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OUR VIEW

University repairs worth the money

Times are tough. Americans everywhere are pinching pennies as we wait for the economy to recover. The economic downturn will directly affect the University next year, as Truman will endure a 5.2 percent state funding cut.

Even so, the Editorial Board is pleased that the University has not completely shut its pocketbook.

Last month, the University paid \$3,000 for parts and labor to fix the bell tower, and recently, plumbers from the Physical Plant worked to get the fountain running again. The Physical Plant also will replace any bricks around the fountain that require attention (see story, page 2).

As state universities nationwide endure funding cuts, spending still must occur in areas that will maintain the University and help draw in revenue.

Some might argue that the \$3,000 to fix the bell tower and the cost to repair the fountain could have been put toward the salary of a professor who might be laid off as budget constraints close in. In fact, our Editorial Board used this space not long ago to argue that the money the Parents Council is spending to build a coffee shop inside the library would have been better put toward saving professors' jobs or keeping some struggling campus organizations alive.

But we see a major difference between spending \$75,000 to add a little flair to an already exemplary library — especially when there is another coffee shop merely 50 yards away — and spending a much smaller amount on fixing broken bells and a fountain that looks like a pit when it's not running.

The library coffee shop is like trying to give the University plastic surgery, when in reality, all it needs are a few touches of makeup here and there, such as repairing and adding a few items that make our University more aesthetically pleasing.

Also, the repairs to the bell tower and fountain probably will end up paying for themselves. The campus' aesthetic appeal might not be the only factor for students who choose Truman, but it might be the icing on the cake for some.

Hopefully, work on the fountain will continue. Student Senate recently passed a resolution in support of painting the fountain — as it was several years ago. However, Physical Plant Director Karl Schneider told the Index no such plans are in place.

We urge the University to reconsider. Schneider expressed concerns about painting the fountain because the paint job traditionally doesn't last longer than a year. But a different option might be seeking the help of an art class to mosaic the fountain's floor with glass. Although the materials for this project would be more costly than paint, the effect would be longer lasting.

The University also should consider renovating the fountain, which is projected to cost \$10,000. By renovating the fountain, it might be possible to find a way to recycle the water that is pumped through the fountain.

Now is not the time for the University to rest on its laurels. Repairs and campus improvements still need to be made in areas that won't break the bank and will attract prospective students, and in turn, revenue.

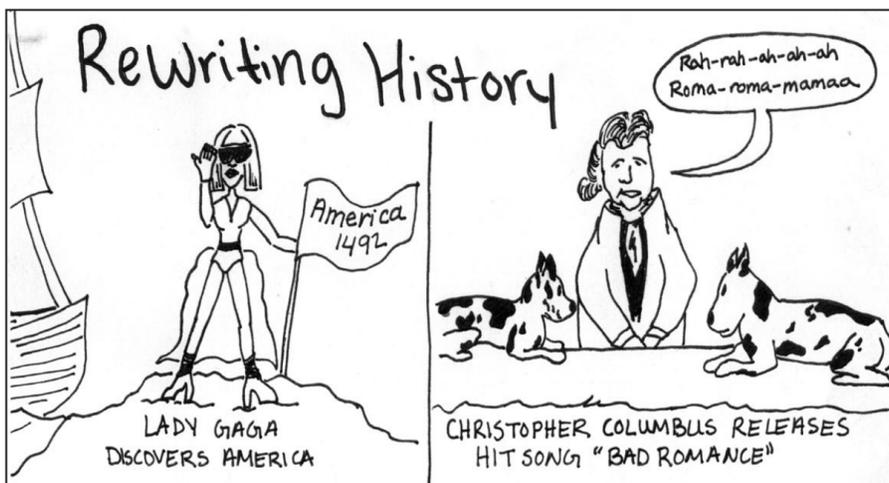
CORRECTIONS

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.

° An infographic on page 1 of the April 15 edition of the Index incorrectly reported there were 268 confirmed H1N1 cases in 2010 in Missouri. There were actually 286.

CARTOON

By Alex Boles



Letters to the Editor

Party leaders call senators to action

Congratulations to President-elect Robinson and Vice-President-elect Olmstead. They, as well as George Allen and Ryan Nely, ran wonderful campaigns and brought refreshing ideas to the table.

Robinson's idea for student grants not only reduces the current Senate \$8,000 surplus but allows students to increase their ownership in our University. Allen's bucks for bricks program will restore our campus to the beauty it deserves and we pledge to be first in line to make a donation.

Judging by our reception at the Student Senate sponsored debate, we do not expect to be included in the next session of Senate. On behalf of our supporters, we would like to offer the incoming administration a few points of advice.

First, keep the discussion focused on the issues. We understand that during the campaign tempers flared, but we all care about this University. Vitriol-filled comments have no place in the marketplace of ideas, and Senator Allen and ourselves were smeared during the campaign. We were disappointed that the other candidates declined to join Mr. Koors in condemning these attacks; we can and must do better.

Second, despite our loss at the polls, it seems clear that at least 237 students agreed with our message of increased transparency. Senate's website does not list any of the minutes from January to present: This must change. Senate usually reads resolutions twice before adopting them — unless the standing rules are suspended. Senate should post resolutions that have been first read online for students to see. Abusing the ability to suspend the standing rules can lead to plunging the process into darkness instead of bringing it into the light.

Third, the Senate's budget must be handled differently. Spending priorities aside, year-to-date expenditures are not posted. This vital information is critical for students who want to see exactly what Senate is accomplishing. As we suggested during the Senate debate, the draft budget should be posted online at least 48 hours prior to adoption. This gives students the chance to give Senate the input that it needs to make the best choices. Senate could go above and beyond by sending the budget as an attachment to all students — this goes a long way toward getting students involved.

Fourth, Senate needs to refine its focus on the students. During the campaign we were asked if we had ever participated in Senate. We think an equally important question is why Senate isn't more accessible. While the meetings on Sundays are open, Senate can do better by implementing Senator Allen's idea's for weekly town-hall meetings or our idea for weekly meetings. Additionally, Senate's office hours ought to be expanded beyond 3:30 p.m. We contend that ending office hours at 3:30 is inconvenient for the majority of students and that increasing hours would be a boon to both senators and students.

Finally, a word about the future: Many students asked if we would participate if we didn't win. The answer is an enthusiastic yes. The Student Action Party, despite what our critics would have you believe, is not a ploy, joke or game to us. It is a way for students to work together to elevate the discourse, speak truth to power and help this university move forward.

Again, good luck to the administration as it transitions from campaigning to governing. We'll be here, ready to help any time you need us.

*George Koors and Alex Ewing
Chairmen, Student Action Party*

Evolution needs more faith than creation

In the article "Faith Can't Answer Questions about Human Origin" in the April 1 edition of the Index, columnist John Hitzel wrote, "I cannot convince myself that a Truman student would seriously consider creationism to be true." The column basically presented the idea that evolution is the only position on origins that is scientific (i.e. "observable," "refutable"). Conversely, faith in a Creator or an Intelligent Designer is incompatible with science. Actually, many great scientists, both before and after Darwin, had a profound faith in God. Francis Bacon, the man usually credited with formulating the scientific method said, "A little science estranges a man from God. A lot of science brings him back."

Unfortunately, most of what is presented as science in Darwinian evolution is biased by a pre-commitment to philosophical naturalism (nature is all there is), a position which itself cannot be tested empirically. In other words, it is a position taken by "faith." Some of the more obvious faith assumptions

that scientists make are that the world is real, not an illusion (objective reality exists), our thought processes and our sense perceptions are basically reliable and there is a uniformity of natural causes (the universe is orderly and predictable). All of these things must be true for science to even get off the ground, but none of them can be proven by the scientific method itself.

Mr. Hitzel wrote disparagingly of "religion's unwelcome presence in politics and secular education." It does seem that Darwinists try to block any attempt of bringing up the scientific arguments against evolution and favoring creation.

But, the amazing thing is that after more than 50 years of controlling the public schools in America, evolutionists still find that the overwhelming majority of people continue to believe that God created the world. Why is this? Perhaps it is because it takes more "faith" to believe what Darwinism teaches than it does to believe in a Creator.

For example, it takes a great deal of faith (actually credulity) to believe that the universe came into existence out of nothing or that it has always existed and the marvelous design we see all around us came through the aimless interaction of atoms. It also is very hard to believe that randomness can produce complex ordered systems, that life arose from non-life by accident, that consciousness arose from non-conscious matter, that personality arose from impersonal matter, that morality (if there is any) arose from amoral matter and that rationality arose from non-rational matter, all by blind, undirected chance. In addition, most people find it hard to believe that bacteria, plants, animals and humans all had a common ancestor in a primordial soup.

Finally, if the universe is not designed, the points Mr. Hitzel makes in his column are pointless. An under-designed universe is ultimately meaningless and purposeless, and so is any column presenting that position. Nothing can have any meaning in a meaningless universe. I would counter Mr. Hitzel's earlier statement by saying that I cannot see how any Truman student would seriously consider that the cosmos did not have an intelligent designer unless, of course, that student is constantly taught (indoctrinated) that such a view is unscientific.

*Richard Ochs
alumnus*

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Serving the University community since 1909

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Editorial Policy

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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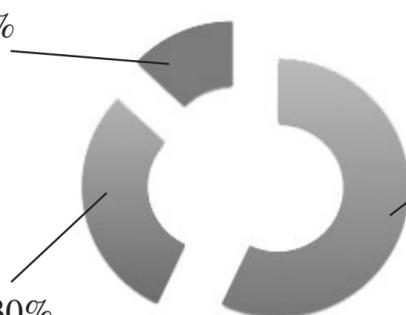
WEB POLL

How important or unimportant are Student Senate leaders?

Neither - 13%

Unimportant - 57%

Important - 30%



This week's question:

Do you worry about identity theft?

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