

WATCHDOG: A street sign on Kensington Avenue may have fallen victim to a city bus. | B2

Lake of the Ozarks' "Party Cove" is giving the "other" Anderson Hollow Cove a bad name. | B2



HATRED AND LAW ENFORCEMENT SHOULD'N'T MIX. MARY SANCHEZ | B7



A final summer splash

Angela Cole of Excelsior Springs braced herself for the big splash Monday as she went down the water slide on the last day of the season at Adventure Oasis in Independence.

JILL TOYOSHIBA | THE KANSAS CITY STAR

Local

OBITUARIES AND A TRIBUTE, B4-5

YOUNG MINDS AT WORK



Science fare

Eight area students earned spots among 400 nationwide, all seeking to be named America's top young scientist of the year.

It was the largest number from the area to advance in the Discovery Channel's Young Scientist Challenge since the contest began in 1999, said Mary Brock, executive director of Science Pioneers, which runs the annual Greater Kansas City Science and Engineering Fair.

In all, 18 students were selected for their work in Missouri science fairs. Only Florida, California and Texas had more. The contest is open to students in sixth through eighth grades.

The area's semifinalists: Allison Marie Christian, Englewood Christian Academy in Independence; Kylie Quinn Hornbeck, St. Peter's School in Kansas City; Megan Marie Keller, Overland Trail Elementary School in Overland Park; Shilpi Ganguly, Trailwood Elementary School in Overland Park; Linden Alvey Stirk, Westridge Middle School in Overland Park; Nicolas Allan White, Briarwood Elementary School in Prairie Village; and Nathan Edward Coulson and Dirk Paul Hudson, West Platte Elementary School in Weston.

| Joe Robertson, jrobertson@kcstar.com

UMKC RECOGNIZED

A neighbor with class(es)

Another "best-of" list is out, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City is on it.

UMKC is ranked 23rd among the top 25 "Best Neighbor" urban colleges and universities in the nation.

The "Saviors of Our Cities" rankings, compiled by Evan Dobbelle, president and chief executive officer of the New England Board of Higher Education, looked at the help colleges and universities provide their communities.

A decade ago, UMKC had a strained relationship with the community over the university's plans to acquire nearby homes. "UMKC has worked hard to improve its relationship with its surrounding neighborhood. It appears they have had some success," said 4th District Councilman Jim Glover.

Dobbelle cited such UMKC programs as its local business startup effort, the Sojourner Clinic for the homeless, the Institute for Urban Education and a School of Pharmacy program that warns children about drugs.

| Mará Rose Williams, mdwilliams@kcstar.com

TALKING TRASH

Keep it clean, folks

The Kansas City Neighborhood Advisory Council is looking for some trashy talk.

Actually, the council is seeking funny or nice stories for an event it is planning so that residents and neighborhood groups can show their appreciation to city trash workers.

The event will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Sept. 27 in the Brush Creek Community Center, 3801 Cleaver II Blvd.

If you wish to volunteer or would like to bring a snack or dessert, or if you have questions about the event, call Tammy Gay at (816) 333-4410.

| Debra Skodack, dskodack@kcstar.com

A TRUE HERO | Natural gas leak led to a brutal house fire

NEIGHBOR RESCUES WOMAN, DAUGHTER



DAVID EULLITT | THE KANSAS CITY STAR

"The baby and the woman were on fire, right there at the door," said Lamont Young, who rescued his neighbor and her daughter from this home Sunday at 3711 Elmwood Avenue in Kansas City.

A mother and toddler are in critical condition after being engulfed in flames.

By KAREN DILLON
The Kansas City Star

Lamont Young was sitting on his couch Sunday night when he heard a deafening boom, and the house shook.

He ran outside and saw flames from the house across the street licking the sky.

Then he heard the screams.

Almost as quickly, he spotted his neighbor in the doorway of the burning home, holding her baby.

"The baby and the woman were on fire, right there at the door," said Young, pointing at the charred house. "It was like some-



PHOTO COURTESY KMBC-TV

Latasha Douglas (left) and Shalena were burned in the explosion.

thing from a movie."

Young was being called a hero Monday for pulling Latasha Douglas and her 2-year-old daughter out of the fire. Authorities said a natural gas leak caused the home

in the 3700 block of Elmwood Avenue to explode about 10:20 p.m. Sunday.

"For (Young) to have the heart to go in," said Lee Douglas, her brother-in-law. "Not many would do that. They were literally on fire. ... But for the grace of God they got out."

Both are in critical condition. Shalena, who will be 3 years old next month, was flown early Monday to Shriners Hospitals for Children in Cincinnati. Her mother is at University of Kansas Hospital.

The Kansas City Fire Department and Missouri Gas Energy are investigating the explosion, which residents felt blocks away.

SEE RESCUE | B9

Election alerts aimed at youth

Johnson County's election commissioner seeks to raise turnout using text messages.

By FINN BULLERS
The Kansas City Star

The best way to reach April Newby is on her cell phone.

In July, the Shawnee resident sent more than 800 text messages from her phone — on average, more than one an hour.

"That's not that bad compared to other kids," said the 18-year-old freshman at Kansas State University.

Her father just happens to be Johnson County's election commissioner, Brian Newby.



Inspired in part by his daughter, he's now harnessing such technology in an effort to increase turnout among people under 30 who traditionally don't vote.

"We want to target people where they live and on their terms," said Newby, a former Sprint employee who has been the county's top election official for nearly a year.

Launched about three months ago, the service allows voters to receive electronic notices of election dates, advance

SEE ELECTION | B2

HOW TO SIGN UP

Johnson County residents who want to get election updates and alerts anytime, anywhere on their cell phone, wireless PDA, pager, MP3 player or computer can do so at www.jocoelection.org or www.apple.com/itunes.

A ruptured appendix fails to stop doctoral student

By MONIQUE NEWTON
The Kansas City Star

In a tent at least 3,000 feet up a mountain in the South Pacific, University of Kansas student Edwin Scholes awoke in the middle of a rainy night, screaming in pain.

Scholes, who had been conducting research for his dissertation,

was several hundred miles from proper treatment for his ruptured appendix.

And if anything looked promising, it was death, not his doctorate.

But nearly four years after the incident, Scholes is receiving his doctorate in ecology and evolu-

tionary biology.

"I just got really, really lucky," said Scholes, who lives in Ithaca, N.Y.

Scholes, 31, began his research in 1999. His dissertation, "The Evolution of the Courtship Phenotype in the Bird of Paradise Genus Parotia," required him to travel

between the KU campus in Lawrence and New Guinea, an island northeast of Australia.

The bird of paradise that he studied, found only in New Guinea, is known for the males' showy courtship displays.

SEE ILLNESS | B9

ARCHIVES REQUIRE A UNIFIED EFFORT

When it comes to the future of the Black Archives of Mid-America Inc., the solutions aren't so black and white.

Earlier this year, the Missouri secretary of state dissolved the archives as a nonprofit corporation for failure to file certain paperwork. However, that paperwork was filed recently, and the Black Archives was reinstated as a corporation and allowed to do business in the state.

It was clear from the turnout and the enthusiasm at an Aug. 17 hearing that people here care deeply about the fate of the operation. Some people, though, would like to inject race into the debate because now

STEVE PENN



COMMENTARY

some of the most prominent advocates for the archives are white.

Attorney General Jay Nixon, whose duties include safeguarding the assets of nonprofit corporations, is one of them. But as far as I'm concerned, he could be purple and belong to the Green Party. What should matter is that Nixon has provided much-needed direction on an issue where there previ-

ously was no leadership.

I've heard a few people say that the plight of the Black Archives is a problem for the African-American community to resolve. Another camp out there believes the time has come for the broader community to get involved.

Now they can. This week, Nixon will try to build on the momentum that came out of that August forum. He will host a second meeting, which is open to the public, from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday at the Gregg Community Center, 1600 John "Buck" O'Neil Way.

At the gathering, representatives from Kansas City's Parks and Recreation Department will make a presentation on

the possible use of their space near 17th Street and Highland Avenue as a future home for the archives.

Gary Kremer, executive director of the State Historical Society of Missouri, will give a presentation on the proper way to care for historical artifacts and documents.

I recently spoke to Nixon, who outlined the process he has come up with to revamp the archives board. "We're really starting to get some good buy-in from folks," Nixon said.

First of all, Barbara Peterson, widow of the archives' founder, Horace Peterson, has agreed to serve as the chairwoman of an advisory committee

SEE PENN | B9

A BRUSH WITH CELEBRITY



SUSAN PFANNMULLER | SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Dickinson Theatres and Lucasfilm LTD arranged to have a special showing of Star Wars Episode IV at the Palazzo 16 in Overland Park on Monday for Dream Factory, which grants wishes for critically ill children. Brett Wilson, 6, made a new friend — Chewbacca.

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