz, 7 p.m., Monsanto Auditorium, Life

Sciences Center.

Sunday: African-American Art and Artists, family event grades 1 through 8, 2 to 3:30 p.m., Museum of Art and Archaeology.

Ellis Marsalis Quartet, 7 p.m., Windsor Ballroom, Holiday Inn Select, 2200 I-70 Drive SW.

Source: MU Black History Month Committee

The act officially freed more than 100,000 blacks held in bondage, large numbers of whom lived in Central Missouri counties. Many had already achieved freedom. A large percentage of black males had enlisted in the U.S. Army — for which their masters received a payment of \$300 — and families fleeing from Southern-sympathizing masters found the protection of the Union forces.

But freedom was just a first step, and blacks, in the United States and in Africa, have been striving to overcome bigotry and legal systems that until recently relegated them to second-class status. The two will be joined in the theme of this year's University of Missouri Black History Month program, titled "Civil War and the Struggle for Black Self-Determination."

Several events, including those intended to kick off the program, were canceled last week because of the blizzard that shut down the campus for three days. The keynote program, a screening of Kevin Willmott's mockumentary "Confederate States of America," a biting satire of what might have been if the South won the war, has been rescheduled for 7 p.m. Feb. 16 in Gannett Auditorium, said Peggy Placier, associate professor in the College of Education and co-chair of MU's Black History Month Committee.

The national theme for Black History Month is "African-Americans and the Civil War," Placier said. The MU committee decided to expand the theme to include the national and international struggle for black rights to show how civil rights battles in the United States parallel those in colonial empires, she said.

"We have a very international campus," Placier said. "We had some people on our committee who thought there are things going on today that are legacies of that period. To both interest the international members of our community and interest the students, because the Civil War was so long ago, we thought that we would make a broader umbrella."

Presenters will tell stories, offer films and demonstrate African musical instruments. And they will tie current trends and conditions to the impact of slavery, segregation-era Jim Crow laws and colonialism.

The national debate over immigration includes an attempt to alter the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Passed in the aftermath of the war, it made anyone born on U.S. soil a citizen and requires states to recognize that they cannot take away any rights or privileges guaranteed under the Constitution.

“The so-called Civil War amendments are still very alive today in all our legal actions,” Placier said.

After being denied education by state slave codes before the war, returning black veterans and their communities built schools and universities, including Lincoln University in Jefferson City. Debra Greene, professor of history at Lincoln, will speak about the school’s Civil War roots at noon Feb. 24 in 323 Gentry Hall at MU.

“The hopes for education among black citizens after the Civil War was extremely high,” she said. “African-Americans have a strong belief that education is an equalizer. I do believe there have been intentional policy decisions of the people in power that have blocked those hopes.”

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