

OUR VIEW

Students deserve true on-campus housing

When you sign up for on-campus housing, you have certain expectations about what it will be like: the loud music blaring from the room next door, the late night movies with your housemates in the lounge, the constant flurry of activity.

Oh, and you also expect to actually be living in on-campus housing. However, thanks to the large number of students who chose that option, eight students who elected to live on campus currently are staying not in a residence hall, but in the former Child Development Center, newly christened the West Campus Annex (see story, page 2). Although the students living in this complex pay less for housing and have larger rooms than they would if they lived in a residence hall, we would like to point out that the experience of living in a converted day care center with seven other people is not equivalent to living in actual on-campus housing with a community of several hundred. Housing students at this annex is inconvenient and impractical, and we encourage Residence Life to secure alternative placements for the students staying there who would like to relocate to a residence hall.

We realize that coordinating on-campus housing is a complex process that is even more difficult because of ongoing residence hall renovations. Residence Life staff have to deal with squatters, upperclassmen, transfer students, international students and freshmen who are competing for prime real estate. They must balance the number of available spots with the number of students who want to live on campus, and with one residence hall closing every year and a new one opening at reduced capacity, this presents quite a challenge.

Sometimes, the numbers just don't work out. But several options should have been considered before resorting to housing students in the Child Development Center.

Under normal circumstances, stu-

dent advisers have their own rooms, and other students have the option of buying out their rooms. This means that there definitely were far more than eight rooms on campus with only a single occupant, and Residence Life should have had no trouble placing the students now living in the West Campus Annex.

During the 2006-07 school year when Missouri Hall was undergoing renovations, student advisers were placed with roommates. Some SAs might be reluctant to give up the privilege of having their own room, but when presented with the option of dealing with the slight inconvenience of a roommate to save a student from living in a building that wasn't intended as housing, it's a safe bet that at least eight SAs would be willing to take on a boarder. Another possibility simply would be to remove the buyout option. Students who absolutely refused to have a roommate would move off campus, which also would solve the housing issue.

Either of these options would be far superior to turning the Child Development Center into what is essentially an even smaller, more intimate version of Grim Hall. The University funds that were spent in order to make the building suitable for habitation could have been put to far better use and the students who live in the Annex are deprived of basic on-campus facilities such as computer labs and laundry rooms.

It's not too late to correct the situation. Because the University already has spent the time and money to refurbish the Child Development Center, these efforts should not go to waste. The University easily could sell the building to a private investor: Given its proximity to campus, the Annex would be prime real estate for off-campus students. Continuing to operate this annex as University housing is a waste of resources and a disadvantage for students.

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.

- The web poll on page 5 of the Sept. 4 issue of the Index contained an incorrect number. The response "Truman has an alcohol policy?" received 23 votes, not 33. The percentage was correct.



Letters to the Editor

Columnist underestimates Palin's VP qualifications

When I asked the Editorial Board to come up with something more controversial, I didn't mean two anti-McCain rants, but that'll give me plenty to talk about. In particular, Brenna McDermott wrote a negative column about McCain's recent vice presidential selection. I think McDermott needs to look up other sources before writing opinion pieces because it sounds to me like she's quoting liberal blogs without getting the other side of the story. This is pretty obvious when McDermott repeats Internet talking points and when she says that she's angry Gov. Palin is the VP choice simply because someone on the Internet said "coldest state, hottest Governor" in reference to Palin. McDermott is right about one thing, though. When judging the candidates we need to look at the issues and their experiences that will help them run this country's government. Unfortunately, she ignores both and attacks Palin for being a beauty pageant runner up, while ignoring the fact that she has done a great job in Alaska as mayor of Wasilla and as governor, fighting corruption and taking on the tough issues of the day.

The sad thing is that Gov. Palin, the vice presidential nominee on the Republican ticket, is actually more qualified than Barack Obama, the Democrat's presidential nominee. Palin served on her city council while Obama was a community organizer. She was Mayor from 1996 to 2002, while Obama was a state senator from 1997 to 2004. She chaired the Alaska Oil & Gas Conservation Committee while he ran for Senate. During the past two years, she's gained valuable executive experience as governor while Obama campaigned for the presidency. All Obama has done during this time is organize protests and campaign for the next position, while supporting the typical liberal agenda without taking on any issues that might lose him votes. He hasn't passed any significant legislation while serving as a legislator in his state or in the Senate.

Furthermore, Obama lacks the type of leadership experience that Palin gained while creating a budget surplus, fighting wasteful

spending and taking on corruption within her own party. McDermott ignores all these facts while saying that John McCain, who is in great health, might die after becoming president. No one has to die, however, for Obama to be president if his ticket is elected, and as I've already mentioned, he has less experience than Palin. As CNN pointed out, if Obama engages Palin in a debate about experience, McCain wins.

Justin Logan
Junior

Kirksville landlords take advantage of students

The landlords of Kirksville should be ashamed of themselves. Although there might be some good landlords out there, it seems that nearly every student I speak to has been mistreated or swindled by their landlord in some way. Most recently, it has come to my attention that many landlords are failing to return the housing deposits made on properties that were vacated in May or August. Not only is it not right that landlords are withholding the deposits for no reason, it is illegal. Truman students who live off campus should be more aware of their rights as renters.

Landlords are required by Missouri Statute 535.300(2) to return either the full deposit or a written statement that shows the specific reasons for keeping a deposit within 30 days of the renter vacating the property. If neither of these is returned, renters have the right to sue their landlord not only for the portion of the deposit withheld, but as a penalty, an amount equal to that withheld, according to Missouri Statute 535.300(5). It is wrong for landlords to keep students' money simply because they think we won't take action. And it is wrong for students to let this problem continue. You can find out more about your rights to the security deposit at <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C500-599/5350000300.htm> and a template document to send to your landlord at <http://stlouis.missouri.org/501e/hcf/security1.htm>.

Abbey Snyder
Graduate Student

Alcohol consumption isn't a problem at Truman

I want to start by saying that Zach Vicars is completely entitled to his viewpoints on drinking (underage or otherwise) and that I am sorry that he had a bad experience during Truman Week. However, other people also are entitled to do what they please with their bodies and their time. If certain Truman students decide that the week before classes they want to go out for a beer or get trashed or anything in between, then that is their prerogative.

Generalizations can be dangerous ground, and Vicars' column is not short on them. Making comments about all or most Truman students going out and getting black-out drunk is a completely inaccurate statement, and as he mentions in his column, he didn't go out to the parties, so he only knows what might have happened through hearsay. Also, if Vicars wants to judge his whole Truman experience based on Truman Week, the first week freshmen are on campus and the week that upperclassmen have no immediate responsibilities, then that is his right. But I think I would wait a semester before making any judgments, especially before claiming that alcohol has become the "culture of this campus."

After being here four wonderful years, I know Truman isn't a place where all people do is drink, like Vicars claims. I always was under the impression that Truman was where the smart kids went to get over-worked and feel inadequate. Man, have I been missing out.

I am happy to hear that Vicars found organizations that know "how to have a good time without damaging their brain cells," but I'd like to reiterate that for some people, drinking is fun, and the last time I checked people were allowed to have fun. Those drunkards at dilapidated frat houses that Vicars describes sure aren't hurting anyone, so I say let them have a good time.

Maybe I should add at this point that I, in fact, didn't go out once this Truman Week. Yes, I enjoyed a couple of legal-aged beers, but no keggers for me — and I am not a member of any Christian organizations. I guess judging by Vicars' standards, I am an exception to the rule, but I beg to differ.

Shahr Rezaiekhaligh
Senior

INDEX

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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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What was going on in the INDEX?

5 years ago – September 11, 2003

Two Truman students apprehended a man after they saw him peeping into the windows of the Water Works Apartments.

20 years ago – September 15, 1988

Professor of history Walter H. Ryle IV began his duties as president of the Missouri Intercollegiate Athletic Association.