

OUR VIEW

Voters need to show up at polls Nov. 4

If the horse is dead, we don't want to beat it. You've heard about the importance of voting about 8,000 times since the beginning of election season: Voting is your right. Voting is your civic duty. Blah, blah, blah.

You get the point. However, we want to point out that when you go to the polls Nov. 4 — less than a week from now — you will not just be voting for the next President of the United States. You also will be voting on numerous other state government offices and issues that might even have a more immediate effect on

outside in the cold to smoke your cigarette.

Granted, voting for president is an important duty that has the potential to have a real, significant impact on the outcome of the election. Given the extremely narrow margin of victory for the winner of the presidential race in 2000 and 2004, the cliché "every vote counts" rings true this time around. Polls can be deceiving — whether your candidate seems to have the election in the bag or seems too far behind to catch up, complacency is not an option. No poll has placed the state of Missouri within the

Even if neither presidential candidate trips your trigger, it's important to show up on Election Day.

grasp of either candidate, which makes it that much more important for you to cast your vote.

There has been a lot of buzz about the youth vote during this election season, mixed with a fair amount of skepticism about whether young people actually will show up at the polls. That's because in the past, political enthusiasm among America's youth hasn't translated into votes. This year, it's time to put your ballot where your mouth is. Don't let the skeptics say "I told you so," when the post-election statistics reveal yet another dismal turnout among youth voters. We're tired of being the butt of all the jokes.

Nov. 4 will be here before you know it. Schedule a time to vote. Don't make excuses: Sleep, studying and even class (although you didn't hear that last one from us) aren't as important as deciding the future of your country, your state and your county.

Plus, you get to walk around for the rest of the day wearing one of those sweet "I voted" stickers.

Missouri voters will be choosing their next governor, as well as representatives for both the State House of Representatives and Senate. Also on the ballot are several initiatives that will directly affect you as a Missouri resident and a taxpaying citizen. It's your civic duty to research these issues and vote on the ones that matter to you. If you forfeit your right to vote, you also forfeit your right to complain when you don't like the results.

Take, for example, the smoking ban. Say you don't like it because you're a smoker or because it's been bad for business. Unfortunately for you, the reason it exists is because two years ago, Kirksville residents voted it into law. Did you vote? If not, sorry, you don't get to whine about having to stand

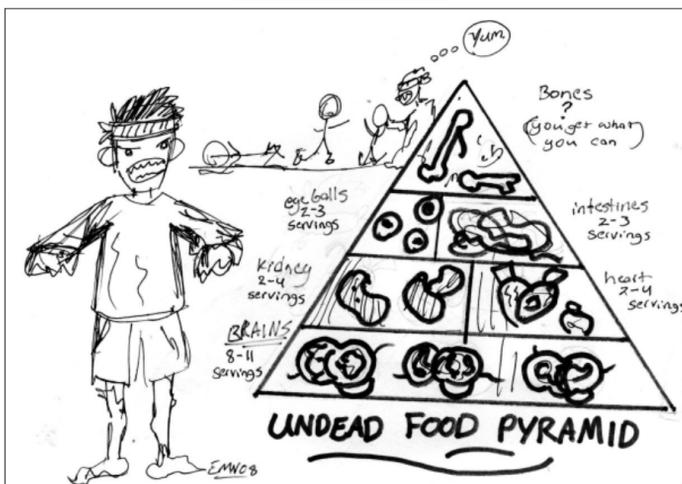
CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail 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 story on page 1 of the Oct. 30 issue of the Index contained a paragraph in which the names of the candidates for Adair County Sheriff were switched. The sentence should read, "Clark said he handled the situation properly by bringing in outside agencies to judge the situation. Hardwick disagreed with Clark's approach and said he would request a team from Jefferson City rather than men who worked with the department on a daily or weekly basis."
- A graphic and story on page 1 of the Oct. 30 issue of the Index identified Steve Salt as a candidate for first district commissioner. He is running for second district commissioner.
- A story on page 15 of the Oct. 30 issue of the Index misspelled the name of senior De Crockett.

CARTOON

BY ERIN NEUMAN



Letters to the Editor

Student athletic assistants get respect for hard work

I want to say kudos to Blake Toppmeyer for recognizing the value of students who contribute to athletics without playing in games. These young people contribute greatly to our athletic program and do the work of graduate students at other institutions. Truman is unique in that it does not have any graduate assistant positions in its athletic program unlike all other institutions in Missouri, including our conference, that have multiple graduate assistant positions in intercollegiate athletics.

For example, these other institutions (Northwest, Central, etc.) have four graduate assistants in football, one each in men's and women's basketball, one in volleyball, one or more in athletic training, etc. Without the dedication of our undergraduate students like Keith Alberti, De Crockett and many more, our coaching staff and student athletes would not get the same experience they currently receive. I really appreciate that Toppmeyer took the time to do this story to recognize their efforts and contribution.

Go Bulldogs!!

Jerry Wollmering
Director of Athletics

Proposition A cheats schools out of funds

Those in favor of Missouri Proposition A, the so-called "Schools First Initiative," have launched an aggressive ad campaign that I hope will not deceive voters. This law will repeal Missouri's \$500 gambling loss limit and promises supposed funds to our public school districts. However, because writers used an outdated formula, more than 100 of Missouri's 524 districts are excluded. More than 27 percent of our students will see no benefit from the exploitation of gamblers.

Prop A hurts every district in Missouri. When any of us asks for money in the next few years, voters will ask, "Didn't we just give you money? Why should I vote to approve this bond issue or tax increase?" Voters won't remember who got money and who didn't. Missouri's legislature may vote no on an initiative to increase the education budget by \$125 million if this passes. We don't know how much money the end of the loss limit will actually generate, and their best — and likely inflated — guess is only \$100 million. I'm no math major, but I know that's \$25 million less than what the state will guarantee 100 percent of districts — rather than the casinos' promise to only 73 percent of Missouri students.

In 1994, casinos tricked Missouri voters into approving the use of bonds that they would fund schools. Schools have yet to see a single penny of that money because the law also created a loophole in which the state funnels that exact amount of money back out of the education budget every year. There's no reason to think that casinos won't cheat us again, and even if this money somehow gets to the lucky few schools, it will be unfairly distributed. Please conduct some research before voting, and make the right decision. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Kansas City Star and Joplin Globe have all endorsed a NO position on Proposition A. A "no" vote on Prop A is a "yes" vote to protecting those with an addiction to gambling and a fair way to fund our schools.

Laura Trieschmann
Alumna

Gubernatorial campaigns prove disappointing

Before Missouri gubernatorial campaigning got rolling, I thought my state had two very solid candidates. Jay Nixon has done an admirable job as Attorney General, especially with respect to freedom of information and the First Amendment. And Kenny Hulshof has been an excellent representative — I've met him three different times, and he's always seemed like a smart, understanding and well-intentioned guy.

But now that I've seen these two campaigns run their courses, I'm disappointed in both candidates. If you go to either of their Web sites, numerous digs on the other candidate litter the page — in some cases, shots are more prevalent than positive facts about the candidate whose site it is. TV ads have become so accusatory I can hardly tell who the commercial actually is in favor of.

In 2006, Hulshof mentioned to me, a working student journalist at the time, that he was proud he and his then-challenger Duane Burghard had run clean campaigns.

Hulshof told me at the time: "I think a lot of candidates choose [the path of] ... 'We're going to punch back and counterpunch,' and what happens then is it seems to be, sort of, spiraling out of control in a negative way. ... It was a conscious choice, at least on our part, and I think echoed by others: Let's stay focused on issues and not get down and dirty like some of the others."

Nixon's and Hulshof's ads definitely are spiraling out of control. News flash for politicians: When real people go into job interviews, they present themselves in the best possible light for their potential employers — they don't try to slam their competition. Hammering on each other is pointless. No one wants to hear it, and we're all tired of it by the time we're casting our votes. If you're Kenny Hulshof, I want you to tell me about Kenny, not Jay. This is your job interview, and Missourians are your employers.

It would be refreshing to see either Nixon or Hulshof take a stand and be the bigger man rather than perpetuating the cycle of idiocy.

Unfortunately, I think we'll see more of the same until election night.

Nathan Becker
Alumnus

Van Vleck reveals true character in online posts

I've spent the last few days listening to the unceasing attacks and smears on Rebecca McClanahan. Although I do not agree with McClanahan on every issue, I've met her and value her hard work. In addition, I have serious concerns about her opponent.

In a simple Internet search of Thom Van Vleck it is easy to find the abundant supply of reasons Van Vleck himself gives on why he would be a poor representative for our community. Van Vleck is no stranger to a number of Internet forums, many of which relate to his involvement in highland game events.

Van Vleck has made thousands of posts, some of which should seriously concern the voters of House District 2. Last spring, Van Vleck described some alarming facts about his past. He admits he had been arrested twice but got off "with a lawyer" even though "the honest truth was, [he] was guilty." (<http://kcstrongman.yuku.com/reply/33841/t/10-things-you-didn-t-know.html#reply-33841>)

Van Vleck freely acknowledges his short temper that one time drove him to "[grab] an ax/maul and [destroy] a

shed." (<http://kcstrongman.yuku.com/reply/33841/t/10-things-you-didn-t-know.html#reply-33841>)

I think elected officials require not just a set of policy beliefs but a certain temperament that won't keep them from getting so hotheaded they cannot work with others, especially those of other parties.

Perhaps the most frightening fact found online about Van Vleck is that he is complicit in his weightlifting colleagues' use of steroids. Van Vleck acknowledges more than once that "there were guys [he] was training with that were using [steroids]"

(<http://kcstrongman.yuku.com/reply/18421#reply-18421>)

I think in the next few days before the election, Kirksville voters should take an in-depth look at the candidates up for election. I think most people would agree that the negative ads flooding our airwaves are deceptive. I encourage everyone to do what I did and research everything you can yourself and pick the best person for the job. Voters should not only pick the candidate who represents what they want for the future of Missouri, but also the one who they know will listen to their concerns and act to remedy them in an honorable and responsible manner. That is why I am voting for Rebecca McClanahan.

Peter Johnson
Freshman

Truman community should shake off apathy

Contrary to last week's dreadful letter from the local College Republicans, which seemed to relish in encouragement of student apathy in order to get in their chauvinist opinion of State Representative Rebecca McClanahan, I deplore all apathy. I wish to spotlight it as an unfortunately growing problem that simply has to be shaken off if you really do cherish a practical belief in active, engaged liberal arts education.

This attitude forcefully was brought home to me last week as a Midwesterner affliction on the so-called left as much as on the wannabe state house staffers of the College Republican right. Here is the complaint, TSU apathetics: Amnesty International — once capable of drawing crowds of 500 to events — was rescued at its first meeting by two-thirds of its new members being overseas students and high school affiliates.

As a foreigner myself, I say there is nothing wrong with this massive Asian and Scandinavian expertise to draw upon. But come on, you self-styled talk-only Midwestern radicals and liberals! Where were you as we ferociously blitzkrieged in advance of the meeting, me even sidewalk chalking in spite of my disabled arm?

In this town we do have an apathy problem, and it is not just the dying local Republican party's loss. I tell those using an Obama or McClanahan victory as an excuse for not lifting your Midwestern butts to do more. In his book "Inside the Cabinet," economist Robert Reich stated that the reason he and Senator-to-be Hillary Clinton could never get President Clinton to back her universal health care program was because "no one from the left wrote in letters of support or held endorsement rallies out there in real towns and campuses" the way the other, "do-nothing" side did.

Apathetics of the left, you have been forewarned.

Larry Iles
Kirksville resident

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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.

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