

OUR VIEW

Bottled water dries up valuable resources

Let's play a game. You are facing two toll bridges that both get you to your destination, and you have to pass over one every day. The toll for the first bridge is one-twentieth of one cent.

The toll for the second, more scenic bridge, which will save you five minutes, is more than two dollars. In a year, that's 18 cents vs. \$730. Which will you choose?

If you are like 54 percent of Americans, you're willing to fork over more than 4,000 times the cost of the toll to cross the second bridge.

Sound ludicrous? Take that idea and think about the water you drink: You could get more than 4,000 bottles of Kirksville tap water for the cost of one blue-tinted bottle of Dasani or Deja Blue.

But tap water isn't cold, it doesn't come in convenient 22-ounce containers and — horror of horrors — to drink it, we'd have to operate a faucet to get our H₂O fix. In our instant-gratification culture, it's easy to get used to having everything we need in portable, plastic packages. And we're ready to shell out big bucks to get things that way.

But that capability doesn't stretch across the globe. We applaud Campus Christian Fellowship for its sponsorship of the Blood:Water Mission fundraiser (see story, page 16), which we hope will water a seedling of knowledge about the grave hardships of others.

Some Americans cite danger as their reason for drinking bottled water — they think tap water isn't verifiably safe. But in 2005 as part of a 20/20 special, microbiologist Aaron Margolin from the University of New Hampshire compared five bottled waters with tap water and found no difference in the levels of illness-causing bacteria. Other scientists have had

identical results, according to a 2005 ABCNews.com article. In addition, the Food and Drug Administration allows a low level of fecal matter in bottled waters, but the Environmental Protection Agency does not permit any human waste in tap water, according to a May 2007 article by the Environment News Service.

But if we can pay for the packaging and the purification and we find it easier to grab icy Aquafinas from our fridges rather than to refill cups with lukewarm water that tastes of minerals, why shouldn't we?

There are two reasons. In the short-term, can we really afford to feed — or rather, quench — this habit? What are we giving up in order to pay multinational corporations \$9.2 billion per year for something we can get virtually for free? The average college graduate carries \$19,000 in debts. If you forgo buying a bottle of Bulldogua every day during your time at Truman, you'd save more than \$2,000.

More importantly, in the long run, millions of tons of polyethylene terephthalate, an oil-derived plastic, are used every year to create all those disposable water bottles, and less than a quarter of the bottles are recycled. The exponentially growing use of natural resources such as oil is contributing to the weather patterns that intensify the droughts in places like Kenya, where some citizens already do not have consistent access to potable and portable water.

So let's recycle our one-time-use water bottles, invest in some more durable containers and rediscover our faucets.

Otherwise, we might never get to face those hypothetical toll bridges — there won't be anything running underneath them.

Let's recycle our water bottles, invest in some more durable containers and rediscover our faucets.

CORRECTIONS

- The men's soccer team record is 1-6 against the top 10 teams in its region and 6-7-1 overall in its region. The sports staff regrets the error and any confusion as a result.

UP UP AND AWAY



Letters to the Editor

Atkinson's column about publicity for Homecoming misses evidence

In response to Nathan Atkinson's column in the Nov. 1 issue of the Index, a lot of publicity might not occur on campus about the alumni activities during Homecoming, but these events do occur. Even then, posters appeared throughout campus that included student and alumni activities. Alumni are notified through mailings about the various activities, such as a golf tournament, a 5K race, a tailgate picnic, reunion class luncheons, an alumni banquet and a mixer, that happen throughout the weekend.

The University even is working to include alumni who cannot attend Homecoming by showing the parade online. Even some of the student activities, such as lip sync, can appeal to alumni because of the tradition of these activities and alumni's former involvement. And activities such as the comedian and the step show Saturday night appeal both to alumni and students.

The Homecoming Committee, which is made up of about 12 students, has been working hard to make Homecoming more family-oriented in the past few years by including things like a chili cook-off in Red Barn Park that includes a children's corner with carnival-type games. Although it is difficult to know exactly how many alumni returned to campus, the Office of Alumni and Development estimates a couple thousand, with the largest events being free donuts and coffee during the parade, where they served 400 to 500 people, and the Alumni and Friends Banquet on Friday night, which had almost 300 attendees.

Both the Office of Alumni and Development and the Homecoming Committee always are looking for ways to improve Homecoming and are welcome to suggestions. Aside from events sponsored by these two groups, fraternities and sororities also host alumni events such as barbecues and mixers. The alumni who return to Kirksville know that Homecoming offers much more to alumni than a parade and a football game.

To see a full list of the activities that occurred, go to: http://alumni.truman.edu/Homecoming2007/H07_Schedule.asp.

Rachel Nobel
Graduate Student

Greek life at Truman discriminates, is antithetical to University ideal

I read with amazement Ellie Glenn's self-aggrandizing letter on the state of discrimination toward the Greek community at Truman. To speak plainly, I intend in this letter deliberately to offend Greek life.

To begin with, Greek life is antithetical to the model of the University. The University is a place where the inquiring, individual mind is free to make good-faith academic inquiry. Implicit in this experience is, of course, a social dynamic — one hopes students would seek companionship upon their intellectual journeys. However, when one introduces an inherently discriminatory, superficial and artificial aspect to this dynamic, the wholesomeness of the results becomes dubious.

It is farcical that Glenn would attack perceived discrimination when the groups she speaks on behalf of are inherently discriminatory in theory and practice. The theory of the fraternity or sorority, as I understand it, is to separate the "brothers" or "sisters" from the teeming masses — implicitly stating that the Sigma Kappas, or any other Greek organization members, are better than other people and more worthy of their members' time.

Furthermore, I bring Glenn's attention to the actions of the chapter of the Delta Zeta sorority at DePauw University (Ind.). The sorority evicted some 23 members supposedly because they were deemed not devoted enough to the sorority, according to the New York Times.

In reality, these 23 members represented every overweight and minority member of the chapter — philanthropic indeed. Even if the women in question were evicted because of lack of devotion, that mindset illustrates a general pack-mentality that is typical of the Greek community, which again flies in the face of the free nature of the University.

Granted, nothing on as flagrant a scale as this has happened on campus — at least as far as we know because the Greek system is notable for its ridiculous secrecy. Nevertheless, this is symptomatic of a larger Greek problem. Whatever service a fraternity or sorority has rendered to the University or the community at-large (which Glenn implicitly demands thanks for) is tainted by the discriminatory nature of Greek life.

What Glenn refers to as a lack of open-mindedness on the part of students in the humanities is, in reality, a dislike of the closed-mindedness that the Greek community perpetuates. Nobody denies Greek organization members their right to group themselves as they do. However, they possess no stable moral ground upon which to browbeat the rest of us for discrimination.

Perhaps the dissatisfaction Glenn exhibits actually is indignant surprise at not being treated with the sacrosanct respect that she might think she deserves by being a member of a Greek organization — although I admit that is just speculation on my part.

Robert Topping
Sophomore

McDermott's column about Plan B makes "false claims," skews facts

Brenna McDermott's column in the Nov. 1 issue of the Index about the morning-after pill offers a valid perspective, but the ideas and facts behind it are skewed severely.

In her column, McDermott claims that "Plan B will not abort the pregnancy." What she fails to mention is what her definition of "pregnancy" actually is. Pregnancy is defined as a fertilized egg being implanted in the uterus, not the egg being first fertilized, but if you ask any legitimate biologist, he or she will tell you that life begins at fertilization.

The first purpose of the pill is to prevent ovulation and the fertilization of the egg. But also it should be noted that if those events still occur, the pill goes on to create a chemical environment that makes it impossible

for the fertilized egg to attach to the uterine wall, ultimately killing that fertilized egg. The only difference between Plan B and an abortifacient is whose definition you choose to use.

McDermott makes several false claims and insinuations in her article that are, frankly, laughable. She claims that the availability of Plan B potentially could reduce the number of American abortions.

What she doesn't mention is that we have a precedent with which we can compare that idea. After Britain made the morning-after pill available over-the-counter, the abortion rate actually rose instead of falling as had been predicted, according to an editorial in the British Medical Journal. I think a concrete historical example is a bit more credible than a hypothetical situation.

McDermott tries to take the middle-ground by warning women about abusing the drug and saying that it shouldn't be as readily available as vitamins. However, her underlying idea that unrealistic, holier-than-thou hypocrites lead opposition to Plan B and that the users of Plan B only have made innocent mistakes is terribly flawed.

Unprotected sex is not an unintentional stroke of a pencil to be erased quickly without a thought. In the majority of cases, a person, knowing all the possible results and consequences, chooses to engage in sex, protected or not. They know, or should know, that condoms sometimes break and that contraceptives are not 100 percent effective, and they choose to engage in sex anyway. If you want choice, choose whether to have sex. If people decide they are mature enough to engage in sex, then they should be mature enough to accept all the possible consequences of that choice — whether they include an STI or a pregnancy.

That's called responsibility, and that's called being an adult. Plan B only enables our already consequence-free lives, but this time the consequence is not a smudge on a piece of paper, it's the death of what would be your future child.

Don't be misled!

Sean Cooksey
Freshman

Editor's Note:

Anna Glasier, in her editorial about emergency contraception for the Sept. 16, 2005, issue of the British Medical Journal that is cited in the previous letter, argues "If you are looking for an intervention that will reduce abortion rates, emergency contraception may not be the solution, and perhaps you should concentrate most on encouraging people to use contraception before or during sex, not after it." Glasier also cites a study by R.K. Jones, J.E. Darroch and S.K. Henshaw of the Alan Guttmacher Institute that suggests that increased use of emergency contraceptive pills could further reduce levels of unintended pregnancy and abortion and that as many as 51,000 abortions were prevented by the use of emergency contraception in the United States in the year 2000.

Daniel Glossenger
Index Opinions Editor

INDEX

Serving the University community since 1909

Staff

Managing Editor Jessie Gasch	Editor in Chief Nathan Becker	Opinions Editor Daniel Glossenger
News Editor Julie Williams	Features Editor Laura Prather	Sports Editor Joe Barker
Assistant News Editors Chris Boning Diane Poelker	Assistant Features Editor Jessica Rapp	Assistant Sports Editor Blake Toppmeyer
News Staff Bonnie Birdsell Mariah Bohanon Caitlin Dean John Fleming Julia Hansen Shelby Higginbotham Jean Kaul	Features Staff Jennifer Calandra Franklin Cline Mark Couch Kara Savage Abbey Snyder Valerie Spencer Jonathan Stutte	Sports Staff Brent Foster Kyle Magee Jack Nicholl Shawn Shinneman Ryan Turner Ben Yarnell
Online Editor Kai Schaller	Photo Editor Jackson Groves	Copy Chief Megan Kleo
Design Chief Nick Wilsey	Assistant Photo Editor Jason Williams	Copy Editors Bradley Bartlett Alex Boles Matt Butler Amanda Jackson Kelsey Landhuis Zoe Martin Megan Mills Sadye Scott-Hainchek Kelly Shute Nate Sullivan
Designers Dylan Herx Erin Eisenbath Andrea Bailey	Photographers Mark Hardy Phil Jarrett Adam Kabins Rachel Tharp Chris Waller	
Cartoonists Shaun Gaynor Ellis Ray		
Advertising Manager Chris Vernaci	Advertising Staff Adam Arredondo Christen Gates Kelley Hulse Tina May Arielle Morris	Business Manager and Collections Agent Ryan Saffer
Assistant Advertising Manager Ashley Hancock		Distribution Aaron Ely Kyle Oesch
Adviser Don Krause	Circulation Manager Justin Dildine	

Editorial and 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 or on our Web site at 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.

The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, 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.

WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE INDEX

50 years ago
Nov. 6, 1957
Vol. 49, Issue 25

Kirksville began its one-way street system Nov. 4, 1957, with the purpose of alleviating traffic congestion on the Square.

20 years ago
Nov. 5, 1987
Vol. 79, Issue 10

Students attempted to break the world record for number of participants in a single game of Twister in Pershing Arena. Unfortunately, students came up short of the record of 4,160 people with only 1,710 participants.

10 years ago
Nov. 6, 1997
Vol. 89, Issue 11

A new gas station in the area created competition that drove down prices for a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline to less than \$1.