

## OUR VIEW

## Practicality needed to prevent TB panic

In case you've been chained to your books for the past six days, here's an update: Someone on campus has contracted tuberculosis. But, thanks to the efforts of the Student Health Center, no widespread panic has ensued.

We commend the health center for recognizing the serious symptoms of the disease and handling the outbreak in a timely, professional and informative manner. The health center alerted the campus community at the first indication of TB, instead of waiting until the case was confirmed, and provided information and level-headed instruction to help us help ourselves — without planting the seeds of unnecessary paranoia.

At this point, no active TB cases exist on campus. Still, the best defenses against any infectious disease are information and common sense. And because the health center has so aptly provided students with the knowledge they need to identify TB, we encourage the campus community to practice that second defense.

First off, this means keeping yourself informed. Keep checking your e-mail for TB updates and follow the links the health center provides to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. Don't just delete them — they might affect you. Become aware of TB symptoms and prevention, and practice elementary germ-hindering measures like avoiding touching your eyes and nose and covering your mouth when you cough.

Second, don't succumb to paranoia. The student who sits behind you in Health 195 with the incessant sniffing probably does not have TB. And unless

you've been notified by the health department of having had close contact with the current confirmed case, chances are pretty high that you don't either. We certainly don't recommend abandoning hand-washing or sharing straws willy-nilly, but there's no need to ostracize everyone with a chest cold. Just practice common sense.

This isn't the time to launch a full-scale investigation into who the confirmed case is, either. The student already has been contained and treated, so phoning up the health center and all of your friends does nothing more than satiate your curiosity. The Adair County Health Department already has worked with the health center to ask those students thought to have been in close contact with the individual to receive TB testing, and none of these students have tested positive. If you weren't notified, sit back and feel lucky.

If you have been identified as someone who's been exposed to the disease, seek testing immediately if you haven't already — especially if you start experiencing coughing, fever, weakness, chest pain or are coughing up blood. And don't skip the test just because you're afraid of needles. It's painless and takes less than five minutes. In case you want to double check that your nagging cough isn't something more serious, the health center will have a walk-in clinic next week for anyone who'd like to be tested.

Be safe, be smart and be sensible. One confirmed case of TB isn't the go-ahead to begin drafting your will, but we can all take measures to better protect ourselves from the spread of disease.



## Letters to the Editor

## Anti-abortion advertising insert misleads, misinforms

I was shocked and angered by the anti-choice propaganda titled "trapped..." that appeared as an advertising insert in the April 17 issue of the Index. Readers should know that this inflammatory publication contained an appalling number of inaccuracies — so many, in fact, that it would take several pages for me to address them all. Just two of the most blatant examples would be the information in the article linking abortion and breast cancer and in the article about the long-term physical and emotional effects of abortion. Reputable medical organizations and reputable scientific studies do not support these claims.

Sadly, what this publication did not contain was any information that would help reduce the need for abortion. I am proud that Planned Parenthood supports and provides medically accurate sex education and access to birth control to prevent unwanted pregnancy. Preventing unwanted pregnancy prevents abortion. Incendiary rhetoric, fear mongering, misinformation and moralistic judgments do not.

Like many people, I enjoy a thoughtful, intelligent discussion about complex social issues like abortion while working toward common ground and meaningful solutions. However, this publication shows me that it's business as usual for anti-choice advocates whose top priority is to ban abortion without addressing the needs of women in the real world.

Too many people wanted to sign this letter so I am writing it on behalf of our Board of Directors, our Truman Vox Chapter and the entire staff of Tri-Rivers Planned Parenthood.

Lisa Ecsi Davis  
Director of Education &  
Public Affairs  
Tri-Rivers Planned Parenthood

## Truman doesn't merit comparison to Harvard

Alex Hayden clearly has taken apathy to heart. Hayden, like many current writers, cannot bother to take the time to research an interesting column. Sure, I could have written about why Daniel Glossenger's column was sorely out of touch. I also could have written about the fact that our paper seems to find fact-checking a needless drudgery and how inflammatory editorials seem much more prevalent than any sort of actual news. But instead, I will do what appears to be necessary to be published in the Index: I'll point out some facts about Truman.

We are not the Harvard of the Midwest. Shocking? Harvard might be a bastion for academic rigor, but it has two things Truman does not have: money and school spirit. Money truly makes the world go round, and in this case, the campus is the world. We will not be able to compete against schools if all we have to show is outmoded dormitories, a 10-year-old Student Recreation Center and an updated Baldwin Hall. It is necessary to upgrade non-academic buildings as well as classrooms. Living environments are just as necessary as class environments if you want to be conducive to learning.

That brings me to the other aspect in which Harvard beats Truman: school spirit. Attendance at all of our events (even the oft-lauded swim team meets) is sorely lacking. School spirit as a whole is pathetic. Here are a few reasons: Tailgating is prohibited, people spend more time complaining than working to fix anything and it's easier to write an editorial criticizing Truman than to write a well-articulated piece praising anything on campus.

Joseph Goedde  
Senior

## Residence hall renovations should not be overlooked

Although I agree with some of the comments made by Daniel Glossenger in his column in the April 24 issue of the Index about changes that should be made at Truman, I must disagree with number 10.

I lived in BNB last year, and it was horrible. It started with a small leak above our toilet and metamorphosed into a year of insanity. We had repairmen coming in and out of our room on a daily basis trying to fix a leak in

our bathroom that was at times hard enough to require an umbrella. Once that was briefly fixed, a sewer pipe burst and flooded the closet of the student below us. That took all of second semester to fix and involved even more holes, including one in our closet that forced us to move everything out. This was for an entire year, and we still had to pay full price for the room. The repairmen said this was typical of the piping in the building due to the age.

Although I agree that academic buildings should be remodeled, I also think living in a habitable living space is extremely important and should not be overlooked.

Laura Raiiff  
Junior

## Concern about environment is unnecessary, alarmist

It's a good thing that we've started recycling. If we hadn't I'm sure our whole planet would be covered in trash by now, or at least our landfills would be full and there would be nowhere to put it. That's what alarmists like Kelsey Landhuis think anyway. Apparently Kirksville residents are too ill-informed to know what has to be done about the trash problem.

Luckily for them, all-knowing college students have the answer Kirksville residents have been waiting for: If we all recycle, our landfills won't fill up and the world will be a better place. Instead, they decided to increase the amount of trash allowed to be thrown away each month because the residents wanted to throw away more stuff. This would be a problem if you thought the landfills were filling up, and in a way they are. The amount of trash grows faster than the amount that decomposes. So why are the residents of Kirksville still throwing away their trash?

It's probably because throwing most items away is cheaper than recycling them. A lot of times the costs are hidden by government or school programs, but in fact, it costs so much more that it's safe to say recycling is wasteful. It's easy to think that recycling saves resources, keeps landfills from filling up and so much more, but really it's just land, and we're not running out.

In fact, we will never run out of any resource, renewable or not. I'm confident of this because I know that as we fill up our landfills with trash, land will become more scarce. As this happens, the cost of throwing trash away will go up, and when it goes above the price of recycling, we'll start recycling more. The less land we have to put trash in, the more we'll recycle: Problem solved.

With this in mind, I would encourage everyone to stop worrying about recycling and just do whatever saves you the most money.

Too often people think of land as some sacred thing, but it's just another resource like the labor, energy and equipment that it takes to recycle, and the only way to properly balance them is to do what saves you the most money. Luckily for us, there are more people in this country like the residents of Kirksville with the common sense to do what's right than there are Truman environmentalists who are well-intentioned but misguided. I think the next time Landhuis decides to insult the intelligence of this community, she should check the facts and get it right for once.

Justin Logan  
Sophomore

## Minors, not bartenders, are source of problem

I was disturbed when I read the article and column in the April 24 issue of the Index regarding recent alcohol law violation citations handed out in Kirksville. Brenna McDermott's column was particularly troubling. Certainly, underage drinking is and has been a serious problem in Kirksville. What bothered me about this column was that it entirely failed to address what I think is the source of the problem: the minors who are trying to drink.

As a bartender with more than a year's experience, I have encountered these minors many times. For some reason, nobody has questioned the behavior of the multitude of minors who flock to the bars every weekend with their fake identification in tow. In general, people don't consider it a

big deal when minors try to drink. I don't understand this. Just as bartenders should be held accountable for their actions, so should these minors.

McDermott states early in her column that "there is a reason those of us who aren't 21 aren't lawfully allowed to drink." I am not arguing this assertion. And I think she is honest when she says, "I don't know what that reason is." She contradicts herself later when she claims "there are laws about bartenders serving alcohol to minors so that the bartenders aren't blamed for a death when drunk minors crash their cars into trees and kill themselves." This contradiction highlights her lack of understanding of the relevant Missouri statute and her misunderstanding of the actual problem.

After all, as the headline of her column points out, bartenders who serve minors are making a "minor mistake," albeit with major consequences. But it is a mistake made in good faith, whereas minors enter the bar with the intention of breaking the law and therefore are knowingly acting in an illegal and unethical manner. There is a clear distinction. Why does no one raise this issue? Isn't this worse than making an honest mistake? This is the source of the problem. For some reason, in our society, we overlook this fact and focus on how awful it is when bartenders make these mistakes.

McDermott's assessment of the situation is typical. If we are serious about resolving this unquestionably serious problem, we need to start at the problem's source. It is time for the perception to change. The actions of these minors are wrong. Indeed, they are not only endangering their bartenders — they are endangering themselves.

Ryan Parks  
Senior

## Paperwork delays cause too much uncertainty

I am a graduating senior who has applied for the Master of Arts in Education program here at Truman. I would like others who might be applying for this program in the future to understand the bureaucratic process involved. I turned in my application on the deadline date, Feb. 15. I received my acceptance letter to the program this Saturday, April 29, a week and a day before graduation. Before that, I received no contact from the education department or the graduate studies office regarding my admission to or rejection from the program. I called the graduate studies office twice in the last week, and each time they told me the papers were there and only needed to be signed by the dean. I bring this to light because I don't think my experience is unique.

Other students in my situation are biting their nails in anticipation, putting other potential plans on hold, while they wait to hear from their home institution. Were I a non-Truman student, I would have given up long ago, opting instead for a school that is more considerate to someone from whom it requested a \$2,500 payment before she was accepted. Truman should not sacrifice its strong academic reputation simply because it cannot put a signature on and mail a letter in a timely fashion.

Abbey Snyder  
Senior, MAE Student

## Faculty members deserve competitive salaries

According to the American Association of University Professors' new "Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession," Truman faculty salaries are in the bottom 20 percent of U.S. colleges and universities (March-April issue of *Academe*). In terms of total compensation, Truman's faculty also is in the bottom quintile, and this rating is consistent across faculty ranks. Among Missouri schools, Truman is 11th in faculty salaries. During the past decade or two, Truman salaries have slipped from average to low in comparison to other schools. Low faculty salaries make it difficult to hire and retain faculty. It will take the combined efforts of the University President and the Board of Governors to increase Truman faculty salaries and compensation to a competitive level.

Martin Erickson  
Professor of mathematics

## 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 letter to the editor on page 4 of the April 24 issue of the Index incorrectly stated the year of Natalie Soltys. She is a senior, not a sophomore.
- An "Around the 'Ville'" item on page 11 of the April 24 issue of the Index contained incorrect information about an Environmental Jam 'n' Slam. The event took place at 9 p.m. April 24 at the Dukum Upp and was a forum for music, readings and poetry relating to the environment.
- A photograph caption on page 16 of the April 24 issue of the Index was incorrect. The photograph was taken in the Missouri Hall dining center, not in Centennial Hall.
- An article on page 1 of the April 17 issue of the Index titled "All measures pass" contained incorrect information about the Student Senate elections. Kristel Givogue, Philip Gilmor and David Hayes all were elected Senior Senators.

## 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

For up-to-date information on current rates or to inquire about the availability of classified ads in the Index, contact our advertising department at 660-785-4319. Our fax number is 660-785-7601, or you can e-mail us at [indexads@truman.edu](mailto:indexads@truman.edu).