

TROOST ^{1100 E} AVE

How one street became Kansas City's Wall

News // Page 2

A segment of the east side of the Berlin Wall at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. Kansas City Major Sly James has used the Berlin Wall analogy to symbolize the racial and socioeconomic divide between neighborhoods east and west of Troost Avenue, dubbed the 'Troost Wall.' "We need to quit acting like there's a Berlin Wall and a river without a bridge," James said at a fall 2011 UMKC town hall. Photo Illustration // Nathan Zoschke

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'Troost Wall' the product of Kansas City's long-running racial plight

Racist real estate practices leave urban decay

Jessica Turner Staff Writer

The perpetuation of Kansas City's segregation problem requires a history lesson.

"We didn't start out racially segregated," said Dr. Jacob Wagner, Director of UMKC's Urban Studies Program. "The Troost Wall is really a very recent creation of the 1970s."

The process of hyper-segregation in Kansas City began with J.C. Nichols, a man who Kevin Fox Gotham refers to in his book, "Race, Real Estate, and Uneven Development: The Kansas City Experience, 1900 - 2000," as "one of the first and most prominent developer-builders to promote the use and enforcement of explicitly racially restrictive covenants."

Nichols was the director of the Kansas City Real Estate Board for seven separate years, spanning a period of three decades. His practices in the '20s served as an example for other real estate companies to follow throughout the country.

"What the J.C. Nichols Company did was they made it so that everyone who owned a Nichols home also had to belong to the neighborhood association," said Whitney Terrell, UMKC's New Letters Writer-in-Residence.

His book, "The King of Kings County," was motivated by wording he found in

his aunt's deed that mandated white-only home ownership.

His aunt was the wife of J.C. Nichols' son, Miller Nichols.

"He didn't invent the racial covenant," Terrell said, "but he did invent the use of the neighborhood associations [to enforce them], and the idea that a racial covenant would be permanently renewable, that it would never go away, no matter who owns the home."

The '30s consisted of steering, blockbusting and redlining. This led to white flight, and it became increasingly difficult for African Americans to obtain loans.

"When folks came back from World War II, there was all this demand for housing and there was no housing, so there starts to be rapid construction again, but as that's happening, you've got that system that was invented in the 1930s—of racially biased lending—that's firmly in place in the '40s when people come back," Wagner said.

"While all of this is happening, you have an emerging Civil Rights Movement," he said. "So African Americans come back, they have just fought Nazism and racism in Europe, and they come back home and they're like, 'Hey, we just died in Europe to save this country and fight racism, and we come home and now we are treated with racism.'"

Although the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education ruling in 1954 outlawed segregation in public schools, it did little for racial integration in Kansas City.

In fact, it actually did the opposite.

"That was really when Troost became an important dividing line," Terrell said. "Because what happened was, they drew the school district boundaries at Troost. The effort was to preserve a white-only school in the southwest."

Almost 20 years later, in 1973, the federal government did not see sufficient integration progress in Kansas City. It ordered the school district to desegregate, but the residual policies of Nichols-era Kansas City made this a difficult process.

The subsequent decade is described in Tanner Colby's book "Some of My Best Friends Are Black: The Strange Story of Integration in America."

"In the 1980s, the Nichols Company and other developers went on a buying spree, scooping up land that buffered the Plaza and the Country Club District," Colby wrote. "Meanwhile, the black side of town remained the black side of town. The only time white people had to think about east of Troost was to remind themselves not to go there."

Joe Louis Mattox, a board member for the Historic Kansas City Foundation and

'Troost Wall' by the numbers

64113
(West of Oak Street)

96% white
\$103,000
Median Household Income

\$310,000
Median Home Value

64110
(Split by Troost Ave.)

46% black
46% white
\$44,500
Median Household Income

\$146,000
Median Home Value

64130
(East of Woodland Ave.)

91% black
\$26,000
Median Household Income

\$68,000
Median Home Value

Source: www.city-data.com,
www.zip-codes.com

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Inclement weather leads to class cancellations



Meredith Shea A&E Editor

Two large blizzards imperiled Kansas City's roads but gave students an unusual treat—snow days.

Classes were cancelled Monday evening and Tuesday this week and Thursday and Friday last week.

Students waited in anticipation last Wednesday for the University to call off classes a day in advance in preparation for Winter Storm Q.

UMKC was one of the last area schools to cancel class, as snow was forecasted to reach a new record.

Around 4 a.m. Thursday morning, students were awakened by the robotic phone call the University sends out in emergencies.

By mid-morning Wednesday, the entire Kansas City metro area was blanketed in snow falling at a heavy rate of up to four inches per hour to the south. At one point, Kansas City received more snow in one hour than the area has had in the last two years combined.

But this wasn't just any snow. It was thunder snow, snow accompanied by thunder and lightning during parts of the morning.

KCI airport measured 9.2 inches of snow, while areas to the south, like Overland Park, reported snow up to 13 inches deep.

The last major snowfall the area had was the blizzard of 2011, when Kansas City measured around nine inches of snow.

Cars were left stranded on the highway and exit ramps, many of which were towed to overflowing tow lots. Tow lots were so overflowed that tow trucks started moving cars to Arrowhead Stadium.

Even snow plows and ice trucks were stuck in the nasty conditions Q brought.

Those smart enough to move their cars into the garage before the storm were still surprised when they couldn't get out of their driveway without spending several hours shoveling.

Cars that were parallel parked on campus were unable to move without being dug out.

This week, Winter Storm Rocky is bringing an estimated 10 and 20 inches for the metro area, and cars are stuck once again.

Mayor Sly James asked Kansas City residents to park on the west side of streets running north and south, and park on the north side of streets running east and west to accommodate snow plows. Drivers are allowed to ignore no parking signs in order to comply.

Those who left cars parked overnight on campus were advised to park in one of UMKC's garages for a few days to avoid being stuck.

UMKC is littered with evidence of students taking advantage of their snow days. In front of Grant Hall, several snowmen stand, waiting to be knocked down by other students. Sled tracks are seen on some of the hills around campus in front of the Oak Street Residential Hall and behind the Oak Street Apartments.

Students looking for the best sledding hill in town should head to Suicide Hill in Brookside or hunt around for some of the less populated hills in the area. Kansas City has a lot to choose from.

Students who want to have fun after the next fresh snow can head to Snow Creek in Weston, Mo., where they can go tubing, skiing or snowboarding with special college prices.

Tubing is \$21 per student, while skiing and snowboarding are \$20 for a lift pass, and \$19 for equipment rental. Hours for this special price are 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., perfect for students' schedules.

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LEFT: Students push a car in front of the Oak Place Apartments on Friday. ABOVE: City snow plow trucks work their way across Oak Street on Friday. PHOTOS // Caleb-Michael Files

obituary Victim of JJ's blast was alumnus known for serving others



Megan Cramer. CREDIT //Facebook.com

Roze Brooks News Editor

As firefighters scoured through remains of the explosion and four-alarm fire that broke out at a County Club Plaza-area restaurant on Tuesday, Feb. 19, one Springfield family anxiously awaited details on their daughter's whereabouts.

On Thursday, it was confirmed that the body of Megan Cramer, a UMKC School of Law alumnus and server at JJ's Restaurant, was found among the rubble.

Cramer moved to Kansas City in 1987 to complete her law degree, pursuing a passion for social justice.

"Megan was smart, tenacious, and proud—a woman who lived her values," said Dr. Jim Wanser, Director of Testing Services.

"She had a direct communication style that reflected her strength and determination as a student leader."

In 1990, Cramer and four other UMKC alumni created the first long-standing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organization on campus, the Gay and Lesbian Student Alliance (GLSA).

A previous group, The Gay Student Union, organized on campus in 1970 but was not officially recognized until 1978 after a U.S. Court of Appeals lawsuit the previous year, Gay Lib. et al, v. University of Missouri.

The Gay Student Union disbanded in 1979.

GLSA, cofounded by Cramer, Jim Giles, Reese Isbell and Julie Riddle, helped LGBT students gain traction on campus and eventually led to the creation of Pride

Alliance.

In a September 1990 article written in The University News, Cramer was quoted about the impact she hoped the organization would have on UMKC students.

"There is a significant gay population on this campus," Cramer is quoted in a September 1990 University News article. "The gay students need an organization in which they can network and receive support."

Wanser served as faculty adviser to GLSA, working closely with Cramer and the other students to ensure the group's continuity.

"They were a great group of students who were friends, worked very well together and gave new life to the support and inclusion of gay and lesbian students on campus," he said. "They were a brave group of students for

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A pedestrian tromps through the snow on a Main Street sidewalk in Midtown. PHOTO //Matt Cook

Police Blotter

Feb. 19

9:00 a.m. Burglary
The reporting party, who had been on leave since Feb. 1, returned to find a laptop missing from his office in the Health Sciences Building

Feb. 13

3:00 p.m. Burglary
An iPad was reported stolen from an office in the School of Medicine.

Feb. 15

12:08 p.m. Disturbance
Officers responded to a disturbance in the Student Success Center cafeteria.

8:52 p.m. Harassment
Several students received harassing text messaged on the Volker Campus.

Feb. 17

12:24 a.m. Disturbance
Officers responded to a disturbance at Oak Street Residence Hall.

Feb. 18

1:30 a.m. Assault
Officers responded to the report of an assault at Oak St. Residence Hall.

Feb. 19

9:20 a.m. University Rules Violation
Suspect was cited for using a stolen parking hangtag in the Oak Place parking garage.

1:20 p.m. Larceny
Victim left cell phone unattended in Student Union and returned to find it missing.

4:02 p.m. University Rules Violation
Suspect was using a stolen parking tag in the Rockhill Parking Structure.

Feb. 20

3:45 p.m. Burglary
Victim left wallet, cash, credit cards and ID unattended in a School of Law office and returned to find them missing.

7:50 p.m. Drug Offense
Suspicious party was arrested for drug offense and trespassing at Oak Place Apartments.

10 p.m. Common Assault
Officers responded to a reported common assault at Oak Place Apartments.



Like many East Side schools, Seven Oaks Elementary has sat vacant for years. The Kansas City, Missouri School District's enrollment has dropped from a peak of 75,000 students to about 17,000 in recent years. 26 of the district's 61 schools were closed in 2010. Others have sat vacant longer. Seven Oaks, at 3711 Jackson Ave., was closed in 2003. The school is now being redeveloped as senior housing.
Photo // Nathan Zoschke

Troost Wall: Continued from Page 2

the historian for the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center, explained the result.

"Many middle-income black people follow middle-income white folks wherever they go, and they want to be like them," he said. "I feel that as far as decline of the inner city—and the problems that we're having with our schools and crime—is mainly due to the fact that middle-income black people have deserted the city.

"At one time, middle-income black people were the majority in the African American community. They had standards that they would not allow some low-income people to break, period. Now we have a situation where the majority of people in the African-American community are low-income people, and it's their standards that dominate."

Added Wagner, "The promotion of racially biased lending and housing is a national problem that we're still living with the effects of today.

So how is this problem resolved? How does Kansas City begin to integrate after a long and stubborn history of racist real estate practices and embedded close-minded ideals? Wagner, Terrell and Mattox have some suggestions.

"Racial covenants robbed several generations of African American families in Kansas City of the best way of creating generational wealth, which is through real estate," Terrell said. "You have to remind people. Young people need to pick up the story and make sure it becomes part of the official record."

"My answer is that middle-income black people have got to move back to the city," Mattox said. "When you have middle-class people in the inner city, when a streetlight's not working, somebody's going to call. If the city's not picking up trash, somebody's going to call. If you've got a prostitute in front of your door, somebody's going to call. [They] need to come back and put their kids in the schools and say, 'I demand this of the teachers,' and 'I demand this of the student body.' And I think some low-income people just give up. I don't know if some low-income and elderly people have the will to just keep fighting for their communities.

"I am very disappointed with blacks at UMKC. I am disappointed in the African-American involvement in our

community. They are not outstanding in leadership, and in speaking out."

Wagner has a somewhat different point of view.

"I think middle-class black folks should move where middle-class black folks want to live," he said. "I think the African-American middle class has decided to suburbanize because they see that as the path to opportunity, the path to keeping their kids out of the problems of the inner city,

which are really problems of concentrated poverty.

"Until we change how we fund and build neighborhoods, until we shift from subsidizing the construction of new neighborhoods to subsidizing and investing

in existing neighborhoods, there's not going to be an incentive to stay. There is a need for political empowerment of urban neighborhood. The cities in the nation have subsidized suburban development for more than fifty years. It's time to flip that."

During President Obama's administration, there have been policy changes limiting the communities that can be developed from scratch, drawing attention to the importance of focusing on improving existing neighborhoods, from those such as the Chamber of Commerce's Urban Neighborhood Initiative.

"But that's just the beginning," Wagner said. "It's not the end."

He explained that there are several questions that need to be asked following this program.

Will the commitments to reinvest in existing neighborhoods and their businesses remain over time? Will public and private spending change? Are lending patterns changing? Are the people who benefit changing? When development takes place, who gets the contracts? Are they local, minority-owned businesses? Is the capital staying in the community to increase access to opportunities?

It may be too soon to ask some of these questions, but Maddox maintains that in the meantime, UMKC students can make a difference.

"One of the things we're going to have to have," he said, "is more college graduates saying that the inner city is a good place to live; I'm going to take a stand, and I'm going to be here to improve it."

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“The cities in the nation have subsidized suburban development for more than fifty years. It’s time to flip that.”
-Dr. Jacob Wagner



Photo // Johanna Poppel

Johanna Poppel Photo Editor

March and its warm spring days are just around the corner. The snow on the ground shouldn't inhibit you from riding your bike.

Instead, it should remind you that spring is coming soon and it is time for you to get your bike out of the dust. There are many reasons to ride your bike all around the year.

Of course, you warm up your body in the cold and shed winter weight gain. Secondly, you always have free V.I.P. parking on campus. There are many bike racks on campus, even in the quad in front of Haag Hall.

Finally, riding your bike is great for the environment, your health and lets us all have a breath of fresh air.

Get an early start to this season with these tips on how to survive bike rides in the winter months and tune up your bike for the spring.

Beat the winter blues by biking

Follow the ABCD's of bike tuning before you start:

A. Air: Use a bike air pump to pump air into the tires until they are firm. There are bike pumps on campus outside of the Student Success Center and Cherry Hall.

B. Brakes: Make sure you have good working brakes before you ride. A common test to see if brakes are safe is to ride at 10 mph and be able to stop within 50 feet from the braking point.

C. Chain: Make sure the chains of the bike are clear of debris and dirt. Also make sure the chains are lubricated.

D. Drivetrain: Gears and shifters make up the drivetrain. Take a short spin around the block to check if the bike shifts gears with ease.

If assistance is needed, "The Hub" in Cherry Hall offers information and services for basic bike needs.

It is also important to dress accordingly while riding in cold temperatures.

Riding fast speeds on your bike can

invite cold harsh winds, so make sure to keep bare skin to a minimum.

Wear sunglasses and a thick scarf to protect your face, and wear gloves for the hands.

Be sure to cover your ears as well; hats are great, since most body heat is lost from the head.

Be sure to wear many layers, but not too many, to avoid overheating. Windproof jackets and moisture wicking fabrics work well for a comfortable ride. Also, remember to taper your pants and stick them into your boots or socks to avoid pant legs from getting stuck in the bike's chain.

Finally, obey traffic laws. Be aware of others and look out for icy and snowy spots ahead. If your bike is ready now, you won't have to miss a minute of beautiful spring bike riding weather later. Plus, you won't have to spend money on gas, you get in shape, and help the environment.

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Cramer: Continued from Page 2

their time here at UMKC and provided the foundation for the Pride Alliance of today."

Students in Pride Alliance expressed feelings of losing a legacy marker that none of them had the chance to know.

"She was interested in how the law could better serve those that were marginalized in our society," Wanser said. "We are very fortunate that Megan chose UMKC for her education and for her leadership of gay and lesbian students. Her warm and generous smile will be missed by many."

Co-founder Isbell and Tom Poe, UMKC professor of communication studies, expressed gratitude that coverage of Cramer's death didn't downplay her work with the LGBT community as an openly identifying lesbian.

"Megan was a few years older than the other three of us founding the initial UMKC GLSA from scratch, and so she was very helpful in guiding us toward our goals, Isbell said. "In writing bylaws

together, organizing the first meetings of the group, creating budget plans, and basically beginning to figure out how to be openly LGBT together on campus— she basically helped change the Kansas City LGBT community, on campus but also throughout the city, for the better."

Many knew Cramer from her time spent working at The Melting Pot on the Plaza, and she was equally praised as a server at JJ's, where many regulars often requested her service or waited until her work shift to come in for a meal.

The family reported having spoken with her earlier Tuesday before she clocked in for her shift, but when coverage of the explosion flashed across the airwaves, the Cramer family hadn't heard from their beloved aunt, sister and daughter.

A funeral service will be held in Cramer's hometown of Springfield.

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Women's Basketball

Amid blizzards, an avalanche for the 'Roos

Nathan Zoschke Editor-in-Chief

Saturday's 47-33 home loss to Indianapolis is another disappointment for a struggling team. The 'Roos now stand 9-19 for the season and 5-10 in the Summit League.

Saturday's loss follows a 63-38 blowout loss to Western Illinois at Swinney Recreation Center on Thursday.

Home court advantage has not panned out for the 'Roos. In January away games, the team edged out Western Illinois for a narrow 51-50 victory while losing 47-46 to Indianapolis.

Eilise O'Connor led the team on Saturday with 10 points. Hailey Houser led with six rebounds.

O'Connor also led Thursday's game with 17 points. Emile Blakesley led with eight rebounds.

The 'Roos will travel to Omaha on March 2, where the team will play its last regular season game.

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Men's Basketball

'Roos busted by Tennessee Tech

Nathan Zoschke

Editor-in-Chief

Saturday's 68-62 loss to Tennessee Tech in the Ramada BracketBuster isn't what UMKC basketball fans had hoped for, but it was a continuation of the team's losing season.

The 'Roos now stand 7-22 and 4-10 in the Summit League.

However, the game against Tennessee Tech had several bright spots for the team.

Nelson Kirksey led with 16 points, the second game in a row he has done so and third time in his career. Estan Tyler followed with 14 points.

Fred Chatmon cranked out a game-high 10 rebounds, his seventh double-digit rebound game of the season.

This week, the 'Roos will hit the road to play Western Illinois on Thursday in Macomb, Ill., before the final conference game against Indianapolis on March 2.

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Eilise O'Connor (No. 15) and Hailey Houser (No. 34) put up a tough fight despite Saturday's 47-33 loss to Indianapolis at Swinney Recreation Center. PHOTO // Sai Srikrar Kadiyam

Emile Blakesley and Kara Lee

Player Profile

Destined
2 play
together

Kara Lee and Emile Blakesley have played together at both Hutchinson Community College and UMKC. PHOTO // Courtesy of UMKC Athletics

Dan Moreno

Staff Writer

Not much separates 'Roo guard Emile Blakesley and center Kara Lee, except maybe for eight inches.

Blakesley, 5'8", is an inch taller than the team's shortest player. Lee, 6'4", is an inch shorter than the tallest.

Blakesley was a freshman at Johnson County Community College in 2010 when she observed potential JCCC recruit Lee, who was still playing at Seaman High School in Topeka.

"I had no idea when I watched her play that we would be teammates on two different teams and become such good friends," Blakesley said. "Now I can't imagine not

being her teammate."

The Hutchinson Community College Dragons added Blakesley, a hometown product, and Lee to their roster in 2011. They helped the Dragons earn a spot in the National Junior College Athletic Association Region VI (Kansas) championship.

At JCCC and Hutchinson, Blakesley started in 33 games each season. She averaged 9.5 and 9.4 points, respectively.

At Hutchinson, where she was coached by John Ontjes, Blakesley was recruited by the 'Roos and opted to join UMKC as a junior.

"Coach Ontjes knew some coaches on the UMKC staff and that helped get my recruitment going," Blakesley said. "After a spot opened up a little later, I was able to fill

it. It was good timing and a good fit. It was close to home and had dental hygiene as a major."

Last season was a dream come true for Blakesley. She appeared in 31 games, including one start. Lee still played for Hutchinson, but she remained in close contact with Blakesley and was also being recruited to join the Roos as a junior.

"Last season, we talked a lot," Lee said. "We would text, and Emile would help me with my classes. Once I started getting recruited by UMKC, we talked about me coming here and re-teaming."

Lee helped Hutchinson to a 33-1 record and a national runner-up finish.

"I asked her about the team and about

campus life to see if it would be a fit for me," Lee said. "I trusted Emile, so her opinion weighed heavily on my decision."

Once Lee decided to join the 'Roos, the two became even closer.

"Emile is someone who I can always talk to about anything," Lee said. "She always has my back, and I love her for that."

Chimed in Blakesley:

"I was excited when I found out she was coming here and now we live and do almost everything else together. The saying, 'teammates become friends... friends become family' holds true with most of my teammates, but especially with Kara."

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Scoreboard

<p>Kate Baxendale Staff Writer</p> <p>Men's Basketball Overall Record: 7 - 22 Conference Record: 4 - 10 (L) Feb. 23—at Tennessee Tech 68 UMKC 62 Up next: Feb. 28—at Western Illinois (Macomb, Ill.) March 2—at IUPUI (Indianapolis, Ind.)</p> <p>Women's Basketball Overall Record: 9 - 19 Conference Record: 5 - 10 (L) Feb. 21—vs. Western Illinois 63 UMKC 38 (L) Feb. 23—vs. IUPUI 47 UMKC 33 Up next: March 2—at Omaha</p> <p>Men's Tennis Overall Record: 1 - 7 Region: 1 - 2 Up next: March 9—at William Jewell (Liberty, Mo.)</p>	<p>Women's Tennis Overall Record: 3 - 6 Region: 1 - 1 (L) Feb. 20—at Missouri 7 UMKC 0 (W) Feb. 24—Central Arkansas 3 UMKC 4 Up next: Feb. 27—at Kansas (Lawrence, Kan.) March 2—at McNeese State (Houston, Texas)</p> <p>Softball Overall Record: 7 - 7 (L) Feb. 22—SIU-Edwardsville 4 UMKC 2 (at Southaven, Miss.) (W) Feb. 23—Indiana State 3 UMKC 5 (at Southaven, Miss.) (W) Feb. 23—Belmont 3 UMKC 4 (at Southaven, Miss.) (W) Feb. 24—Nicholls State 3 UMKC 16 (at Southaven, Miss.) (W) Feb. 24—Detroit 1 UMKC 6 (at Southaven, Miss.)</p>	<p>Men's Track and Field Feb. 24-25—The Summit League Indoor Championships at Vermillion, S.D. (hosted by South Dakota): 3rd Place, 118 points Up next: March 2—Last Chance Qualifier at South Bend, Ind. (hosted by Notre Dame)</p> <p>Women's Track and Field Feb. 24-25—The Summit League Indoor Championships at Vermillion S.D. (hosted by South Dakota): 4th Place, 86 points Up next: March 2—Last Chance Qualifier at South Bend, Ind. (hosted by Notre Dame)</p>
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PHOTO // Courtesy of UMKC Athletics

Softball team stands 7-7 after weekend matches

Dan Moreno

Staff Writer

After a sad five loss performance at the Troy Cox Classic in Las Cruces, N.M., the softball team had a great comeback this weekend at the Blues City Classic hosted by the Memphis Tigers.

The 'Roos failed to impress on the first out of five games as Head Coach Meredith Smith's team dropped its opening game with a 4-2 loss against the SIU-Edwardsville Cougars last Friday. The Blue & Gold got off to a fast start with a 2-0 score at the end of the first inning but failed to maintain the advantage and ended up losing the game.

At the plate, Kelley and Christopher went 2-for-3 on the day, while Broyles and outfielder Kelsey Dean tallied a hit each. In the circle, Ramos allowed six hits and three earned runs to go along with three walks surrendered and one strikeout.

Saturday afternoon, the 'Roos faced Indiana State and Belmont were they came strong and won both matches.

In the first game of the doubleheader UMKC played seven innings to beat the Indiana State Sycamores with a 5-3 victory were the offense connected 12 hits, led by Broyles. In the circle, Friese struck out eleven batters for the second time this season.

Later on the Belmont Bruins fell short against the motivated 'Roos who started slow as infielder Mia Vierra hit a two-run homer off pitcher Cinda Ramos in the first inning but came back to win with a 4-3 score. Rangel, Dean and Parker tallied a run and a hit each.

In the third and last day of the Blues City Classic the 'Roos repeated the dose and won both their matches against Nicholls State and two hours later against Detroit University to end the Classic with a 4-1 record and an overall of 7-7.

At nine o'clock in the morning the Lady 'Roos faced the Nicholls State Colonels in a match that ended with a 16-3 mercy-rule victory were Maples went 1-for-3 with three RBI and a stolen base, as Parker managed to go 1-for-2 with two runs scored, two walks and an RBI.

In the fifth and last game of the weekend the Blue & Gold extended their winning streak after a 6-1 victory against the Detroit Titans. The Kangaroos found themselves down 1-0 in the third inning until Broyles scored after and error and Ott RBI-single to right to drive in Maples.

Coming up, UMKC returns to Missouri to take part in the Coaches vs Cancer Tournament were the Lady 'Roos will face number seven Mizzou, Saint Louis hosted by Southeast Missouri State.

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UMKC Theatre students write and perform 'Brechtology'

Meredith Shea

A&E Editor

Undergraduate theater students worked in collaboration with local theater artist and owner Heidi Van at the Fishtank Theater to create a humorous abridged version of the works of Bertolt Brecht, a mid-20th century German playwright. They called it "Brechtology."

This is the second time UMKC students have teamed up with the Fishtank. Last semester, undergraduate students participated in "44 Plays for 44 Presidents," and sold out nearly every night. Despite having to cancel their opening night last Thursday due to Winter Storm Q, the "Brechtology" played Friday through Sunday.

"Brechtology" was not your average theater experience. Instead of a standard polished show, it was written entirely by Van and the students, allowing them to test their playwriting and collaboration skills, but gave the show an unfinished raw feel. The show was written, rehearsed and produced all in one month, an impressive accomplishment for any theater artist.

But that does not mean the show was 'bad.' In fact, it was quite funny at times. Each scene was based off one of Brecht's full-length plays. Some scenes stayed true to the original plays, while other scenes were written out of the students' memories of the stories, with little



1.

research done to fine tune the details. Often times, the latter were funnier.

Act I was comprised of scenes that were based from plays. In Act II, the play takes a complete 180 after the performers openly admit they did not read enough of Brecht's plays to write another full act, so for the remainder of the show, they make fun of Brecht's personal life. They even joke about the Theater Collaboration 403 class they were all enrolled in last semester, and hand out one of the worksheets acquired in the class to audience members.

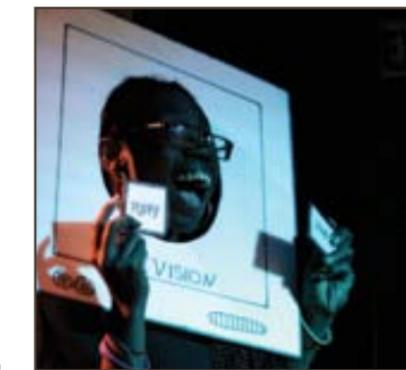
Brecht was born in 1898 in Augsburg, Bavaria, north of Munich. By the early 1920s, he was already a published writer. He helped establish expressionist theater where, instead of being completely absorbed by the play in a

cathartic state, audience members are aware of everything happening onstage.

Brecht liked to warn the audience of what they were about to see by doing things like flying in a sign with the title of the scene. Today, theater practitioners and scholars refer to his style as 'Brechtian.'

Throughout Act I of "Brechtology," each scene is labeled with the title of the play it was based on. The acting is over the top and extremely presentational, rather than the realism most audiences are comfortable with today.

Act II feels very much like an inside joke. Many audience members were theater students who were also enrolled in the 403 class with the performers. These viewers understood



2.

the jokes, while audience members from the community may have felt left out at times, missing the jokes entirely.

Nikky Badejo stood out among other performers. Her stage presence is strong and she offered energy to the show that it needed to not be a flop.

"It was a huge learning experience," she said. "Having to learn to put aside our egos to produce a full original production was definitely a challenge, but we attacked it head on."

"Brechtology" will not win any awards anytime soon, but it was an enjoyable and unique experience for audience members and actors alike.

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3.

1. Petey McGee, Anna Day and Nikky Badejo.
2. Students used homemade props. Nikky Badejo acts as a television infomercial.
3. Petey McGee performs.

PHOTOS // Meredith Shea

Wind Symphony combines education with performance

Joey Hill

Staff Writer

There are few experiences comparable to sitting before a live wind symphony. A wind symphony embodies a more powerful sound than other live music.

Last Tuesday, the Conservatory Wind Symphony, directed by Steven D. Davis, made the distinction very clearly when it played both Paul Hindemith's "Konzertmusik für Bläserorchester, Op. 41," as well as Percy Grainger's "Lincolnshire Posy," both of which demonstrated the expertise of the musicians.

Conductors David W. Clemmer and Andrew J. Putnam provided brief lectures on each work and composer before the performances, further enriching the impact of each piece.

The first piece, "Konzertmusik für Bläserorchester, Op. 41," began with an eruption of sound. This was composer Hindemith's first work for a wind ensemble, and was originally presented at the 1926 music festival in Donaueschingen, Germany. One can hear, almost immediately, the modern feel of this

work where the entire ensemble comes together in loud and abrupt high wails, which seem to make the entire sound ascend only to be crushed back down by the loud crash of the percussion.

Using sounds and arrangements resembling military march themes, Hindemith creates an extremely active type of music with the woodwind's gentle interludes opening for the great shouts of the brass section. There are moments when the march beat is abandoned for a quiet and suspenseful playful melodies that, simply by closing one's eyes, can transport the listener to a fantastic and beautiful narrative.

The business and constant activity of the piece add to this. With the low and booming outbursts of the percussion, one would imagine the gods themselves were in the midst of an enormous battle onstage.

The second work, Grainger's "Lincolnshire Posy," is a much more personal piece which is based in narrative. As a young man, Percy Grainger was greatly enamored by the concept of natural things. As a child, when given a plot of land for gardening by his parents, he chose

to collect various specimens of weeds and other natural plants to build his garden rather than plant the seeds his parents gave him.

This interest in natural things eventually encompassed music when he began work on the "Lincolnshire Posy" a compellation of old folk songs transcribed for wind symphony. To create this he traveled around Lincolnshire, England with an Edison wax cylinder recorder strapped to his chest and sought out folk singers to record folk music directly from the most natural source.

The piece is split into six movements, but because each is based off of a folk song, they are all relatively short. The longest is only a little over two minutes. The way Grainger is able to imitate the sound of the human voice through the instruments creating a lively collection of melodies is beautiful.

Walt Disney would have wanted to animate this performance, though he may not have thought himself up to the job.

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fashion

Kyle Hall expresses himself through style

Kate Baxendale

Staff Writer

What is your favorite thing about fashion?

I like how it's so expressive if you want it to be. It's an outlet. Some people may choose to use it as an outlet of self-expression and some people express themselves in other ways.

What inspires you to dress the way you do?

I don't really follow fashion. I don't really base it off what's on the runways. When I go shopping I try things on and if I like how it looks then I buy it. I don't think I could categorize it, at least not now. In high school I was probably a prep.

Do you read any fashion magazines? Do you pay attention to what is on the runway?

It's just not practical [to follow couture]. I can flip through a *Vogue* or something and look at those ads but I can't ever look like that. I can't afford those things. Facebook is a great tool. I like to see what my friends are wearing to get ideas and see what I like.

Where do you like to shop? Do you look for particular brands?

I love Urban Outfitters because they have small enough sizes to fit me. I like my clothes fitted for the most part. Sometimes I like to shop thrift stores. I like Arizona Trading Company, and Halls on the Plaza.

When people see you walking around campus or anywhere in public, what do you think they see?

Gay [laughs]. I think that's what people see right off the bat. I hope I look put-together. I hope I look approachable, although that's probably not the case.

Why not?

I guess sometimes I can come off as cold because I'm always in a hurry.

Has your style always been the same or has it evolved in any way?

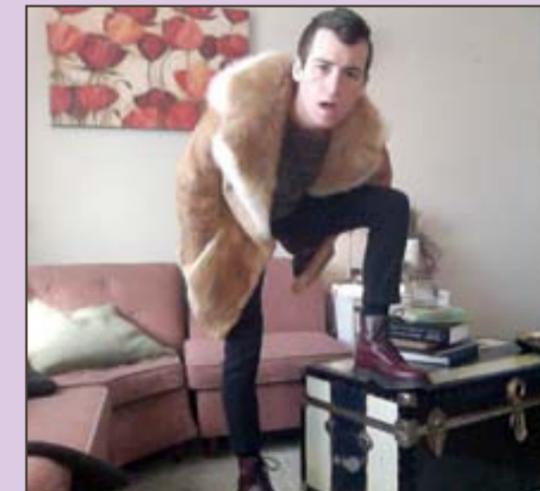
My style has totally changed. When I started being more comfortable with myself and I came out, I quit caring what other people thought and I started dressing how I wanted to dress. I didn't have to "straighten up" for school anymore, if that makes sense.

Describe your style in one word.

Me.

What trends do you currently like or dislike?

There are things that I wouldn't wear but I don't



COURTESY // Kyle Hall

cringe when I see something I don't like. To each their own. I don't really mind what other people wear. It's superficial to judge what people are wearing. But I just love boots and winter fashion. I like chunky. I feel like there are so many more options with winter clothes.

How long does it typically take you to choose an outfit? Do you plan what you are going to wear?

I very rarely plan my outfits. It probably takes me five to 10 minutes to get ready.

Describe your favorite article of clothing. Where is it from?

It's really sad but I just ruined it. It's an oversized long-sleeved gray t-shirt, with a swoop neck and a cute little pocket. I think it's from Urban [Outfitters] about three years ago. I got it off the sale rack. I still have it and I'm going to try to repair it. The stitching on the neck came out so it looks frayed. I wore it with everything I had. It was very versatile—the perfect basic.

What does your closet look like?

It's not really organized in a particular way, but I like to keep it neat. I really like my closet. I would say it's modest but it's the perfect size for me.

The Pantone Color of the Year 2013 is emerald green. What do you think of this choice?

I don't mind emerald. I'd wear it. Who cares what color they [Pantone] pick? I don't really think it's a big deal.

Do you have any fashion tips for students?

It [fashion] is whatever you make it. If you're confident with what you're wearing, to me that's



Steven D. Davis directs the Wind Symphony.

PHOTO // Joey Hill



Oscar reflections

Elizabeth Golden Managing Editor

Seth MacFarlane did a wonderful job hosting the Oscars despite his racial comments, sexist remarks and all-around crude humor, but that is what he is known for, after all.

When asking the creator of "Ted" and "Family Guy" to host the Oscars, no one expected the content to be enjoyable for the whole family.

Besides his R-rated humor, MacFarlane shines with his hilarious snide remarks and brilliant vocal styling. Who even knew he could sing?

The show began with William Shatner aka Captain Kirk from Star Trek appearing and telling MacFarlane how the paper will rate him as the worst Oscar host ever. So, of course MacFarlane follows that remark by singing a song about female nudity in film. Although crude, this song was extremely laughable and entertaining.

Shatner continued to mention how MacFarlane will continue to make a fool of the Oscar ceremonies, so Charlize Theron and Channing Tatum ballroom dance to MacFarlane's beautiful rendition of the classic, "The Way You Look Tonight" followed by MacFarlane joining the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles. The awards portion hadn't even begun and this Oscar ceremony was already finding its place in history.

As for the awards, there were several surprise, but many obvious choices.

"Life of Pi" of course won almost every

production award. From cinematography to Visual Effects to directing, this film was a sure fire winner. How could it not win? Every aspect of the film was beautifully done and definitely the best produced film of the year. When it came to entertainment level and overall merit, "Life of Pi" fell short of sweeping the floor with best picture.

"Django Unchained" was also a film worthy of several awards. Best Original Screenplay was an obvious award for Django since a film can't get too much more original. It's not every day the audience is able to witness slaves slaughtering their masters on the big screen. Christoph Waltz for Best Supporting Actor, however, was a surprise to many. There were so many amazing men in the category such as Alan Arkin, Robert De Niro, Phillip Seymour Hoffman and Tommy Lee Jones. All of the actors nominated are classics, but Waltz did do an incredible job and deserved the award.

Daniel Day-Lewis made history as the first actor to win an Oscar three times in the same category. He won for his brilliant portrayal of the 16th President of the United States in "Lincoln."

One of the biggest surprises of the night was Jennifer Lawrence winning Best Actress for her role in "Silver Lining Playbook." Jessica Chastain, for "Zero Dark Thirty," was the front-runner in the competition and it came as a surprise when Lawrence's name was called. She deserved the award, but not many expected the underdog to win. Lawrence also made for one of the most entertaining moments of the night.

As she was walking up the stairs to receive her award, she tripped on her dress and fell flat on the floor. Several men rushed to help her, but she pulled through on her own. She is Katniss Evergreen, after all. Thankfully she had a good enough sense of humor to laugh the incident off, but her awkwardness was obvious.

The Best Original Song award also came as quite a surprise. "Les Miserables" was bound to win, but somehow Adele's "Skyfall" managed to walk away with the award. Adele brilliantly sang the song, but as for emotional impact and lyrics, "Les Miserable" should consider themselves robbed.

"Argo" won Best Picture as well as Film Editing and Best Adapted Screenplay. The latter awards may have been obvious to many, but Best Picture came as a surprise to some. As a hard-core Ben Affleck fan, I was rooting for "Argo" all along, but "Les Miserable" and "Life of Pi" seemed to be the more popular choices. This film truly had it all. With a brilliant cast, an incredible script and an touching story, there was no better choice for Best Picture.

Overall, this was one of the best Oscar ceremonies of the recent years. MacFarlane was hilarious, the dresses were beautiful and the acceptance speeches were moving many audience members to the point of tears. The 85th Academy Awards could not have gotten much better.

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The lettuce looks less than a lunch shift away from expiration. These slices of onion have been refrigerated too long after being chopped and have lost their flavor. Now, they're only cold, crunchless slivers.

The disappointing trimmings are made more unfortunate because the heart of the sandwich, the namesake of Lutfi's Fried Fish, is actually really good. The breading is thin and consistent. It's seasoned perfectly, not overwhelming or boring but in that sweet spot between.

The fries, however, do not surprise me. They are the same generic, pre-cut, bagged fries, punched up with a salt-based seasoning I've had at Lutfi's many times before. While they aren't unique, they're good. Add enough ketchup and they're worth the money.

But, it's not about the fries, it's about the entrée. Lutfi's, what have you done to my beloved Comeback sandwich? I remember it being another way: ciabatta bun, onions so fresh they can still make you cry, and lettuce that was still wet from the market. Find it, Lutfi's. Find the reason I told all my friends about you, the reason I make an extra bus trip just to come to you, find it and bring it back.

I've never ordered anything at Lutfi's Fried Fish except the Comeback sandwich and while it was disappointing this time, I can attest to their fish at least. If you find yourself on the Troost Max bus line, stomach growling, and decide to stop in at Lutfi's, order yourself a half pound of catfish, whiting, or tilapia and a side of fried okra. Avoid the Comeback sandwich until its better version comes back.

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Connecting art and music



UMKC's Conservatory Connections at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art combine visual and performance art into one experience.

PHOTO // Joey Hill

Joey Hill Staff Writer

It's difficult to not feel the tremendous visual weight of artist Xu Longsen's "The Law of the Dao Is Its Being What It Is" ink painting in the Kirkwood Hall of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art.

The enormous painting spanning almost as long as two school buses depicts a vast and intricate mountain range with rivers and waterfalls, forests and misty peaks which seem to go on forever into the background. Amidst the towering black marble columns of Kirkwood Hall, Longsen's painting acts as almost a sort of window, creating a visual jolt that tears the viewer away from the Greco-Roman architecture that surrounds them.

This window, this painting was the backdrop of the Conservatory of Music's second collaboration with the museum as part of the "Conservatory Connections" series. Bringing in UMKC graduate students to perform their own compositions, the aim was to create a blend of new and old to reflect the Nelson-Atkins' own "Journey Through Mountains & Rivers" exhibit with both modern Chinese paintings like Longsen's as well as extremely rare ancient 1,000-year old paintings.

The collection of instruments appeared at first to be an odd collection for such a small ensemble of only four people, but each had a specific purpose and role in bringing the entire performance together.

This collection has ranged from conventional instruments, like a bass clarinet, to a wide percussion section of congas, bongos, a glockenspiel, an ocean drum, and

interestingly, two empty liquor bottles.

These together would serve to add both visceral feeling and nature sounds to the compositions. The greatest oddity to the ensemble was the electric banjo. During the last song, "Mantis" in which it is used, it is given an effect which makes it sound as if all the chords are being played in reverse.

The signature instrument in the ensemble was a 21-string guzheng, a Chinese string instrument resembling a long lacquered wooden box with strings stretching over it that the player plucks and strums with their fingers.

What made this performance truly incredible was the connection that was created between the musicians, the viewers, and the painting that loomed over each. After the first few minutes of each song, time begins to disintegrate and the listener starts to take a journey through the paths and over the rocky mountainsides of the vast illustrated expanse drawn before them.

The music became theatrical in this regard. There were moments when combined together, the musicians created sounds that brought life to the art which stood behind them. One song, "I Walk Alone," was written as a solo by the guzheng, and was to illustrate the feeling of walking through this imaginary aesthetic mountain landscape. The walk the listeners made throughout this performance was not a walk of loneliness, but more a walk of contemplative solitude. A kind of solitude found only while in the presence of nature.

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album reviews

STRFKR has seven tracks too many

Caleb-Michael Files

Staff Writer

The second that STRFKR's second full-length record, "Reptilians," dropped in 2011, I already had a pretty good idea of what to expect from the band's third. STRFKR – formerly Pyramid, formerly Pyramid – hasn't budged from the palatable electronica territory since its 2008 debut, cranking out polished Electronic Dance Music with hints of synthpop over and over.

For a band that changes its name as frequently as it changes its look, the music stays pretty static. The expectation for "Miracle Mile" isn't what new direction the sound has taken, rather, whether the band has taken a new one at all.

"Miracle Mile" offers 50 minutes of new dance material, but it's nothing we don't already know. Superfluity is a hallmark of dance music, synth pop, and club hits. To a group like STRFKR, superfluity is the goal. We can see this in the way it releases material, as if it's Campbell soup cans off the Warhol factory line. Their songs are equal doses of dance and pop. The music is manufactured, but it still gets people to move. Which is to say, the machine works. What's there to fix?

The area STRFKR differentiates its sound is in its live performances, which is why without the visual element, the physicality of the sound comes off flat. The only track that utilizes any sort of crescendo is the seven-minute closer, "Nite Rite". The rest of the songs establish gentle grooves early and get comfortable. "Say to You" recalls of Montreal's R&B schtick, complete with Joshua Hodges' best impression of Kevin Barnes' alto croon. In other places, the album



CREDIT // STRFKR

sounds like a primitive Passion Pit, albeit with half the song structure and none of the lyrical pull.

Another favorite from STRFKR's album is the track "Atlantis," which starts off with video-game like instrumentals and repetitive drumming, immediately catching one's ear before Hodges even begins crooning the opening lyric, "You are an angel / I am the aftermath."

"Miracle Mile" attempts to broach darker subjects in spite of its perpetual brightness, but Hodges could have sang a word-for-word rendition of "Born to Run" and you wouldn't walk away from it feeling any different. The vocals remain distorted and drowned out, which can be an interesting effect. Except this record could have used them as an anchor.

At 15 tracks, it's at least twice as long as it should be. It's possible that the cumulative deadening effect of "Miracle Mile" is intentional, or that the contrast between the vacuous music and the spiritual ennui of the lyrics is supposed to be ironic. But "Miracle Mile" doesn't seem smart enough, musically or lyrically, for that to be the case.

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food critic's corner

Lutfi's Fried Fish should throw this one back



Lutfi's Fried Fish at 3360 Troost Ave.

PHOTO // Johanna Poppel

Bradley Trevor Hoffman

Staff Writer

The mostly basketball orange walls, with a gray and brown stripe running along the bottom, are adorned with framed photos of notable musicians and still lifes, such as one of a couple smiling widely, looking very happy and satisfied. It is my guess that this couple did not just finish a lunch at Lutfi's Fried Fish.

On the outset, this place is a dive eater's dream. The vinyl booths share the same eye-popping color scheme as the walls. There's a large TV in the corner anchored over a Street Fight II pinball machine that occasionally growls and flashes, interrupting Sports Center. A booth in the front has the abandoned pieces of a checkers game on it and the windows are decorated with burglar bars. To boot, Lutfi's also shares its building with a liquor store. Locations nearest campus are at 3037 Main Street and 3360 Troost Ave.

I ordered the Comeback fish sandwich with all the toppings, a favorite of mine I've enjoyed several times before. It was brought to my table inside a styrofoam container, which was inside a plastic bag that read in big letters, THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE. When I unveiled my meal I'm disappointed to see that the ciabatta bun my last Comeback was made on is absent. It's replaced with two slices of cheap, cold wheat bread. The price, however, remains unchanged at \$6.25.

The bread won't do. My attempts to pick it up are like a weak juggling act and the sandwich's integrity begins to falter. After two bites the toppings fall out and I see what I was eating.

Groban's new album 'echoes'

Johanna Poppel

Photo Editor

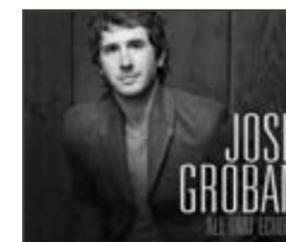
Josh Groban is known for his incorporation of classical and pop genres in his vocally driven music. Unknowingly, I figured Josh Groban was either a Christian rock singer or an emerging foreign opera sensation.

At a closer listen, the album, "All That Echoes," possesses characteristics of alternative rock, European pop, and opera. The lyrics could be seen as love ballads for a significant other or worship songs for Sunday morning.

Groban peaked in his fame with the cover of "You Raise Me Up" a decade ago. Over 125 covers have been made of this song, originally composed by a band called Secret Garden, and Groban's cover is the most well known. If you remember the powerful uplifting confessions of "You Raise Me Up," from the "Closer" album, you will get a sense of Groban's emotion in his latest album.

His new album, "All That Echoes," is different from his previous albums. His new work offers a mix of strong opera style lyrics in Italian and contemporary adult. The surprising mix provided a sophisticated vibe.

The addition of Italian to his predominately English album brought awkward detours in his album with "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress," followed with "Un



CREDIT // Reprise Records

Alma Mas" in Italian. Another flaw in the album is the emergence of instrumentals that I would normally hear on a classic Disney movie soundtrack like "Lion King."

Also, the loud forceful nature of symphony, rock, pop and opera music made it overbearing to listen to the whole album in one setting.

His theme of lyrics varied in the album. The opening song, "Brave," offered motivational messages in lyrics like, "You will find the warmth when you surrender, Smile into the fear and let it play." His lyrics don't just inspire. They also describe beautiful scenery and romance. His sweet lyrics include, "I don't know you, But I want you, All the more for that." An example of his descriptive imagery was in the song, "The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress."

Fans won't be disappointed with his new album. The consistent musical talent throughout kept me intrigued. All in all, I would recommend those with an interest in classic, contemporary vocal expressions to listen to "All That Echoes".

SNOW DAYS



From left to right: Kathleen Brueggemann, Alaina Shine, Emily Oehler, Ivan Figueroa and Lexy Cockrell. CREDIT // Megan Haghnegahdar



Squirrel perched on a windowsill on campus. PHOTO // Roze Brooks



Above: A snowy sidewalk through Midtown's Hyde Park. PHOTO // Matt Cook

Above, left: Scofield Hall. PHOTO // Sai Srikar Kadiyam

Left: Greek row. PHOTO // Sai Srikar Kadiyam



UMKC business student starts nonprofit tutoring company

Meredith Shea A&E Editor

While some students let time slip by, John Stamm has been proactive with his college years and tutors area high school students. Stamm, a senior majoring in business and philosophy, started Tutorious, a non-profit tutoring business, in January 2011.

"It took about a year to actually begin tutoring because there are a lot of regulations surrounding the creation of a non-profit," Stamm said. "It also took a while to convince school districts of our legitimacy as an organization."

Stamm used to work for a for-profit tutoring company.

"I didn't think it was fair that only a very small portion of households could afford tutoring," he said.

Where other tutoring companies charge upwards of \$50 per hour, Tutorious offers services to high school students free of charge. Free services are offered to at risk students.

Other programs, like ACT prep courses, are offered at a much lower rate than other tutoring companies offer through what Stamm calls his "Democratize Tutoring" venture.

The "Democratize Tutoring" approach stems from a quote by Henry Ford: "I'm



PHOTO // Courtesy of John Stamm

going to democratize the automobile industry." In so doing, automobiles became affordable for the average American. Stamm is doing the same thing with Tutorious by making it free for many and affordable for others.

His business targets students who would not normally be able to afford a tutor through a private company.

"I decided the best way to address problem would be to build something that could be replicated in other communities," he said.

Tutorious has contracts with Kansas City public schools, St. Louis public

schools, the Atchison, Kan., Unified School District and Alta Vista Charter School.

"Currently, about 30 people are involved in a variety of ways, including tutoring, organizing and business planning," he said.

Tutors are required to participate in a one hour long tutor training session. There, volunteers learn how to appropriately tutor students and gain confidence in their teaching abilities.

"I find that lots of people are afraid of the idea of tutoring because they are

CONTINUED Page 14

Rachael Coulter teaches area adults how to read

Roze Brooks News Editor

Undergraduate English Council publicity officer Rachael Coulter, senior English major, is expected to create flyers for upcoming events, plan Quidditch matches and Spelling Bees for Literature for Life week each spring semester and attend bi-weekly meetings with a student group dedicated to higher education English.

While her passion for advanced authors such as E.E. Cummings, modern poetry and UEC have been skills acquired with age, Coulter's 22 year old student has trouble even reading a restaurant menu.

Coulter volunteers at a local reading advocacy organization called Literacy Kansas City, which pairs trained tutors with functionally illiterate adults. The initial goal of the program is to excel the students from a 1st grade level to at least 9th grade, the required level to pass GED certification.

"I think that people forget how crucial the ability to read is to everyday life," Coulter said. "Many of the student's goals are to be able to get a license, vote, help their children with homework and other basic life skills. By volunteering with this program, I really can help change someone's life and help them reach goals they never thought possible.

To be an eligible volunteer, Coulter and other participants were required to attend an 18-hour tutor training workshop. After some completion of the training, tutors are paired with a student and begin instructing and meeting each week. The workshop concluded with assessment of progress since the start of the program.

For Coulter's student, being able to read is a chance to help her be successful for the rest of her life. The student aspires to become a nurse, hoping to help people in the way Coulter has already succeeded in assisting her.

According to Literacy Kansas City's website, "approximately 225,000 adults in the Kansas City area function at the lowest literacy level." As Coulter attends classes to receive her BA in English and participates in extra-curriculars, she is surrounded by hundreds of students mastering the privilege to read, while some take advantage of the luxury.

Literacy Kansas City acknowledges that children raised in impoverished households with histories of health issues or unemployed parents often end up illiterate. The program targets those children.

"With each session, she tells me more about her life and what she has been through, and in spite of all of this, she never wants to stop trying," Coulter said,



PHOTO // Courtesy of Rachael Coulter

admiring her student's determination. Coulter motivates herself from the energy her student brings to each session.

"I want to teach later in life and my experience with Literacy Kansas City has done nothing but reinforce my desire to teach," Coulter said. "I have never been as rewarded by an experience as I have been with this program."

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, February 26 Do I Look Fat? Film Screening and Discussion // Noon-2 p.m.//Miller Nichols Library

This documentary explores the issues surrounding body image for gay men. Film-maker Travis Mathews profiles eight men and their stories of how addiction, self-hatred, and illness contributed to problems with body image. Lunch will be provided.

Wednesday, February 27 Love the Body You're In // 5-7 p.m.// Mind Body Connection, Atterbury Student Success Center

Join us for an evening of activities and discussion about maintaining a lifestyle that promotes emotional and mental health as much as physical well-being. Our guest speaker will discuss ways to maintain positive energy, including yoga and massage therapy. Light snacks will be provided.

Thursday, February 28 E-Week Blood Drive // 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. // Flarsheim Hall Room 557 Please sign up NOW for an appointment by emailing Jane Vogl, voglj@umkc.edu, Site Coordinator; the time you would like to donate - slots are open every 15 minutes from 9:00 am - 3:45 pm on Thursday, February 28, in room 557 Flarsheim Hall.

Thursday, February 28 The Hidden Closet // 6-8 p.m. // Student Union Multipurpose Room A panel on the intersecting identities of LGBTQIA students of color.

Thursday, February 28 The 18th Annual Richard D. McKinzie Symposium "Fight the Power, America's Enduring Struggle for Civil Rights," // 6-8 p.m. // Truman Forum, Kansas City Public Library, Plaza Branch This year's McKinzie Symposium will examine the history and legacies of the American Civil Rights Movement in light of the 50-year anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington. Leon Litwack's Thursday night keynote address will explore the centuries long struggle for civil rights in the United States, as well as the enduring legacies of the movement. On Friday morning, Leslie Brown will examine the civil rights activism in the years leading up to the modern Civil Rights Movement and Patricia Sullivan will discuss the pivotal year of 1963.

Class Cancellations

Thursday (Feb. 21)	All Day
Friday (Feb. 22)	All Day
Monday (Feb. 25)	Evening Classes
Tuesday (Feb. 26)	All Day

Disclaimer: The views of individual writers expressed below in this section do not represent the official stance of *U-News*. *U-News* welcomes participation from all UMKC students. Letters to the editor may be submitted to Editor-in-Chief Nathan Zoschke, nzoschke@unews.com.

A disaster that shook Kansas City

Dan Moreno

Staff Writer

JJ's, a local and beloved restaurant, went up in flames last Tuesday and that day will forever remain in Kansas City's memory.

Around six o'clock that evening, I was opening the door to my apartment when I heard and felt a very loud blast. The magnitude of the explosion was so large that I thought it had taken place in the building next to mine.

As I opened my curtains, I immediately noticed the huge cloud of black, thick smoke. I then grabbed my keys and ran to the destruction site a few blocks away to find out what happened.

I caught my breath and thought about how

lucky I was to not have been any closer. Then I began to feel sad for those injured, many critically. And later, when we learned the news that a body had been found, it made me painfully aware of how tragedies can happen when we least expect them.

Can you even imagine having dinner with a loved one, or enjoying a few drinks with friends, and then, from one moment to the next, everything is gone? You just never know what can happen.

This makes me think about the small things we often complain so much about. I know I do it all the time, and events such as these remind me how wrong I am for it. There is so much I

should be grateful for, and I am. I'm grateful I can attend college in this country, I am grateful to be happily employed and I'm grateful for food and clothing. These are basic necessities so many people around the world don't have, and yet they don't complain nearly as much as we do.

I know I risk sounding preachy, but think about it? What are the things in your life for which you should be grateful? What do you have that others wish they had?

This is a time to show our support to those injured, to those grieving and to everyone affected by this tragic event.

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Dan Moreno

'80s nostalgia registers with students today

Elizabeth Golden

Managing Editor

I don't know about all of you, but I'm pretty sick of the 2000's. The majority of our music is crap and our movies aren't much better, besides rare exceptions.

These last few months, we witnessed the best of the best with Grammy and Oscar season, but unless it's between the months of October and December, chances are the entertainment value is greatly diminished.

The '90s weren't horrible, but they led way to the cheesy boy bands and unrealistic teenage fantasies. Movies were decent, but definitely nothing compare to the preceding decade: the 1980's.

Let's begin with the music. Although music is not my area of expertise, it deserves a brief mention. Paul Simon, the Clash, Bruce Springsteen, Cyndi Lauper, Metallica, U2, Nirvana, Madonna, Bon Jovi, Michael Jackson and Prince are just a few of the most

notable names of the 1980's.

The music even had such a distinct style.

It's easy to tell an '80s song when one comes on the radio these days. From unusual beats to stunning vocals, the music is unlike anything produced today. I'm sorry, but Bruno Mars will never become the next Michael Jackson and Lady Gaga cannot compete with Madonna.

Now onto films, which I do know a thing or two about. The 1980's laid a foundation for the films today and many from the decade are recognized as one of the best films of all time.

There's so many incredible films that it's impossible to put them in any list, so I just begin discussing a few of the films worth mentioning.

"When Harry Met Sally" came on the scene in 1989 and proved to be one of the best and most quotable films of all time. Life lessons were learned and the young actors became Hollywood stars. These days, an ordinary friendship turned romance transitions into

Vampires or stupid teenagers.

Rarely is there a fairly innocent, brilliantly written film like "When Harry Met Sally" released in this world.

Films like this don't sell anymore due to a change in time and a lack of interest in the subject. It's impossible just to create a simple story of a friendship.

There always has to be an unnecessary element of the supernatural realm or teen drama.

The first "Batman" feature film was also released in 1989 starring Michael Keaton. This heartfelt film truly delves into the character of Bruce Wayne. The audience felt his inner struggle without the unrealistic special effects and overly anticipated explosions.

This Batman film was relatively free money making tricks and focused on the script and the characters. Although "The Dark Knight" may be cool with all those explosions and stuff, the original feeling of Batman has gone missing. There is no emotional connection to the characters.

Instead, there are a lot of explosions and women in tight spandex.

Going along the superhero theme, "Superman II" was released in 1980. It really does not get better than the original Superman starring Christopher Reeve and Gene Hackman. Filmmakers have tried, and failed, many times over the last decade to get Superman right, but nothing will be able to compete with the originals.

There were several great Steven Spielberg films released such as "Return of the Jedi," "Empire Strikes Back" and "ET," both of which will forever stay on the Best films of all time list. No series will ever be able to challenge "Star Wars."

It is the original series and the films are brilliant in every sense of the word. Although they may come across as cheesy now, they are amazing classics that should be watched and re-watched by everyone.

Among other '80s films are Beverly Hills Cop, Dead Poets



Elizabeth Golden

Society, Good Morning Vietnam, Diner, Repo Man, Scarface, Karate Kid, Back to the Future, Sixteen Candles, Ghostbusters, Risky Business, Airplane, Breakfast Club, Rain Man, Fast Times at Ridgemont High, Die Hard, Raiders of the Lost Ark and dozens more.

None of which I have space to talk about, but all deserve to be viewed.

Now, try to name that many films since the 1980's that deserve to be classic films. I highly doubt your list will be that long.

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Kansas City gets it good and hard

Caleb-Michael Files
Student Life Editor

It's coming. Everyone says so.

Snow will inherit the earth, and chances are it has already covered the sacred hills of Lawrence.

I'm willing to bet that every student is extremely happy about the chances of classes being canceled at the University. The University forcing students to skip class is always more fun than skipping class because students are lazy. But one thing I know students don't think about when classes are canceled is possibly the most crucial: Snow is the worst.

First and foremost, snow is dangerous. The University doesn't cancel classes because Chancellor Leo Morton thinks students would really enjoy playing in the snow and having a grand ol' time. No—classes get canceled because

people could possibly die if they were to drive to and from campus on the icy conditions, or if one of the buses lost control and rammed into walking students. Classes get canceled to save your life.

I understand why people are excited for classes being canceled, but replacing boring lectures with dangerous weather conditions seems to be hardly an enjoyable consolation.

I remember The Great Snowpocalypse of 2011. I was there. I survived. But I hated snow then, and I'm going to hate snow now.

Maybe it's because, even though I've been in Kansas City for four years, I still haven't gone sledding down Suicide Hill. Maybe it's because during that great snowstorm of 2011, I still had to work on those supposedly glorious days that classes were canceled by the University. And on my way to

work, my car got stuck in the snow and left me stranded.

Those are all real possibilities as to why my heart is still ice cold when tiny snowflakes fall from the sky. But it's also possible that ever since the state deemed it legal for me to drive a car, I've understood that snow can be a real deterrent to everything that is good. Instead of being able to get to the places I want to be in a timely stress-free manner, I have to plan out a strategic plan of to safely travel. And sometimes snow keeps people locked up inside for several days, stopping them from being able to get the hot enjoyable soup on an ice-cold day.

But as I write this, I know none of those are the real reason I hate snow so much. The real reason is the aftermath. The elements left behind after snow surrenders to the changing of the season: sand and salt.

That nasty mixture of sand and salt is used unsuccessfully to try to stop snow and ice building up and allow cars to drive on the roads. Maybe the salt does help melt the ice—I'm not a scientist, so I won't guess—but is it really worth it when there is such a nasty mixture left behind when the snow disappears? Probably not.

Once the snow is gone, I cringe when I walk on the sidewalks and see (and sometimes even feel through my shoes) the mixture. It's disgusting. There really must be a better way to prepare for something so sinister. This method really does seem like it was created in the 1700s.

"General Washington, how should we get rid of the snow?" asked a loyal American soldier on Dec. 25, 1776, when George Washington led his army across a frozen Delaware River.

"Salt," said the soon-to-be leader



Caleb-Michael Files

Maybe if the United States of America were to develop a much better way to prepare for icy conditions, I wouldn't hate snow so much. Maybe if classes are canceled today, and I spend all my free time enjoying my life by sledding down Suicide Hill, I won't hate snow so much.

But for now, I do. Screw you, snow.

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Why students should care about the Violence Against Women Act

Caleb-Michael Files
Student Life Editor

Protections for Native Americans and members of the LGBTQ community were removed from the proposed bill last week. Congress could make campuses safer by reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act or VAWA. VAWA has been one of the most critical, effective and life-saving tools in the fight to end sexual assault and dating violence. It has always received vast bipartisan support, as it did when it was passed in the Senate last year with 68 Senators supporting it. But somehow, despite intense negotiations in December, the 112th Congress was not able to pass a final VAWA before the Congressional session ended on January 1st. This is unacceptable. Every day that the 113th Congress

fails to pass a VAWA that protects all victims, more and more young people will suffer from dating violence and more students will feel unsafe on their own campuses.

Domestic violence is one of the most common forms of violence endured by women. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that one-fourth of U.S. women will endure an abusive relationship, while some 1,300 people are killed each year by intimate partners. Thankfully, we have come a long way since the 1970s, when laws did not directly prohibit domestic violence, police often failed to respond, and few resources were available to victims. Yet we stand at the brink of losing much of that progress if Congress does not act now to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

First enacted in 1994, VAWA was the first federal legislation to acknowledge domestic violence and sexual assault as crimes. It provides

federal resources to encourage community-coordinated responses to address these issues, including support for victim services and training of law enforcement. In 2000, VAWA was reauthorized and included several new provisions, including legal assistance for victims, expansion of the definition of the crimes to cover dating violence and stalking, attention on trafficking of persons and assistance to trafficking victims.

Another reauthorization occurred in 2005, which added new provisions specifically aimed at helping immigrant victims. It allows undocumented immigrant victims who have endured abuse at the hands of an intimate partner to self-petition for residency status. This critical provision was incorporated because many times abusers bring victims to the U.S. and promise to complete the required paperwork yet instead use their victim's status as yet

another tool of power and control. These victims often remain in dangerous situations out of fear of deportation or loss of child custody. The self-petition provision of VAWA lets these victims obtain documentation that allows them to legally drive and work. Given that many victims stay with abusers because they cannot financially support themselves, the ability to drive and work means these women and men can be independent.

Despite its name, the provisions of VAWA help men, women and children. Administered by the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW), an estimated 250,000 victims are served annually through VAWA.

VAWA works, according to advocates in the field. The White House notes that the National Domestic Violence Hotline, which was established through the VAWA, has received over three million calls, with more

than 22,000 each month. For 92 percent of callers, it is the first time they have called anyone for help. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, between 1994 and 2010, rates of intimate partner violence decreased 64 percent.

The time is now. Congress is debating VAWA and despite widespread support some still oppose it. Opposition rests largely on the fact that VAWA provides assistance to undocumented immigrants and to Native Americans and LGBT persons.

This partisan squabbling is appalling in so many ways, not least of which is the fact that failing to reauthorize VAWA is a huge step back, a return to times when victims had little choice but to endure their partners' violence.

This is an opportunity for Congress to promote justice—for victims and for communities.

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Student Life // Tutorious: Continued from Page 13

unsure of their abilities. In a nutshell, our training explains that it is okay if you don't know every answer," Stamm said.

Creating Tutorious was not as easy as getting a group of people together and calling it good. Stamm had to find school districts willing to allow Tutorious tutors in to help students. It took about a year to get

everything in order.

"It took a while to convince school districts of our legitimacy of an organization," he said.

He also had to file the appropriate paperwork in order to get a 501 (c)3 status from the Internal Revenue Service to act as a not for profit company.

Stamm has advice for other students

looking to start their own businesses.

"Network. Meet as many people in your field as you can. Almost all of our growth has been a direct result of meeting the right people," he said. "Also, be resilient. I can't count the number of times I've failed while trying to get Tutorious up and running."

Students wishing to get involved with

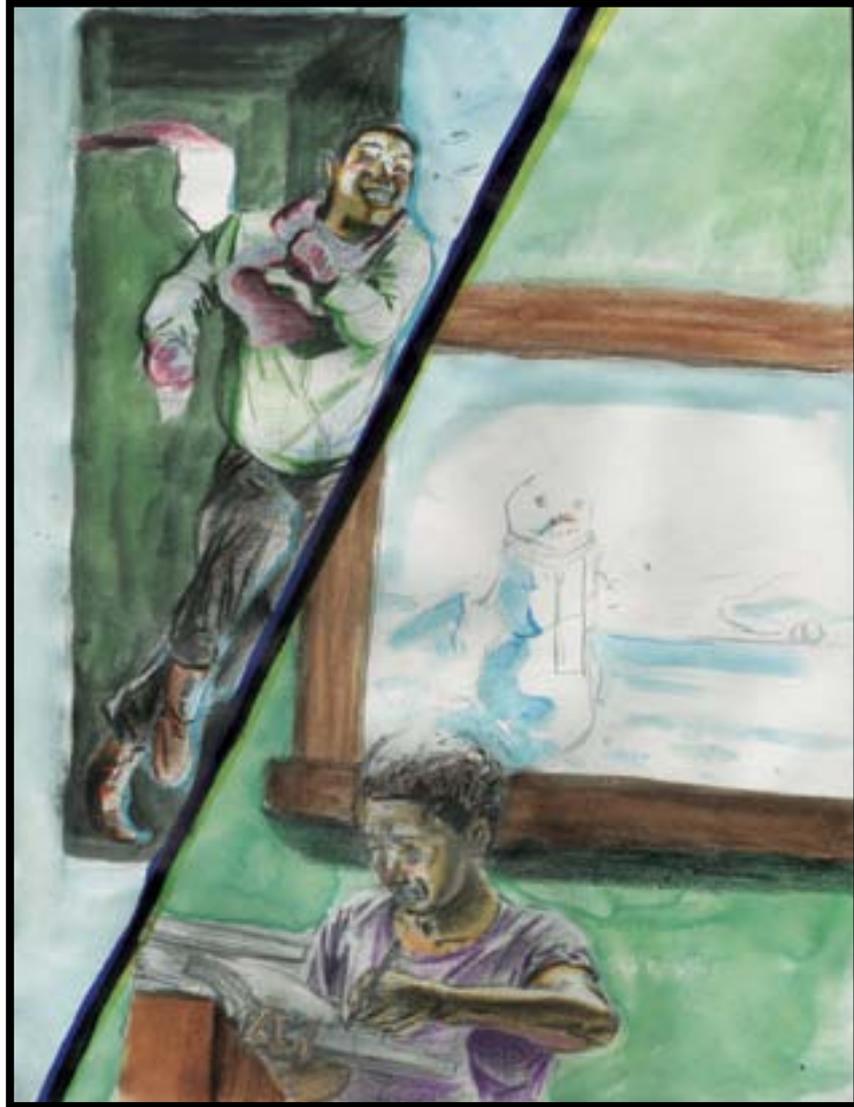
Tutorious can visit www.tutorious.org or search for it on Facebook. Tutorious trains volunteer tutors several times a year and accepts donations on their website.

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Cartoon of the Week



The calm 'Blizzard of Oz' before the homework storm.

CARTOON // Aaron Cecil

movie review

A laughable love story

Elizabeth Golden

Managing Editor

When will teen films writers learn that love does not happen overnight? Well maybe "love" does happen overnight to those involved while everyone on the outside sits and laughs at their stupidity. "Beautiful Creatures" tell of an instantaneous love between a witch and a mortal and proves to be just that: laughable and stupid.

Lena (Alice Englert), a mysterious new girl moves to town and begins a 72-day struggle of good over evil. Soon after entering the town, she runs into Ethan (Alden Ehrenreich), who only dreams of some day being able to escape the prison of a small town in which they live. Within a week, they're dating, in love, being stupid and showing off their annoying personalities.

After an hour into the film, the true plot is revealed. On the eve of her 16th birthday, Lena must find a spell to erase the certain evil protruding on her life. When a witch turns 16, her true nature will decide whether she will be good or evil for the rest of eternity. Lena only dreams of being good, but feels her soul is evil at heart.

Ethan discovers Lena's unlikely powers early on and continues to help her unlock the secrets to her past and in the process they both discover their connected family history.

The best part of the film is Lena's personality and the chemistry between the characters. Despite the awful storyline and sad attempts at cinematography, the chemistry and character traits manage to shine through. Lena is brutally honest and hilariously sarcastic with a necessary element of quirkiness. Ethan is boring, predictable and relatively annoying, but together the characters come across as sweet and funny.

Their affection is obvious besides the unrealistic fantasy aspect. Yes, this is a teen fantasy film, but once again, that does not make love happen within a couple days of meeting.



Maybe those who are romantics will enjoy this, but it's hard to get to the substance of a film when the premise is so unrealistic and cheesy.

The film is clearly playing up to the "Twilight" crowd, however it fails miserably. As horrible as "Twilight" was, it did get viewers emotionally involved in the characters. People felt the drama and wanted more. There's a fine line between cute and cheesy, and "Beautiful Creatures" fell on the extreme cheesy side of the line.

There is potential here. The supernatural theme is extremely popular and could be interesting, but the filmmakers did not capture the most interesting dynamics in the story. The film is based on a book, so who knows what the book focused on? But there were very interesting story lines and character dimensions that the film did not even touch on. This is most likely a writing problem since the directing proved to be 100 percent average.

However, the film was entertaining, though a tad bit long. It's easy to lose interest halfway through. The acting was solid. The directing was decent. The special effects were overplayed, but tolerable. Nothing made this film stand out, but then nothing made it unwatchable.

Overall, this film is not worth the price of theatre admission, but wouldn't be a waste of a dollar at RedBox.

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We publish 4,000 copies each week, and distribute to the Volker and Hospital Hill campuses and surrounding neighborhood businesses.

Letters to the Editor can be submitted by mail or to info@unews.com. Letters should be 350 words or less and are subject to edits for clarity.

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