

Officers gather unattended bikes

DPS gives abandoned bicycles to Recycling Center for auction

BY MICHELLE MARTIN
Staff Reporter

Chad Whittom, sergeant for the Department of Public Safety, said he thinks students who don't lock up their bicycles could be making an unfortunate mistake.

Whittom said that in addition to the possibility of bicycle theft, another reason not to leave bikes unlocked or unattended is that DPS picks up bicycles that seem abandoned or are illegally parked. After a period of six months, DPS gives the bicycles to the Recycling Center to be auctioned to the public, Whittom said.

"If we find a bike that looks like somebody grabbed it, rode it, then abandoned it, then we'll pick it up," he said.

He said abandonment most commonly happens during the summer when students have graduated or left campus.

"We have to go out [and] pick up the abandoned bikes because otherwise the bike racks get full and aren't available for people to use who need them," Whittom said.

Illegal bike parking involves chaining bicycles to hand rails or light poles. Whittom said that chaining bikes to hand rails causes a hazard to people who need to use the rails, and chaining them to light poles is against regulations.

DPS also finds bicycles that have been abandoned after theft, one of the most



Krista Goodman/Index
Bike racks such as this in front of Ryle Hall are strategically placed around campus. If a bike is left for too long, DPS seizes it, and after 6 months, it is taken to the recycling center to be auctioned.

common campus crimes, he said.

Whittom said he thinks it is imperative for all students to lock up their bikes to avoid the possibility of theft.

"It's amazing how many bikes you'll see sitting around unsecured, and it doesn't take but just a second to reach up and grab it and be gone with it," he said.

Junior Drew Forrester said he had an experience with bike theft last year when a friend's bike was stolen after she forgot to lock it up.

"We went to look for it, and I ended up finding it in a completely different spot," he said.

Forrester said he normally locks up his bike, although his lock is a little outdated.

"It would be really easy to steal my bike because all [someone would] have to do is take clippers and cut the chains," he said. "It wouldn't be that hard because the chains aren't thick at all." Forrester said that al-

though he locks his bike, he hasn't registered it and probably never will. He said he never knew what registering a bike entailed and that DPS should better inform students about the process.

"If [DPS] think[s] that it's necessary for all the students at Truman to register their bike, if they think it would help them in the long run, I think they need to figure out a better way to tell us because I had no idea," he said. "It just seems like a hassle."

Whittom said he urges all owners to register their bikes because it is the only way to increase the chances that a stolen bicycle can be returned.

"We highly recommend that everybody register their bikes so if we recover them, we can get them back to the owner because if we don't return to the owner, the only other option we have at the end of the six months is to send them to the surplus auction," he said.

Whittom said registration is a free, easy process. To register, simply stop by DPS to fill out a card, he said.

"If [a recovered bicycle is]

registered, we'll contact the owner and let them know we've recovered their bike," he said. "If they're not registered, then we don't have any way of finding out, so by state statute what we have to do is hold onto them for six months."

Howard Worcester, recycling and surplus property coordinator, said he runs surplus auctions four or five times a year. The Recycling Center sells the bicycles that haven't been claimed from DPS, along with other unclaimed items at the auction.

"A really good bike would sell for [\$25]," he said.

Bicycles often sell for parts at the auctions, although some come in decent condition, Worcester said.

"Not only [do we sell] bicycles, but we do sell computers, laptops, furniture — just about anything you can imagine, we sell it," he said.

Worcester said he thinks the auctions are little-known to Truman students.

"We're trying to get the word out, but I would like to see more awareness," he said.

"It's amazing how many bikes you'll see sitting around unsecured, and it doesn't take but just a second to reach up and grab it and be gone with it."

Chad Whittom
Sergeant for the Truman
Department of Public
Safety

Student relishes odd birthday

BY LAURA PRATHER
Staff Reporter

Tomorrow, sophomore John Taylor will celebrate his fifth birthday tomorrow.

Taylor is no prodigy or child genius, though. He simply was born on a day that only occurs every four years: Feb. 29, also known as leap year day.

But it wasn't supposed to happen like that. Taylor said he was born two weeks late.

"It was getting to the point where they were about to induce labor, but my mom had her water break," he said. "And at the hospital, in the elevator on the way up, I came out."

Taylor, who was born at 11:53 p.m., said his dad was a little disappointed because he had hoped the birth could wait until midnight on March 1 to avoid confusion.

"I thought it was kind of funny," Taylor said. "I was late but when I decided to get things done, I got it done."

Taylor said that growing up, his birth date, or lack thereof, wasn't that unusual to him because he was used to celebrating on one of the surrounding days.

"[My parents] just told me, 'Well, every four years your birthday actually comes, so you're special,'" he said.

Taylor, who actually will be 20 years old, said his parents never picked one day — Feb. 28 or March 1 — to celebrate on each year. Instead, he said they usually waited to see which day was more convenient for them. It could depend on when the days fell during the week and if his friends or family had a specific event planned for one of the days, he said.

Taylor said that when he was much younger, he tried to convince people to celebrate both days so that he could get two sets of presents. He said even now he uses his extraordinary birthday to his benefit.

"I can use it to my advantage to make people come to see me on my birthday," Taylor said. "I'll say, 'It only happens once every four years. What makes you think we'll be friends in four years? You got to see me then.'"

Although he enjoys the occasional years he gets to celebrate on his actual birthday, Taylor said his friends usually make more of it than he does because not many people know someone who has a leap year day birthday. This year his birthday falls on a Friday, and he said he plans to celebrate some that day and more Saturday with close friends.

"There's this big joke going around [Centennial Hall] that when I turn five, I'm going to run down the hall yelling, 'I'm five years old, I'm five years old,'" Taylor said.

The most frequent question people ask him is when can he legally consume alcohol, he said. Taylor said the repetitive question is irritating in some instances, but he spouts off the same answer each time.

"FDR actually had a secretary who was born on the 29th and it caused a lot of problems for them," he said. "So they had to set March 1 as the official date [to drink] when you're born on a leap year, when you're on an off year."

Not everyone makes a big deal out of his unique birthday or laughs about how he only ages every four years, though, Taylor said.

"My cousin says I have a birthday every year, it's just that one second between midnight and midnight... February 28 and March 1," he said.

But Taylor said he will continue to joke about his leap year age.

"I do feel special," he said. "Not everyone has my birthday, not everyone can tell the joke that when they're 72, 'I'm 18 years old.'"



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Application Procedure

Interested applicants must attend one of the preview sessions (see dates and times below) to orient them to employment in the Career Center. Applications will be distributed at the preview session; applicants should submit an application, resume, cover letter, and the names and phone numbers of three references (at least one of which should be from their academic department). Deadline for application is Thursday, March 27th 2008 at 5:00 PM.

Preview Sessions

Tuesday, March 18th 5:00 PM
Wednesday, March 19th 6:00 PM
Thursday, March 20th 5:30 PM

