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The University's student-produced newspaper

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Kirkville, Mo. 63501

Stewart resigns, city council seat will remain open



Ron Stewart

Alison Bowen
News Editor

The Kirkville City Council has lost its third member in as many months. Councilman Ron Stewart submitted his resignation Nov. 10, leaving the council with only four members, two of whom recently were appointed by the council to fill vacant positions. "I have never experienced - I'm not sure who's ever experienced - a majority of their council leave in three months," City Manager Mari Macomber said. "I think it's been one [councilmember] a month." Macomber said Stewart's seat will remain open until the April elections.

In a letter to Kirkville citizens and the council, Stewart cited family and work obligations along with personal attacks from the community as reasons for his resignation. Stewart declined further comment. Macomber said Stewart came in to speak with her personally Thursday night and, after discussing various issues, handed her his letter of resignation. She said she thinks Stewart resigned mainly because of his obligations as an employee of the Adair County Health Department, but she does not know of any personal attacks. "There were no heated discussions," she said. "We'd only had the two new councilmembers for two weeks maybe." She said that unless personal attacks oc-

curred outside of council time, she is not aware of people saying anything directly. Macomber said she does not think the pattern of recent resignations is because of any internal issues within the council. "I think anybody who would get on the council hopefully would find that we are professional," she said. "We work hard at doing what we can for the citizens." Macomber encouraged citizens to consider whether they would be good candidates. Kirkville Mayor Martha Rowe said Stewart's resignation came as a surprise. She said she was aware of Stewart's obligations with his Health Department position. "He's a very busy, busy man," she said. Rowe also said she did not know what per-

sonal attacks Stewart referred to, and she herself never has experienced what she considers personal attacks. Rowe said Stewart was pleasant to work with. "He was great," she said. "He was willing to listen. He had good ideas." She said the council will continue to focus on its next task - tackling the budget Monday. Ralph Cupelli, councilman and assistant to the vice president for academic affairs, said he still thinks the new composition of the Council will be successful. "We agreed to wait and see how we work together," he said. Cupelli, who was recently appointed, said he has not yet decided whether he will run for office again in April.

Gov. Blunt asks Missouri's universities to brace for a possible 12 percent cut in funding

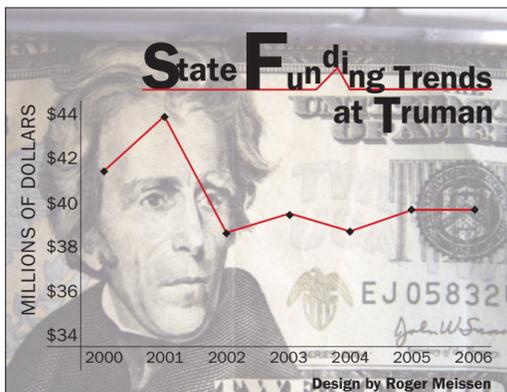


Universities prepare for budget reductions

Jessie Gasch
Assistant News Editor

The future of Missouri's public colleges is in limbo. Commissioner of Higher Education Gregory Fitch sent an e-mail Nov. 8 to the presidents and chancellors of all public institutions in the state. In the letter, he requested they submit plans by last Friday accounting for a 10 percent to 12 percent budget reduction in state funds in the next fiscal year, which begins in July 2006. Larry Schepker, director of the state's division of budget and planning, said early estimates show there is a total \$400 million discrepancy between reported mandatory costs and available funds. Fitch said if the projections are correct, higher education might be asked to shoulder \$100 million of the state's predicted deficit. "We've already started to submit data on several areas," Fitch said. "We want to know what would the impact of this be on your campuses. We've avoided looking at specific de-

partments. ... We don't want to create a panic on the campus." Fitch said the projected budget deficit stems from both state and federal commitments, including Missouri's Amendment Three, which voters overwhelmingly approved last November. The amendment earmarks money for highways from the state's General Fund, removing funds that potentially could be used for higher education. Higher education, mental health facilities and corrections are the only offices funded totally from the General Fund, making their position in the upcoming fiscal year more precarious. For universities, which already have endured cuts during the last few years, the effect might be a loss of quality, Fitch said. He said the situation is confounded because 70 percent to 80 percent of colleges' costs is in people. "We have to have a No. 1 higher education system in the state if we want to be competitive nationally," he said. "Colorado just voluntarily lifted the cap on higher ed funding. Illinois is moving ahead in research. ...



We're going to get outdistanced very soon." Mike Keathley, commissioner of Missouri's Office of Administration, said colleges have no reason to worry yet. "It would not be prudent financial fiscal management to budget without understanding the effects of it, make sure the governor understands what the implications are in every department," Keathley said. "Whatever choices there are to make,

and I don't know what those are, you have to ask them now even if you don't know if they're going to be utilized. You can't build a tornado shelter when it's headed at you." He said he does not know how likely the cuts are. "I have no answer to that," Keathley said. "This is early in the process. It's a routine exercise. Every agency has been asked to do this." **See BUDGET, Page 9**

Inconsistencies prompt attorney to drop charges

Nathan Becker
Index Staff

Mark Williams, Adair County prosecuting attorney, dismissed the pending DWI charge Tuesday that was filed against former Kirkville City Councilman Richard Scott. Williams dropped the charge because of a conflict of interest. One of the officers involved in stopping Scott revealed previously undisclosed information that caused Williams and Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Kristen Coffman to become potential witnesses, according to a press release from Williams' office Tuesday. Two police officers pulled Scott over Jan. 21 after they saw him driving erratically, the Index reported in February. They did not arrest him, however. Williams filed the charge in March. Williams was unable to comment because of illness but answered questions by e-mail.



Richard Scott

The officer provided inconsistent statements to prosecutors while preparing for the trial, which was scheduled to begin Tuesday in Shelby County, Williams said in the e-mail interview. The inconsistencies caused the conflict of interest. "Since the information was provided to myself and [Coffman], we **See SCOTT, Page 9**

Student alleges assault on campus stairway

Amanda Boyle
Staff Reporter

Bright pink fliers hanging on the doors to residence halls and on-campus apartments are catching the eyes of students and alerting them of the Campus Watch. An incident in Ryle Hall last week led the Department of Public Safety to post the fliers. At 10:30 a.m. Nov. 10, an unidentified assailant pushed a female student down a flight of stairs in Ryle Hall, Public Safety Sgt. Chad Whitton said. The woman stated that prior to the assault, she noticed a person in the area who might have been following her. She described the

suspicious person as a Caucasian male wearing a hooded sweatshirt, a blue baseball cap and blue jeans, according to the flier. Sophomore Rachele Storzjohann, student adviser in Ryle, said the incident occurred during the day when there were no SAs on duty. She said the woman tried to contact an SA, but none was available. Storzjohann said she attributes this to the fact that most SAs were probably in class at the time. She said that instead, the woman contacted the person working at the hall desk. "If someone on our staff is contacted [about an incident such **See ASSAULT, Page 9**

New hall progresses to completion

Alan Reininger
Assistant News Editor

The walls of on-campus bedrooms next year already have been put in place. The exterior shell of the new residence hall is nearly complete with construction work continuing on the top floor of the west section of the building, masonry work and the roof on the east end of the building. Trusses for the west side should be up within the next couple of weeks, said Phil Teeple, project manager with River City Construction, L.L.C. "Construction is going very well, and we are slightly ahead of schedule," he said. The structural-blocked masonry work should be finished by the end of next week, and the interior wall framing is

mostly finished for three floors of the building, he said. Teeple said a subcontractor has begun hanging drywall in the building, and work potentially will begin on the floors in late December. The substantial completion date for the building is July 15, 2006, and the final completion date has been set for Aug. 15, Teeple said. The substantial completion date is when the architects will examine the building and provide River City Construction with a list of items that need to be finished before the building can be completed. When Missouri Hall goes offline next year, its cafeteria will close, said Andrea O'Brien, director of Residence Life. She said Residence Life has looked at capacity for both the Ryle and Centennial Hall cafeterias and think they will be able to handle the load. "The Centennial Hall cafeteria is currently

under capacity in terms of usage," she said. She said some of the rectangular tables from Missouri Hall will replace the circular tables in Centennial to increase seating capacity. Sodexo is considering the placement of a hot-food line in the convenience store on the main floor of the new building, O'Brien said. O'Brien said a small kiosk with grab-and-go items might be located inside the student affairs office in Kirk Building. It would offer limited items. Zac Burden, Missouri Hall director, said two years ago Residence Life added a grab-and-go to the Missouri Hall cafeteria. "I think a lot of these options are set up for convenience sake right now, but also to get students in the frame of mind that not all of your meals will be coming **See HALL, Page 9**



Kelsey Vaughn/Index

Construction of the new residence hall continues last week.

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Celebrate the End

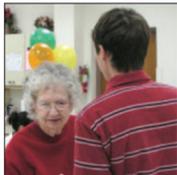
Columnist Katie Stuart finds validation in various life-altering ceremonies.



See Other Voices Page 7

Senior Prom

NSCS volunteers visit nursing home and party with elderly residents.



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World of Magic

Ryle Hall prepares to turn into Hogwarts on Friday night in honor of the book.



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THIS WEEK | weather

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Sunny	Few Showers	Mostly Sunny
High 45	High 51	High 51
Low 31	Low 31	Low 32