

OUR VIEW

Masten resignation shows need for change in city

Kirkville Mayor Debbie Masten's abrupt resignation Monday came as a surprise for many, but we applaud Masten for acknowledging it was time for her to step down.

Now, the city of Kirkville is in the position to step away from the controversy that tainted much of Masten's tenure and continue the momentum of good things in Kirkville by electing a new leader who will shed the veil of secrecy and listen to the public.

Although we agree with Masten's decision to step down, it is pertinent to point out that during her

time in office, the city enjoyed substantial economic development. Downtown Kirkville is improving cosmetically, and businesses such as the Home Depot, Walgreens and Ruby Tuesday have agreed to place franchises in Kirkville. As a successful business owner, Masten appeared to understand the city's need for further economic development, and we applaud her for that. Until the April elections – and after – the council needs to continue to pursue economic development for the city. It is key that in these next few months, council members make listening to the public a key goal.

It is widely known, however, that Masten often seemed to be in the middle of controversy during her time as mayor. She remains a suspect in the investigation of the arson of Too Talls Two, her former bar downtown. She and councilmen Tim Crist and Richard Scott came under heavy fire last winter for the

council's decision to sell a portion of the city's property at the Hazel Creek watershed. Citizens also were unhappy with Masten's decision to cancel the annual State of the City address in April because of "security concerns."

Masten also allowed the council to reappoint her as mayor in April, when, in our opinion, she should have declined. By accepting the reappointment, Masten made it clear then that she believed herself capable of fulfilling her mayoral duties.

With the new council vacancy, students should take the initiative to become more conscientious voters. Both students and other Kirkville residents should attend candidate forums, become informed about the election issues that council candidates debate and ask questions of their elected leaders. Students and residents must use their voting power prudently this April, pushing for renters' and students' rights in the city and voting for candidates who will make timely decisions based on the best interests of all voters. Voters also must watch out for leaders who are less than forthcoming about information and secretive about meetings.

It also should be clear that students not yet registered to vote should do so. The four years most students are enrolled at the University is far too long a time to be politically apathetic.

Kirkville has a bright future, and voters must be responsible enough to place it in the right hands.

By accepting the reappointment, Masten made it clear that she believed herself capable of filling her mayoral duties.

Truville

Maureen Ferry /cartoonist



Letters to the Editor

Columnist's opinion of Potter series is reflective of U.S. mindset

Well, even I, deeply inured to the darkness and unimaginative materialism that lurks beneath the isolationist American soil, never felt it would come to this sorry parlous state of dull affairs!

Namely that in our state's official premier liberal arts university, it would come out so bad that an Index columnist, Josh Fenton, temporarily based in Australia in 2005, should misuse the [May 5] issue of the Index to pour forth his vile against J.K. Rowling and her Harry Potter saga of books. How Dullsville can you be?

Indeed, in so damning Ms. Rowling's work because of her allegedly backward preoccupation with witches, plants, fairies and so on, Josh joins highly dubious woeful company. According to an August 2004 Voice of Youth Advocates, a U.S. librarians publication, "against censorship of reading material for young people," Ms. Rowling's works are second-most targeted books by the U.S. Christian Right censorship brigade.

Because of their "demonic" and so on contents, being supposedly unsuitable for young minds!

Heaven knows, then, why all the monies, so far, are even bigger sales receipts than her prolific book saga? And that most kids from a 13-year-old relative of mine, top of Midlands her class, to even jaded teenager lads I know in college abroad simply "adore" the output!

Or, of course, the fact that Ms. Rowling herself, from being a single mom, a French schoolteacher in the United Kingdom in self-admitted poverty and near-destitution, is now so much a millionaire, linguist, that she, vitally, supports "left" causes, including single parents' rights, laudably, and eloquently so in tirades against Blair philistinism!

But what any historian of any self-worthiness would find most peculiar about the anti-Rowling case put by Fenton in your last issue, is the proposition of the ignorant male- and war-centered U.S. Christian fundamentalist, insular males.

That "magic" is somehow "antireligious," merest superstition!

Anybody who has read even a bit of the massive, mostly published referenced scholarship of the likes of modern medieval renaissance historians like Keith Thomas could tell Josh that many of the first "scientists," let alone monks and women accused of either good or bad "pagan" witchcraft, did not see any viable essential difference between religion and magic: They were part of the same coinage in the medieval self-understanding.

Nor did Muslim scientists translating ancient Greek and Hebrew myths!

In Chance's tales, as much as Tolkien's in the inter-war period of the last world-wasting 20th century, "magic," or the incredible, or the barely ordinarily believable, about life is used to preach ethics or set open the buried imagination, much as Christ or the Buddha or Mohammed often used "parable" preaching tones to reinforce what ethically, even spiritu-

ally yearningly, sometimes comically, they wanted us all to understand as existence's divine truths or foibles men and women can get up alive to in zest or mistake!

To be magical is to be lovely or alive!

For an Index columnist of Fenton's personal sanity to waste his last column thus attacking the greatest liberal art device of them all, tales of fantasy as decadent thus is very worrying stuff because it says ill about the deadening USA mindset narrowly of the young.

I'm tempted to end by casting a Rowling-like weird spell on you all accordingly, magically, but will be content to be broomstick retort answering!

Larry Iles
Kirkville Resident

Iles' remarks on Japanese prove that his letters shouldn't print

As a Truman alumnus of 20 years, I don't understand why you print letters by Larry Iles. This guy is so far off the deep end that I fall off my chair when I read his diatribe crap. What kind of depraved person is he?

If we had not dropped the atomic bomb on Japan, we would have lost more than a million people during the invasion of Japan.

This guy is such a Communist that I just can't believe you would print his garbage.

It makes me think about not coming back to celebrate my 20th anniversary of graduating from Truman.

Rick Essex
Truman Alumnus
Class of 1985

Resident's letter ignores the ramifications of name change

I do my best to follow the public pronouncements of fellow Kirkville resident Larry Iles.

In regards to his suggestion that we rename this school [Josephine] Baker State University, I must ask him Haven't you figured out what its new initials would be then?

Charles Ammons
Kirkville Resident

May 5 article misrepresents facts, according to director

The Index article entitled "Access Denied" in [the May 5] issue of the Index completely misrepresents the Center for International Education's response to a request for information under Missouri Statutes 610.010 to 610.225. It states in a front-page article that we did not comply with state law.

This is a false statement and therefore damaging to the reputation of the Center for International Education and to my own.

Consequently, I request that a correction be printed on the front page of the next issue of the Index that I understand will be published in the fall.

I am sure that you adhere to the ASNE statement of principles which in Article IV states "truth and accuracy. Good faith with the reader is the foundation of good journalism.

"Every effort must be made to as-

sure that the news content is accurate, free from bias and in content and that all sides are presented fairly.

"Editorials, analytical articles and commentary should be held to the same standards of accuracy with respect to facts as news reports.

"Significant errors of fact, as well as errors of omission, should be corrected promptly and prominently."

Here are the "significant errors of fact" that I ask you to correct "promptly and prominently."

I received a written request from a student made under Missouri Statutes 610.010 to 610.225 on April 4.

There was no initial contact except for a letter which was left at the front desk in my office.

I was on campus that day from 7:45 a.m. until 8:45 p.m. except at lunch time.

The student made no attempt to meet with me and never requested an appointment.

I had stepped out of my office for less than five minutes when the letter was delivered.

Although the student was informed that I would be right back, s/he did not wait for me.

Yet you assign a red light on the "initial request for budget."

How is this possible? There was a single request in writing. By pretending in a front-page article that two requests were made you are simply misrepresenting the facts.

As already stated, I received that single request on April 4. I printed the requested information from TruView and sent it to the student at no charge (via on-campus mail because the student lived in Ryle Hall) on April 7 – that is within the three-day time frame required by law.

Yet again, you gave us a red light despite the fact that we fully complied with the request.

The Missouri Statutes provide a legal way for citizens to receive information should someone deny them access to it.

When did I do that? The fact is that if that student had made the effort to ask for the information in person, I would have given it to him or her then and there.

I do not like to see my name associated with the so-called culture of secrecy, which does not describe me as a person or as an administrator. I look forward to the correction in your next issue.

Patrick Lecaque
Professor of French
Director, Center for International
Education

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Index Editorial Board has reviewed these allegations and stands by the information printed in the May 5 issue. The reporter followed standard procedure under the Freedom of Information Act for requesting these documents.

After reviewing the records from that request, the Editorial Board supports the initial finding that the Center for International Education did not comply within the strict parameters of the law.

INDEX Web poll

What is your take on the University's revamped scholarship renewal system?

August 30 Results

as of midnight Tuesday

33% (7)

Leave it alone. My grades are good enough to keep my scholarship.

57% (12)

It's great! Truman is hard enough without having to worry about losing financial aid.

10% (2)

What scholarship?

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

How safe do you think your personal information is at the University?

vote online at
www.trumanindex.com

INDEX

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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

- Highway 63 was incorrectly identified as Highway 36 on Page 2 in the Aug. 21 issue of the Index.
- The scholarship appeals committee has not yet been disbanded by University President Barbara Dixon. It was incorrectly stated on Page 4 in the Aug. 21 issue of the Index that Dixon had disbanded the committee due to the revamped scholarship renewal process.

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.