

Stage mix-up delays event

Nathan Becker
Assistant News Editor

The stage was set and ready to go for the Special Olympics Track and Field meet Saturday. The problem? It was set too close.

A miscommunication regarding stage placement caused a delay of about 45 minutes and left crowd members, volunteers and parents wondering why the opening ceremonies could not begin at 11:30 a.m. as scheduled, said junior Julie Wynn, student director for the Special Olympic games management team.

Trish Lutz, managing area director of Special Olympics Missouri, said the Truman football team was scheduled to practice on the field until 11:30 a.m., and the stage and sound equipment could not be set up until the team left the field.

In e-mail correspondence between head football coach Shannon Currier and Lutz prior to the event, they agreed the stage would not be set up on the field. Lutz said the stage could not be set up on the track because of meet events, so it was placed just off the sideline of the playing field.

Currier said the stage was set up for the Special Olympics the night before, but the football team had to take it down because it was so close to the field that it might have caused injury to players.

"You can't have practice on the field when there's bricks and boards on the sidelines," Currier said. "... It was a yard, two yards off the actual sideline, so anybody that runs out of bounds, you're going to run into a brick."

Lutz said that if the stage wouldn't have had to be moved, everything would have gone as planned.

"Had we been able to leave everything the way we had it set up, it would have been no problem to start at 11:30 [a.m.] when [the football team] got off the field," Lutz said. "... It didn't put us behind in the day by any means because we just adjusted. ... We were flexible. In Special Olympics, one of our favorite words is to be flexible."

Wynn said the Special Olympic athletes were lined up to march in the parade of athletes for about 30 minutes, and volunteers had to sit doing nothing while waiting for the stage to be set.

"The huge frustration was that we had a lot of volunteers that were scheduled to be there right after opening ceremonies," Wynn said. "... They basically sat around for 45 minutes because we were delayed."

Wynn said the football team said it would put the stage back up after practice. She said that when the practice was winding down, volunteers wanted to get the stage up as fast as possible. She said she saw at least two members of the football team staff helping to put the stage up after practice ended.



A member of the Hannibal Hawks team stretches in anticipation of his event, the standing long jump, at the Special Olympics track and field meet Saturday. The opening ceremonies of the event were delayed because its stage had to be rebuilt after football practice.

"We saw the football players in a huddle in the middle of the field, and we decided: They're finished, so now we can put our stage up, and we just went ahead and did it ourselves because we didn't want to wait any longer," Wynn said.

Currier said the team normally would practice until about 12:30 p.m., but he arranged to be off of the field by 11:30 a.m. to accommodate the Special Olympics. He said players were required to be at practice at 6:30 a.m. to leave at 11:30 a.m.

He said the football team had no intention of delaying the opening ceremonies, and the problem was that he didn't expect the stage to be that close to the field.

"It's disappointing that people think that we're intentionally trying to make the Special Olympic program go later than it was supposed to go," Currier said. "I wasn't familiar with any stage being on the field or anything like that, so, I mean, I guess I didn't know."

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Trish Lutz
Managing Area Director of Special Olympics Missouri

"I hope that in the future, we can make a better compromise so that we have time to set up for our event, and they have time to run their practice," Wynn said.

Small town fears for missing youth

Grace Mattie
Staff Reporter

Wade Lurk went to his friend's cabin to play cards March 30, but he never came home.

His parents reported him missing the next afternoon at the Sainte Genevieve (Mo.) Police Department, which is an hour and a half south of St. Louis, and no one has heard from him since.

"We've pretty much ruled out the possibility [that he ran away]," said Mike Lurk, Wade Lurk's father.

Reports show that Wade Lurk, 17, was last seen driving his 1990 Nissan Stanza at 4:30 a.m. April 1 in the Goose Creek area in Sainte Genevieve. At first his family proposed a \$5,000 reward for any information related to his absence, but they increased the reward to \$25,000 just a few days later.

Mike Lurk said that after calling his son several times the next day, he filed a report after checking his son's cell phone history from the night before and noticing that no calls had registered.

Fliers have gone out to several areas including Kirksville and Truman's campus, and information has been posted on the Internet as well as on

business packages, Mike Lurk said. He said his family has received sympathy via e-mail from people as far as Australia.

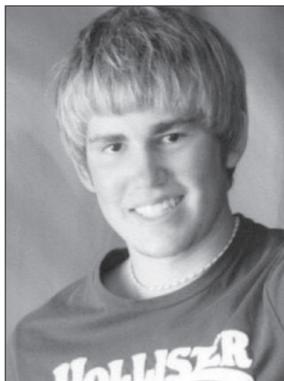
The Lurk family has received a great deal of support from the police and their family and friends, Mike Lurk said. He said there have been four organized searches where hundreds of people showed up, and he said hundreds of people have been searching on their own, including plane and helicopter searches every day.

"The search is ongoing and massive," said Lt. Kyle Marquart of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Marquart said they have received some leads to the case but cannot disclose the information because the case is under investigation.

"We've been trying to eliminate a lot of possibilities, but until you have some information, you can't eliminate any of them," he said. Statistics show that Sainte Genevieve County hasn't had a missing person since 1984, and even then the person was found, Marquart said. Regardless, trained investigators are presiding over the case.

"The sheriff's department is doing a great job with the investigation," he



Wade Lurk

said. "They are following all the right protocols and all the right measures."

Media including the FOX Network, St. Louis newspapers and news stations and Court TV all have covered the Wade Lurk case, and Mike Lurk said he had an interview with CNN on Tuesday.

The case also has shown up on "America's Most Wanted," Marquart said.

"Media attention has been fantastic," he said. "They are really helping us get the word out."

A model student and a two-sport athlete, Wade Lurk is a senior at Valle Catholic High School in Sainte Genevieve.

"Everyone who knows him loves him," said Sara Menard, principal of Valle Catholic High School, who not only has Wade Lurk in class but also

employs him at Sara's Ice Cream. "He's one of the good guys, the kind of guy that goes back to visit his fifth-grade teacher."

Menard said that because Valle Catholic is a small school of 35 students per class, almost everyone knew that Wade was missing by Sunday afternoon, and a youth group gathered that day to recite the rosary.

Later that night, hundreds of people attended another service despite the lack of electricity from a storm Sainte Genevieve had experienced, Menard said.

Crisis councilors from Catholic Family Services came to the school April 4 and 5, and Menard said students have been trying to go through the motions like they would during an ordinary school day.

"I'd hardly call it normal," she said. "I'd call it cautious."

Wade Lurk's sister is a freshman at the high school, and his great-aunt and grandmother both work at the school as well. Menard said it has been a difficult situation for all of them.

"I'm sure it's not easy for them," Menard said. "But we are talking about people of faith, people who are rock solid."

Marquart said the investigators won't give up until Wade Lurk is found.

"We just pray that we can [find him]," Marquart said. "We are still hopeful that we can find Wade."

NEWS | In Brief

University receives \$3.44 million gift

Truman announced Tuesday that it has received a \$3.44 million estate gift to establish a scholarship fund.

The Lyle Ingraham Scholarship Fund will assist students with financial need in receiving a Truman education. It will provide about \$120,000 per year in scholarship resources. The maximum award is \$4,000, with at least 30 students benefiting from the fund each year, according to the scholarship guidelines.

Lyle Ingraham, a native of Green Castle, Mo., attended Kirksville Normal School, now Truman State University, and eventually became a banker in Browning, Mo. He retired in 1976 and moved to Kansas City. He passed away on July 3, 2005, at the age of 99.

Drunk student arrested during Lip Sync

A Truman student was taken into protective custody April 5 during the Greek Week lip sync contest after having too much to drink, said Tom Johnson, director of the department of Public Safety. Johnson said a Public Safety officer noticed junior David E. Shaw, 21, slurring his words and having difficulty speaking at Thursday night's festivities in Pershing Building. Shaw was then arrested and taken to the Adair County Detention Center where he remained in protective custody for 12 hours, Johnson said. No charges were pressed against Shaw.

Rowe reappointed, new pro-tem enters

Kirksville Mayor Martha Rowe was reappointed April 5 as mayor and newly re-elected city councilman Jeff Newton will serve as mayor pro-tem, replacing previous pro-tem Tim Crist, said City Clerk Vicki Brumbaugh. Meetings of the Kirksville City Council also were changed from Mondays to Wednesdays at 5:30.

Local energy company seeks rate hike

Atmos Energy Corporation announced April 7 that it would seek a gas rate increase because of increased operating costs and investments to maintain reliability and safety. The increase would be the first from Atmos in nine years.

The corporation will ask the Missouri Public Service Commission to increase its revenues by about \$3.4 million or 5.88 percent.

The rate change would go into effect after PSC approval. Atmos Energy serves about 60,000 in-state customers.

Student Senate | In Brief

- External affairs chairwoman junior Angela Crawford, secretary junior Abbi Howe and senator senior Stephen Huss were absent from Sunday's meeting.
- Senate approved the Funds Allotment Council slate.
- Junior Twink Pham addressed Senate on the SUB advisory committee's position on the vision document.
- Senate appointed senator sophomore Taylor Burks as its representative on the SUB advisory committee.
- Senate rejected a resolution that called for the administration to amend the University's parental notification clause concerning drug and alcohol offenses pending a voter majority on a referendum issue, by 4-8-3 vote.
- Senate approved a resolution creating a task force to investigate the viability of joining Missouri Students United!, by 12-0-1 vote.
- Senate passed a \$50 money motion for publicity and refreshments for a forum about United!, to take place at 7 p.m. Thursday in the SUB Alumni Room.
- Senate passed a \$390 money motion for Educator of the Year banquet invitations.
- Senate placed on the ballot a referendum question that reads as follows: "Do you support the Truman Student Body becoming a provisional member of Missouri Students United! so the student association can have the opportunity to participate in United!'s inaugural congress while postponing the question of financial commitment until the outcomes of becoming official union members can be established?"
- Senate approved an action plan outlining Senate's priorities for implementing the vision document.
- Senate placed on the ballot a referendum question that reads as follows: "Should the administrators of TSU notify the parents of students who violate the drug and alcohol provisions of the student code of conduct when there is not an imminent threat to students' lives and the student is not a repeat offender of those provisions?"
- Senate passed a \$30 money motion for a gift card to Hastings as a prize for an upcoming online survey on revising curriculum.
- Senate will meet at 6 p.m. Monday.

DPS | Reports

- 4/7 Report of bicycle theft from the Community Bike Sharing Program.
- 4/6 Report of burglary from old Grim Smith hospital.

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