



STEVE J.P. LIANG

Coat season is on its way, but that doesn't mean women have to sacrifice style for comfort.

Time to find the perfect coat

Cold weather is on its way, so now's the time to get that perfect coat. But don't think you have to sacrifice your style to stay warm. Check the latest classic styles that will keep you professional and presentable when the temperatures drop. **1C**

ONLINE NOW

Podcasts: Bears, high school

Reporters Lyndal Scranton and Kyle Nedderriep discuss the final game of the MSU football season and the first tips for the basketball teams in the Bears Talk podcast at News-Leader.com/MSUbears. Reporters Allen Vaughan and Joe Cress talk about local high school football playoff action and get ready for winter sports in their podcast at News-Leader.com/blogs/highschoolHQ

Send us your hunting photos

Did you bag a trophy buck this hunting season? You can post a photo of yourself with the trophy animal in our Hunters' Gallery online. Join us at News-Leader.com/photos/hunting

YOUR COMMUNITY



NEWS-LEADER FILE PHOTO

Missouri State's Dale Lamberth

Three burning questions

Missouri State University opens its basketball season on Saturday with seven veterans and four newcomers on the Bears' team. Hopes are high that they'll make it to NCAA, but three burning questions must be answered first. Sports, **1D**

United Way exceeds its goal

United Way of the Ozarks learned Thursday morning that it has exceeded its fundraising campaign goal - good news for affiliates such as the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill in Springfield. **7A**

Will Battlefield get its first bar?

The city of Battlefield is threatened with having its first "liquor-by-the-drink" establishment - a bar - because a Springfield bar owner has affiliated with a veterans group and wants to open one there. Will it happen? Sarah Overstreet, **1B**

Dedication honors 'Flower Lady'

Fannie Baldwin - known as the "Flower Lady" - made it her business to beautify Springfield and was a pioneer volunteer because of it. Residents will get an idea of her contributions when a park is dedicated in her honor at 11 a.m. today. **3A**

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Weather

**68°** Cool temperatures and plenty of sunshine are likely.

**38°** TIA

Precipitation: 10%

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# SPRINGFIELD NEWS-LEADER

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## Complaint: Schools unfair to girls

Filing alleges lack of softball fields is discriminatory.

**By Cory de Vera**  
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Baseball fields for boys are located on campus at four of Springfield's public high schools, but all the girls' softball teams must play on off-campus city-

owned fields. In August, someone filed a Title IX complaint alleging that the situation is discriminatory to female students. Title IX is the part of federal law banning gender discrimination in public schools. Since 1972 it has been credited with expanding athletic opportunities for women and girls around the nation. The complaint came as a

**Web resources:** Follow the link with this story to get more information about Title IX.

surprise to athletic director Mark Fisher. "From my understanding our coaches and community are pleased with the fields they play on at (city-owned) Meador and Coop-

er" parks, said Fisher. This week, two investigators from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights came to town to tour facilities, district leaders said. Though the complaint concerned softball, they checked out other athletic facilities at the five high schools, as well. "I would have to say there does seem to be gender dis-

crimination," said Joanne Levy, the mother of a Kickapoo junior who played softball last year. "The girls work hard, we have an excellent team. It doesn't seem fair that they can't have a field to call their own." Levy said she is glad the school district will have to review the issue.

See **Complaint**, Page 5A

## Comet Holmes captured

A local attorney's photo of the erupting comet, taken with a telescope camera, will appear in Astronomy Magazine.

Comet Holmes, between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, brightens in the nighttime sky on Oct. 24.



Richard Hammar explains how he used his state-of-the-art Ritchey-Chretien telescope to capture an image of Comet Holmes.

On Page 4A

- **Graphic** on where to look for Comet Holmes
- **Tips on how to watch the comet**, which is visible to the naked eye

**Photo gallery:** View additional images of Comet Holmes.  
**Web resource:** Learn more about astronomy and how to view the night sky by clicking a link on this story at News-Leader.com

Celestial object increased a million times in brightness.

**By Wes Johnson**  
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In the far reaches of the solar system, 150 million miles from Earth, a tiny black object suddenly sprang to luminous view on Oct. 24. And local attorney Richard Hammar caught the erupting comet with his telescope camera from the driveway of his Highland Springs home. "In a matter of a few hours this object increased a million times in brightness," Hammar said. "This thing is out between Mars and Jupiter," he said. "It's the opportunity of a lifetime." Hammar's remarkably crisp photograph of Comet Holmes will be featured in the April edition of Astronomy Magazine, which should hit the news stands at the end of February. "This is a big deal," said Astronomy Magazine photo editor Mike Bakich. "When something is a million times brighter than it was in a two-day period, that's really something in the astronomy world. Richard's photo is the best one we've seen."

For Hammar, watching the two-mile-wide comet turn from a tiny speck to a "big fuzzy star" was awe-inspiring. During the day, Hammar is an attorney for the Assembly of God headquarters in Springfield. But at night - when the sky is clear - Hammar likely will be found in his driveway peering through an 18-inch optical telescope or taking pictures with his state-of-the-art Ritchey-Chretien computerized telescope. The Ritchey-Chretien adjusts for the rotation of the Earth so camera images aren't blurry. Its 15-inch mirror was polished to near perfection with a stream of argon gas atoms in the Soviet Union. "It took me five years of constant failure to learn how to use this," Hammar said. It's about the best imaging telescope amateur astronomers can buy, he said. It works by taking numerous digital photographs of an object and

See **Comet**, Page 4A

## GOP lawmakers may ask Jetton to step down

Any action unlikely to be taken before January.

**By Kathleen O'Dell**  
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More than 10 Republican legislators are so displeased with House Speaker Rod Jetton's explanation of his role in a controversial bill, they may ask him to step down as speaker in January, Springfield Rep. Charlie Denison said Thursday. He said he doubts they would



Jetton

act on it before the General Assembly convenes in January because they want to hear how Jetton explains the issue to them. They would want to garner enough support to be able to vote him out if he didn't resign. "They are upset with Rod because they felt like he has done

See **Jetton**, Page 6A

## Heer's owner seeks support to build boutique hotel

**By Didi Tang**  
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As St. Louis developer Kevin McGowan became the owner of the historic Heer's building Thursday, he asked for support to build a boutique hotel. McGowan said he is willing to gamble on such an endeavor but would not fight for a hotel tax incentive that has met much opposition in Springfield. "The hotel does need to happen, but the community



McGowan

must muster its support and assure me that the tax will come my way," he said Thursday. McGowan signed papers and wired \$3 million to the city of Springfield on Thursday. Under his agreement with the city, renovation must begin by Sept. 1. The agreement also stipulates he must build a Mike Shannon's Steak and Seafood restaurant. He has

See **Heer's**, Page 5A



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