

INDEX EDITORIAL

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OUR VIEW

New smoking restriction lessens campus freedoms

When inside a classroom, it's common courtesy to avoid talking on the phone. In a church, silence is customary. But when outdoors in a common area, rights should not be limited heavily.

The passage of the updated smoking restriction on campus is lessening student and faculty freedoms (see story, page 1). While the Board of Governors did not pass a complete smoking ban, they did make it harder for smokers to have their much-needed cigarette break between classes.

The previous rule regarding smoking on campus required people to be at least 10 feet from residential buildings before lighting up. Now, smokers must be at least 25 feet from all campus buildings.

We do not see the point in this partial smoking ban. It seems to be merely a compromise between those for and against a complete ban. The main problem with this new ban, however, is the ability of Student Affairs to enforce it.

The current policy for enforcement is on a complaint basis — if you see someone violating the 10-foot rule, you tattle. Then what? The perpetrator will receive 1. a notice, 2. a warning and 3. a disciplinary hearing. Then, the perpetrator will presumably receive some type of punishment after the third strike, what exactly we aren't too sure. Nothing more than a slap on the hand it seems, though.

If there is to be any change in the rules and regulations on campus, enforcement should be a heavily discussed topic. Making new rules and then not doing anything to better implement them seems to be a waste of time.

While we don't think this change in regulation is going to do much, we do think enforcement should have been a major aspect in the decision process. Whether the requirement be 10 feet from a building

or 100 feet, if someone wants a cigarette, they will have one. No smoking ban is going to stop them, especially one that is not enforced. Without fear of actually being reported and punished, not much will deter a smoker from standing right outside a building's door to have their nicotine fix during the cold Kirksville winters or the harsh rain. And, we can't blame them. Why follow a law if you know you won't be caught for violating it?

Since little, if any, time was dedicated to the implementation of the new rule, we can only conclude that the Board spent all their time deciding on the arbitrary number of 25 feet to satisfy those who thought 10 feet wasn't enough. This is not going to change much, though. If someone wants to avoid walking through puffs of smoke on their trek between classes, it's possible. When was the last time non-smokers actually walked through a visible cloud of smoke? Our campus might not be huge, but it is big enough to avoid cigarette smoke if we want to. Changing where smokers stand isn't going to do much except annoy smokers.

A 25-foot distance from all campus buildings might not seem like a huge change from the previous regulation, but think of where 25 feet will put you. If at Barnett Hall, smokers will be standing in the middle of the parking lot. And is there even 25 feet between Pickler Memorial Library and Baldwin Hall or the Student Union Building and Magruder Hall?

While compromising is a good thing, this ban is not going to do much to change the smoking conditions on campus. The Board of Governors wasted a lot of time focusing on this futile distance when there are probably more important things on their agenda. And, without enforcement, this rule will simply float off campus in a cloud of smoke.

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.

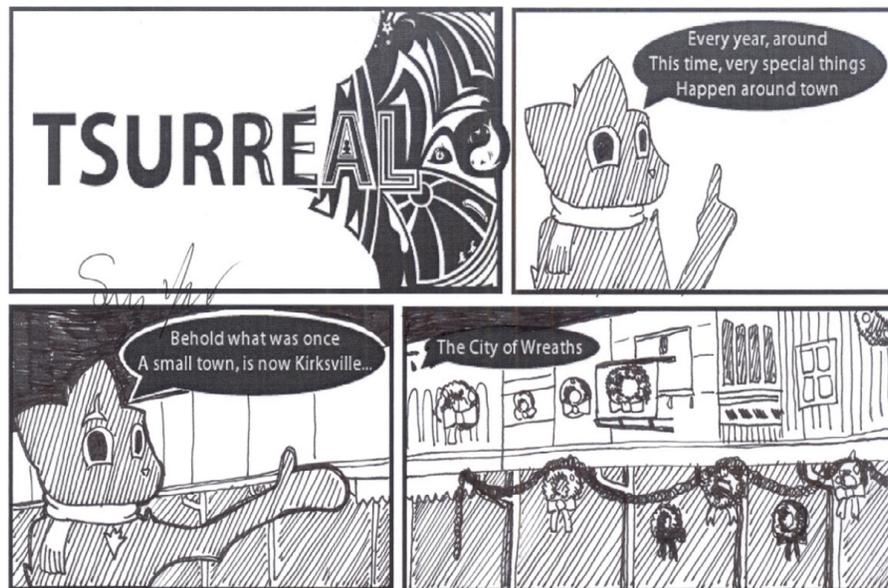
* On page 5 of the Dec. 2 edition of the Index, a column was titled "Printing services fail to meet student needs." Printing Services does not have control over the printing accounts and is in no way connected to this column. The headline should have read "Printing accounts fail to meet student needs."

* On page 2 of the Nov. 18 edition of the Index, sophomore Zachary Stearns was listed as having received a Missouri Complaint and a minor in possession of alcohol. DPS reports show Stearns was issued these, but he did not receive them.

* The graphic on page 16 of the Dec. 2 edition of the Index should read "Top returners for 2010-11."

CARTOON

By Sam Kyker



Letters to the Editor

Every day acts improve the environment

Regarding the column "Thought must precede climate change action" in the Dec. 2 edition of the Index, Mr. Strangler is right when he argues that confronting climate change will require significant effort. The changes that humanity will have to make on the macro-level of government will no doubt be enormous.

However, in the article, I was under the impression that he was skeptical that: 1. Humanity is capable of achieving this. 2. Small efforts at conservation are trivial in the big picture. "And it's not simply a matter of turning off an unnecessary light." Both of these are absolutely false. Humanity has overcome numerous environmental problems in the past. If we can reduce Chlorofluorocarbon to protect the ozone layer, so too can we reduce carbon emissions to curb climate change. And we can do this through small actions every day.

If every U.S. family replaced one incandescent bulb with a fluorescent one, it would eliminate 90 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, the same as taking 7.5 million cars off the road. Lighting accounts for 30 to 50 percent of a building's energy use, or about 17 percent of total annual U.S. electricity consumption. Simply turning off unneeded lights can reduce the amount of energy used for lighting up to 45 percent. The bottom line: positive changes of any size can help immensely in saving our planet. So the next time you see lights left on in an empty room on campus, flip the switch, because every little bit helps.

Ryan Campbell
senior

LSP mode classes should be more lax

The academic pressure on a Truman student is very high. Compared to many other colleges, there are more assignments to do and the exams are also tougher. There have been many instances when I, including my friends, get overwhelmed by work. One cause of that is not being able to manage time

properly. But I think professors also play an active role. Some professors assign work that is unnecessarily hard or takes a long time to do. I think some of them think their class is the only class a student is taking and has plenty of time for that. If that was the case for major classes, it might be plausible, but there have been situations when I was forced to work harder on LSP mode classes than my major classes.

Besides that, I have experienced a teacher having much expectation in a LSP mode classes. Instructors often fail to be aware of the fact that a student taking a LSP class does not have a well-developed notion of the subject matter that he is taught only in a single course. Sometimes, due to this case, even a student interested in learning that subject can get bored. Through this piece of writing, I would like to infer that it would be more fun and interesting to learn new subjects if professors would be a bit more lenient in assigning work to a student and have less expectation from a student in LSP mode classes.

Binaya Sigdel
junior

Awareness raised of the seriousness of ALS

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that attacks nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. ALS affects about 70,000 people worldwide and an estimated 5,000 are diagnosed annually. Also, it is estimated that ALS is responsible for nearly two deaths per hundred thousand deaths annually. It is wonderful that ALS doesn't affect a large amount of people, yet the relatively few sufferers of ALS make large scale research unlikely. A disease should not be recognized for importance based on the amount of people that have it but by the horrifying effects it does to people's bodies. ALS is a devastating disease and awareness of it desperately needs to be raised. Due to this lack of awareness, patients of ALS are receiving inadequate treatments and cannot afford to have procedures done that could potentially prolong their lives.

One man that suffered greatly and

lost his life due to people's oblivion regarding ALS would be Albert Arthur Hallett, who allowed for his court case to be publicized, exposing unawareness of ALS. In 1998, Hallett began to experience symptoms of ALS. He felt a choking feeling in his throat, his left thumb often tingled and his hand would periodically go numb. Eventually, he visited an otolaryngologist for his throat and a neurologist for his hand. He never thought to tell the neurologist about the otolaryngologist or vice versa because nobody ever asked. He knew nothing of ALS, and no health professional even mentioned the possibility. After having an MRI done, Hallett had surgery done in hope of improvement. When he awoke from his surgery his left hand felt no better and, more alarming, he couldn't move his right arm at all. He was told that there was nothing to worry about, this was common and with physical therapy he'd be good as new. Unfortunately, his growing fatigue made therapy impossible and his feet began losing function as well. It wasn't until 2004, after many years of suffering, that Hallett was properly diagnosed with ALS. Sadly, even after being properly diagnosed, Hallett still couldn't receive proper treatments because he couldn't find any way to get the necessary funding.

Had more people known about ALS as the disease was taking over Hallett's body, his life perhaps could have been prolonged, or at least improved. Also, if more funding was available he would have been able to receive proper treatment. As of now, the main organization that raises awareness and funds for ALS is the ALS Association. Through this association, many walks and fundraisers, such as The Walk to Defeat ALS, have been established. However, this is not enough. ALS is a horrific disease, and awareness of it desperately needs to be raised. More people need to participate in these events and this can be done by simply spreading the word because once somebody becomes familiar with this devastating disease they can't help but wonder, "What can I do?" Luckily, the answer is simple, participate in these events!

Brianna Goldstein
freshman

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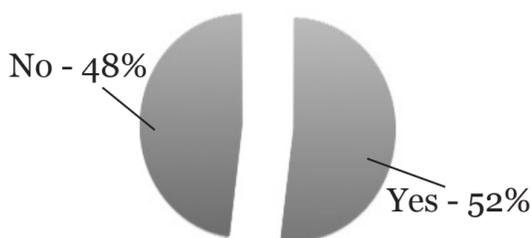
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WEB POLL

Does the cold weather make you depressed?



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