



Truman loses 75-60

Men's basketball Page 15

INSIDE

News: Local restaurants close their doors **PAGE 6**

Opinions: Columnist sees flaws in Blackboard **PAGE 5**

TruLife: 10 tips to stay happy during winter **PAGE 9**

Basketball slideshows
www.trumanindex.com

Truman State University INDEX

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Truman pays off debt to state

BY BLAISE HART-SCHMIDT
News Editor

Truman has paid all debts owed to the Missouri Division of Employment Security, after the Division filed a lien against the University on Dec. 14.

Truman owed more than \$7,900 to the state for the reimbursement of unemployment claims, according to the document filed by the Missouri Division of Employment.

"The person who deals with that and views those bills ... knew there was some discrepancy with that bill," Sally Detweiler, Truman's executive director of human resources, said. "There were some ongoing communications, evidently some miscommunications in the end about the amounts due and when it had to be paid."

Detweiler said the University received notice of the lien, a security interest to secure payment of a debt, Dec. 16, and that the department went back and checked its records.

"There were a couple quarters where I guess just [because of] clerical oversight that the payments just didn't get paid," Detweiler said. Truman paid the money and fees Dec. 18, and the Division of Employment Security then dismissed the lien.

Amy Susán, director of communications at the Division of Employment Security, said unemployment is offered to Missourians who lose their jobs through no fault of their own, in cases such as layoffs or quitting due to discrimination or harassment.

The Division of Employment Security has a trust fund that is maintained entirely by Missouri employers, Susán said. Based on their employees' wages and hours, employers must pay a certain amount of money toward their unemployment insurance benefits.

"If an individual loses their job due to no fault of their own, they will start claiming, and we will start taking money out of their employer's account," she said.

Budget Director Dave Rec-
Please see DEBT, Page 7

APRIL ELECTIONS

Incumbent Kirksville City Council members Richard Detweiler and Aaron Rodgerson are hoping to get re-elected this April. Rodgerson has had his seat for three years, while Detweiler has served for two.



Richard Detweiler



Aaron Rodgerson

Three additional contenders filed Tuesday to run for the two open positions:

- ▶ Kevin Alm
- ▶ David Mountain
- ▶ Tony Fajkus

Councilmembers seek re-election

BY ELIZABETH KOCH
Staff Reporter

Incumbent Kirksville City Council members Aaron Rodgerson and Richard Detweiler will be running for re-election in April. But they'll face competition from three other contenders.

Candidates Kevin Alm, David Mountain and Tony Fajkus also filed by Tuesday's deadline.

Rodgerson said he is running for re-election because he is one of the most experienced councilmembers, which he thinks is a major advantage, and other people encouraged him to run.

He said the economy will be an issue addressed in the upcoming term, along with the security and safety of Kirksville citizens. Others include infrastructure and water issues. Rodgerson said he

doesn't have a specific agenda for his term.

"I've got common sense," Rodgerson said. "We [candidates] all bring something different to the table. We all have our strengths, and we all have our weaknesses. I've got experience."

Rodgerson pleaded not guilty to one charge of failure to report underage child abuse or neglect as a mandated reporter and prac-

ticing law without a license in August. On Jan. 7 the state dropped the charge of failure to report underage child abuse or neglect against Rodgerson. Rodgerson said his upcoming trial could have an impact on the election.

"I think that there's always that possibility," Rodgerson said. "One charge has already been dropped. ... [The only charge
Please see COUNCIL, Page 7



Todd Kuhns (left) has been renovating Pickler's Famous since September 2008. The building will include an ice cream parlor and soda fountain, an organic bakery and movie theater.

Pickler's Famous remains unopened

BY ELIZABETH KOCH
Staff Reporter

Pickler's Famous, a possible future hangout spot in Kirksville, still isn't completed, and owner Todd Kuhns still has two more secrets to reveal.

So far, Kuhns has revealed three secrets about what Pickler's Famous will have once it's completed. On the first floor, customers will be able to experience an old-fashioned ice cream parlor and soda fountain, and buy food and gourmet sweets. It also will be the new home of the Covert Cupboard, an organic bakery. On the second floor, there will be an independent movie theater that will show classic and independent films.

Pickler's Famous occupies the former Lawson Mill building and is located at 114 W. Harrison St. on the north side of the Square.

Kuhns first decided to transform the Pickler's Famous building shortly before the summer of 2008, and the building renovations began that September. Kuhns previously told the Index he wanted to open the building by Dec. 1, 2008.

"We originally thought, 'Oh, we'll have this done in a few months and we'll have it open,' but we completely underestimated the time it would actually take," Kuhns said.

Kuhns said it is his first major renovation project. The entire building is

being restored to historical standards, which is one reason for the delay. The lettering on the outside of the building is based on photos from the late 1800s.

There currently is a full-time construction crew working in the building, Kuhns said. The plumbing and electricity is nearly complete on the first floor, with one of the large walls ready for priming. Half of the second floor is complete.

"We're really moving along pretty quickly," Kuhns said. "I'm really still not sure when we'll be finished, because I tried giving a prediction once before [and] that didn't work out too well."

Another factor in the delay is the change in plans about how the building looks, he said. For example, an interior wall that was going to remain brick ended up having to be plastered.

"Every time you make a change ... it takes time," Kuhns said.

Kuhns said a consultant is now working with him, which has helped reduce little mistakes that might have been missed before.

Kuhns has a daily blog that explains the progress of Pickler's Famous, at www.picklersfamous.org/blog1. But Kuhns will not give an estimate about the completion date until the time is closer.

"I really envision this as being a place for a lot of people to enjoy. ... No matter what you're doing or who you are, you'll find something neat
Please see PICKLER, Page 7

Truman student Tweets anti-Semitic threats

BY ANDREA HEWITT
News Editor

Sophomore Rachel Oetting found her Tweets popping up on anti-hate speech Web sites last week.

Oetting Twittered the offending post on Jan. 11, which said, "Can we go on a jew killing spree soon? i need to release some anger and jews are always worthy targets."

Lou Ann Gilchrist, dean of Student Affairs, said that Truman's Student Conduct Code covers threats of violence and harassment, but Truman has no speech code.

"That's actually a very controversial method that some campuses — not many — have chosen to implement dealing with hate

Our View: Twitter slurs should not affect University's reputation
see OPINIONS page 4

speech," Gilchrist said. "The difference is that a harassment policy targets more the effect on the people, whereas a speech code focuses more on the content of the speech — which obviously there are a lot of people who are concerned with how speech codes ... compromise First Amendment rights."

Gilchrist would not discuss if Oetting will face discipline from

the University.

When threats are reported to Student Affairs, the situation is analyzed for threat, Gilchrist said. Factors that are considered include the person having the means to carry out the crime, the person having a tendency to violent behavior and the person taking actions to carry out the threat, she said.

"What is reportedly said in this situation is deplorable," she said. "It's not consistent with University values. It is not what we try to teach. It is not what we would support or condone in any way. But as an educational institution, we have some obligations to support critical thought and free dialogue of the critical thought. So the line

that's very difficult to draw is, operationally, how do we define it."

Brian Cuban, creator of The Cuban Revolution Web log, posted in a blog about the Tweet, "Twitter users supporting the likes of Hitler, NeoNazis, KKK, and The Westboro Baptist Church are regular Twitter fixtures. Unlike Facebook, YouTube and most other responsible social networking sites, Twitter, while having Terms Of Service prohibiting 'true threats,' has no rules against hate speech."

Cuban said that hate speech of all kinds is a growing problem on college campuses — especially at public universities because students have First Amendment considerations.

"It's clearly offensive," he said.

"As a Jew, I'm very offended. As a person, I'm very offended. As a lawyer, I respect her right to express herself — but that right to express herself doesn't give her the right to threaten individuals or groups of individuals. That borders on a violation of the law."

Cuban said that, as a Jew, he feels no animosity towards Oetting, but he is concerned about why she would think it was appropriate to post what she said.

"Students don't know where the line is drawn," Cuban said. "Especially with Rachel, because it really walks the line of a criminal threat because she didn't Tweet it into the Twitter universe, she
Please see TWEET, Page 7