

## OUR VIEW

### Speech showed high interest in discourse

We're kind of partial to buzz. We pay attention to the things that make Truman students tick, the ideas that get us riled up or tickle our collective fancy. For all our northeast Missouri homogeneity, our classrooms regularly house zealous debates on philosophy, politics and public policy, and frankly, we like it that way.

One of the ideas that apparently can pack a 250-seat auditorium, with latecomers disappointedly crowding the exterior aisles, is race-based affirmative action. And one of the speakers who garners both spontaneous bouts of applause and abundant cries of outrage is apparently Ward Connerly.

You probably saw the Facebook invitation with affirmative-action proponents "counting on you to show up in full force" to contest Connerly's positions. And by now, we're sure you've heard about Connerly's decial of the attendees' behavior (see story, Page 1).

The spotlight on the Funds Allotment Council, which helped make possible the appearance of this divisive speaker on our bucolic campus, might seem justified or inappropriate (see columns, Page 5). Honestly, you're probably bracing yourself for the upbraiding you're expecting from us.

But we just want to give you props. Whether you support race-based affirmative action or condemn it as a relic that's lived past its usefulness, you let everybody know. Sure, a few boorish individuals peppered the Violette Hall crowd last Thursday night, abusing their posts and leaving a bad taste in our mouths.

But many of you listened with respect, articulated your positions with confidence, engaged in productive debate and illustrated the critical thinking skills Truman so likes to highlight in its admissions literature. Shoot, maybe the Liberal Studies Program is actually working.

We'd like to see many more arguments and much more debate, both inside the classroom and outside it.

When a student is confronted with an alternate point of view, she is forced to reflect on her position, if only so she can become an effective advocate for it. For all of Truman's interdisciplinary rhetoric, it sometimes fails to wield controversy as an operative teaching tool, and we'd like to see many more arguments and much more debate, both inside the classroom and outside it, now that we've shown ourselves to be capable of decorum.

Truman usually does a good job of encouraging input on campus-based issues, hosting poorly attended forums on curriculum and administrative posts and collecting surveys on the quality of food and the academic experience.

But these don't tend to be the kinds of issues that you'll give up Drinkin' With Lincoln for. Maybe knowing that you made a difference in the cereal selection in Ryle Hall doesn't mean as much as knowing you participated in a nationwide discussion of constitutional significance. Who knows?

After all the self-righteous condescension the college population earned for its mutiny against the Facebook news feed (Time magazine writer Tracy Schmidt sneeringly called it "Gen Y's first official revolution"), we're glad Truman students have chosen to voice their support for something as fundamental to Americans as equality — because that's what it all comes down to. Both advocates and opponents of race-based affirmative action just want everyone to get a piece of the pie. Historically, some of us haven't been offered any, and vehement disagreement just comes from how to get there now.

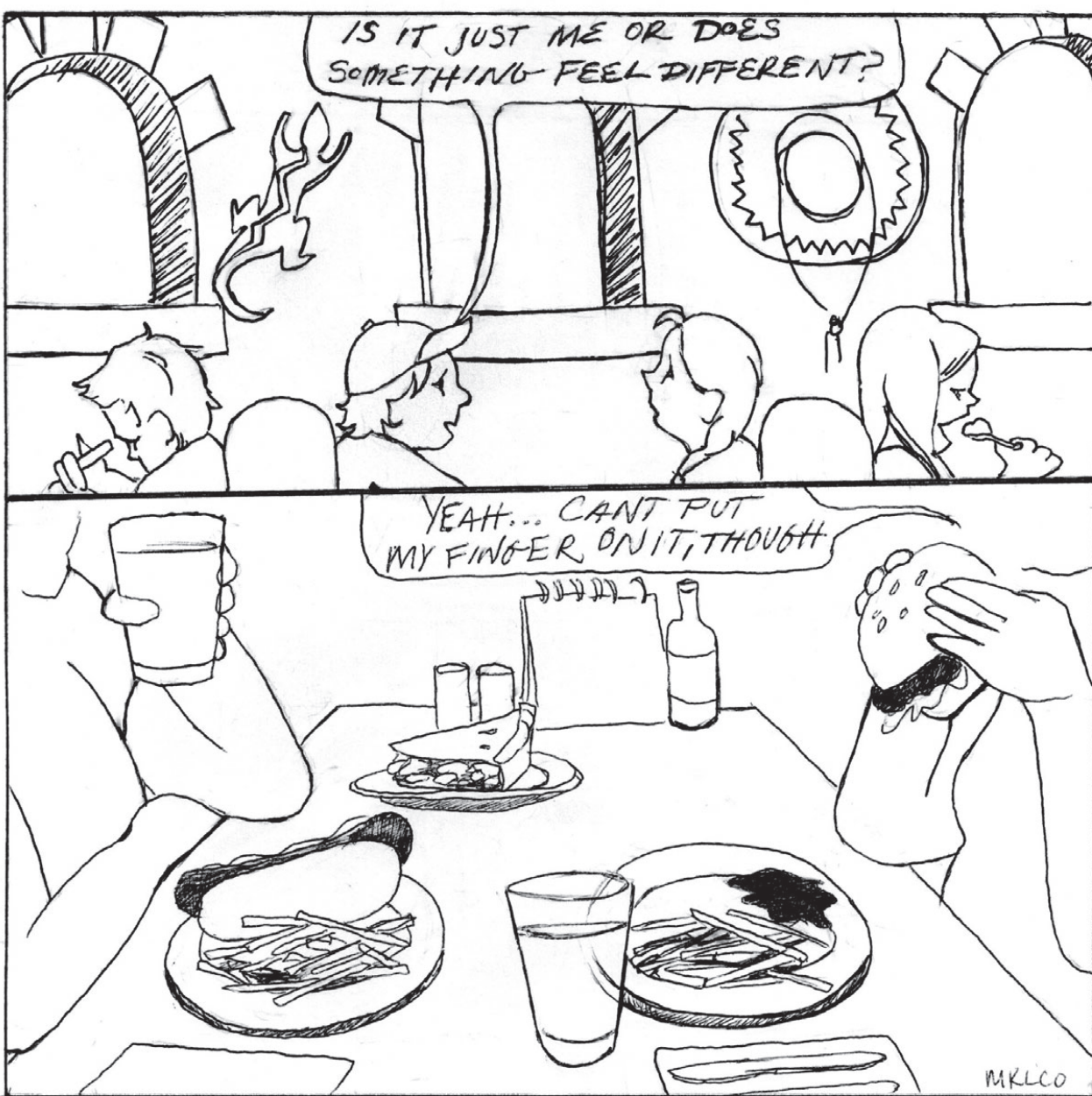
It's this commitment to fairness that likewise kept the Connerly's forum from getting out of hand last Thursday. We're glad your actions spoke as loud as your words.

## CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail [index@truman.edu](mailto:index@truman.edu), call us at 660-785-4449, or send a letter to Index, 1200 Barnett Hall, Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo. 63501.

- A quotation on page 17 of the March 20 issue of the Index was incorrect. Blake Peterson said "I feel like this weekend I was the second-best wrestler in my bracket," not the "best wrestler in my bracket."

### THE NEW FACE OF MEXICAN FOOD IN K-VILLE



## Letters to the Editor

### Cars aren't necessary for travel at Truman with bicycle options

You have to ask yourself: Do you really need a car in Kirksville? Although it's reasonable to assume that a car is the most convenient way to go to and from Kirksville, it's unreasonable to assume that a car is the best way to travel around the city. Kirksville is less than 10 square miles, which seems to make automobile use a luxury, an indulgence and even a bit absurd.

The University, however, has chosen to make automobile use completely acceptable — and even fairly easy — with huge parking lots and its parking tag system. There is even another parking lot planned for the space near Barnett Hall. This open space is one of Truman's assets, and soon it will be another unnecessary parking lot on a university that already has plenty of parking. I can't imagine that there's any reasonable motive for building this parking lot — Truman students are active, able people who are intelligent enough to factor in the brief amount of extra time it takes to travel by foot or bike.

We even have a motivated, well-funded, highly-active bike co-op on campus — the perfect antidote to the automobile addiction plaguing Truman. Do you really need to drive to classes? Ask yourself that before you get in the car. Do we really want another parking lot so we can just keep driving our cars senselessly? Truman should be a place where a sustainable, reasonable culture is created — not a place where the excessive, overwhelmingly unsustainable habits of the larger world are perpetuated.

Luke Gardner  
Junior

### Kirksville Highway 63 bypass presents one-time opportunity

The Highway 63 Corporation has been working with officials from the Iowa transportation community for several years to improve Highway 63 between Missouri and Iowa. Our aim is to eventually develop the "Avenue of the Capitals" between Jefferson City and Des Moines. The highway also would connect Interstate 70 and Interstate 80.

When the Missouri Transportation Commission met in Kirksville last year, we formally requested the extension of our responsibilities to include connecting Kirksville to the Iowa border with an improved highway, starting with our alternate route to Baltimore Street to relieve congestion and promote economic development.

Last fall, our Northeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission was invited to submit a project for consideration to include in MoDOT's Statewide Transportation Investment Priorities. Twenty-four districts presented proposals. Of the projects submitted from throughout the state, it was announced that five projects could be included with the remaining very limited Amendment 3 funds.

One of MoDOT's investment priorities is to improve the operation of Missouri's freight transportation system in order to increase efficiency, reduce congestion and foster economic development. Our alternate route proposal fit the requirements perfectly. Our district engineer, Dan Niec, presented our proposal to the regional planners, and we were chosen No. 4 out of all the projects submitted. It is planned that eventually, as needed, the project can be expanded to four lanes.

MoDOT originally purchased the land for our bypass about 10 years

ago, and the city of Kirksville invested about \$4 million in moving utilities. If we extend the sales tax for economic development as proposed to MoDOT, our proposal will be presented to the Missouri Highway Commission for approval in May.

At that time, our Highway District Transportation Department will develop the project with assistance from public input and city officials. It could be finished by 2012 and ready for our next step north. If our community does not support the tax extension, the project funds will go to another area. This is a one-time opportunity.

Harriet Beard  
Member of the Highway 63 Corporation

### Current school board members accomplished much for town

April 8 is the Kirksville School Board election. I would like to commend the members of the current school board for their progressive actions and foresight. Without parental pressure, the members recently voted to add a girls' volleyball program. Board members became aware of the need for more opportunities for the young women in our community and were proactive in creating a new program.

I am writing to encourage readers to vote for the three incumbent candidates, Kim Bailey, Jason Denslow and Todd Wheeler. In contrast to their female challenger, these candidates have shown support for all students, including those with disabilities.

These Board members have been faithful to their responsibilities and deserve your support.

Becky Pike  
Kirksville resident

## INDEX

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### 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 500 words except at the discretion of the Editorial Board. All letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, signed by at least one individual and include a phone number for verification. The Index does not publish anonymous letters to the editor. Letters to the editor also may be submitted by e-mail at [index@truman.edu](mailto:index@truman.edu) or on our Web site at [www.trumanindex.com](http://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.

### Editorial Policy

The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, and additional copies cost 50 cents each. The production offices are located in Barnett Hall. We can be reached by phone at 660-785-4449. The Index is a designated public forum, and 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 Editorial Board through a majority vote. The Editorial Board consists of the editor in chief, managing editor, news editor, copy chief 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.

### Advertising Policy

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## What was going on in the INDEX?

### 5 years ago ... April 3, 2003

Immigrants at the Premium Standard Farms' meat-packing plant "trade long hours, hard work for good wages, benefits." The communication manager for the plant said that it used an INS program to verify the Social Security numbers of its workers.

### 20 years ago ... March 24, 1988

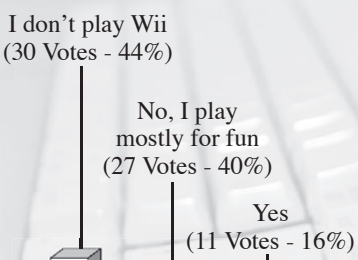
SUB renovations brought a new look to the Quiet Lounge. Renovations cost more than \$1 million, with the Quiet Lounge alone totaling nearly \$800,000.

### 60 years ago ... March 31, 1948

One hundred dollars was appropriated by Student Senate for the use of the baseball team. Tickets still were sold to finance the team. Also, confusion due to the uncovering of old student government constitutions led to motions about adopting a new one.

## WEB POLL

### Do you play Wii for exercise purposes?



This week's question:  
Do you support affirmative action?