

MAR 24 2011



John Critser, 1953-2011

John K. Critser, 57, of Columbia passed away Monday, March 21, 2011, at Boone Hospital Center.

A memorial gathering will be from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, March 25, at Parker Funeral Service.

John was born Nov. 7, 1953, in Galesburg, Ill., to Kenneth Critser and Bernice Sandall Critser.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth S. Critser, of 33 years.

He received a bachelor's degree from Ripon College in Ripon, Wis., and a master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Madison, Wis.

John served as the Gilbreath-McLorn professor for comparative medicine at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

John was passionate about scientific research and preparing graduate students.

Survivors include: his wife, Beth, of Columbia; a son, Paul Critser, and wife Julie of Indianapolis, Ind.; a daughter, Rebecca Critser, of Indianapolis, Ind.; a brother, James Critser, and wife Diana of Monmouth, Ill.; a grandchild, Henry Critser; a niece, Jessie Critser; and a nephew, Dirk Critser.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Memorials may be given to Cryobiology Research Institute Inc.-Critser Endowment, 1102 Indiana Ave., Indianapolis, Ind., 46202, or Monmouth-Roseville High School, Attn: Jeff Brian, 325 W. First Ave., Monmouth, Ill., 61462.

Online condolences may be left at www.parkerfuneralservice.com.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Telling stories may help dementia

BY MICHELE MUNZ • mmunz@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8263 | Posted: Wednesday, March 23, 2011 7:30 am | [No Comments Posted](#)

People suffering with memory loss lose their ability to recall facts, but they never lose their imagination.

That's what led University of Missouri researchers to study a program called TimeSlips Creative Storytelling Project, which encourages participants with dementia to develop a story about a humorous or provocative image — such as two dogs staring at each other through car windows or a person jumping across a canyon.

The researchers found that making up stories as a group significantly improved their mood and increased their communication.

"TimeSlips provides rich, engaging opportunities for person with dementia to interact with others while exercising their individual strengths," said lead researcher Anne Phillips, assistant professor in the Sinclair School of Nursing. "We weren't asking people to remember facts or recall information. We were asking for imaginative and creative responses to a picture."

During an hour-long session, a trained facilitator records participants' responses and helps develop a narrative. Phillips received the 12-hour training, and she held sessions twice a week for six weeks at six long-term care facilities in central Missouri.

Phillips and her team found that participants had increased expressions of pleasure and social interaction during the program. The improvements lasted for a couple weeks after the last session was over, she said.

"It encouraged participants to be actively involved and to experience moments of recognition, creation and celebration," Phillips said.

Another recent study of 20 nursing homes showed that TimeSlips increased meaningful interactions between staff and residents. Staff attitudes toward people with dementia also improved.

Anne Basting, whose doctoral studies involved theater arts and aging, created the TimeSlips program over 10 years ago. The playwright and University of Wisconsin professor had failed in an effort to engage dementia patients with drama exercises. She decided to see if they responded better to making things up.

The success of that first effort led Basting to create a model program. Today, about 30 TimeSlips trainers work in 11 centers across the country to certify others in leading sessions.

The program, however, is not offered in Missouri or the St. Louis area. Phillips said she hopes to see that change.

"I would like to see this added to the repertoire of fun, stimulating activities that are done in long-term care settings," she said. "It's not difficult to learn how to do, and it's inexpensive to operate. Basically, you need magic markers and a flip-chart of paper."

For more information, go to timeslips.org.



Plant oil may help reduce obesity

Published: March. 23. 2011 at 5:58 PM

COLUMBIA, Mo., March 23 (UPI) -- **Sterculic oil, a type of plant oil, may be able to reduce belly fat in humans, a University of Missouri researcher says.**

James Perfield, assistant professor of food science in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, says sterculic oil is extracted from seeds of the *Sterculia foetida* tree and the oil contains unique fatty acids known to suppress a bodily enzyme associated with insulin resistance.

Previous research indicates reducing the enzyme in rodents improves their insulin sensitivity and reduces the risk of diabetes or heart disease, Perfield says.

"This research paves the way for potential use in humans," Perfield says in a statement. "Reducing belly fat is a key to reducing the incidence of serious disease and this oil could have a future as a nutritional supplement."

In the study involving rats genetically bred to have a lot of abdominal fat, Perfield added sterculic oil to the feed of some of the rats. After 13 weeks, Perfield found rats given a diet supplemented with sterculic oil had less abdominal fat and a decreased risk of developing diabetes.

Perfield presented the findings at the Diabetes, Insulin Resistance and Metabolic Dysfunction Symposium in Keystone, Colo.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU research fellow found dead

By Michael Davis

March 23, 2011 | 2:14 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — Columbia police confirmed Wednesday afternoon that an MU research fellow who had been reported missing has been found dead.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol found the body of Norman "Paul" Nolen, 27, inside his car on the Interstate 70 exit ramp at Midway.

Nolen, of Memphis, Tenn., was a research fellow in the MU College of Veterinary Medicine. He was last seen Saturday and had not reported to work since that time. His family reported him missing to Columbia police on Monday.

His family was in Columbia searching for him, Marcus Jones, his cousin, said.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Record number of MU students to take Alternative Spring Break

By Michael Davis

March 23, 2011 | 8:43 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA – A contingent of MU students will trek to distant locations for spring break next week, but they will not be sunbathing on beaches.

They are participants in Alternative Spring Break, a student-led organization that sends volunteers across the nation to complete service projects.

In its 20th year, the organization set a record for the number of participants. Last year 88 students were sent to eight locations throughout the United States, but that total more than doubled with the 190 participants and 17 trips planned this year, according to the organization's website.

Notable trips include a visit to New Orleans where students will help to rebuild the French Quarter after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Students in Ohio will work with service dogs that help disabled individuals, while volunteers in South Dakota will construct houses for Habitat for Humanity to support a Native American reservation experiencing a housing crisis.

The steep increase in participation is not based on luck. Raha Obaei, president of the organization, said the executive board set a goal of 400 applicants this year, but the overall number of applicants far exceeded this figure.

Organizers placed stickers around campus, wrote messages on chalkboards in classrooms and networked with other student organizations to increase involvement, Obaei said. This "marketing influx," as she called it, worked well.

"I really do believe that these trips and opportunities are life-changing," Obaei said. "People I've talked to have said that it's changed what they want to do with their lives."

Last year, Obaei visited Birmingham, Ala., to volunteer for AIDS outreach efforts. Obaei called the trip "incredible" and said their work helped to humanize the issue of AIDS and HIV.

Liz Augustine, an executive board member for the organization, said people learn things they never knew on these trips.

"These trips are very humbling and definitely work to put things into perspective for college students," Augustine said.

The changed perspectives of these young men and women often lead them to come back and change their majors, said Bryan Goers, an adviser for the organization and a graduate assistant in the Center for Leadership Development and Community Involvement.

"We strive really hard to find trips that differ from experiences people can get in Missouri and Columbia," Goers said. "We are exposing these people to populations and people they are not used to. It helps them when they come back to be more active in the community."

Goers said he believes that Alternative Spring Break is one of the best leadership programs on campus. Volunteers from past trips can apply to become site leaders, which offers each student the unique opportunity to manage the volunteers and lead their respective groups during the week.

According to its website, students interested in Alternative Spring Break must apply, and if accepted, pay a \$200 fee to go on a trip. The rest of the money needed for the trips comes from fundraising efforts by the students.



Photography project gives women new perspective on living with HIV

By Véronique LaCapra

More than a million Americans are living with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. About a quarter of them are women, and in St. Louis and throughout the country, African-American women are disproportionately affected.

An HIV diagnosis can lead not just to debilitating medical problems, but to social stigma and isolation. But as St. Louis Public Radio's Véronique LaCapra reports, a photography project is giving some HIV-positive women a new way to look at their disease and its challenges.

University of Missouri-Columbia researcher Michelle Teti has been doing HIV prevention work for about 10 years. She says she was struck by what she saw as a mismatch between what public health programs were offering and what HIV-positive women said they needed.

"Sometimes HIV wasn't even the biggest priority," Teti said. "They might not have had housing. They might have been in violent relationships. So I decided to take a step back and find ways to let women identify their health priorities, and identify problems, and identify solutions."

With the help of health organizations in Philadelphia and St. Louis, Teti recruited HIV-positive women to participate in a photography project. She gave the women digital cameras, taught them how to use them, and sent them out to photograph their lives.

Some women took pictures of themselves. Others photographed people in their support networks, or specific challenges they were facing, like substandard housing. And many, Teti says, used the photographs to show how they had worked to change their lives after being diagnosed with HIV.

"A lot of women when they found out they were living with this virus felt kind of desperate or hopeless, and a lot of women described a transition, or transformation, to a place where they were more hopeful and healthy," Teti said.

“It’s going to take a lot of work, but it can be fixed”

In December 2001, 26-year-old St. Louis resident Tamika Taylor Jackson found out she was HIV-positive.

“When I first was diagnosed it was a very hard and emotional thing for me,” Jackson said.

While she was in the hospital, her husband left her. Then the bank foreclosed on her house, leaving her with three young children, and nowhere to live.

“And some of the closest people that I thought would be there for me was not there for me because they thought I was just a big disease, a big germ,” Jackson said.

Jackson says she used the photography project to show how she has transformed her life since her diagnosis.

She shows me a photograph of a caved-in section of pavement on a dark, rain-soaked street. She says that big, deep hole reminded her of how broken she looked and felt when she first found out she had HIV -- and of how much better she’s doing, now.

“I said as big as this looks, and it looks like it can’t even be repaired, but it can. It can. [There’s] hope for it! Said looks like it’s going to take a lot of work, but it can be fixed,” Jackson said.

Shoes to show progress

Jackson took pictures of the houses she’s lived in. She took pictures of the medications she takes, and of the spiritual books she reads, for inspiration. And she took pictures of her shoes. Not real shoes to wear, but miniature ceramic ones, in brightly-colored patterns. She has about a dozen of them, prominently displayed on shelves near her front door.

“Every time I’ve accomplished something, I always go out and find a shoe to reward myself with. I’ve made progress, I’ve stepped up, I’ve achieved something, so I’m gonna go find me a shoe,” Jackson said.

The first one was a gold boot.

“And I purchased that when I realized to myself that, OK, I want a divorce. Then came I believe the zebra-striped shoe at the top,” Jackson said.

That shoe was for finding a place to live.

“Then,” Jackson said, “came the yellow shoe.”

That was when she met her boyfriend. Jackson bought a shoe when she found a better house, when she got a job, when she bought a car, and she bought a shoe when she moved into the home she lives in with her children, today.

“And I was like oh thank you, I’m doing it, I’m moving up!” Jackson said.

Holding on to transformation

Researcher Michelle Teti says she hopes all the women in the photography project can hold on to that feeling of positive transformation.

“They’re just really strong women and really just committed to being healthy and being better, and this process allows them to reflect on that,” Teti said.

Teti says participating in the photography project can give HIV-positive women a new way to look at their lives, to figure out what they may still want to change and to congratulate themselves for what they’ve done right.

You can see some of Jackson’s photographs above.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Arkansas pulls Anderson back in

BY VAHE GREGORIAN | Posted: Thursday, March 24, 2011 12:15 am

COLUMBIA, MO. • Passing on a \$2 million a year offer to stay at the University of Missouri, basketball coach Mike Anderson is leaving after five seasons that produced three NCAA Tournament teams and an annual flood of suitors for his services.

After weeks of abruptly dismissing questions about his interest in the University of Arkansas job and after Mizzou offered a \$500,000 raise and contract extension it believed Monday would keep him, Anderson is going back to the school where he spent 17 seasons as an assistant coach under his mentor, Nolan Richardson.

"It is a tremendous honor to be named the head men's basketball coach at the University of Arkansas." Anderson said in a statement released by Arkansas.

The Arkansas announcement came at the same time Anderson was meeting with his players in Columbia to tell them that he was leaving. Anderson avoided speaking with reporters.

Arkansas' offer - \$2.2 million a year for seven years, according to media reports in Arkansas - trumped an offer from MU that multiple sources told the Post-Dispatch would have elevated his annual salary from just over \$1.5 million to about \$2 million and placed him among the 20 highest-paid college coaches. Arkansas also will pay the University of Missouri a \$550,000 buyout of Anderson's contract, which had five years left.

While players late Wednesday night said they understood Anderson's reasons for leaving, it seemed an apparent change of heart after statements he'd made declaring his dedication to Mizzou's future.

At Columbia Regional Airport, Anderson stayed on a private plane after returning from Tulsa, Okla. - where he was attending a funeral as well as meeting with Arkansas - as reporters were harangued by airport workers to move behind a fence.

That was a stark contrast to what Anderson had conveyed in recent weeks.

"I've always stated, 'I'm a Missouri Tiger,'" he said March 13 after Arkansas fired John Pelphrey, adding, "I'm excited about what's taking place here."

Asked then if he would talk to his players about the situation, he said, "They know me. and that's where the trust comes in."

On Wednesday, the trust seemed shaken as behind the scenes it was clear MU had felt deceived and emotional players left their meeting with Anderson.

Junior forward Steve Moore, the first to leave Mizzou Arena, appeared to wipe a tear away as he burst by reporters without speaking and pulled out quickly in his car. Junior guard Marcus Denmon was in tears.

At a news conference later, Denmon acknowledged anger but also understanding of Anderson's decision and somewhat sharply added, "I play for Missouri."

The awkward nature of Anderson's departure created disillusionment among a faction of MU fans, who by the end were welcoming the change - particularly in light of the fact it was the third straight year Anderson had publicly considered other jobs.

This time in particular, the process was frenzied and confusing amid conflicting reports that seemed to follow strategic leaks.

For all the smoke, though, Anderson didn't explore permission to speak with Arkansas until late Tuesday afternoon while in Tulsa as he also was attending memorial services for a longtime friend. MU athletics director Mike Alden asked Anderson to sleep on the idea, but as of early afternoon Wednesday Anderson formally sought permission.

MU granted it and simultaneously yanked the contract extension offer, Alden said.

In time, Anderson will be remembered less for how he went out than for how he stabilized and revitalized the program.

When he took over five seasons ago, MU was in the dregs after the chaotic and corrupt regime of Quin Snyder. MU had gone 44-47 in the three years precipitating Snyder's firing and, more significant, still was in the throes of NCAA probation after the transgressions committed under Snyder.

It was symptomatic of the era that on the very day Anderson was to be hired from Alabama-Birmingham, the University of Missouri Board of Curators was meeting to consider firing Alden.

Alden smiled and immediately recalled the date, March 26, 2006, and said Anderson could easily have walked away then but instead was undaunted and in the process began a time of healing for the school.

Anderson, 111-57 at Mizzou, didn't purge the past immediately and made some recruiting mistakes of his own. But he steadily cleaned up the program and took MU to its first Big 12 tournament title in 2009 and into the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2003.

More surprisingly, that team advanced to the Elite Eight before falling to Connecticut 82-75, a game short of what would have been Mizzou's first Final Four appearance.

While MU went from 31-7 that season to 23-11 in each of the last two, the program is infinitely better shape now than it was when Anderson took over.

Between that and the notion it was ready to pay Anderson \$2 million a year, it figures to be able to lure a very attractive replacement for Anderson.

"It has to be somebody who wants to be at Mizzou," Alden said as he began looking to the future. "This is a special place."

Considering Anderson's flirtations with Georgia two years ago and Oregon last year, Alden would be negligent if he didn't have a short list long since assembled.

Numerous possibilities exist, of course, but among names that MU may weigh: Purdue coach Matt Painter, who makes less than Anderson did at MU; up-and-coming Missouri State coach Cuonzo Martin, who probably has too little experience as a head coach to be ideal; and a host of mid-major coaches in the spotlight now - including Butler's Brad Stevens.

After taking his team to the Final Four last year Stevens showed little interest in leaving the school and after barging back into the Sweet 16 this season, he probably could name his price and school.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Bernie: Anderson's departure leaves a sour taste

BY BERNIE MIKLASZ, Post-Dispatch Sports Columnist | Posted: Thursday, March 24, 2011 12:20 am

I'm going to try to show some manners here. I appreciate the job Mike Anderson did at Missouri. The program had virtually bottomed out when Anderson arrived in 2006, and he built it back up, turning weakness into improved health.

Anderson didn't make it to a Final Four, didn't overtake Kansas, didn't win a regular-season Big 12 title, didn't win the recruiting battles against Bill Self (KU) or Rick Barnes (Texas). But Anderson made Missouri basketball matter again. He put the Tigers back into the national rankings and returned them to the NCAA Tournament for three consecutive years.

And I don't blame Anderson for wanting to be at Arkansas. Look, Arkansas is in his DNA. It's the place that made his career possible. It's his basketball heritage. Anderson played an important role as Nolan Richardson's top assistant during the Arkansas glory years. It would be naïve and petty to rip him for feeling a personal pull from Fayetteville, for responding to the need to return to home, to his roots.

And I will refrain from blasting Anderson from walking out on his players. I don't like it, but let's be honest: A short time from now, Mizzou will hire a new coach, and that coach will be doing the same thing. He will be leaving his players to trade in his old job for a newer and more desirable opportunity in Columbia.

So let's not engage in hypocrisy, OK? Missouri will soon lure another team's coach away, just as MU persuaded Mike Anderson to leave UAB five years ago.

This is the business. It's tawdry. It's frequently unethical. But this is what coaches do. They maneuver their way into jobs and talk about wanting to stay forever. But before you know it, they begin scanning the horizon in search of a more lucrative gig. They break promises. They break commitments. They break contracts. And they break their players' hearts. The guys that do stay — coaches such as Jim Boeheim (Syracuse) and Mike Krzyzewski (Duke) — are an increasingly rare exception.

It's naïve to think that mercenaries will look out for anyone but themselves. That said, Anderson's departure was especially slimy. With the assistance of his agent, Jimmy Sexton, Anderson talked out of both sides of his mouth to convince Mizzou and Arkansas that he wanted to be with them.

Anderson misled Missouri director of athletics Mike Alden and the MU administration. Anderson clearly gave Mizzou a signal that he'd stay as long as the university sweetened his contract to put him at about \$2 million a year, and MU acted on that request.

Anderson has several times said in recent weeks that he planned to be at Missouri a long time. that he was happy at Mizzou, that happiness was the important thing.

And if that wasn't laying it on thick enough, Anderson called at least one recruiting target, Otto Porter, last weekend to assure the kid that he planned to stay at Missouri.

Anderson misled everyone. And he burned Mizzou.

Operating in good faith, Alden made a genuine attempt to give the restless coach the respect, the money, that he sought. Even though Alden lost respect in the process — because many Mizzou fans deemed it foolish and wasteful to give Anderson \$2 million a year — Alden took Anderson at his word, only to be manipulated by the agent and his client.

Alden and MU had already given Anderson a big raise in 2009, when Georgia came calling after Anderson led the Tigers on a joy ride to the Elite Eight. But less than a year later, Anderson had the audacity to go on a listening tour and flirted with Oregon. And even after Arkansas entered the coach-search contest, Alden still believed that Anderson was worth the trouble, and the money. Alden found more cash for Anderson, to pump the contract up to \$2 million a year.

And then Anderson betrayed him.

And the Missouri fans who supported Anderson.

I suppose it's fair to blame Alden for falling for the con, for trusting a man who already had shown little regard for honoring a commitment, for trying to make yet another investment in Anderson's integrity. It was a sucker's bet. And Alden lost it.

But you know what? Alden can still win this. The AD will be under enormous pressure to hire another coach. Alden took a gamble on Quin Snyder and ultimately struck out. Alden was an easy mark for Anderson's game of three-card monte. And now Alden must get the next hire right to save face.

Alden has done a lot of terrific things at Missouri, but there's nothing as important as the football and basketball programs. They're the revenue sports, the sports that make it rain. And the only way Alden can save face now is to make a good hire.

This isn't an ideal time to be looking for a coach, and it won't be easy for the next coach to implement a more traditional system in the aftermath of Anderson's track-meet style.

Mizzou has to convert to a new way of playing the game, away from the helter-skelter basketball. And the remaining players may struggle to adapt. The new coach may not be

enamored with them, and they may not like the new coach. You just never know how this will go. And recruiting, at least for a while, could be interrupted.

The new MU coach has to overlook the immediate issues and take a longer, wider view. The Mizzou job is attractive. The facilities are first-rate. The fan support is strong. The recruiting base is solid. The national exposure is good. The Big 12 Conference, at least for now, is among the best in the land.

This may not be a so-called destination job, but it holds appeal. Missouri clearly has money to spend, and Alden can wave that stack of cash around as bait. Coaches love the money.

And there's another reason the MU job should interest some fine candidates: The new coach will instantly become the most popular man in Boone County.

It wasn't easy for Snyder to succeed the living legend, Norm Stewart. It wasn't smooth for Anderson. The Anderson style of basketball, while successful over the last three years, was irritating to watch at times. Even those of us who respect Anderson's work grew tired of watching the same frenetic game — with the same, stupid mistakes — over and over again.

By now, I don't think any reasonable person will resent the new coach for not being Norm Stewart. And I think a lot of people are ready for a change in strategy in Mizzou's approach to the game. And I think it's safe to say many fans are upset at Anderson for the way he duped Mizzou after the university went to great lengths to satisfy his wishes.

So the new guy won't have to worry about replacing a legend, or succeeding a wildly successful, popular coach. The new man is replacing a coach who ran away, so he'll be fully embraced by Mizzou fans.

What should Mizzou be looking for? There's time to explore this in depth in the coming days. But you'd hope that Alden can find someone who's been a successful head coach and not a perky assistant. Someone who's familiar with the power-conference terrain — though that shouldn't be an end-all requirement. Certainly a coach who has displayed a flair for recruiting. There are many possibilities.

Above all else, Alden needs to find a coach who wants to be a Missouri man. A coach who appreciates being here. A coach who won't feel insecure just because he coaches on a court named for Norm Stewart. And a coach who won't be slumming for another job, an increased payday, as soon as he wins a few games. Missouri had to put up with this nonsense for three consecutive years.

And this should be Alden's operating principle: Never again.

"This is a special place," Alden said during Wednesday night's news conference. "This is a place a coach should want to be, and for a long time."

Get it done, Alden. Your best revenge on Mike Anderson? Find a coach to make Mizzou fans celebrate — and soon forget — Anderson's classless departure.

Missouri system curator says professor pay must be raised

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

After receiving a disappointing budget update this week, University of Missouri System curator Warren Erdman defended increasing merit pay for professors, calling salaries “embarrassingly low.”

The Board of Curators plans a 2 percent increase in the salary pool for merit pay even though the four-campus system may be looking at a 2012 deficit that’s more than \$10 million larger than expected.

“I’ve been frustrated since I came on the board that we haven’t been able to address the total compensation package to make our salaries more competitive with our peer institutions,” said Erdman of Kansas City.

“Budgeting is all about setting priorities, and while I’m only one voice, for me, increasing the salary pool for merit pay is a top priority.”

The final budget won’t be ready until later this spring, but this week the vice president for finance, Nikki Krawitz, told curators that they are more likely to see a \$53 million shortfall than the \$42 million projected earlier in the year.

The latest prediction includes an average 5.5 percent tuition increase.

Krawitz said that with such a gaping hole in the budget, the system will have to cut back somewhere. She suggested campuses cut back on deferred building maintenance.

Erdman said campuses also may save some money by eliminating programs that “may have outlasted their useful life.”

MU players stung by Anderson's decision to leave for Arkansas

By MIKE DeARMOND

COLUMBIA | First Missouri athletic director Mike Alden said them. Then junior guard Kim English said them. Then junior guard Marcus Denmon and finally junior forward Laurence Bowers.

They all said the right things. Went over the top to say the civil things, the things that would not tinge the sudden departure of Missouri basketball coach Mike Anderson to the University of Arkansas with simple venom.

But in the end, the three players — who as seniors next season will wind up playing with a new coach — acknowledged how much that punch in their gut hurt.

“Deep down inside, you’re mad,” Bowers said, “and really disappointed. Why us?”

Bowers caught himself, reverting to the original script, saying: “He was happy. You always want someone to be happy. You do what’s best for you. Going to Arkansas was what’s best for coach Anderson.

“Hopefully we’ll get someone in here that’s really good and our senior leadership will carry us to the promised land.

“Coach Anderson used to always stress about us winning a national championship. We still plan on winning that national championship although he’s at Arkansas.”

Denmon touched on the anger, passed over it, then noted that as a kid out of Kansas City, he had been brought up to do one thing on the basketball court.

“I play for Missouri,” Denmon said.

Kim English, from Baltimore, talked about the pride he has in the adoptive state he has grown to revere. And then addressed a statement Anderson had made about wanting to retire at Missouri — before reversing field to return to the school where he had spent 17 years as an assistant coach under Nolan Richardson.

"I think we'll reconcile it by winning," English said.

Phil Pressey, a freshman guard and the son of Anderson's former college roommate Paul Pressey, was not at the Wednesday night news conference with Alden and his three teammates, but he was later asked by KOMU-TV if he would follow Anderson to Arkansas.

"I don't know, man," he said.

Nowhere to be found was Anderson, stealing away from Mizzou Arena after a 7 p.m. team meeting, where he finally confirmed what his players already knew, and what Anderson had promised he would tell them before anyone else.

Anderson flew into Columbia late Wednesday afternoon after spending two days in Oklahoma attending the funeral of a close friend and thinking of his future at Arkansas. A cadre of reporters was waiting at Columbia Regional Airport, but airport officials went out of their way to disguise Anderson's arrival.

Reporters, standing outside a fence near the runway, saw a small airplane land but were told to move back. Two airport vehicles pulled up near the airplane, blocking the view of those who emerged from it and got into a waiting car.

Anderson's only words came in Arkansas' announcement, which was released at the same time he was talking to the MU players.

"I am extremely excited to once again be a part of this special university and Razorback athletics," Anderson said in the news release. "With the continued passionate support of all Razorback fans, I am confident that we will have the opportunity to succeed on and off the court and continue to build on the University of Arkansas' championship tradition."

While Anderson first had asked permission to talk with Arkansas on Tuesday night, Alden said it was not until 6:45 p.m. Wednesday that Anderson told Alden he was leaving.

That was 48 hours after Denmon said he had met with Anderson and asked him if the rumors and speculation he was hearing were true. Anderson told Denmon the decision would be hard. But Denmon could not have imagined what Wednesday night would feel like.

Anderson was making \$1.55 million a season but an offer for a raise to \$2 million per year and two additional years to his current seven-year contract reached fruition a week ago after five months of discussions.

Reports indicated Arkansas was offering only \$200,000 more a year to hire Anderson. But by the time he made his decision, the MU offer, Alden said, had been withdrawn, a condition to Anderson being allowed to talk to Arkansas. Anderson also has to pay a \$550,000 penalty for leaving.

Outside of the small room at Mizzou Arena on Wednesday night, reaction was equal parts understanding, anger and disillusionment on the part of MU boosters.

“We really wanted to keep him,” said Dennis Harper, the man who started the familiar and iconic Harpo’s franchise in Columbia. “We tried hard. In salary we upped the ante. But he’s an Arkansas guy and you can’t blame him.”

Paul Blackman, a longtime Missouri fan and booster from Kansas City, felt ultimately that he had misjudged Anderson.

“I always thought he was an honorable guy,” Blackman said, “but apparently not.”

Missouri should land an upgrade from Anderson

SAM MELLINGER

Mike Anderson is gone, and once the hurt and confusion of the moment fade away we'll all see that this is true:

Missouri basketball is better off without him.

Anderson spent five mostly *eh* seasons in charge of what could be one of the best 20 programs in the country, doing just enough to convince people that better days are always coming. On a scale of one to 10, Anderson performed like a 6 and figured out a way to be paid like a 9.

He made the last three NCAA Tournaments, including an Elite Eight, but his two greatest accomplishments are an impressive line of close friends who happened to sire good basketball players and a remarkable ability to convince his boss and other employers that he's worth much more than men who've done much more.

After a disappointing season in which he went 8-8 and tied for fifth in a mediocre Big 12, Anderson is now being paid the same as Mike Krzyzewski.

Let that sit for a second.

The \$2.2 million salary that Anderson and agent Jimmy Sexton were able to get from Arkansas is sports' biggest overachievement since Andy Roddick married Brooklyn Decker.

The Razorbacks are paying for a shiny Lexus and getting a perfectly adequate Honda.

This is where Mizzou's optimism should arise. The school offered an extension and a raise to \$2 million per year, enough to be among the sports' 12 highest-paid coaches. That money can now be spent on a better coach.

For that kind of money, Mizzou can find a man who won't lose 10 of his last 19 games in an undeniably disappointing season and then for the third consecutive spring pull up his skirt to flirt with another program.

For that kind of money, Mizzou can find a man who won't promise to tell his players first if he decides to bolt and then call a meeting after they'd already had every opportunity to know he's gone.

For that kind of money, Mizzou can find a man who won't say "I want to retire at Missouri," get offended when asked about his interest in another job ... and then three weeks later take the exact job he was being asked about.

Somewhere, Nick Saban smiles.

Look, some bad feelings are unavoidable. Coaching changes almost never go smoothly. Anderson is going home, with a significant raise, and good for him. But a handful of tact or a touch more success would've done some good.

Anderson did a lot of things well. It's easy now to forget what a mess Quin Snyder left, and until the last week, Anderson always carried himself and the program with class. But he hasn't accomplished enough to jerk people around like this.

When national championship coaches such as Bill Self or Billy Donovan consider other jobs, their fan bases grow understandably nervous.

When a fifth-place-in-the-Big-12 coach like Anderson leaves for another job, the fan base should look forward to an upgrade.

All of the coaches who make Anderson's new salary have accomplished much more. If this is the kind of money Missouri can pay its next coach, the school will be better off with someone else.

Mizzou is not an elite, destination job like North Carolina, Kentucky or (sorry) Kansas, but it should carry itself like a member of the next tier. The school is obviously able to pay like it.

Butler's Brad Stevens makes \$1 million per year. George Mason coach Jim Larranaga's salary is less than \$1 million. Each of those coaches has accomplished more than Anderson.

MU has the money and profile to make some awfully good coaches — Tubby Smith, Buzz Williams and Randy Bennett, just to name three — listen carefully.

Mizzou is the dominant program in the country's 18th-most populous state, with two major cities to recruit, a gorgeous arena with top-shelf facilities, and a passionate fan base waiting for something to be excited about.

At worst, it shouldn't be hard to find a coach as good as Anderson who won't have such an annoyingly wandering eye.

Because even after leaving the program in better shape than he found it, MU didn't come close to maximizing its potential under Anderson. He never coached a first-round NBA pick, for instance. Grandview High's Alec Burks was on campus but MU didn't offer him a scholarship.

Maybe if Anderson's old buddies had better genes, the Tigers would've averaged better than a fifth-place finish in the conference.

Instead, his teams were usually only good enough to be a dangerous lower seed in the NCAA Tournament.

The Tigers can be better than they've been. This should be a program that at least puts a little fear into Kansas.

The only danger here is the unknown. Mike Alden is MU's athletic director and he's the same guy who once chose Snyder over Bill Self. Mistakes can be made.

But Missouri isn't trying to replace a great coach.

Only a guy who figured out how to be treated like one.