Twenty years ago this Tuesday, the surging Missouri River burst through Chesterfield’s levee and drowned its commercial district in a muddy soup. The roiling rush heralded the climax of the long, destructive and wearying summer of the Great Flood.

Two months ago, the Missouri almost got within 6 feet of the calamitous crest of 1993. Hardly anyone noticed.

Commerce buzzed without interruption along Chesterfield’s 1.5-mile strip of new stores, from Culver’s to the Bentley dealership. Young athletes played on at the sports complex near the improved levee. Inspectors drove its earthworks looking for leaks, but there weren’t any.

The reason for all that commerce buzzes along with confidence in the flood plain, after millions of dollars were poured into raising the levee.

FLOOD PHOTOS
Full-color unforgettable images. In Community • B1

INTERACTIVES
Join our Twitter conversation with the hashtag #floodof93

City schools weigh new building to meet demand
BY ELISA CROUCH
ecrouch@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8119
ST. LOUIS • City schools Superintendent Kimberly Adams is pursuing something that hasn’t been done for nearly a decade in the district: building a new school. Twenty schools have closed in the district since Adams arrived in 2008. But now, plans are moving forward for a new elementary building for the Tower Grove Park area, potentially giving 600 St. Louis Public Schools students brand new classrooms in fall 2015. “We see opportunities there,” Adams said of the neighborhood. “We also see a need.” The proposed $17.6 million building would serve neighborhoods with the highest percentages of student poverty in the district.

See SCHOOL • Page A8

BACK TO SCHOOL
Our new year guide has everything you need, from decorated lockers to college tuition to essential life skills.

See SCHOOL • Page A8

When two Brandons cross paths at tavern, their fates are linked
BY JENNIFER MAJER
jmajor@post-dispatch.com > 314-621-5804
ST. LOUIS • Brandon Beck arrived at Nick’s Pub around 10:30 p.m., sitting at a stool by himself. He gave off a loner vibe but for his chatter with bar staff, who appeared to know him well.

Brandon Jennings moved to Nick’s from another bar that had closed for the night. It was early the morning after Thanksgiving 2012, and he and his best friend, Steven McGlothlin, were drinking late because they would be off work. Strangers, the two Brandons started talking by chance, joking about how they shared a name. They had more in common than that, but it never came up.