

**TURF** | Track resurfacing project may have to wait until 2009 because of colder temperatures, ground under turf deemed unsatisfactory

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warm and only after the penultimate polyurethane layer has cured for 14 days, Cochrane said. If it gets too cold, the layer won't take and the process would have to be repeated.

"That part of the track, they can get the asphalt done, but the rest of it can't ever be finished until it gets warm in the spring, which will probably be somewhere in April," Cochrane said.

Campus planner Lori Shook said she was unsure when the section of the track would be replaced. With temperatures dropping daily, the last layer might not be able to be applied until 2009.

"It will be weather-dependent," Shook said. "The track surface can't be laid in certain temperatures, so we have to work with that."

The layer could be applied as soon as possible, at a price. Budget director Dave Rector said it would be possible to cover the area with a tent, install heaters and have someone monitor the track to ensure that it dries.

When the section eventually gets replaced the track still won't be at 100 percent. Cochrane said the track underwent less obvious damages. The east curve of the track, opposite from the missing section, buckled in places after the city of Kirksville removed a pipe that was under the field.

"The city came in to replace a sewer pipe, and they went to pull an eight-inch pipe through another eight-inch pipe and buckled the track," Cochrane said. "It buckled the earth under that asphalt and all the way across the high jump area — right in the middle of where we jump — across the track all the way to the wall."

Cochrane said the city fixed this problem by using a roller to flatten the area, but this caused the asphalt base to break. Cochrane said the triple jump on the north side is unusable as well. The pole vault runway also was damaged by construction work.

The damages already have claimed the annual Truman

Open in the spring. For the first time in 11 seasons, the track team won't have a home meet.

Practice habits also have been affected. The cross-country teams usually run around Kirksville but occasionally work on the track during the fall season. This year, they haven't been able to do that. Cochrane said if the last polyurethane layer isn't put on, it would be tough for his longer distance runners to run on finished track to an unfinished track.

The team has practiced at Kirksville High School, but because of NCAA rules, it has to make sure no high school student athletes are also there, forcing some early morning workouts.

"It's been an interesting year," Cochrane said. "We've adapted some things ... but it isn't fun right now."

Despite having to change his routine, Cochrane said he doesn't regret the field project.

"The drainage needed to be done, and I have no problem with the turf field," he said.

**FIELD**

Truman football was scheduled to break in its new turf this year with an unprecedented seven home contests. The number was cut down to six after the field wasn't ready by opening day, and the Bulldogs had to move the season's first two games to neutral sites. Ultimately, the first game was postponed because of inclement weather and will be played Nov. 15 at Stokes.

Once the last down of that game is played, Shook said the turf will be removed.

"More than likely it will [be removed] — [the grading is] not good enough," Shook said.

The ground under the field is uneven. After the first game, players complained about sinkholes, notably on the visiting sideline.

"I've been on all the other fields in the conference except Washburn's, and they don't have waves," Cochrane said. "It's not supposed to be that way."

Shook said that once the season is over, the regrading of the field could commence.

Wollmering said there are no plans to replace the whole field — the actual turf, AstroTurf GameDay Grass 3D, has worked out fine — and that crews could fix problems under the artificial grass by rolling up sections of the turf, working on the ground and then rolling the turf back. Wollmering said he has received numerous compliments about the appearance of the field.

Many of the problems with both the field and the track can be traced back to the installation of a new drainage system, Wollmering said. The drainage system under the field was old and in need of replacement. The field already was being worked on, campus planners sought to kill two birds with one stone — redo the drainage system and reroute it from under the field.

The giant pipes that stretch from Florence St. to the parking lot beyond the West end zone took several weeks to install and still were being placed underground when the Bulldogs were scheduled to kick off their season.

Wollmering said he didn't expect all the headaches that have accompanied the project.

"All around the country, people are putting turf fields inside of tracks, even in our conference," he said. "... The difference in our project was the storm sewer draining system. Most fields do not have a storm sewer system running underneath. If we didn't have that, tearing up the track wouldn't have been an issue."

Despite all the problems, Wollmering said he does not regret the decision to move away from real grass to fake grass.

"It's still a great benefit," he said.

**MONEY**

In April of this year, the Board of Governors unanimously approved the Stokes Stadium Turf Replacement project. The old grass field would be removed and replaced with a new synthetic surface and the drainage system underneath the field replaced. Most of the money for the field would come from the



**Amy Gleaves/Index**  
Members of the Bulldog track team work out with medicine balls near the recently asphalted section of the track. The track was damaged during summer construction.

Student Athletic Fee. Rector said the money for the drainage system and the rest of the tab were to be picked up by general funding.

Head football coach Shannon Currier and Wollmering prepared a list of acceptable synthetic surfaces, and the University sought bids from the companies that the duo researched. GeneralSports Venue, makers AstroTurf GameDay Grass 3D, submitted the lowest bid and were selected to remake the Stokes field. Previously the company has provided turf for several Div. I universities and the NFL's Buffalo Bills. GSV then hired subcontractors to do the actual work.

Rector said that so far the University has been billed and paid nearly \$500,000. However, the next bill the University receives might not get

paid. For being late on several benchmarks agreed to in the contract, GSV incurred some penalties. Shook said the penalties will be worked out when all work is complete.

University general counsel Warren Wells said GSV will not send a refund check back to the University, but rather the two parties will reach an agreement on a new total with the penalties factored in.

"As they achieve certain milestones in the completion of the work, they submit requests for payments," Wells said. "So then the University has to determine whether to honor those requests. It's not a case of getting the money back, it's a case of whether you keep the money or you pay them."

Wells said that right now there is no ongoing litigation against GSV. He said one is possible in the future, but that

is often the case when dealing with situations like this.

"That's always a possibility when you have a dispute, but we hope to not have that happen," Wells said.

When the new total is reached, the University hasn't decided what to do with the money not spent on the project. It could go back into the Student Athletic Fee fund, or because general funds were used it could go back in that fund as well. Rector said that if it were up to him, it would go both ways.

"Any penalties, in my opinion, would first go to reimburse the funds used to move games out of town," Rector said. "... Beyond that, then it becomes a question because part of the money came from the [Student] Athletic Fee and part of it came from general University money."

**LOPEZ** | Former restaurant owner enters guilty plea

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ing to the plea agreement. As many as 70 of Lopez's employees fit that description during the last seven years, and Lopez is also known to have provided his sister Zoraida Lopez with improperly prepared work documents for her intimate partner Jesus Villalba Pedrosa. Lopez also continued to employ Villalba Pedrosa at El Vaquero knowing he was using a false Social Security number, according to the agreement.

Lopez originally was taken into custody April 11 after a federal grand jury issued indictments on counts of conspiracy to defraud the United States, aggravated identity theft, Social Security fraud and harboring illegal immigrants, according to the April 17 issue of the Index.

Assistant U.S. attorney Tracy Berry referred the Index to a spokesperson for the U.S. Attorney's office, who said Lopez's sentencing will take place Jan. 6, 2009, and that he has been released on an existing bond until then.

The maximum sentence for the count that Lopez is pleading guilty to is imprisonment of not more than five years, a fine of not more than \$250,000 or both, according to the agreement.

An El Vaquero manager said Tuesday that El Vaquero was closing, but declined to comment further. By Wednesday, "Closed" signs were posted on the restaurant's front doors.

Lopez also owned or operated restaurants in Mexico, Mo., Hannibal, Mo., St. Peters, Mo., and Wentzville, Mo. between Jan. 1, 2000 and Mar. 28, 2008, according to the plea agreement.

Bret Rich, an attorney based in Clayton, Mo., who is representing Lopez, could not be reached for comment.

**DEBATE** | Candidates for Missouri's 9th Congressional District discuss six issues Tuesday

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Next, the candidates discussed health care. Luetkemeyer advocated a private sector approach in which Congress helps employers find good health care programs for their employees. Baker said preventive health care measures should be taken and that the country needs a health care system rather than a "sick care" system. She later added that early cancer detection can save lives. Additionally, she advocated a program that would make mammograms free to women. The follow-up question regarded Congress' role in restrictions on CAFOs. Luetkemeyer said the federal government should not be involved in a state issue. Baker said CAFOs are another example of an area where preventive measures can be taken.

In discussing alternative energy, Baker said it is one of the most crucial issues of our time and that the economy needs to be based on alternative energy. She said alternative energy will create high-paying jobs, do the right thing for the environment and save money. Luetkemeyer also said alternative energy is a key issue and that the country needs to be energy-efficient. He said he supports an all-of-the-above approach in which all

alternatives are used simultaneously.

Next, the candidates were asked which presidential powers should be curtailed. Luetkemeyer said the president should have veto power, and Baker said the Patriot Act should be re-opened and examined to assess where it works and where it does not.

In discussing support of critical statements made in their own campaigns, Baker said her campaign made a pledge to stay positive as long as possible but had no choice but to change to more negative tactics. Luetkemeyer said he stands behind his campaign's advertisements and that those advertisements are based on facts. He said his campaign had one of Baker's ads pulled because of inaccuracy.

In the final segmented question, the candidates discussed what Congress should do regarding No Child Left Behind. Luetkemeyer said NCLB has laudable goals but prevents states from doing what they need to. He said the federal government should not be involved in edu-

cation and that local education is best. Baker said she hasn't found anyone who likes NCLB and that Congress should look at what works in the program and what does not. In the follow-up question, regarding the costs of higher education, Luetkemeyer said Congress should help students find scholarships to make college more affordable. Baker said Congress should better balance the budget to allow more Pell grants and student loans.

Finally, the candidates discussed Social Security and Medicare. Baker again mentioned that preventive measures should be taken and that Social Security should be secured. Luetkemeyer said privatization should be used to let individuals make choices and take their own responsibility.

Baker said the most important issues for college students in the election are the economy and the ability to ensure jobs for students after graduation. She said she has proposed the Made in America tax credit plan that would give companies a tax credit for every employee kept in the U.S.

"We need to make sure that we create jobs here at home," she said. "It is not going to be pretty if we continue to bleed jobs overseas. ... [We need to] incentivize companies to keep jobs here at home."

Luetkemeyer said it is important to get the economy back on track so jobs and opportunities will be available when students finish school. He said he has a Jobs and Security Now plan for Missouri with different options for jobs and economic and national security with regards to energy.

"Those things are all related," he said. "We don't want to increase taxes. That's a regressive way of going about trying to improve our economy."

Luetkemeyer said he was happy with the opportunity to debate Tuesday.

"When you go into a debate like this, you want to contrast yourself," he said. "And let people know what the differences are, why you're running, what kind of vision you have for our country, what things you think you can do better or make better, improve peoples' lives, be able to improve our country as a whole. I think we were able to get those points across. Obviously it's up to the electorate to make the decision of whether they agree or disagree with what I said or agree or disagree with my opponent."

**"When you go into a debate like this, you want to contrast yourself."**

**Blanie Luetkemeyer**  
Republican Candidate for Missouri 9th Congressional District Representative

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