State senator tries to expand texting law

BY ELIZABETH ROCK
Staff Reporter

Testing while driving might become an issue for Missouri drivers as Sen. Ryan McKenna, R-Crystal City, sponsored Missouri’s current texting and driving restriction of anyone 21 or under the age of 21. McKenna said he was disappointed with the current policy’s age limit.

“If the new bill is passed, it would be fairer and more convenient for other drivers as well, because we can’t do anything about the age they were at when they were involved in an accident… it’s a problem for everyone,” McKenna said. “I’m hoping, based on the testing, we can get a bill that everyone’s happy with. I’ve seen our House of Representations sponsor this every year to do away with that and same with the Senate, but the current policy is not helping everyone.”

“Studies have shown that it’s three times more dangerous to text and drive than something at .08 (blood alcohol content)” Sen. Ryan McKenna

McKenna said, “I think it’s time to have a level that the legislature needs to address it. McKenna says he plans to go to a hearing on the bill within the next couple of weeks.

“When it [the bill] comes back to the Senate, the people that were in favor of it with the age restriction have had a problem with that, and people want to make sure it’s not just for those younger drivers, because we can’t do anything about the age they were at when they were involved in an accident; it’s a problem for everyone.” McKenna said.

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If the new bill went into effect, accidents would be reduced, and it would help with the receptivity of the driving public, McKenna said.

《Bell tower remains silent》

BY MAE ERENE
Staff Reporter

Truman is not investing the money needed to repair the bell tower at Public Memorial Library, which stopped ringing last April. McKenna said he was disappointed in the outcome.

“Doing it across the board sends the right message to the public, so I’ve seen major accidents, but I’ve never really seen a really bad accident because of texting and driving,” McKenna said.

Bob Warnier Trimmer, former dean of graduate studies at Truman, paid for the installation of the bells and the chimes and donated almost $1 million to the University upon her death in 1998. The biggest bell tower rang four times an hour every day since its formal dedication in October 1992. The biggest bell tower has broken once only before in the summer of 1992 due to lightning. The University repaired it quickly, and it was in service until last April, McKenna doesn’t expect any repairs in the next year.

“The company called in to take a look at it estimates the cost to be around $30,000, and up until now, the University doesn’t want to invest that much money into the bell tower.” Karl Schneider

Karl Schneider, source of the physical plant, agrees with the legislature that it might need to send something into the air for people to notice it.

“Later in the year, he gave me every update,” McKenna said. “I was part of the fire department and thought it was important, so I’m only aware of it, and that’s a problem.”

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