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Group To Study Social Service Savings

FEBRUARY 15TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Group To Study Social Service Savings

JEFFERSON CITY – In an effort to find ways to save on Missouri’s social service program, Senate Leader Rob Mayer has appointed a new committee to study the state’s programs.

Mayer, named five senators this week to serve on the Special Senate Committee on Social Service Program Savings. The committee is charged with conducting hearings in order to examine past and anticipated changes in the participation and cost of each social service program offered in Missouri.

“Missouri is facing an on-going budget crisis,” Mayer said. “As we have fewer dollars to fund our priority of education, as well as the critical functions of government, it becomes even more important that we find ways to counteract the hundreds of millions of dollars in annual mandatory increases embedded in our social service programs. We should examine ways we can provide better care and save lives, while also saving money.”

Members appointed to serve include three Republican and two Democrats. Appointed were Sen. Rob Schaaf, R-St. Joseph; Sen. Kevin Engler, R-Farmington; Sen. Brad Lager, R-Savannah; Sen. Joe Keaveny, D-St. Louis; Sen. Shalonn “Kiki” Curls, D-Kansas City.

Schaaf will serve as chair of the special committee.

“The severity of our current budget crisis demands that all solutions be considered, including options such as federal block granting, which has never been considered in our state,” said Schaaf. “We will meet our fiduciary duty to the state by looking at these options and reporting our findings.”

The committee will meet weekly in hopes of submitting an initial report of recommended actions before March 1, the last day to introduce bills in the Senate. The committee will continue its work after that date until a final report of findings is submitted to the Senate.

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TRC Monday Night Classes Cancelled

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TRC Monday Night Classes Cancelled

BREAKING NEWS:

Dr. Wes Payne, Vice President of Learning at Three Rivers Community College, has informed the ShowMe Times that the college will close today, Monday, Feb. 13, at 3 p.m.

All college offices and centers will close and all classes on Monday evening are cancelled due to inclement weather. This includes office and classes on the college's main campus in Poplar Bluff, as well as at centers in Dexter, Malden, Kennett, Sikeston and Cape Girardeau.

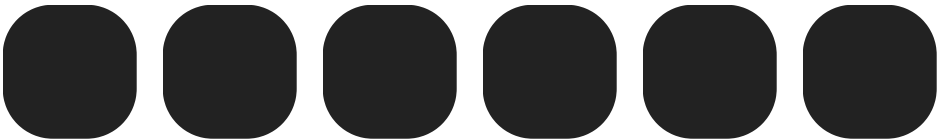
Dr. Payne also reported that a decision concerning college classes for Tuesday, Feb. 14, will be made prior to 6 a.m. Tuesday.

Watch the ShowMe Times for additional weather-related news.

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Crews Prepare City For Winter Weather

FEBRUARY 13TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Crews Prepare City For Winter Weather

By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor

Dexter's street crews are staying in front of the latest round of wintry weather expected Monday and working to prepare city streets for the predicted ice and snow.

Street Department Supt. Jeff Myers said Monday morning city street crews have been out since early Monday morning preparing for the winter weather.

"I'd rather be safe than sorry," Myers said.

Crews have applied a salt solution - roadway "stripes" you see - to promote melting. Myers said the Street Department has three crews on the streets applying the solution. The tank on each truck contains about 425 gallons of solution. The solution is mixed at the department shed and then loaded onto the tanks on each truck.

The three city crews will continue to work on applying the solution. Myers said it will take the three crews 6-7 hours to apply the salty solution to all city streets.

The National Weather Service in Paducah has issued a Winter Weather Advisory for Stoddard County and the surrounding area. Snow is predicted, arriving Monday mainly after noon with a high near 35. The chance of precipitation is 90 percent. Total daytime snow accumulation of around an inch possible.

Freezing rain will arrive Monday night before midnight, with a low around 32. Chance of precipitation is 100 percent. New ice accumulation of 0.1 to 0.2 of an inch possible.

Photo Above: Street crews in Dexter are working to help prepare the city for the predicted winter weather due to arrive Monday evening. On hand at the Street Department Monday morning were (from left) Michael Wolpers, Street Supt. Jeff Myers and Jim Overall. (SMT Photo by Annabeth Miller)

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Wintery Weather Predicted For Area

FEBRUARY 11TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Wintery Weather Predicted For Area

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

While flowers and trees showed the slightest sign of budding into an early spring last week, winter has returned to the Bootheel this weekend with an Arctic blast.

The National Weather Service in Paducah has issued a Special Weather Statement concerning its forecast of cold temperatures and possible snow in the region.

The NWS is predicting that winter weather will move into the region by Sunday night with wintry precipitation to develop of Southeast Missouri. Most of the wintry precipitation is expected to be snow, with a mixed bag of wintry precipitation also to be possible.

“Preliminary indication suggest no less than 1 to 2 inches may accumulate most areas,” the NWS statement reported.

Saturday night’s low temperature should reach the mid-teens, with the high on Sunday to only reach 34 degrees. Increasing clouds are expected by Sunday event with the snow and possible sleet to arrive by Monday morning.

With a winter storm forecast to move into the state from the west beginning late Sunday evening, the Missouri Department of Transportation is reminding drivers to check its Traveler Information Map to get the latest road conditions before heading out.

Motorists can also call MoDOT’s customer service center for road conditions at 1-888-ASK-MoDOT (888-275-6636). The toll-free phone line is answered 24-hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

MoDOT crews are prepared and ready to treat Missouri highways as needed. During winter weather events, MoDOT places the highest priority on roads with the highest traffic volumes, such as interstates, U.S. highways, and other high volume state routes. Lower volume lettered or numbered routes will be treated as necessary.

Motorists should be aware that bridges and overpasses generally experience freezing conditions first. Motorists should drive cautiously, pay extra attention, and drive defensively in winter weather.

One of the biggest travel issues when winter weather strikes is black ice. Motorists need to be especially cautious as falling drizzle freezes or melted snow refreezes making black ice a concern, especially on bridges and overpasses.

MoDOT encourages drivers to remember the following tips when driving in inclement weather:

- Always wear your seat belt.
- Use common sense, and adjust your speed to suit driving conditions.

- If weather conditions warrant windshield wipers, turn your headlights on. They help you see and help other drivers see you. Plus, it's the law.
- Double the distance you normally leave between you and the next car.
- Use gentle pressure on your accelerator pedal when starting on wet or slick surfaces.
- Give snowplows plenty of room, and try not to pass them when conditions are poor.
- Remember that driving is most hazardous when temperatures are near 32 degrees.
- Watch for other vehicles having problems with road conditions.
- Don't pass other vehicles on or near bridges.
- Keep your fuel tank at least half full.

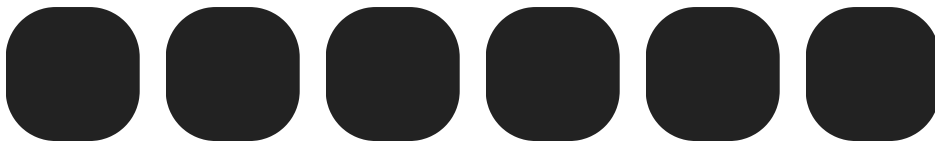
Links of Interest

- [MoDOT Travel Information](#)
- [Paducah National WeatherService – Dexter Area Forecast](#)

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Nixon's Visit A 'Chance Of A Lifetime'

FEBRUARY 08TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

Nixon's Visit A 'Chance Of A Lifetime'

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

Lesson plans were put on the back burner Tuesday morning, as the students in Cherie Smith's Family and Consumer Sciences class had a pair of very special visitors.

The guests at Dexter High School were Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon and First Lady Georganne Nixon, who visited DHS to commend the school for participating in the A+ scholarship program and to encourage the students in their studies.

Mrs. Nixon is a former schoolteacher, so the classroom was familiar territory for her. She used the classroom visit to encourage the high school students to consider teaching as a career.

"It's one of the greatest jobs that there is," the First Lady told the high school students. "So anyone who thinks that they might like to do this someday, maybe you'll be standing here some day helping other people."

The Governor used his classroom time to encourage the students to participate in A+, a scholarship program offered by the state. To qualify, students in participating schools must meet the requirements established for the program, including minimum grade point average (GPA), attendance, tutoring, and good citizenship standards. In return the A+ Program provides two years of free tuition and academic fees at Missouri's community colleges.

Nixon told the students that A+ has two main values.

"Number one, you have to go to school and you have to keep your grades up. And if you do that we make a promise on our side as a state that you qualify for two years tuition at community colleges across the state. It is a great way to avoid what so many young folks are finding these days, which is the weight of debt because of a college education," he said.

He told the students that a recent study by the Federal Reserve reported that there is more student loan debt in America today than all the credit card debt in America.

"Think of all the people with credit cards," he commented. "What we're doing here in Missouri is to provide students with an opportunity. It's a great pathway to make sure you have a chance to move forward."

Nixon opened the floor to the students to ask questions, joking that he was next to the door in case the questions were too touch. Senior Megan Robert asked the governor about citizenship, and his definition of a good citizen.

Focus On Duties Of Citizen

The state's chief executive advised the students to not be distracted by "mudslinging" and political argument, but to stay focused on the duties of a citizen.

"We live in the most open democracy in the world. Everybody can have an effect. Everyone in this room is going to be eligible to vote. Every one of you has as much voice as Warren Buffet has on who the next President of the United States is once you turn 18 and can vote. Voting is a responsibility," he said.

Other responsibilities include informed, being involved, following the laws, and being a good citizen.

"There are a lot of responsibilities (in being a good citizen), but they present you with the opportunity to do and be whatever you want," he concluded.

Jessica Snider asked the state's top elected official about today's primary election.

"I believe in primary elections," he replied. "I'm a believer that we should have elections to choose candidates instead of party caucus. I thought we should have a presidential primary, which we are having today."

However, Nixon explained to Jessica and the parties determine way the convention delegates are chosen. One party – the Democrats – chose by the primary, the other – the Republicans – choose by caucus. Unfortunately, he explained, the two parties could not agree on timing and other factors that created the situation that required today's election, which will not chose the delegates to the GOP convention.

"This is one of the reasons you need to be informed," Nixon said after his explanation. "People will give you snippets of information that only affect their side of a questions. And that's dangerous in a democracy. Being informed as a citizenry is really important."

Nixon's answer to her really complex question impressed Snider.

"Right before I left the house (today) I heard on the news that he vetoed to have the Missouri primary in March, and it actually kind of got me fired up," Snider said after class. "I then got to school and found out he'd be in my class and I could ask him a question. I wasn't sure how he'd respond to my question, but I thought he responded very well, and it made more sense to me after hearing him explain it."

Classmate Shyann Jines agreed that she appreciated the Nixons' visit.

"I enjoyed it," Jines said. She is a freshman at DHS. "It was something new and it was enjoyable thought."

She did, indeed, listen to the governor in class and during his remarks later in the morning when he addressed the DHS Student Body in the Bearcat Event Center.

"I think A+ is a very good thing because some parents and kids may not be able to afford to go off and pay for college. But with this you can. I am really thinking about attending Mizzou! but I'm really not sure yet."

By taking advantage of A+ tuition, she might be able to start her college career at a community college and finish her degree at University of Missouri, she said.

"I thought his speech in the BEC was nice. Very glad he came," said Snider.

Teacher Cherie Smith was impressed by the Nixons' interaction with the students and proud the students had a chance to visit with the governor.

"We were so excited and were honored to have the Governor visit our classroom," Smith said. "The kids couldn't believe how down to earth he was. The impact was huge. This was a chance of a lifetime. How many kids (and adults) will ever have the opportunity to meet and have a conversation with any governor? When the Governor, his wife, and I were talking during the drill, we spoke a bout the best state parks to camp and hike in within the state of Missouri. It was such an exciting experience."

Photo above: Governor Jay Nixon and First Lady Georganne Nixon chat with DHS teacher Cherie Smith on Tuesday. The Nixon's spent some time in Smith's Family and Conuber Science class. (ShowMe Times Photo by Annabeth Miller)

ShowMe Times Photo Gallery

Gov. and Mrs. Nixon at DHS

ShowMe Times Photos by Annabeth Miller

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