

Sheriff's Department to receive new investigative tool

The device will allow the Internet Crimes Task Force to copy cell phone data.

By JONATHAN STEPHANOFF
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The ability to peer deep into cellular phones and other mobile devices soon will become part of the Boone County Sheriff's Department investigatory arsenal.

The department will spend \$3,999 on a gizmo that carries an extravagant name. The Universal Forensics Extraction Device, or UFED, is manufactured by CelleBrite, a leading company in the transfer and backup of mobile content. It also sells UFEDs to law enforcement agencies worldwide, according to CelleBrite's Web site.

The Boone County Commission approved the purchase Tuesday morning.

The Mid-Missouri Internet Crimes Task Force will use the device to copy cell phone data — including phone numbers, contacts, pictures, videos, text messages, call logs and even some information the phone owner thinks has been deleted — that might be useful in its investigations.

The UFED is a "known device in forensics investigation tools," Detective Tracy Perkins of the task force said.

The Mid-Missouri Internet Crimes Task Force focuses much of its resources on child exploitation, serving Boone and the seven surrounding counties. Perkins said the device will be used by the task force lab in a wide variety of investigations.

Having their own UFED will "save a lot of time and travel for the officers involved," Perkins said. Until now, the task force has had to travel elsewhere to borrow

another agency's UFED.

The ability to extract data from mobile devices raises some privacy concerns.

"Cell phone privacy issues all depend on the case," Perkins said. With written permission of the user, investigators can access the phone; without it, they would have to get permission from the courts.

The UFED is about the size of a desk phone. Operating as a stand-alone unit or tethered to a computer, the device comes with a host of cables to plug into nearly 2,000 mobile devices, or 95 percent of all marketed cell phones, according to CelleBrite's Web site.

The purchase is part of requirements for the Multi-Jurisdiction Cyber Crime Grant, which provides federal money through the Missouri Department of Public Safety, according to the county purchase request.

US Geological Survey in Columbia plans \$7 million facility overhaul

The funds would also go toward fixing up research ponds.

By DALENE ROVENSTINE
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The Columbia Environmental Research Center is planning a \$7 million overhaul of its labs and offices in southeast Columbia.

The U.S. Geological Survey in Columbia researches the effects of water quality on aquatic organisms and river science, said Michael Mac, the center's director. The effectiveness of these studies will be improved with more adequate facilities, he said.

"If successful, this will be a huge upgrade to our system," Mac said. "It will be a big boost to our science

productivity." Research is currently housed in buildings that were constructed throughout the late 1960s and '70s. Under the proposal, nine of these buildings would be consolidated into the new center.

The USGS is hosting an informal open house with exhibits on the project at 7 p.m. today in the center's conference room at 4200 New Haven Road.

Chief inorganic chemist Thomas May said his area of research would be improved by the new building because of more room for instrumentation and equipment such as fume hoods for processing environmental samples.

In addition to the new center, the funds would allow for the renovation of 25 research

ponds. The ponds currently have asbestos piping that needs to be replaced. The renovation would also change the size of the ponds, allowing for research to be more standardized and replicable.

The library at the research center is in an area that floods and the project would relocate the library and provide a proper drainage system.

Martin Smith, project manager of the USGS, said the proposal is still in the "preliminary planning stage." If approved, the funds would come from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"This stimulus money is really the perfect storm when we badly need to replace buildings," Mac said. "We are so grateful."

LIFE STORIES

Lillian Swanson

Lillian Swanson of Columbia died Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010. She was 94. Mrs. Swanson was born in Woodlandville to Homer Lee and Elsie E. (Mead) Claxton, though she lived in Columbia for most of her life.

Mrs. Swanson was the office nurse for Dr. Charles Leech for more than 30 years and also worked as an LPN at Ellis Fischel Cancer Center for several years.

She was one of the first students to attend a program sponsored by the National Association for Practical Nurse Education at the University of Maine, and she was also one of the first to attend the historic first summer school. She graduated and received a license to be a practical nurse in Missouri in 1954. Mrs. Swanson was a member of the Missouri State Association throughout her nursing career, and in 1980, she became a member of the National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service.

In 1998, she worked, though retired, with NAPNES as associate editor of the Journal

of Practical Nursing until 2006.

She is survived by two sons, Sam Martin of Colorado Springs, Colo., and Michael Swanson of St. Louis; one daughter, Patricia (Skeen) VanBooven of Columbia; two sisters, Margaret Seiberling of Mitchellville, Iowa, and Florence Turner of Hallsville, two daughters-in-law, Suzann Martin of Tulsa, Okla., and Cho Martin of Columbia; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Her husbands, Frank Martin, Glenn Skeen and Vernon Swanson died earlier. Three of her sons, Homer Martin, John Martin and Larry Skeen also died earlier.

Services will be at 1 p.m. Thursday at Parker Funeral Home, 22 N. Tenth St. Burial will follow immediately at Memorial Park Cemetery, 1217 Business Loop 70 W.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the National Association for Practical Nurse Education, 1940 Duke St., Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314. Tributes may be posted at parkerfuneralservice.com.

— Lischen Reeves

Leslie Cochran

Leslie Cochran of Columbia died Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010. He was 53.

He was born Aug. 30, 1956, in Boone County to William and Veneta (Carter) Cochran.

Mr. Cochran enjoyed art and collecting eagle artifacts and photographs. A father and grandfather, he enjoyed having his family and loved ones around him.

Mr. Cochran is survived by his daughter, Amanda, and her husband, Robert Connor; brothers, Tommy Cochran of Ashland, Roger Cochran of Columbia and

Bobby Cochran of Kansas City; sisters, Lois Goodman and Mary Sue Anderson, both of Columbia; grandchildren, Robert and Scott Connor; and many nieces and nephews.

His parents, a brother, Carl Cochran, and a sister, Marjorie Beard, died earlier.

Visitation will be from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday at Nilson Funeral Home, 5611 E. St. Charles Road with services following there.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Salvation Army, 1108 W. Ash St., Columbia, MO 65203.

— Gregg Johnson

Education department seeks public input on special education services

By ALLISON ZIEMBA
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The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education held a public hearing on proposed changes in state regulations for special education services in Missouri on Tuesday.

Missouri is changing its state plan to comply with new federal guidelines that regulate federal funding for special education services, Jim Morris, the department's spokesperson said. The federal plan went into effect Dec. 31, 2008. The state already put into practice many of the changes and is now changing the plan to continue to receive federal funds.

The federal plan "provides the guidelines for the schools eligible for funding," Morris said. The changes are "language clarifications and technical in nature," but won't change the meaning of the guidelines.

Most of the changes are for clarification

purposes, but there is a new federal regulation that will allow parents to withdraw their child from special education services with written consent, Jackie Bruner, special education services director, said.

In the past, a team would evaluate the child to decide if special education services should be continued before removal was allowed, Bruner said.

Bruner expressed feedback from parents about the new change, but "there has not been much comment about it either way, good or bad," she said.

The proposed changes will be submitted to the Missouri State Board of Education for final approval after the final public hearing in St. Louis on Jan. 26.

Proposed changes to the state regulations are available at dese.mo.gov/div/specced/stateplan/index.html.

Man pleads guilty to marijuana charges

By GREGG JOHNSON
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A man who was growing 300 marijuana plants in his home pleaded guilty Monday to the production of a controlled substance.

Steven Maurer, 34, initially pleaded not guilty in August and was scheduled to be tried on Jan. 21, according to Missouri Case.net.

Maurer can be sentenced five to 15 years for the Class B felony, said Steven Berry, Boone County assistant prosecuting attorney. When Maurer pleaded guilty, he entered an open plea, which means the court can decide from the full range of punishment for the offense, Berry said.

In March, police served a search warrant at 3800 Snow

Leopard Drive where Maurer was living. In the search, officers found roughly 300 marijuana plants growing behind false walls in two places in the house, according to previous Missouri reporting.

In addition to the plants, officers found fewer than 35 grams of processed marijuana, numerous items of drug paraphernalia and a 44-caliber handgun.

Police also found items related to a growing operation, including lights, fans, electrical sources, fertilizer, chemicals, tubing, potting material and water filtration systems.

Maurer was arrested on suspicion of manufacturing a controlled substance, misdemeanor possession of a con-

trolled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Under the conditions of the open plea, Berry will recommend Maurer serve a maximum of an eight-year sentence and would oppose a sentence of probation. The sentencing hearing is scheduled for April 5, with 13th Circuit Court Judge Jodie Asel.

Maurer's attorney, Rusty Antel, declined to comment.

Maurer's co-defendant, Anthony Phillips, 39, was arrested on the same charges as Maurer. He was growing plants at a different location, but police thought they were working with each other.

Phillips has a jury trial scheduled Jan. 20. Berry is the prosecutor for both cases.



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