

# INDEX EDITORIAL

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Thursday, November 19, 2009

## OUR VIEW

### Visiting hunters help Kirksville's economy

Whether you think Bambi is a furry, cuddly friend or a destructive rodent, you can't deny that he makes bank for Kirksville.

That's right, folks. It's hunting season in Missouri.

Deer hunting's rifle season, which runs from Nov. 14 to Nov. 24, allows hunters to hunt deer using all of the legal methods, according to the Missouri Department of Conservation. Deer hunting season in some form in Missouri lasts from mid-September to early January.

Hunters are the only tourists Kirksville sees besides visiting parents of Truman State University and A.T. Still University students. And it shows.

Killing deer seems to bring our beloved, quirky town back to life every year. We've all witnessed the signals — "Welcome hunters" signs all across town, camouflage gear at Wal-Mart, and the pervasive smell of deer urine floating around town, refusing to diffuse.

Store shelves seem fuller, even if the new merchandise is camouflage shirts and hunting gear. Hotels are booked, which helps bring in money. Restaurants have wait times for customers, which might frustrate other patrons, but it helps ensure that places like Rosie's and Pancake City can remain open the rest of the year. Pickup trucks with antlers sticking out from the truck bed squeeze down an already crowded Baltimore. The town seems to bustle during hunting season. Some might disagree with killing innocent animals, some might get frustrated with the overcrowded streets, but hunting season is a yearly boost to our community's hard-hit economy.

Hunters, who come from all over the Midwest, are even

included in the images on the city of Kirksville Web site. Outdoor Life Magazine named Kirksville as the best whitetail deer hunting spot in America. Kirksville also has five conservation areas where hunters can hunt game. In other words, Kirksville is a hot spot.

Hunters also give back to the community through the Missouri Deer Hunting "Share the Harvest" program (see story, page 6). Since 1992, hunters have been donating venison to processing plants, which in turn donate the meat to needy members of the community. Even though these visiting hunters aren't a permanent part of our community, they still manage to give back during the short amount of time they are in town, something some permanent or semi-permanent residents probably can't claim.

The community benefits not only from hunters' mere presence, but from the population control of animals that, whether you agree with hunting or not, tend to walk out into the middle of winding roads at night and freeze, causing swerving, honking and accidents.

The pros and cons of organized and structured hunting have been debated time and time again. But whether it is ethical to kill animals isn't the most important issue for Kirksvillians in these troubling economic times. What is most important, and what is a valid point for business owners, waitresses and townspeople, is that the hunting season allows our small town to become the focus and the meeting place for hunters of all walks of life from across the country. Throughout the season, hundreds of hunters pour their money into our small community. And that is an undebatable "pro" in the hunting column.

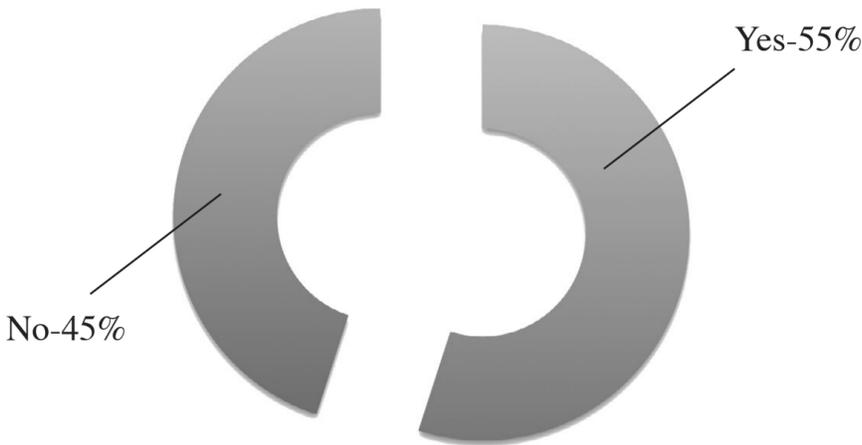
## CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail [index@truman.edu](mailto: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 Oct. 29 issue incorrectly listed the number of psychology majors in campus as 414. The number is actually 521, according to Psychology department chair Robert Tigner, which makes psychology the fourth most popular major, not the fifth.
- The story on page 6 of the Nov. 12 issue, "Senate votes to combine classes," misidentified Charles Tomlinson as a voting student senator. Tomlinson is the Academic Affairs Chair for Student Senate.

## WEB POLL

Have you taken out a student loan during the course of your college career?



This week's question:  
Will you spend less or more money on holiday presents this year?

Vote online at [trumanindex.com](http://trumanindex.com)

## Letters to the Editor

### Government health care has its risks

As I read the article in the Nov. 12 edition of the Index on the health care bill I found many things troubling. Apparently people do not understand the risks of government-regulated health care. How much of our freedom are we willing to give up so everyone can have health care? Because of the fear of tyranny, this country was founded on the principles of small government and large individual freedom. Today, we are spitting in the faces of our Founding Fathers as we turn over more freedom for the "greater good."

It is true that the system needs to be fixed, but why is handing it over to the government the only viable option? What has the government ever touched that has been a productive entity? I could give you quite a list of things that are failing due to direct government involvement, including the postal service, social security, Amtrak and many others.

Stephanie Powelson, head of the department of nursing, claimed in the article that the bill being rammed through Congress would be beneficial to physicians. If it will be so beneficial then why do two-thirds of doctors oppose this legislation according to a poll done by Investor's Business Daily? This same poll found that 45 percent of doctors would consider leaving the practice or retiring early if the bill is passed. How beneficial can it truly be when a large majority of them do not even want it? Also, let's not forget that our national debt is almost \$12 trillion. We won't be able to borrow any more money so we'll have to tax the "evil rich" in order to cover the \$1 trillion dollar price tag. We all know rich people never open businesses or create jobs and are an overall menace to society. This is a joke. The government has gone tyrannical.

As for Jaime Diaz, president of the college democrats, commented, "it's a human right to have health care." I ask why is that a human right? The human rights, laid out in the Declaration of Independence, are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These human rights are rights of non-interference from other people and government. So where does health care fit in? It doesn't. Health care is not endowed by the Creator. It is something you pay for with your own money. We cannot demand or allow the government to cover (through taxes) all

these people. This whole notion is fundamentally wrong and violates the principles upon which the U.S. was founded.

It was also quite troubling to read that even though Sean Cooksey and the College Republicans were opposed to the bill, they weren't going to express their opinion to Truman. Let me offer a quote from Thomas Jefferson. "All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to remain silent." This is where we are as Americans. We can wake up, make our voices heard and retain our freedoms, or we can let the government take them. It's as easy as that. The choice is yours.

Ethan Gabel, junior

### Athletics should receive budget cuts

At a recent Student Senate meeting, Student Senate's Vice President Isaac Robinson began a discussion about what should and should not be cut when it comes time to finally deal with this budget crisis that has been (luckily) put off for another year or two (no one seems to know when exactly this will finally come and bite us). I believe I was one of the first to speak up, with a response that seemed only common sense — cut the entire athletics department before cutting anything having to do with academics. We are a university after all, not a sports club (and then a university) like our big bad neighbors to the south. I realize my suggestion seemed a bit radical, and unsurprisingly was met with some fierce critics going after a "spirit" argument. But why? Why is it so awful to put all of our academic careers ahead of the sporting ventures of a few?

Many people seem to believe that sports is an appendage of the University, just as an arm is to us, and severing it from our larger body would be devastating. I would argue that the academic schools are the true appendages of our body and athletics is more like the Mountain Dew we buy from Sodexo, a bit too expensive but nice to have. Well now we are in a time where we need to scrounge around for every penny we have, so what will it be? Cutting out the Mountain Dews every day (athletics), or chopping off fingers (professors, staff)? Is it really too radical to suggest we keep our professors before our football team?

While support for my view was little to none during the meeting,

afterward many students expressed their support. I wasn't surprised, just disappointed. Stand up for your academic career, it's not a horrible thing to do, just hard. In particular, I had a discussion with one member of the body who brought up a great point: why should football, soccer, basketball, etc. players get scholarships to a university before other students who engage in activities that they enjoy? Sports was chosen more than a hundred years ago as "the" thing to do, and its been that way ever since, but that doesn't mean that is how it has to be. Why can't the students who fight for human rights and promote environmental consciousness get scholarships? How about the members of the variety of service organizations? Hey, why not the writers of the Index and other members of the Truman Media Network? Isn't a scholarship meant to be an investment in the future of a student? So then why are we investing in the future of athletes? I can't seem to recall any major players in the NBA, NFL, MLB, etc., coming from Truman State University (there may be some, but don't get me started on ratios of athletes here to those who "made it"). How many students engaging in activities that apply to the career they are working toward actually go in to that field? I bet a lot more than athletes. But alas, giving scholarships to athletes over other students just makes sense. Keeping athletics at the expense of academics just makes sense. Maybe to you, but not me.

My point is this: just because something has been a part of the University for years does not make it vital, especially during a budget crisis. Athletics is here, but I am not ready to see my favorite professors and staff get cut because of it, are you? Truman is already down to the bare minimum of services that are provided because we are such a cheap school to go to, so any budget tightening will mean making tougher decisions. However, that decision isn't tough for me: cut the Mountain Dew and put the money we do have to some food for thought. The budget will be an important issue within the next couple of years, and I hope everyone is clued in to what is going on, so pay attention and engage in this discussion, for your own sake, as well as for Truman State University.

These are my personal views and not the views of any organization I am a part of (which I do without getting scholarships for being involved).

Daniel Heagney, senior voting member of Student Senate

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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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