

## Head to Head: Planned Parenthood closes

### Closing cause for celebration



Zach Vicars

As most readers of this column already know, the Kirksville Planned Parenthood will close its doors in November (see story, Page 1). As a columnist coming from a Christian, conservative, pro-life perspective, I am greatly tempted to use the next 700 words to gloat. However, as I was preparing to write this column, I realized that I have no reason to boast.

For you see, the closure of Planned Parenthood isn't a vindication for my viewpoint or for conservative ideology. No, the closure of Planned Parenthood is but one example of the triumph of life over death, something that all of us should be able to celebrate.

First of all, I would like to make it clear that, although the Kirksville Planned Parenthood does not administer abortions or give out abortion pills, it is very much a pro-choice facility. If you go to their Web site, you will find that abortion referral is first on their list of services. They also express the wish to "help" women get an abortion and offer Plan-B medications over the counter, which many gynecologists consider an abortifacient.

Further, the clinic mentions

nothing on their Web site about the detrimental effects of abortion. They in no way address the profound moral dilemma involved with terminating the existence of a zygote, embryo, fetus, baby or whatever you want to call it, that is genetically 100 percent human. They do not provide anti-abortion education or mention a very real health concern called PAS — Post Abortion Syndrome. They do not tell women that, according to mortality research by the Finnish government, abortion is more dangerous to one's health than childbirth, and women who have an abortion are seven times more likely to commit suicide than women who carry a full pregnancy (afterabortion.org).

Instead, they advocate "choice" and keep the deadly cycle of abortion going.

But why is the local Planned Parenthood shutting down? Well, according to Director Lisa Ecsi-Davis, Planned Parenthood did not have the proper number of nurse practitioners or the donation revenue to stay open. She also said that because of "market share" reasons, there is no longer a need for Planned Parenthood in this area. It is evident, then, that Planned Parenthood no longer has a place in Kirksville.

I'd imagine that if you're pro-choice, you can't find any reason to celebrate the demise of an abortion-advocating facility. But consider this: Hillary Clinton, a politician who has built her career on giving women the "right" to terminate their children, said she hopes abortions are "safe, legal and rare." Pro-choice citizens who share Sen. Clinton's goal

to see the number of abortions dwindle should be proud of Kirksville for taking this monumental step.

Although Planned Parenthood does have a long history of abortion advocacy, the clinic did offer more ethical services to the community. For instance, Planned Parenthood has been a ready supplier of birth control to prevent pregnancies and STIs, but it has not been the only supplier. Condoms are available at Wal-Mart for less than 50 cents each, and oral contraceptives are offered for as low as 14 dollars a month, even for uninsured women. Women who need sexual health screenings and exams can seek out Kirksville's highly competent OB/GYN, who my wife has seen in the past. One service that might no longer be available in the Kirksville area is emergency contraceptives. However, it saddens and disturbs me to think that self-respecting college students still rely on such a resource. If students cannot accept the responsibility of using protection or taking the pill, then sex should not be an option.

So although I'm sure most pro-choice readers don't yet share my joy in the closure of Planned Parenthood, I hope they can see that this could be a real step for Kirksville and for life in general.

Thank you, Kirksville, for choosing life.

*Zach Vicars is a sophomore physics major from St. Louis, Mo.*

### Community losing an asset



Alex Boles

I thought Planned Parenthoods were like McDonald's: if the town is big enough for a Wal-Mart, it gets one. Unfortunately — for some — Kirksville's Planned Parenthood is closing its doors in November. Word on the street is that it's being forcibly closed because of lack of funds (see story, Page 1).

The number of people in Kirksville who qualify for free healthcare provided by Planned Parenthood resources increased, resulting in a depletion of funds. The demand is high and people are utilizing the resource. I see the reasoning in closing the establishment. It's a little bothersome that more funding could not be allotted to Planned Parenthood when the numbers obviously show that it's needed. But there are other things we should be focusing on than just the seeming unfairness. We need to focus on what this Planned Parenthood offers, where we're now going to find those services in the community and why there was an increased need for sexual and reproductive education and care.

I understand that Planned Parenthood really is experiencing money and resource issues, and it's not surprising, with the current state of both the economy and health care, but I really think these services are needed in a college town no matter the size, and I think we should have done more as a community to keep it funded. We should have been informed that they were in need of money, so funds could have been raised or at least an effort mounted.

Planned Parenthood offers so many services in one. It will be disheartening to see an organization that offers so much go down with the rest of the companies that fell during these trying times. It's not that these services

cannot be found in other mediums. Your local Walgreens can provide females with monthly birth control and the Health Center can provide some of the services (although only by appointment now) along with local family physicians. It's not like the town is losing services that can't be replaced. It's just unfortunate that we couldn't maintain the place that provides all of them.

One in four American women has turned to Planned Parenthood for health care at least once in her lifetime, totaling about 30 million serviced since 1916, according to the Planned Parenthood Annual Report. Planned Parenthood is more than just a place to get free condoms and a pregnancy test or birth control. They have been educating people on sexual and reproductive health for years and have been an asset to communities.

So now more than ever, you need to think twice about your choice to participate in unprotected sex without the guarantee of free sexual health care and a free condom from your local Planned Parenthood. It might seem unfair that this organization is closing while the need is so high, but we need to take into consideration the type of institution that is closing and why the demand of its services was high. Does this mean that Kirksville residents are being more lax when they make the decision whether to practice safe sex? This is a giant wakeup call to those who were previously in need of the services Planned Parenthood provided. It was nice to be offered confidential sexual and reproductive health care, but we need to be more conscious of our decisions. The community's continued need for care was what eventually closed this establishment, and that's really unfortunate. In November, Kirksville's Planned Parenthood will close for business — hopefully it's message won't leave town with it.

*Alex Boles is a senior communication major from St. Louis, Mo.*

## AROUND THE QUAD

What is your favorite Kirksville landmark and why?



**"Rosie's, for the really great breakfast food."**

*Alan Weusthoff senior*



**"Thousand Hills, because it's fun to chill with friends outside."**

*Elizabeth Bledsoe junior*



**"Rainbow Basin, because it's fun to climb around and take pictures of."**

*Biscuit Ratliff senior*



**"The AKL house, because my brothers live there."**

*Frank Impellizzeri junior*

## Books create unnecessary costs for students



Toby Hausner

There are many financial strains that college students face today. They have tuition costs, rent, food expenses, fees for extracurricular activities, car repairs and random living costs that all compete for our precious dollars. For all the costs I am currently facing, there is not one that fills me with as much righteous indignation as that of school textbooks.

After reviewing my financial records over the past two years, I quickly realized what a fiscal foe the textbook machine has been to my wallet. I generally have ordered my books online through various discount sites. I ignorantly saw this as hundreds of dollars saved and turned a blind eye to the money I was still throwing away for 12 books in a given semester.

To articulate my point — I believe the system of buying books year after year is a system gone wrong. During Truman's financial scare last year, I remember hearing how the college would be forced to cut funds or fire faculty unless the students agreed to pay

more per credit hour. Knowing that this would be financially taxing on students, the administration looked to cut costs for students in other ways. One of the ways discussed was to have teachers assign fewer books, have more online readings and start using older editions of textbooks. To me, this would have been a perfect solution, but it was not implemented. Of all my classes this semester, only one has moved readings to Blackboard, with the other classes showing no shift in strategy at all. Perhaps the lack of change should be attributed to the reassurance given to the college not to worry about budget cuts in the upcoming year. When people are not forced to optimize, they rarely do.

I do not blame professors for the problem at hand, although they do hold power to alleviate some of our financial pain. I feel as if the system itself is flawed. Publishing companies are not forced to evolve or fail. They utilize a model very similar to that of American car industries, which are protected by subsidies and protectionist policies.

The Internet is a marvelous thing. I feel as if the disconnect some professors have with technology is our Achilles' heel. Blackboard can be a functional tool. Kindles can be purchased for \$299 and could be used as more affordable electronic portals to hold all of our textbooks. Truman and other schools should embrace technology, not reject it in order to keep a failing industry intact. While they

live in ignorance of these technological wonders, we have lost hundreds of dollars waiting for them to get on board.

In almost every profession we might venture into as post-graduates, the Internet and related technologies will be a dominant form of obtaining information. I simply would like to see our school, which claims to have quality education without unreasonable expenses as one of its main goals, embrace the technology already present and give us increased mobility in our education. The shift I am advocating does not directly benefit Truman, and would have an indirect negative effect on publication companies. Therefore it will not receive the support needed to push it through unless we college students, the people who benefit the most from a change stand up and express how important fixing this flawed system is to us.

No one likes forking over hundreds of dollars a semester when they don't have to. For some of us, textbook costs can become what amounts to a second rent. My hope is that we somehow can become mobilized and correct the system. I realize in many ways I am preaching to the choir, but I'm hoping that the choir director will take note.

*Toby Hausner is a junior political science major from Kansas City, Mo.*

## Wet tailgating promotes spirit



Shawn Shinneman

There is something magical about getting decked out in team apparel, gathering in a parking lot with fellow fans and sharing laughter, burgers and, of course, beer. Well, that just doesn't happen here at Truman, (see story, Page 1), and I have a strong suspicion that it is in large part due to the last integral tailgate ingredient.

Allowing wet tailgating on campus would be a huge step in putting the excitement back into Bulldog sports. Some might call that shallow, but I call it practical.

Let's face it, college students drink. They drink a lot. You know that T-shirt that reads, "80-some percent of Truman students do not drink alcohol regularly?" Yeah, nobody's buying it. The sample size is under 300 for those statistics. Sounds like a Saturday night dorm room questionnaire to me.

Skewed statistics aside, there are some reasons school administrators should consider the switch to wet tailgating. Attendance rates at home football games are often unimpressive. Last year, our Bulldogs played in front of fewer than 3,000 fans on average. The finale — a thrilling, double OT loss, mind you — was played in front of a measly 856 fans. Less than two weeks ago, Stokes catered to fewer than 2,000 on a clear, mid-70s Saturday afternoon.

Opening up campus parking lots for wet tailgating would instantly fill seats. That idea seems like a no-brainer to me. Tailgating is such

a unifying experience that it would do a lot to repair our often sub-par school spirit.

I've been to at least five football games at Stokes Stadium. Rarely have I stood for a substantial amount of time or gone ballistic on third-and-short. There are certainly the select Bulldog faithful who attempt to rouse the crowd, but even they often are met with minimal results. It isn't because fans are sober, it's because the enthusiasm for Truman athletics just isn't there.

Having the chance to experience Mizzou tailgating for the first time last season, I realized two things. First, that, good lord, there were more brat-filled faces within a quarter-mile radius than in all of Kirksville. But more importantly, that the sense of community and Tiger pride resonated from person to person, student to student, until all were chomping at the bit to go nuts for four quarters.

Obviously, Truman doesn't have the student body to put up the gaudy tailgate showing that is seen at Mizzou and other big-time Div. I schools. But team pride should not be confined to schools with future pros, and school spirit should not be left only to those attending huge universities.

For many years, athletics have been an afterthought at Truman. Sidewalk chalk around the quad is about as far as advertisements for games go, and the school rarely puts on a worthwhile promotion to bring in more fans. Wet tailgating would be a huge step by the administration to show they want to help turn around the students' apathy towards sporting events.

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