

Diesel discussion



Erin Givartz/Index
Debate team member senior Chris Girouard and his partner sophomore Mark Buchheit debated at the Biofuels Debate on Monday Night in Violette Hall. The debate was one of many events scheduled for Earth Week.

Local job fair draws hundreds

BY JOHN HITZEL
for the Index

Despite the blustery weather, more than 300 people made it to NEMO Fairgrounds for the fourth semi-annual NEMO Career Fair last Thursday.

The Missouri Career Center brought more than 40 organizations to the NEMO Fairgrounds to aid job-seekers throughout northeast Missouri.

"This is the fourth annual Career Fair," said Cathy Collop, the workforce development supervisor at the Missouri Career Center. "We had one at the shoe factory building, we had one at the Armory [and] we've had two here [at NEMO Fairgrounds]. We're trying to do spring and fall now, twice a year."

Collop said there were 46 employers and organizations participating this year.

"We have training programs where dislocated workgroups, like those from Ortech who are being laid off, or Hollister, they can provide for some training dollars, and go back to school, and hopefully get better jobs or at least get different jobs," she said. "We help many people in many different ways."

The Missouri Career Center uses the Career Fair to help people find jobs like they normally do but on a greater scale.

"We want to be a service to the public here," Collop said. "That's what we're here for, to match job-seekers with employers, and before we had these, people would just come into the office. We didn't do a lot of outreach."

Collop said the Missouri Career Center office allows job-seekers to complete résumé preparation workshops and job searches and to brush up on interview skills. She said the office also assists with résumé writing and dealing with layoffs.

Collop said that last year 370 job-seekers attended the fair and that she had hoped for more this year. Thursday's fair attracted 340 potential workers. Collop said she thinks the event was a success.

"We hope to do it again in the fall," she said. "We want all the students to come, and any job-seeker that's looking for work, we'd like to invite them to come see us."

Collop said she enjoys the event because of the satisfaction she gets from helping people.

"I've been with workforce development 22 years," Collop said. "It's just so rewarding helping people. I love it. When you've got an employer, and they help people get a job and become self-sufficient, it's just very rewarding."

The elderly are one group aided by the Career Fair, said Max Bittiker of Experience Works.

"Experience Works is the old Green Thumb Program," Bittiker said. "Anybody over 40 or 50 will know what that is, especially out in the rural area. Originally, it was called the Rural Employment Act."

Bittiker said the Green Thumb Program began in the '60s when farming was difficult and people moved to the city. Today, Experience Works helps people 55 and older re-enter the workforce, he said.

"We pay them and place them with government agencies, 501C3s, nonprofits, and they can be trained back into the workforce," Bittiker said.

Bittiker said the program helps older people get the money they need to live.

"It helps a lot of people because of inflation," Bittiker said. "Especially around utilities and gas, the old people are really hurting right now."

Bittiker said he worked the NEMO Career Fair because he gets great personal rewards from helping others find jobs.

"When they get that job and they don't have a job, you can just see their face light up. It's just amazing."

Max Bittiker
Experience Works

Lori Gray, benefits coordinator in the Human Resources department for the University, recruited at the Career Fair.

"Being the largest employer in the Kirksville area, they invited us," Gray said. "It's important to get your name out there in the community."

Gray said she empathizes with job-seekers who find themselves seeking new employment because of military obligations and frequent traveling.

"Years and years ago, I was married to a guy in the military," Gray said. "With the military, you move every two or three years. If you don't have a degree and they know you're going to move in about three years, you have to start over, all the time, pretty much from square one. It was really hard to start over every two or three years."

Gray said she later earned her bachelor's and master's degrees, then entered human resources to help people.

"People who make a move and start over, I help them understand their benefits and get them more knowledgeable of what they have coming to them and how to interview and things like that," Gray said. "It makes a difference."

Truman students help county raise extra \$20K

BY CAITLIN DEAN
Staff Reporter

An extra \$20,000 goes a long way in the life of a college student — or in the life of a cancer patient.

Truman students joined Adair County residents last Friday for the annual Relay For Life event. Adair County set a fundraising goal of \$35,000 this year but, through extensive efforts, raised more than \$57,000, said junior Abby Simons, Alpha Phi Omega vice president of large service and team captain.

Money raised by Relay For Life is put toward cancer research through the American Cancer Society, with the hopes of never forgetting those lost to cancer, supporting those who face cancer and one day eliminating cancer, according to relayforlife.org. Relay For Life provides a way for students to connect deeply with residents and peers.

This year's event moved inside the multi-purpose building at the NEMO fairgrounds because of inclement weather. Initial fears about this change dampening the spirit of the event quickly faded as participants found the tighter quarters allowed them to grow closer to other teams, Simons said.

"We were in this building and cramped together, and the 40 of us had to sit in this like, 10-by-20-foot box," she

said. "We were kind of spilling over into other people's teams. I think that probably provided for more of a fun environment because you couldn't just isolate yourself from the rest of the teams."

Simons said staying up the entire night together bonds people and that she enjoyed getting to know members from other teams.

"It was kind of cool to see the community of Kirksville and the campus coming together for the same cause," she said.

Simons said she chose to organize APO's team instead of delegating the task to another member because she has enjoyed participating in the past. She also said the event is close to her heart because her grandfather died from cancer a few years ago.

"They do the 12-hour walk-a-thon to push you through what a cancer patient might have felt like," she said. "They're up for so long that their body is just completely worn down, and then in the morning you finally see the break of dawn. It's supposed to be like hope for the future."

Leading up to the event, team members sell luminary bags either in honor of or in memory of those who have battled cancer, sophomore Craig Deken said.

"During [the luminary] ceremony, they read off all of the names, and it's like silence," Deken said. "It's hundreds

[of names], at least. Just the reading of the names lasted about an hour."

Senior Nichole Reiling stepped into a new position this year by serving as the team development chair with the Relay For Life committee. Community members comprised the rest of the committee, and Reiling acted as a liaison between the committee and the Truman teams, she said.

"If someone did not tell you [when meetings began], or if someone from the year past in your organization did not do Relay, you might not know about it," Reiling said. "So what I really wanted to get across to the campus is that this is going on, you can be a captain, let me help you do this whether it's your first year or your 10th year doing this."

Participants spent most of the evening enjoying karaoke, a performance by and lessons from University Swingers, music, raffles, bingo and a performance by True Men. However, more serious aspects of the night, like the luminary ceremony, reminded participants of the gravity of cancer and allowed them time to reflect on Relay's goals.

"You might not know the person that's walking next to you, but they are dealing with something that you have, too," Reiling said. "They have the same want in mind, the same desire. I think that's just something really special."

DELTA SIGMA PI

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