

OUR VIEW

Reality clashes with Gov. Blunt's farewell

It's not often that we find the need to poke at roadkill with a sharpened stick right after it's stepped into the road, but this time, we do. Good riddance to you, Gov. Matt Blunt.

It's not that we're ignorant of your plight: The media and the public have been bashing you all along, and you just never really got a fair break. And on top of that, you're such a decent guy. You never poked at us when we were roadkill on the pavement of a floundering post-9/11 economy.

Oh wait — you did. You said you achieved everything you set out to do

four years ago (see News in Brief, Page 2). Well, apparently we weren't on your checklist.

Funding for Truman from the state — the chunk of the bills that get paid by Missouri taxpayers at-large rather than students — has dropped in the last decade from about 75 percent to just about half of the operating costs of the University. In real dollars, based on the Consumer Price Index (the same standard of inflation used to set the minimum wage), we haven't had such a low level of funding since the fiscal year 1996. That means that this University — in as long as it has been Truman — has never been so hard up for state money.

But don't let us confuse you with crazy talk about the roaring '90s — since 2001, money for Truman from the state has declined dollar-for-dollar to the tune of \$4 million.

That span of time includes your term, Gov. Blunt. And that cash is equivalent to more than 200 full-tuition, room-and-board scholarships at this University. It's also equivalent to about 20 University president salaries or a smattering of faculty salary increases that have been neglected for too long.

Now, we wouldn't want to smear you for a previous governor's iniquities. Since you've taken office, Truman has had budget increases, we'll admit. But if we admit that, then you should

admit that the increases don't keep up with inflation, which really means that Truman still has had budget cuts. Let's see how that compares with what you said when you decided it was time to abandon all hopes of re-election:

"In contrast to the old education withholdings and cuts, my budgets will have delivered 1.2 billion new dollars to our universities, classrooms and students."

Hmm. Where did that \$1.2 billion go? To the students? We didn't get that check, Gov. Blunt. To the classrooms? Baldwin Hall 346 doesn't appear to have seen the money.

Of course, you had to have done something with all that cash. It's just that we're pretty near Podunk up here in the far northern reaches of the state, and we didn't really notice when you suddenly turned into Rich Uncle Pennybags for higher education.

As we continued listening to your statement, you told us the truth about what happened to our hopes for the best liberal arts college in the Midwest: "Hundreds of millions of dollars in waste has been eliminated, and we reduced the size of government." All those trips to Kirksville to pander to the electorate didn't manage to convince you that Truman isn't a bloated wasteland.

Well, Gov. Blunt — it's time to bid you farewell. You jumped on the bandwagon of virtually every Republican issue of the moment — from taxes, to bridge safety, to Virginia Tech, to illegal immigrants, to slashing funding for Missouri's universities. Unfortunately, you didn't manage to turn that into good polling numbers against Attorney General Jay Nixon, to whom you probably would have lost the 2008 gubernatorial election had you run.

In light of what your decisions meant for Truman, we can only hope that you've tumbled off the bandwagon of politics for good. Savor the last year you've got — but for the sake of Missouri, please don't reach for higher office again: We've had enough.

This University is as long as it's been Truman has never been so hard up for state money. Thanks Gov. Blunt!

CORRECTIONS

- An editorial titled "University bears guilt for fire alarm fiasco" on page 4 of the Jan. 17 Index implied that the University Farm Building Duplex was under the purview of Residence Life. Residence Life personnel are not responsible for the installation or operation of smoke detectors in the building and, additionally, provide training for one student in the facility to respond to emergencies. The building is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agricultural Science.
- A sports teaser on page 1 of the Jan. 17 Index incorrectly stated the final score of the women's basketball game. The Truman women's team lost 98-61, not 98-6.
- An article titled "Online sites challenge reality of relationship" on page 13 of the Jan. 17 Index misattributed a pull quotation to freshman Corey Moon. The quotation should have been attributed to freshman Amanda Piner.
- A sidebar article titled "Truman Athletics" on page 18 of the Jan. 17 Index was incorrect. The career leader in Truman wrestling wins is Merrick Meyer with 130 wins, not Mike Duffy, who had 93 career wins.



Letters to the Editor

Ron Paul remains praiseworthy even after Phil Jarrett's column

As Phil Jarrett has noted, Ron Paul cuts across popular political definitions. Liberals like how he would bring the troops home from Iraq immediately and end the war on our civil liberties. Conservatives like him because he has never voted for a tax increase and wants to limit the size of our federal government. He appeals to a diverse group of people on a variety of issues and has enjoyed recent success as a result.

Paul raised \$20 million last quarter and growing support so far has given him a stunning second-place finish in Nevada with 13 percent of the vote, a fourth-place finish in Michigan and 10 percent of the Iowa vote.

Every day Paul's support grows as people hear his message of freedom, and no one can deny that — not even Jarrett. In his column, Jarrett was right when he encouraged people to vote for the candidate who most closely fit their own views. Every voter should research the candidates and make up his or her mind based on his or her position on the issues. Jarrett also was correct when he wrote that "Ron Paul best illuminates these issues without the doublespeak." Ron Paul doesn't take money from special interests and the Republican and media establishments aren't giving him any support, to say the least.

But after all the praise for Paul's character and his stances on the issues, Jarrett still tried to tell you not to vote for Ron Paul. He wrote about someone who answered a phone, supposedly named "Reefersseed," but when I searched for similar incidents on

Google, all I found was Jarrett's article. He also cited other unsavory supporters as reflecting badly on the campaign. It seems to me that Jarrett couldn't find any character flaws in Paul, unlike the other presidential candidates, so he decided to focus on one or two individuals out of tens of millions of supporters — and if that's not enough, he brings up stereotypes that I've never heard of.

To be honest, Paul is not that great of a politician due to the simple reality that he's too good of a person, but that doesn't mean he doesn't deserve our best efforts to elect him. If anything it means just the opposite — we should do everything we can to make sure he is elected. I'm not supporting Paul because I think he's trendy or because I am confused on where he stands on the issues.

I just don't like any of the other candidates on either side, and I like everything Paul stands for. I implore every reader who hasn't looked at Paul to do so before the primary so that he or she can see what all the hype is about. Remember that Missouri has an open primary so one doesn't have to be registered with any particular party to vote for him, and a vote in a primary does not hold one to voting for that candidate in the election.

Paul offers a real choice over the Democrats and other Republicans, and unlike the other candidates, the only promise he makes is that he will do everything in his power to advance the cause of freedom for all people.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Our View from the Jan. 17 issue of the Index incorrectly suggested that the Office of Residence Life has oversight on the presence of smoke detectors in the University Farm Building Duplex. The editorial was published to draw attention to the fact that students were living in a facility whose safety mechanisms were not appropriately monitored — regardless of whose responsibility that monitoring might be. The Residence Life Handbook is quoted liberally by the University at-large as a document meant to inspire confidence in incoming students, which was why we also used it in the editorial.

The Index Editorial Board regrets the implication that Residence Life was the office sacrificing safety for convenience and for that we apologize. Regardless of who and what office is responsible for the lack of smoke detectors at the University Farm Duplex Building, the fact that no backup was in place is a major problem at any residence or any educational facility.

We hope that, in the future, all students — whether in a traditional residence hall, an on-campus apartment, an off-campus residence or the University Farm — are aware of the potential for fires and that they self-advocate for the protection they and their classmates deserve.

Index Editorial Board

Justin Logan
Sophomore
College Libertarians

Incident illustrates need for card-access system at Truman



Daniel Glossenger

Residence Life staff did their jobs, and its policy was followed as planned. The Department of Public Safety officers did their jobs, and its procedures were adhered to. But that didn't stop someone from walking into a residence hall in the wee hours of the morning, blowing past a night monitor and making his way into the room of a student (see story, Page 1).

At other universities, both interior and exterior building doors are equipped with devices called electronic

card-access systems. For example, at Mizzou, buildings started to be equipped with card-access systems a while ago — and by a while ago, I mean the summer of 1998. At Brown University, the Department of Public Safety reported a decrease in burglaries after a card-access system was installed in all residence halls. At the University of Virginia, electronic card access has been in use for years and has simplified the process of changing locks when students lose keys.

If we adopted a keyless system, we still don't have to go all the way to a traceable system, such as that of Quinnipac University. At Quinnipac, students and staff have their reading habits, what doors they open and where they're shopping stored on their cards and recorded into a central computer system. Their system already has helped solve some minor cases of vandalism and theft.

But that's not what I'm asking for, Truman. I'm asking for the card-access system that appears to be installed at West Campus Suites to be activated. I'm asking for all residence hall buildings to have these systems installed — now, rather than when all the residence halls have been renovated.

If there had been a card-access system on the exterior doors of Dobson Hall, the incident from last Sunday possibly could have been prevented. In fact, it's just that sort of occurrence for which a card-access system is installed in the first place. I'm not asking for much, Truman. Missouri's flagship university and hundreds of other universities across the country already have this security measure, so why shouldn't we?

Daniel Glossenger is a senior history major from Nashville, Tenn.

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What was going on in the

INDEX?

45 years ago...

Wednesday, Jan. 23, 1963

A new IBM Selectric electric typewriter was installed for use in an Office Appliances course and was 50 pounds lighter than the average electric typewriter.

40 years ago...

Wednesday, Jan. 24, 1968

In "Male students respond favorably to Mini-Skirts," Truman male students agreed that the mini-skirt (on most women) was as short as it needed to be, but that knees "appear to be of vital interest to skirt watchers. If a girl has fat knees or knobby knees, the experts say they don't jibe. But nice knees are extremely pleasing to the male taste."

20 years ago...

Thursday, Jan. 28, 1988

KNEU (later KTRM) began broadcasting again after a year-and-a-half absence because of technical issues involving bidding and construction delays. KNEU operated under a new format, which consisted of classical music, Motown, jazz, blues, urban contemporary and classic rock.