

# TRU Life



Playground Pleasures

Alpha Tau Omega fraternity explains the art of 4-Square

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Index Staff

Freshman Meagan Batson, like many other first-year students, still talks to her parents at least once and sometimes twice a day. The second in her family to attend Truman, and the youngest, Batson said her mom still is sad she left.

"She's still pretty upset," Batson said. "She cries."

Some studies suggest that college-age students are relying more and more on their parents and are less prepared for independent life during and after college, according to the June 2002 issue of the College Student Journal.

Until she came to college, Batson said her parents had paid for everything for her from her gas to clothes. She said now they still support her financially to a degree, but she has a separate account for food and clothing.

"[My parents] are paying for four years of college and after that I'm on my own," Batson said.

College life has brought new challenges, such as laundry, to Batson. She said she still relies on her mom for advice on "what to divide, what to wash together," because her mom has always done it for her.

Mike Houlahan, director of Centennial Hall, said that if a parent comes to him with their student's problems, he attempts to work things out with the student before dealing with parents.

"We try to remedy the situation with the student first," Houlahan said.

Matthew Stuart, assistant manager of Wal-Mart, said that during freshman move-in weekend, students receive assistance from their parents, especially when finding things essential to living on their own.

"Many students come in with their parents during move in weekend," Stuart said. "They buy everything from toiletries to just things for everyday use. The parents are usually there to buy items they think their kids wouldn't think about."

Kathryn Kuhlman, professor of English and director of the English MAE program, said the meaning of "adulthood" and "adolescence" is changing — many students rely on their parents while away at school, and more and more often students return to their parents' home after graduating from college, complicating their transition to emotional independence.

## ADJUSTING ADOLESCENCE

Today's students are finding themselves increasingly dependent on their parents.

She said the term emotional independence is hard to define and different for every individual. Some students find it easier to break away from parents.

Freshman Julie Knoblauch said she tries to deal with things on her own without parental assistance.

"I usually take care of [problems] myself," she said. "Then I tell them about it afterward."

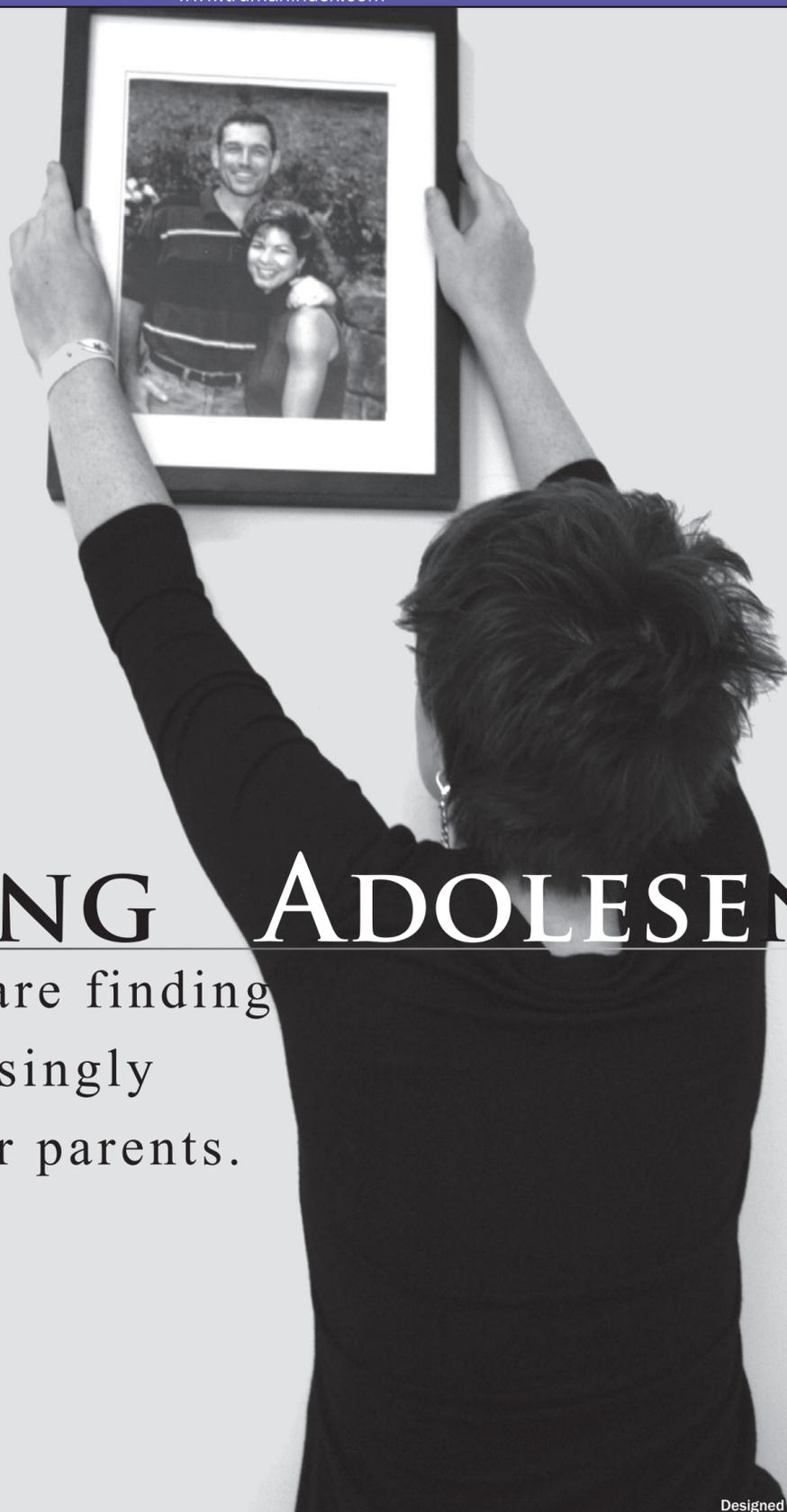
Knoblauch said she is economically independent from her parents.

"My money is all coming out of my own pocket," she said.

Kuhlman said the definitions of adolescence and adulthood are changing.

"The more I listened to my students, the more I was prompted

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Designed by Roger Meissen/Index

## GhostWriter reveals identity

Singer, songwriter and performer makes music of others' potential songs

Sara DeGonia

Assistant Features Editor

The GhostWriter's identity is more than a phantom presence.

He is as real as the music he creates. Kirksville resident Mike Hunsaker, 26, said his purpose is to help anyone who wants a song written.

"Maybe [potential customers] don't know how to play an instrument, but they have lyrics, I can help them put their lyrics to music, record and give it to them," Hunsaker said. "Or vice versa — perhaps they know how to play something on guitar, but they're just horrible when it comes to writing lyrics."

He began his GhostWriter business this summer as an avenue to help the hidden musician in any Truman student or Kirksville resident.

"I like taking people's songs that have potential and try to make them better just using some of the musical gifts I have," Hunsaker said. "Not that I'm extremely gifted, but, you know, it's a lot of fun for me."

But Hunsaker said it is unnecessary for his clients to have any musical background whatsoever.

"If you have people that are just not musical in any way, but they have an idea, they have a story in mind, they have something that they want put to music ... maybe a guy has a crush on a girl and he wants to give her a song that's from him, then I can help them

write that and then actually give them a recording of what it's like," he said.

Money should not be an issue for any person who wants music written, Hunsaker said.

"I want people to have their own songs," he said. "It's not necessarily about money to me. I do charge only according to what the actual person can afford."

Hunsaker said he invented the GhostWriter title to calm potential clients' fears about his motives as a collaborator.

"I don't put my stamp on anything," he said. "... If it becomes a hit song and goes out on the radio and makes millions of dollars, I don't see any of that because I'm just the GhostWriter. I'm just the one that helps them do that."

Hunsaker said he is aware of the possibility of his customers benefiting from his assistance.

"Now granted, if I ever did write a song for somebody and it did make it on the radio, I'd probably start charging more," he said.

Hunsaker said he is not concerned about others taking credit for his work.

"If that's fine with their conscience, that's fine with me," he said.

The GhostWriter keeps his identity secret on the business fliers he posts throughout Kirksville. But anyone who has eaten at La Pachanga between 5 and 10 p.m. on a Friday or Saturday in the last year is no stranger to Hunsaker's voice.

"I went in there one day, and they were trying to tune a guitar," he said. "And they couldn't get it, and it was just driving me nuts."

After tuning the guitar, Hunsaker



Chris Waller/Index

Kirksville resident Mike Hunsaker performs Monday night at La Pachanga Mexican Restaurant. He performs regularly at La Pachanga on Friday and Saturday nights between 5 and 10 p.m.

said one of the waiters asked him to play "La Bamba." He said a La Pachanga employee began singing along and a crowd gathered.

Soon after, Hunsaker began a regular gig playing guitar and singing at the Mexican restaurant.

Diane Tigner, Kirksville evening supervisor for Moberly Area Community College, knows Hunsaker from his days as a MACC student.

Tigner employed Hunsaker in order to give her colleague, Teresa Atteberry, a birthday surprise.

"I kind of hired [Mike] to write a little song," she said. "I knew he could make it

really sassy and funny and go over there and surprise her with a serenade."

Tigner said Hunsaker's dual personality gives him the ability to create music of all types.

"I know he's just sickeningly romantic," she said. "... He's just a really well-balanced person. He could go far, I know he could."

Truman graduate student Hilary Noll, a friend and fan of Hunsaker's, said she was surprised to learn that a few of the songs on Hunsaker's first album, "Diminished," are about her. As the subject of his work, Noll said she is impressed with his writing.

"I think he's very talented with the lyrics, most of all," she said.

In addition to his GhostWriter business and his role as the music leader at TimberRidge Community Church, Hunsaker said he is working on his second album, tentatively titled "Acoustic Prayers."

"One day I wanted to be a rock star, but I'm not too hip on that now," Hunsaker said. "If it happens, great, if not, I'll be content playing at a little Mexican restaurant."

For more information, call Mike Hunsaker at 665-8064, or e-mail yeahrightyourmom@hotmail.com.