

EDITORIAL

OUR VIEW

Smart financial choices made in rough economy

In these tough economic times, you must do everything you can to make enough money to get by and simultaneously try to save as much dough as possible. Being frugal isn't the only way to keep your wallet full, though. You must also be smart.

Smart financial decisions are the key to improving a community, and the city of Kirksville, along with the University, have been improving their financial game.

Creating more jobs is one way to boost an economy. This concept isn't rocket science — less unemployment will lead to more purchasing of goods, which will stimulate economic growth. However, finding a job right now can be next to impossible. To combat the pitiful job market, Colton's restaurant on the south side of town received a revolving loan to assist in the completion of construction, according to the Oct. 4 Kirksville City Council report. This loan, valued at \$27,000, does not need to be paid back if the restaurant has 30 full-time positions and 85 part-time positions available during the course of the next three years.

Sometimes you have to spend money to make money. Kirksville's loan to Colton's is doing just that. By creating these jobs, the economy and the recently hired employees benefit, and the loan will pay itself off. The city has also supported other local businesses with similar loans, according to the report.

Truman has done its part to make the best of economic hardships, too. Despite recent and impending budget cuts, the University will hire a local foods coordinator and fund the position through a recently won grant (see story page 1). Through the opportunities provided by this position, we think the local economy will continue to grow and strengthen. By buying locally, the University could save business while stimulating the Kirksville economy by giving

more money to local farmers instead of outsourcing to outside corporations. Having local foods served in the dining halls and sold in the C-stores on campus also could attract more students to Truman, due to the growing popularity of the grassroots movement of local pride and support. The hiring of a local foods coordinator will only improve Truman and Kirksville financially.

Another smart financial choice in Kirksville is application for grants. The city has been fortunate to receive grants to benefit the community in several ways. Grants to fix the roof of the courthouse, to dispose of hazardous waste, to put in bike lanes and to make parks more accessible, just to name a few, are all in the works to make Kirksville a better place. And these grants didn't just fall into the community's lap — they worked hard to receive them.

These grants will not only help to improve the aesthetics of Kirksville for citizens, but they also will act as a marketing agent. Hearing about a city that has handicap-accessible parks and improved building conditions will encourage people to visit, or even move to, this part of the county; thus, more money is shoveled back into the mix.

Behind every grant is a grant writer. It is the grant writer's job to search for available grants, create a proposal and apply. The field of grant writing is growing in popularity. There are grants for almost everything if you have the initiative to seek them out and apply for them, and Kirksville has found that initiative.

Through smart financial decisions like increasing employment, creating new job titles and applying for as many grants as possible, we think the city of Kirksville and the Truman community are sure to thrive, and that economic successes today will lead to more responsible, wise financial decisions for years to come.

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.

CARTOON

By Sam Kyker



Letters to the Editor

Out-of-state activists influenced ballot

This week's election has shown me one thing about Missouri voters. We are no longer the Bellwether State, nor is "Show-Me State" an accurate nickname.

We've become the "Shear-Me State." Just like sheep herded into a corner paddock, we've had the wool pulled over our eyes by out-of-state interests and their ability to throw overwhelming funds at us. All it took for opponents of Kansas City's earnings tax to enable us to gut it was \$11 million from one source, a two-prong ballot measure that catered to an anti-tax out of state populace and a barrage of ads that drowned out any attempt from either Kansas City or St. Louis to plead its case.

All it took for proponents of tighter restrictions on dog breeders, and potentially all livestock and poultry farmers in Missouri, was for out-of-state animal rights activists, fresh off their strangling of agribusiness in California, Florida and Ohio, to spend \$3 million to convince us that their arbitrary limits on animals, vague wording and potentially exploitable definition of the word "pet" was better than what our elected officials would ever come up with.

And we've just written a blatant loophole into our state constitution, the document that's supposed to be the bedrock of our state. This in spite of the General Assembly's attempt to force our state's largest county to change its charter being warded off when that county did it themselves by a 3-to-1 margin last year.

This election has proclaimed to the world that, contrary to the description Willard Vandiver gave us when he called us the Show Me State, Missourians can be convinced and satisfied with mere frothy eloquence. Or more appropriately in this day and age, hours on end of scathing attack ads, pictures of dogs seized from unlicensed puppy mills and flashy ads fronted by Cardinals skippers, all funded by out-of-state billionaires who don't have to live in the mess they wreak on us by way of our state's sheepish inability to read what's actually on the ballot and what's beyond the language.

Kyle Hill
alumni

Voters must be well informed on issues

Proposition B got a lot of attention this political season. I saw signs and posters everywhere, as well as many stories covering the proposed law including the Oct. 28 edition of the Index. Before I found out exactly what the proposal was, I was in favor of it. At first glance, a law that promises to prevent animal cruelty seems like it would face little public opposition. However as the political season progressed, I started seeing numerous "NO ON PROP B" signs. I thought to myself, how could anyone support animal cruelty?

After I looked into it, I realized that I had been deceived by how the proposal was packaged and presented to the masses. I was one of the many people who took the informal name of the proposal — "puppy mill cruelty prevention act" — at face value. I thought it would target underground, dirty, illegal puppy mills. Instead, the law imposes nearly impossible requirements on legitimate breeders, which could harm the industry. Once I learned that this law is a large-scale attack on the breeder population and would be used as a wedge for future legislation, I was embarrassed. I was embarrassed that I had realized I was an uneducated voter.

Our Founding Fathers, through the Constitution, gave us the right to vote. We have a duty to vote but more of a responsibility to be educated on the candidates and legislation before we vote. It may be a little late. Election day has now passed, but in the future, I vow that I will take time to inform myself fully on as many aspects of every election that I can before I head to the poll booth. I highly encourage everyone to do the same for the integrity of our towns, our states and our whole nation.

Eric Vinyard
freshman

Non-prioritized jail system increases fear

I have heard about the jails being overfilled a few times, and I figured the government would have created a system to categorize the risk levels of criminals kept in jail. However, the article "Crowded prisons jeopardize safety" in the Nov. 4 edition of the Index gave me good insight into the misconception that all the "bad guys" are staying in jail.

As a female, I have a few more concerns about my safety than males because of the higher rate of sexual assault and other violence toward women. When I went to the activities fair, I saw the Women's Resource Center handing out rape whistles. There is also a rape defense class offered that women can take.

My point: Women have a few more things to worry about if they walk alone at night, one of them being that some violent person will attack them on their way somewhere. It only further increases my fear when I hear that drug offenders are being put away while sexual assault offenders are being released to make room. By no means am I saying that only women should fear those not being kept behind bars — any violent criminal could attack people of all ages, races and genders.

I agree that the government needs to find a way to prioritize the most violent to nonviolent offenders to put and keep in jail. I realize that there is limited room. Some people would suggest that the death penalty for more prisoners would solve part of the problem. However, I am against people taking others' lives away, so I would just suggest that the government figure out new places to put more people or create a system that keeps the most violent offenders in prison. If this idea is spread wide enough and action is taken by citizens, maybe then the government will respond effectively.

Alicia Kimberlin
freshman

INDEX

Serving the University community since 1909

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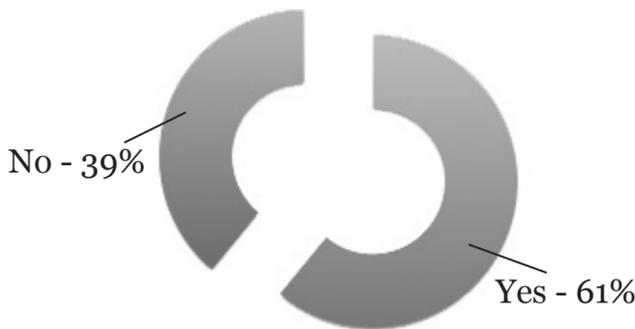
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