

# Budget gap leaves dome vacant

The University's recent addition will be the only of its kind in the region

Sara DeGonia

Assistant Features Editor

It is the Cracker Jack box without a toy, the jelly-less doughnut or the empty Easter egg: just a shell with potential.

At least for now.

The oddly shaped structure that appeared in front of the Student Union Building last spring as part of the Magruder Hall Campaign is now a fully formed, uniquely shaped edifice.

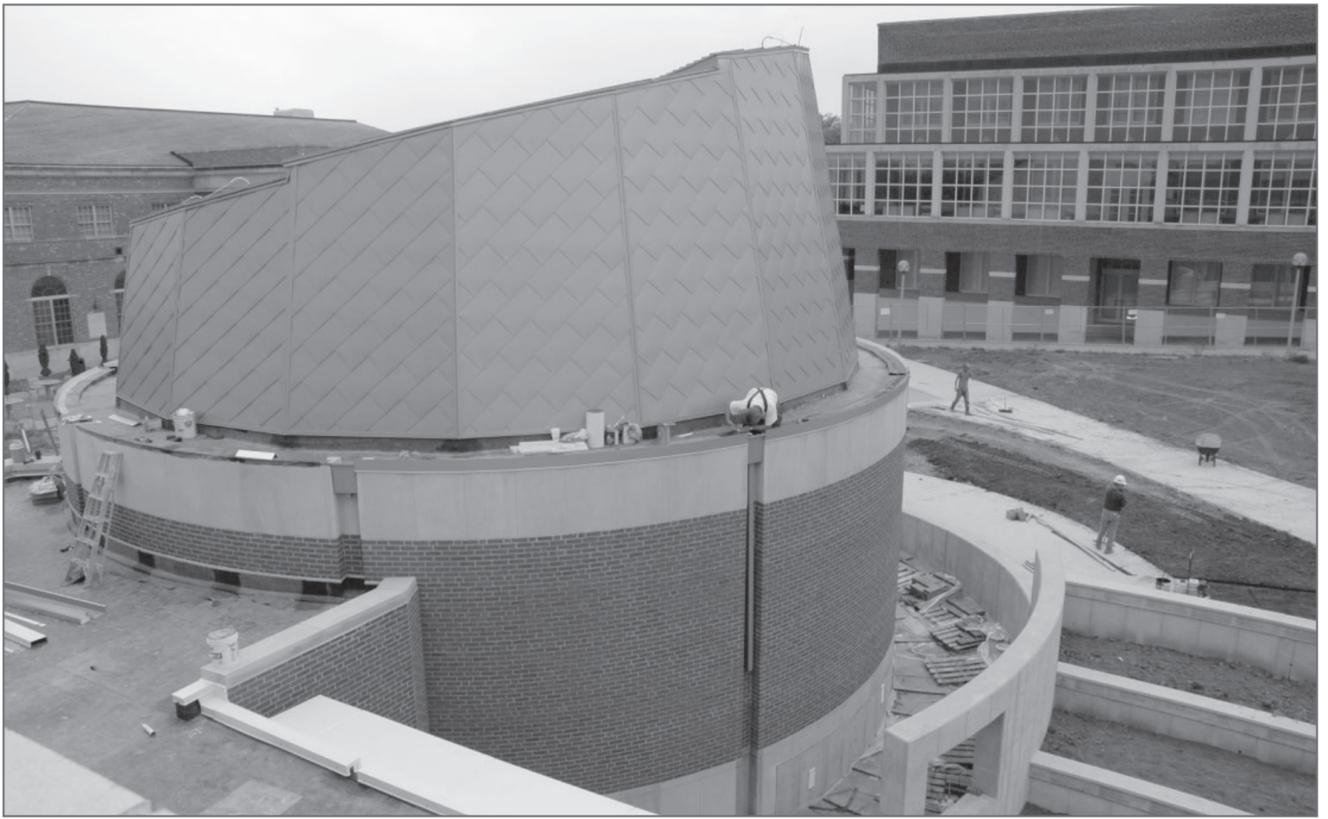
The building is the University's new multimedia center, a special interest of former University President Jack Magruder, said Michael McManis, University dean for planning and institutional development and executive assistant to the president. It is a space specifically created to fulfill a variety of liberal arts needs any student, faculty person or community member could have or imagine, McManis said.

It is 1,800 square feet with a 40-foot domed ceiling and seating for about 75 people, according to an informational flier made by Scott Ellis, dean of the science division. Plans indicate the multimedia center eventually will include an optical star projector, a panoramic video projector and state-of-the-art production equipment, according to the flier.

McManis said the vision was that the building would serve a variety of needs and opportunities.

"For example, some music students might perform under the dome and then there would be a coordinated light show or just a variety of appropriate images that would occur at the same time they're playing," McManis said. "... We could use the star machine, or planetarium equipment to show what the sky looked like in ancient Greece 3,000, 4,000 years ago when Homer was recording his oral tales. ... The [visual communication] students and faculty could develop a visual program for the dome. In other words, you can buy canned programs or pre-produced programs for the dome, or you can produce your own."

McManis said once the project is complete, the multimedia center will be unique to the region.



Chris Waller/Index

Crews work on the new addition to Magruder hall during Truman week. The new additions include classrooms and a multimedia center. The possibilities for the multimedia center will not be realized until the necessary funds are acquired, said Michael McManis, University dean for planning and institutional development and executive assistant to the president. McManis said former President Jack Magruder took a special interest in the project, and many have high expectations of the building to serve a broad range of student and community needs.

"This facility also will be, when it's equipped ... the only thing of its type outside the three metropolitan areas ... [of] St. Louis, Kansas City and Des Moines," he said.

Until the necessary funds are acquired, however, the building will be nothing more than an empty space with vast potential. Ellis said the center will contain the bare minimum until the planned materials can be purchased.

"When you go into the inside there will be drywall on the inside. ..." Ellis said. "There won't be that dome so you'll be able to look up and see the underside of the roof. I think there's

going to be carpeting on the floor, but there won't be any seats. And there won't be any equipment."

He said the area will provide limited use until donations are made, but it will not be blocked off.

"I'll probably store some things in it," Ellis said. "Or we could use it for a large dodgeball [court]. There's all sorts of good ideas we could come by."

Mark Gambaiana, vice president for University advancement, said the University now is at the stage of searching for funds, about \$1 million to \$1.5 million, to purchase the necessary equipment for the building.

He said private donations are the most likely source of finances at this point, although it is not the sole option the University is considering.

The University previously received a federal grant/earmark for the Magruder Hall Campaign from Sen. Kit Bond, but it was designated toward other areas of the project and does not apply to the multimedia center, Gambaiana said.

Ellis said he has fairly optimistic hopes about the completion of the project.

"I hope that this will all be funded and built and being used within three years," he said.

## The Multimedia Center

Opening Day: Unknown

A Few Possible Uses:

- Optical star projector shows
- Musical performances
- Visual programs

# Scholar searches for home

Grace Mattie

Staff Reporter

Although freshmen and first-year students might have thought their move to Kirksville was stressful, one man truly has room to complain.

Along with his wife, Farnaz Perry, and three children, Soraya, Kofi and Shenandoah, Mark Perry, McNair Teachers Scholar and Resident and visiting associate professor of sociology, moved across the globe from Beirut, Lebanon, to Kirksville just a few short weeks before classes started with nothing but a job.

Mark Perry will teach Sociology 190 and 350, and his wife is looking for a job as a teacher. Yet, before either of them could worry about work, finding a place to live was their top priority.

"We came to Kirksville on the first Sunday in August and camped out at Thousand Hills for five days," Mark Perry said. "After that we went up to Minneapolis to visit Farnaz's aunt."

Brent Steacy, superintendent of Thousand Hills State Park, said Mark Perry and his family would leave for the day and come back in the late evening.

"They must have been getting ready to move into the house," Steacy said. "I know they left after the night that it rained here."

After returning to Kirksville and working with Show Me Realty, finding a house was not as easy as Mark Perry hoped.

"There were lots of problems finding a house," Mark Perry said. "It's very hard to find decent houses in Kirksville. The ones for sale are nice, but the ones for rent aren't. The prices are unusually high for poor-quality houses."

Mark Perry said apartments also were difficult to find.

"There are hardly any [nice] apartments in Kirksville with three bedrooms," Mark Perry said.

Mark Perry and his family are renting a house near the high school and plan to live there for the rest of their time in Kirksville because of his one-year renewable contract with the University. All three of his children will attend the local schools.

Although Mark Perry is native to the U.S., he has traveled the world. After growing up in Pennsylvania and attending the University of Chicago for graduate school, he moved to Switzerland to teach at a Baha'i school, where he met Farnaz Perry. The two were married in Turkey instead of Lebanon, where Farnaz Perry lived.

"The reason we didn't get married in Lebanon was because Americans weren't allowed there 12 years ago," Farnaz Perry said.

After marrying, the two moved to the U.S., where Mark Perry researched at the University of Maryland. They then moved back to Lebanon before coming to Kirksville. Mark Perry taught social sciences everywhere he went.

"I applied to many places in the states, but Kirksville was the only place that accepted me," Mark Perry said.

Although it is a dramatic change from the Middle East and even the East Coast, Mark Perry and his family have found Kirksville to be a good choice.

"I like the quiet," Mark Perry said. "The people are also very friendly."

Their family enjoys the China Palace, Crumbles and Cream and Wal-Mart, where they said they have gone almost every day since they have been here. Farnaz Perry also mentioned the air is much cleaner here than it is in Lebanon.

"I also like the architecture of the campus and the renovations," Mark Perry said. "It's nice."

As for Mark Perry's goals for the school year, he said he hopes to interact well with his students, and he also said he looks forward to campus events, both multicultural and musical.

"There were a lot of problems finding a house. It's very hard to find decent houses in Kirksville."

Mark Perry  
Visiting Associate  
Professor of Sociology



Chris Waller/Index

Professor Mark Perry stands outside of his new home Monday with his wife, Farnaz, and their children, Soraya, Kofi and Shenandoah.

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