University Of Kansas
Mascots To Marry

By JONATHAN KEALING

LAWRENCE (AP) -- Big Jay and Baby Jay are about to get married.
No, this is not a marketing promotion from the University of Kansas athletic department.

Jessica Virtue and Chris Veit, a former Baby Jay and Big Jay, respectively, will walk down the aisle in October. The two met when Virtue was trying out for the mascot squad, of which Veit was already a part.

"Friday night, you start tryouts, and I remember seeing her and thinking, That's a really hot girl," said Veit, from Overland Park. "The second day of tryouts, I tried really hard to be nice to her."

The two quickly became friends and, over time, began to date. But Virtue, who is from Lawrence, said it was important that they never let their characters seem like they were dating.

"I think it would be really weird for the fans if we were a little extra friendly when we were in the suit," she said.

But that didn't mean that the two didn't perform together. Although several people act as mascots, Veit and Virtue regularly were able to be "in suit" as the mascot community refers to it at the same time.

Veit said it was almost natural that the two found themselves interested in dating.

Linda Gilstrap, Virtue's mother, was surprised when her daughter told her she wanted to become a mascot. When her daughter started dating a mascot, she was even more surprised. Little would she know how important the mascot squad would be to her daughter's life.

"They really have a built-in advantage, in that they have so many shared experiences," said Gilstrap, of Lawrence. "They're both cheering for the same team. They both have the same beliefs."

Gilstrap said Virtue and Veit have a unique relationship. They're lucky they found each other, she said.

"They're a very special couple," Gilstrap said.
G.C. student pledges to sorority

Kristen Marie Doering, a student at Garden City College, was one of approximately 567 women at the University of Kansas to pledge a sorority during fall formal recruitment. She is pledging Chi Omega sorority.

Doering is a freshman piano major at KU.

She is the daughter of Michael and Cynthia Doering, of Garden City.
Students take on leadership roles

Two University of Kansas students from Garden City have taken on leadership positions in the university’s Department of Student Housing.

Lacey J. Fisher, a junior psychology major, is a resident assistant in Corbin Hall. She is the daughter of Allan and Marla Fisher.

Kiley Suzanne Luckett, a sophomore social work major, is the national communications coordinator for the Association of University Residence Halls. She is the daughter of Karen and Clifton Luckett.
University of Kansas names summer grads

University of Kansas summer 2007 graduates

**Deerfield** — Luke
Fredrick Johnson, Bachelor of Arts, fine arts

**Garden City** — Eric
Luther Fry, professional certificate, ophthalmology;
Megan Marie Koerperich, Master of Science in Education, curriculum and instruction; Travis
Charles Laubach, Bachelor of General Studies, English;
George B. Martinez, professional certificate, internal medicine; Andrew C. Payne, Bachelor of Arts, economics

**Holcomb** — Jennifer
Ann Simmons, Bachelor of Science in Business, manage-

**Scott City** — Margarita
Humbelina Harper, Bachelor of Arts, biology
Music department to host guest trio Allégresse

Barton County Community College’s Music Department will present Allégresse, a flute, oboe and piano trio, in concert at 8 p.m. Oct. 12 in the Dorothy Moses Morrison Chapel, located in the Fine Arts Building, F-157. The number of tickets for this free concert is limited. To reserve tickets, contact Barton instrumental music instructor Steven Lueth, 792-9396.

Friends and collaborators from the Kansas City and Lawrence area for nearly a decade, Annie Gnojek, Margaret Marco and Ellen Bottorff formed this ensemble to explore the rich and varied repertoire for flute, oboe and piano. The trio plays a wide range of music of the classical masters, including Quantz, Telemann, W.F. Bach and Rossini, and the contemporary works of Frank Martin, Madeleine Dring, Thea Musgrave, Jean-Michel Damase and William Grant Still.

Allégresse, the French word for “joy,” depicts the graceful artistry of this new trio. Allégresse combines the virtuosic talents of three nationally recognized musicians with careers that have taken them throughout North America, South and Central America, Europe and Asia, both as soloists and chamber musicians. Driven by a strong commitment and a deep passion for their music, the three infuse every performance with expression, sincerity and a unique, interpretive elegance.

Gnojek is in demand as a free-lance musician, flute educator and clinician in the Lawrence and Kansas City areas, where she manages a successful flute studio. In addition to Allégresse, she performs in a variety of solo and chamber music concerts throughout Kansas. This nationally acclaimed musician’s most recent solo performance was Mozart’s Concerto in G Major with the Fort Hays State University Orchestra.

Marco has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras including the Orquesta Sinfónica de Maracaibo, the Rome Festival Orchestra and the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra. She has given master classes and recitals at venues including the University of Michigan, the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Costa Rica. Currently she serves as co-principal for the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra and performs frequently with the Kansas City Symphony, the Kansas City Lyric Opera and the Kansas City Ballet Orchestra. She is a founding member of the Chamber Music Society of Kansas City.

Bottorff is highly sought-after as a collaborative artist in the professional community. She has toured extensively throughout the United States and Canada, performing on live radio broadcasts, regional and national conventions, competitions, recital series and cruise ships. In addition, Ellen can be heard on three professional recordings, “Just for Fun,” with euphoniumist Pat Stuckemeyer and trumpeter Justin White; “Rare Breeds and Dog-Eared Classics,” with the Kansas Brass Quintet; and “Arrows of Time,” with trombonist David Vining. She has been a featured soloist with the Saint Joseph Symphony, having recently performed Rachmaninoff’s Second Concerto.

A graduate of the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Missouri Western University, Bottorff has studied with Richard Cass, Jerry L. Anderson and Rita Sloan. Currently, she is the interim piano professor at the University of Kansas.
Oxford honorees

Oxford High School students were awarded dictionaries for their academic achievements by the University of Kansas, on Wednesday night, Sept. 19, 2007. Those being honored were from left to right, KaCee Carson, Megan Hicks, and Lynsey Metz.

Teresa Lee photo
KU to recognize area students

Three students from West Elk Junior-Senior High School will be named Kansas Honor Scholars at a reception hosted Oct. 22 by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

Michael Lear, Alex Portenier and Jordyn Triboulet will receive the award along with 120 other students from 14 other high schools in Butler, Elk and Greenwood counties at the El Dorado Civic Center.

KU Alumni Association Kansas programs director Heath Peterson will present each student an American Heritage dictionary in hardback and CD versions. The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and has honored more than 100,000 students in the top 10 percent of the high school senior classes.
Associated Press

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Still, Veit said, it was almost natural that the two found themselves interested in dating.

"You get a core group of mascots who are hardcore,” Veit said. "Even before Jessica was in the picture, the other mascot and I would spend whole weekends together.”

Virtue said the mascots would perform, then perhaps do an appearance, and then spend evenings or spare time repairing the costumes. It just made sense that they’d become close.

Albert Veit, Chris Veit’s dad, said he knew quickly there was something special between the two.

"Chris met her in the spring and then all summer long didn’t see her. I would hear him mention to his friends all summer this blonde chick,” Albert Veit said. "I think at that point he didn’t even know her name.”

But Albert Veit, who lives in Overland Park, said he could see a twinkle in his son’s eyes that hadn’t been there before. Albert Veit and his wife both knew this was the one, probably long before Chris Veit did.

"It’s very cool. We were very excited,” Albert Veit said. “They have a lot of common interests. They both enjoy sporting events and things of that nature. I would say it would probably help their relationship.”

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Christopher Veit and Jessica Virtue met when she tried out for the University of Kansas mascot squad, of which he was already a member.
Mysterious colony decline baffles Missouri beekeeper, others in U.S.

While some blame the environment or a virus, a KU expert points to malnutrition and stress.

BY BILL GRAHAM
The Kansas City Star

Glenn Davis' workers are struggling.

Some experts blame a virus. Others complain about environmental factors. But a University of Kansas researcher and teacher says it might just be poor nutrition and stress.

Whatever the case, Davis' honeybees just aren't as prolific as they once were.

The 66-year-old Bates City, Mo., beekeeper hopes for a turnaround soon.

A mysterious honeybee decline — called colony collapse disorder — last winter struck his commercial operation and others throughout the country. Because honeybees pollinate fruit and vegetable crops, as well as produce honey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is organizing research to find causes and cures.

Meanwhile, Davis is still losing bees.

"I'm just trying to keep as many bees alive as I can so I can get to the pollination season next spring and get some return on my investment," he said. "I spent $25,000 last spring replacing bees I lost."

His bees are shipped to several states to pollinate crops, such as almonds in California. Recently, he harvested honey locally and checked hives.

"I've had some that have dwindled down to nothing, and it could be from the same cause," Davis said. "Some had just a few bees and the queen left in them."

Researchers last month announced that a virus from Israel, called Israeli acute paralysis virus, had been detected in declining hives.

USDA officials suspect other factors, too. Researchers are looking at pesticides, parasitic mites and the stress that bees suffer when hives are moved.

"It's one of those things where you just don't know for sure," said Davis, who lost colonies in 300 of his 650 hives.

But the cure may simply be better nutrition and less stress for honeybees, plus good weather for flowers, said Orley R. Taylor, a University of Kansas entomologist.

Taylor is known best for his monarch butterfly studies. But he also keeps honeybees and teaches a class on them.

The virus is not affecting operations that sell bees to keepers, Taylor said, nor does it affect wild bees. Keepers who move hives for commercial pollination in monoculture crops are suffering the losses, he said.

"Bees require a high diversity of pollen sources, and not all pollen has the kind of nutrition a bee needs," Taylor said.

Davis said a spring freeze added to his problems by stifling clover flowers. In response, his bees produced less light honey and more dark honey, which is bitter and doesn't sell.

"It's hurt me," he said, "and most of the hives where the bees died have dark honey more than anything else."

To reach Bill Graham, call 816-234-5906 or send e-mail to bgraham@kcstar.com.
Water Forum to feature KU professor

Kansas' water supply will be the topic for the sixth annual Community Forum on Kansas Environmental Issues on Thursday at Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village.

The forum is being sponsored by the Kansas Natural Resources Council and the Prairie Village Environmental Committee.

Don Worster, a professor of environmental history at the University of Kansas, will give a presentation at 7 p.m. on "The Waters of Kansas: Past, Present, Future." Worster has written nine books, including Rivers of Empire, which deals with the development of water resources and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

The program will open at 5:15 p.m. with appetizers and exhibits by Kansas environmental organizations. A supper of locally grown foods will be served at 6 p.m.

Reservations are needed. A donation of $20 a person is requested. To make reservations, send a check payable to KNRC/Community Forum, 7301 Mission Road, Suite 248, Prairie Village, Kan. 66208. For more information, contact Teri Carey at ptscarey@mac.com or 913-579-7300.

The Star