



### SEASON'S END

Volleyball team falls in regional final to Washburn

Sports  
Page 15



# TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY INDEX

The University's student-produced newspaper

### A HELPING HAND

Free Rice turns big words into big help for the hungry

TruLife  
Page 9



Thursday, November 29, 2007

www.trumanindex.com

Kirksville, Mo. 63501

## MOHELA suit dropped, will be refiled

JULIE WILLIAMS  
News Editor

All is quiet on the MOHELA front, but that silence is only temporary.

Three months after Gov. Matt Blunt signed a bill into law in May allowing the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority to fund capital improvement projects for colleges and universities around the state, two former student borrowers with MOHELA filed a suit questioning the legality of that plan. That lawsuit was voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiffs Nov. 19, but John Lichtenegger, the attorney who represents those students, said the suit is not over yet.

"It is our plan to refile the case with additional plaintiffs — there's been quite a few students that have contacted us about representing them," Lichtenegger said.



The case will be refiled in the eastern part of Missouri because Lichtenegger said that will make it easier geographically for him and his co-council Mike Flannery, an attorney based out of St. Louis, to go to court.

Lichtenegger said he represents borrowers who have, without their consent, paid for \$350 million worth of buildings to be constructed. He said that no matter how badly the buildings are needed, the money should have come from state taxpayers instead of students who were not advised that when they took out college loans their interest rates would be affected by a plan to fund

Please See MOHELA, Page 7



Matt Blunt

## Blunt proposes license restrictions

Governor says current safeguards aren't enough

BY JESSIE GASCH  
Managing Editor

Gov. Matt Blunt stopped in Kirksville on Tuesday as part of a statewide tour to announce a proposal to further strengthen illegal immigration restrictions.

Blunt declared his support for legislation to reinforce the measures that prevent illegal immigrants from obtaining driver licenses and provide criminal penalties for people who help them do so.

Blunt's communication office did not return multiple phone

calls from the Index.

"While existing safeguards within the driver license approval process help prevent illegal aliens from receiving a Missouri driver's license, it is not specifically prohibited by state law," according to a press release issued by Blunt's office Tuesday.

As of July 2005, state law does require that applicants for driver licenses show proof of lawful presence in the United States, said David Griffith, spokesman for the state Department of Revenue, which issues licenses through its many contract offices across the state.

This prompted a spokesperson for Attorney General Jay Nixon, a Democratic gubernato-

rial candidate, to point out that this part of the proposal would do nothing new, according to a Monday article in the Kansas City Star.

Griffith said the proposal also probably will not change the workload of the Department of Revenue, which already deals with more than 80 categories of non-citizen driver licenses.

"Let's see what the legislation looks like and if it will, in effect, affect the department," he said.

Griffith said the driver license restrictions that took effect in 2005, called "Show Me Proof," were among the state's responses to the attack on the World Trade Center. He said he

Please See BLUNT, Page 7

### Who would Blunt's proposal affect?

- The estimated 35,000 to 65,000 illegal immigrants in the state of Missouri, who are already prohibited from obtaining driver licenses.
- Anyone who helps an illegal immigrant obtain a driver license would also be subject to prosecution.

## City OKs water, sewer rate rise

CHELSEY COLE  
for the Index

The Kirksville City Council approved a proposal Nov. 20 to raise the city's utility rates. The proposal increases both water and sewer service charge rates by \$5 each per month effective Jan. 1, 2008.

"It's a service availability fee for specific cost to be able to receive water to the meter," Kirksville Finance director Laura Guy said.

The cost to run the meter is high whether it is actually used or not, so the service charge applies to each connection, Guy said.

"We don't usually see more than two [connections], but some businesses will have more depending on the amount of their water usage," Guy said.

Guy said the city currently bills residents for a minimum fee of 300 cubic feet of water monthly.

"Now, on a monthly basis, if you use only a hundred cubic feet, you will still be billed for 300 cubic feet," Guy said.

In the future, the city plans to charge customers only for the cubic feet they use. This will create a loss of revenues, but the new charges will help balance that loss, she said.

She said the money also will be used to offset other costs such as current operations and debt services, like the loans the city obtained through the state.

The city started participating in a state revolving loan program in 1997 for sewer projects and in 2004 for water projects, Guy said.

"We just didn't have the cash to fund the multi-million dollar projects," Guy said.

The state offers a low-interest 20-year loan in the form of bonds that are backed by state revenues, Guy said.

"This is all an estimate, but the revenues will increase by \$295,000 for water, and on the sewer side, it will increase by about \$405,000," Guy said.

Tenants might see an increase in rental prices to cover the cost of service charge on units that include utilities in the monthly payment, Guy said.

"It will only affect one of our properties, but the cost of our coin-operated washers and dryers might increase," said Doug Porter, broker and realtor for Four Horizons Realty.

He said the price rise wouldn't be too significant for tenants because it would be just



Senior Mallory Buchner washes dishes in her apartment. The city has approved a proposal to increase water and sewer charge rates by \$5 each per month in 2008.

enough to cover the new costs.

"I don't think paying 10 extra dollars a month is going to hurt me, as long as the city is putting the money to good use," senior Mallory Buchner said.

Buchner said she currently pays for her own utilities and hopes the new funds will be used to pay for city projects like the water main construction.

"Even if I lived in a place where utilities were included in rent, the payment increase shouldn't be too extreme," Buchner said. "The money will be helpful."

Senior Ashley Blodgett said she isn't sure if she likes the new rate increase.

"I've had more problems with their billing system than anything," Blodgett said.

She said some of her water bills ended up at the wrong address and she never was notified of late pay until the utility company wanted to shut her water off.

"I think they need to get their payment system in order before they raise the prices," Blodgett said. "I understand the new amount is supposed to help the city, but I'd rather not pay it."



Arron Husted/for the Index

Senior J.R. Hladky donates canned food on Monday in exchange for excusing his library fines.

## Library forgives fines for food

BY ARRON HUSTEAD  
for the Index

Many food drives take place on campus this time of year, but only one provides a little extra incentive for those with library fines.

Food for Fines at Pickler Memorial Library does just that. By donating cans or boxes of food to the library's circulation desk from Nov. 26 to 30, people can have up to \$1 of fines forgiven per item. There is no limit to the amount of items that can be donated, but the program will not forgive fines that apply to lost or damaged items. The library only will forgive fines that are left from items that already have been returned.

"We thought it would definitely benefit the community," said Gayla McHenry, head of access services at the circulation desk. "There is a huge need in this area, especially this time of year for food drives. We felt we had something to offer as a way of bargaining, encourag-

ing people to participate."

McHenry said the library has used the program in the past, but not in the last 10 to 15 years.

"We wanted to do it last year, but we did not have time to get it approved by the University and to do the preparation and have it all organized," she said. "So, we made sure to get it approved ahead of time this year, have it organized, advertised, and ready to go."

The library chose to run the program from Nov. 26 to 30 so that it would be in between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"It was after Thanksgiving holiday, when all the students were going home," McHenry said. "We were hoping that they would have their parents buy food as most students come back with things from their parents. And before finals. We wanted that little window of opportunity there."

McHenry said she isn't sure what to expect from the program this year.

Please See FOOD, Page 7

## Citing personal issues, Mayer resigns

Mayor Martha Rowe says she also will not run for re-election

DIANE POELKER  
Assistant News Editor

Kirksville voters must fill an extra city council seat in April 2008.

City Council member Tom Mayer filed a letter of resignation at the council's annual budget meeting Nov. 20. Mayer, who

was elected in April 2007, said he will remain in his position until after the April 2008 city elections, during which voters will be asked to fill three council seats. Mayer said his decision to step down stems from personal issues, including a change in his employment situation.

"When I ran last year, I was much more the master of my own time — I was a salaried employee," Mayer said. "February of this year, [Academic Medicine Inc.] sold to a large corpora-

tion, and I immediately became an hourly employee. [Now] I have concerns of time."

Mayer said participation on the council demands more time than most people notice. In addition to attending council meetings and study sessions, participants must spend time studying pressing issues, participating in committees and attending public events, he said.

"Councilmembers should be available to the community in



Tom Mayer

### INSIDE | this issue

#### Terrible Tasers

Stun gun deaths irk columnist into arguing for change in policies



See Other Voices, Page 5

#### Park Place

University formulates plans for additional lots on south end of campus



See News, Page 2

#### Role Model

Hall director Zac Burden loves being part of the Truman community



See TruLife, Page 10

#### WEATHER

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Showers
High 45 Low 30	High 41 Low 23	High 37 Low 35