

OUR VIEW

Wal-Mart's impact on city has benefits, drawbacks

Wal-Mart rightfully could be called Kirksville's most controversial employer. Although the super-corporation's local satellite employs roughly 350 residents — making Wal-Mart the sixth-largest employer in the city — the store and its parent corporation seem to be under fire constantly. (See stories, Pages 4 and 5)

Phil Tate, director of job creation for Kirksville Regional Economic Development, Inc., rightfully noted that a clear-cut characterization of Wal-Mart as entirely positive or negative is inaccurate or incomplete.

Alisa Kigar, executive director for the Kirksville Area Chamber of Commerce, pointed out that from a purely economic standpoint, the existence of Wal-Mart is a boon for the community. It is undeniable that Wal-Mart's location in Kirksville attracts patrons from well outside the city's parameters. During the city's attempts at economic resurgence, it is clear that the store's existence at the north end of Kirksville has helped drive the city's economic growth. Wal-Mart simply is a major attraction to the Kirksville community, as it is the only such location in a nine-county area.

The corporation also is a major charitable benefactor, donating more than \$8 million to various charities and organizations in 2004. Kirksville's Wal-Mart has donated more than \$50,000 since the current fiscal year began in February, and for this Wal-Mart should be commended.

Unfortunately, the store has had an undeniable negative effect on the community as well, similar to its influence in other

towns like Kirksville. As Tate pointed out, many locally owned businesses simply are not able to compete with Wal-Mart's one-stop-shopping mentality. Small businesses inevitably will disappear from a town's map when Wal-Mart enters, as mom-and-pop stores specializing in a certain area will not have the resources to compete with the retail giant. At best, Wal-Mart is a profitable capitalist institution that can offer consumers a wide variety of inexpensive goods. At worst, Wal-Mart bankrupts local businesses. At the least, local business diversity suffers.

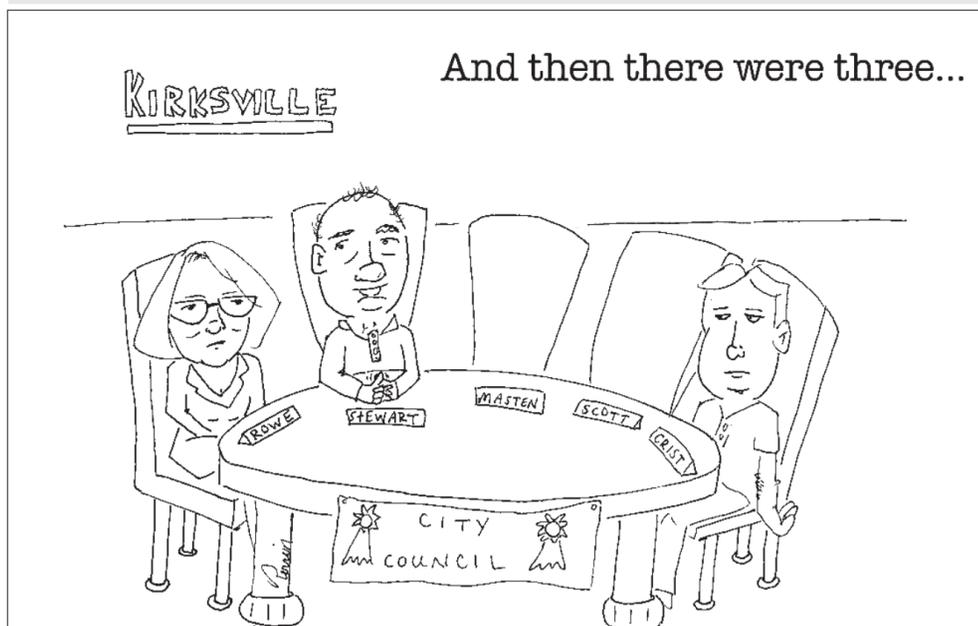
Not only has Wal-Mart's reputation for refusing to negotiate with labor unions made it a lightning rod for criticism, but many critics believe that the corporation's business practices in driving down costs — which include employee wages — is unethical. Some students and faculty even have gone so far as to refuse to shop at Wal-Mart altogether, citing what some perceive to be inequities in how the corporation deals with its employees.

Many students flock to Wal-Mart for all their shopping needs, citing it as the most convenient and cheapest option. Part of the university and small-town experience, however, is frequenting locally owned shops to immerse oneself in a town's culture. We encourage students and community members to consider the ramifications of shopping at only one place in town. Although these stores might not offer the sheer variety of goods available at Wal-Mart, the unique bookstores, specialty shops and food marts on the Square and throughout the town offer options unavailable in a major supercenter.

Part of the university and small-town experience ... is frequenting locally owned shops to immerse oneself in a town's culture.

Truville

Perrin Carrell/cartoonist



Letters to the Editor

Alumnus shares memories of Bulldogs who have passed away

Recently, the Truman State football community has endured some significant losses. As you know, former head football coach John Ware passed away just weeks ago.

Brandon Steel from Morris, Ill., left us in August of this year and James Ross from Chicago left us New Year's night 2001. Ware was my coach, and both young men were my teammates on the Truman State football team from 1993-98. These two guys were very different in many ways, but the ties that bonded each of us to one another are strong. Bulldog Love was not for show, it was and remains for real. We miss them both very much, as well as Coach Ware.

As teammates we literally bled and sweated together. As classmates we shared the warm embrace of the Truman community, which seems to engender the deepest and best of friendships. As the years passed, we graduated and kept in touch, occasionally discussing our last-second defeat to Pittsburg State in 1994, legendary barroom brawls at Toons and The Tap Room and some of the quiet moments we shared as acquaintances destined to be lifelong friends. Unfortunately, life was not very long for these young men.

I am writing to express that their lives, though short, were full. In such short lives, their experiences at Truman were all the more significant. I am writing with the hope that Truman will celebrate Homecoming this year with a little Bulldog Love.

I played defensive back and wide receiver on the Truman football team. I studied political science and was an opinions writer for this campus newspaper. Today, I continue to write, and I continue to study political science, but I'll never play football again.

So I write this piece to honor my friends, but make no mistake, if I could strap it up one last time and deliver the big hit for these guys, I would. Go Bulldogs.

Baxter Swilley
Alumnus

Makeup of food service employees raises questions about University

I found myself eating dinner at one of the graciously provided Sodexo cafeterias recently, and I realized rather by accident that nearly the entire student food-serving staff is made up of international students. I did a double-take as I surveyed the lines, staffed by students from Asia, Africa and South America. Yet very few of the student workers were young, white and from St. Louis (as the majority of students from this University are). In fact, on this particular occasion, I saw none. I noted that the prevailing staff on most occasions is either Kirksville permanent residents or international students.

I thought to myself about this somewhat-interesting situation, realized it occurs more often than I had imagined, and I wondered why this was so. Was it that workers from international areas are often unable to obtain work for campus publications, various professors or the other usual outlets for the "easy" jobs on campus? Or perhaps, to use the word of a friend, maybe international students find it difficult to obtain employment that is reserved for people with "connections"? Why is it that we as a University offer little work beyond food service to international students? Why does the scholarship system seem to conspire to

force foreign students into working at perhaps one of the least-respectable positions on campus, that of serving the affluent and connected "average American college kid"? And this is not meant as an offense to any food-service worker — you have my greatest respect. Yet, to all those questions, I never found an answer.

I was just curious, that's all. Maybe someone can provide an answer. Maybe — just maybe — the University's publications ought to be taking a closer look at these sorts of things. But, of course, I could be wrong. I guess until we stop reading about the brighter side of marijuana usage or local barbecue, I won't really know.

Daniel Glossenger
Sophomore

Matthews' column ignored opinions of many other students

Although I was not a part of the particular trip to Spain discussed in Chris Matthews' Oct. 6 column, I think Matthews neglected to represent the opinions of many of the students who have participated in the Salamanca study abroad program in the past. During the summer of 2004, I had the opportunity to study in Salamanca through the program directed by Silvia Pites, professor of Spanish. The summer I spent in Spain was extremely enjoyable and an excellent learning experience. I was able to spend nine weeks traveling around Spain, experiencing Spanish culture, meeting fascinating people and putting my Spanish language skills into practice.

That being said, no experience abroad is without its challenges. Putting oneself in a completely different culture for an extended period of time requires a certain degree of flexibility, but it is from the resulting adaptation to other cultural norms that the best learning experiences come.

In my experience, Pites did an excellent job of providing this sort of learning opportunity for the entire group. Matthews' criticism of the extent to which she used Spanish fails to account for the widely varied Spanish skill levels of the students, which range from beginning to nearing fluency. One of the greatest strengths of the program is that any student, regardless of prior Spanish skills, is permitted to attend. However, this requires that Pites use both languages to ensure that students understand logistical details as well as cultural knowledge.

In the future, I hope columnists will act professionally and responsibly in the way that they go about finding and using sources for their opinion pieces. When writing outside of their own experiences, they not only should be certain of the charges they imply but also should consult obvious sources who might have different opinions than those of three disgruntled students.

Sarah Jones
Senior

Resident claims letter criticizing him advocates censorship

With your customary fairness, please permit a rejoinder to my "20 years" plus boasting alumnus NMSU critic letter supporting Truman's bomb [Sept. 1 issue of the Index] and a corroborative letter of appreciation to my student letter supporter [Sept. 15 issue of the Index], that I do, I assure her, not intend to ever be silenced by his "communist" taunts on

this campus' poor A-bomb name choice, with which our whole Kirksville town is saddled!

Firstly, both banker, as well as far more European leftward friends than our evidently illiberal arts alumni were all, I have to say, reduced to gales of scornful laughter by the "commie" charge! As, in fact, one of my first "political" acts ever was to champion a human rights dissident writer in the Soviet Union, whom I later had the released pleasure of hearing in person at a U.K. Young Liberals council national meeting — Victor Bukovsky, if I recall rightly. So younger chap than me: no lectures from, sir, you please, unless you, sir, can vaunt a similar accomplishment record against authoritarianism, capitalist, or so-called "radical"!

Secondly, is it not stupefying how an ageist NMSU-boasting "alumnus" has to threaten a monetary boycott of TSU 2005-06 activities for another generation. Because he evades, totally, the real case that the whole world is now debating on this anniversary "nuke" year against Truman's shocking decision. Indeed, since your letter would-be censorer is so averse to foreigners daring to debate bombs you do drop on we foreigners! Even if they be peace-feeler 1945 Japanese through Russia sources Harry ignored, as FDR always feared he would not historically trust his VP with the bomb secret until last moment feasible, let's try another all-USA only critic tack!

I significantly suggest he and we readers do look up the brilliant essays printed by Boston Globe columnist James Carroll in his paperback, "An Unjust War" collection, last year. Son of an all-USA general, Carroll blames, with meticulous detail, Truman for those horrific black rain bombs. And he shows how Secretary Stimson vainly tried to stop him listening to such Cabinet USA Southerners' incinerator warmongery. Indeed, Carroll argues, this unleashed the might-is-right, sick USA white-racist culture leading to Vietnam, and now, yet again, towns by the USA being incinerated with their Iraqi babies in this Iraq occupation failure.

Finally, I have only one slight quibble with my admirable student defender whose point is saliently wise, that if alumni are so fearful that they have to contend the Index not print me, then hooray, I am, indeed, "control"-winning! As umpteen Pickler Library friends can attest and more publications than most U.S.-attached academics ever hypocritically hold themselves to (see latest on first woman ex-doctor and ex-women suffragette Congresswomen Ben-tham and Jewson in U.K. Labour Heritage bulletin, summer 2005 or weekend edition London Evening Standard, end September on our U.K. Labour conference official invitee to parts of), I would instead be a masochist! If I wrote letters "wastefully" of time? The tragedy is others should be making these points, too, and are, elsewhere in both the States and certainly here at the University of Paris where I am an official visiting researcher. It is thus shameful that a liberal-arts alumnus cannot debate, but solely, he seeks to shut dictatorially up, so dissent-crushing did Rome deservedly fall! Shame, yes, on you, sir! What a bad censoring example to young people your ilk set them!

Larry Iles
Kirksville Resident

INDEX Web poll

At what point did you decide on a major?

Oct. 18 Results

as of midnight Tuesday

44% (16)

Before I got to Truman.

33% (12)

At some point during my freshman year.

17% (6)

More recently than my freshman year.

6% (2)

I still have no idea what I'll study.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

vote online at

www.trumanindex.com

What is your opinion of Wal-Mart?

INDEX

STAFF

Editor in Chief Whitney McFerron	Business Manager Collections Agent Shaun Moynihan	News Staff Reporters Amanda Boyle Kyle Hill Timothy Long Grace Mattie Alan Venneman
Managing Editor Kalen Ponche	Design Editor Roger Meissen	Features Staff Reporters Alicia Collins Naomi Davis Meg Joyce Maggie Wolcott
Opinions Editor Justin Weinrich	Online Editor Chris Tharp	Sports Staff Reporters Joseph Barker Billy Drazen Tyler Madsen John Scognamiglio Josh Sisson John Weeks
News Editor Alison Bowen	Circulation Manager Cari Twaddle	Photographers Nick Corich Adam Kabins Lisa Margetis Nicole Meltabarger Courtney Robbins Mike Snodderley Chris Tharp Kelsey Vaughn
Assistant News Editors Jessie Gasch Alan Reininger	Advertising Manager Christina Carter	Distribution Ed Esquivel Laura Johnson
Sports Editor Conor Nicholl	Convergence Manager Karen Schwartztrauber	Adviser Steve Stepanek
Assistant Sports Editor Ross Houston	Design Staff Mark Hylton Lindsay Koski Victoria Weaver	
Features Editor Erin Sadzewicz	Copy Editors Nathan Becker Alaina Brookhouse Amanda Knox Audrey Leisner Sadye Scott-Hainchek Andrew Seal Nick Wilsey	
Assistant Features Editor Sara DeGonia		
Photo Editor Chris Waller		
Assistant Photo Editor Lisette Metz Grulke	Advertising Staff Megan Barry Lindsay McReynolds Prajwal Sharma	
Head Copy Editor Christine Albrecht		

Serving the University community since 1909

Editorial policy

The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The production offices are located in the Student Union Building. We can be reached by phone at 660-785-4449. Content of the Index is the responsibility of the Index staff.

The editor in chief consults with the staff and adviser but ultimately is responsible for all decisions. Opinions of Index columnists are not necessarily representative of the opinions of the staff or the newspaper. Our View editorials represent the view of the Index through a majority vote of the Editorial Board, consisting of the editor in chief, managing editor, news editor and opinions editor. The Index reserves the right to edit submitted material because of space limitations, repetitive subject matter, libelous content or any other reason the editor in chief deems appropriate. Submitted material includes advertisements and letters to the editor.

First copies are free. Additional copies are 25 cents.

Index corrections

- Sal Costa was identified incorrectly as returning to teaching Oct. 17 on Page 1 of the Oct. 13 issue of the Index. Costa will return Oct. 24.
- Laurie Hahn was mistakenly identified as the committee head of the publication design group for the Kirksville Regional Airport on Page 2 of the Oct. 13 issue of the Index. She is a member of the project team.

Letters policy

The Index welcomes letters to the editor from the University community. Letters to the editor are due by noon the Monday before publication and become property of the Index. Submissions are subject to editing, must contain a well-developed theme and cannot exceed 300 words except at the discretion of the editorial board.

All letters to the editor MUST be typed, double-spaced, signed and include a phone number for verification.

Letters to the editor also may be submitted by e-mail at index@truman.edu or on our Web site at www.trumanindex.com. Include the words "letter to the editor" in the subject line of the e-mail. No individual may submit more than one letter a week.