

Our View

School spirit doesn't rely on athletics

The typical definition of school spirit involves stadium bleachers packed with fans, bodies painted in school colors, shouting and cheering when their team scores.

At Truman, we show our spirit in a different way, and while it might not be as exciting, we should be proud. We are proud of our highly selective liberal arts education and become distressed when that is threatened.

Ryan Nely, president of the Student Association, hosted the State of the Student Body Address on Tuesday, where he outlined how to keep Truman's identity intact while managing the looming budget cuts. Nely told students how to harness our spirit and use it to keep us strong as a University, no matter what is thrown our way.

To do this, we should reflect about our experiences at Truman and decide what makes our spirit different. We have groups like the Purple Friday Committee that encourages students to don Truman apparel and relish in school pride weekly. It can be corny, yes, but it provides an outlet for spirit at a University that's core is not athletics.

At the State of the Student Body address, Nely also announced the members of his guiding coalition, a group of students from various organizations who will meet with University President Troy Paino about suggestions for how to manage the budget cuts.

The coalition members, who belong to organizations such as Greek Life, Athletics, Residence Life and Student Senate, are examples of true "fans." No, they might not be painting themselves purple and cheering in Paino's office while crunching the numbers for the next fiscal year, but they are looking out for current and future students.

This will not be an easy task, Nely said. They will be met with opposition and tough decisions, but true spirit doesn't die when your team loses. If anything, this is the time when our Truman pride is put to the ultimate test, and we think Truman can overcome.

This is not a challenge with which only Paino and the guiding coalition must deal. This affects everyone. Theater programs, the athletic department and student media — no one is immune. Therefore, we all must show our school spirit and unite to ensure the University's continued success.

That being said, it was disappointing to see only approximately 60 people present at the State of the Student Body Address, three of whom were Indexers. Truman is an excellent institution with a highly regarded reputation we know people are proud of. Therefore, we need to start showing it more. Attend University meetings and conferences. Let your voice be heard. At the end of his speech, Nely asked every member of the student body to send a handwritten letter to Gov. Jay Nixon asking him not to cut Truman's state funding. It doesn't have to be long or complicated, even just a sentence to show what Truman means to you. There are note cards outside the Student Senate office for concerned students.

Now, more than ever, is the time to show your school spirit. Paint yourself purple if it helps, but don't forget what it means to be a Truman State University student.

Corrections

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please email index.editor@gmail.com, call us at 660-785-4449 or send a letter to Index, 1200 Barnett Hall, Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo., 63501.

Cartoon

By Jenn Marks



Letters to the Editor

Committee attempts to save grass alley

I would like to bring the reader's attention to an initiative being taken by local residents such as myself. For the past seven months we have been working to save the last public green space between the TSU campus and Downtown: a grass-covered alley located in the 400 block of South Franklin Street. Until recent weeks, we have moved at a slow pace gathering ideas, raising awareness and gaining the support of a sponsor. Recently a developer has purchased the lots on either side of the alley and has begun construction on his land and at the same time removed the 60-100 year old trees on the City-owned alleyway, something he had no right to do. Since that act this has become more than a hobby for me, it is now my passion to see this land used in a way to benefit the community not line the pockets of one greedy developer.

On March 5 the developer attempted to have the City Council close the alley and give him the land without due process behind the backs of Kirksville residents. Thanks to a last minute notice from a City official I was in attendance along with our sponsors: City Council candidates Betty McLane-Iles and Robert Russell and five other concerned citizens all to voice our concerns.

As procedure goes, first the City Clerk reads the item on the agenda, second it is discussed by the Council, third the citizens in attendance are asked to voice any questions they might have and provide input either for or against the item, fourth it is put to a vote by the Council. When the issue came up it was discussed hurriedly, in hushed tones by the council they then proceeded to skip over asking for input from us citizens and attempt to hold the vote at that point. If not for quick action on our part the voice of the people would have been ignored. Seven out of our nine in attendance spoke out in turn against the vacation of the alleyway.

Our efforts brought forth the desired fruit. The Council voted not to table the item for further review. Then and there the ordinance was voted on and with only Mayor Detweiler voting in favor it failed.

But you can rest assured that the attempts to turn this area into parking aren't over. For the developer it's all about making money, not the quality of life of the people living in the neighborhood or TSU's students to the south, or the downtown to the north. We have formed a committee. We have a downtown businessman that has pledged \$1,000 to start an endowment for this pocket park and to underwrite basic maintenance, like mowing, for up to five years while we build the endowment fund. We would like to see this pocket park made pet friendly, giving a place where people can leash-walk their dogs. But we need your help, your voice, to make it happen.

Drew Heller
Kirksville resident

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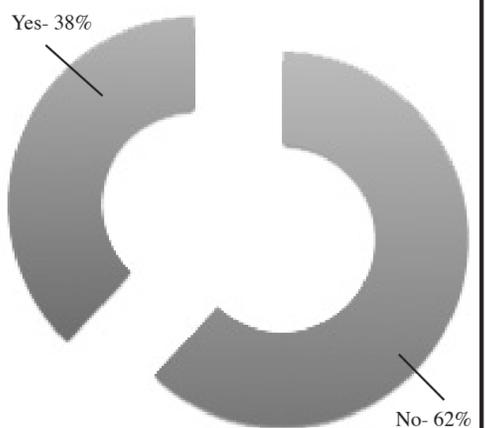
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The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, and additional copies cost 50 cents each. The production offices are located in Barnett Hall. We can be reached 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, sports editor 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.

Web Poll

Should the Department of Education funding be cut if Ron Paul is elected?



This week's web poll question:

Because of the "Kony 2012" video, what do you think about the Invisible Children organization?

Vote online at trumanindex.com