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The Watchdog: Recorded screeches keep birds away from Bartle Hall

Today's problem

The piercing chirps sickened **Nancy Groetken** as she walked by Bartle Hall.

"It sounds like birds or animals in distress," she writes. "I certainly hope that small animals are not getting trapped in the (heating and cooling vents) and dying a slow death..."

What's that awful noise?

The answer

The dog sniffed around 13th and Broadway. What he heard made the fur stand up on his neck. Sure enough, it sounded exactly like birds screaming.

The mystery only deepened when the dog looked for clues. No feathers, just clean bare sidewalks. But a romp to the security department at Bartle Hall solved the mystery.

"It's a recording. The sound of a predatory bird to keep starlings, pigeons and other birds from getting under the eaves and leaving their droppings," says **Agelon T. Jones**, a superintendent with the city's Convention & Entertainment Facilities.

The sounds — and yes, they are recordings of the last moments of starlings before they're eaten by a hawk — emanate from a device called the BirdXPeller.

The gadgets are scattered around Bartle, mostly under its docks.

They work well, says **Dan Barrett**, deputy director of the convention center.

"There's no harm to birds. No poisons. No hurt and dying animals. It just makes them move on to other places that aren't, well ... so annoying."

@ Go to **KansasCity.com** to hear a sample of bird-repelling squawks.

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