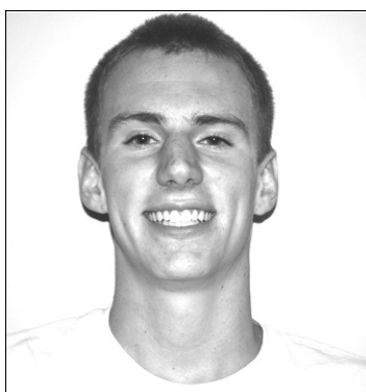


Life goes on



Editor reflects about the necessity of moving forward after tragedy

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Last week, Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Jovan Belcher shot and killed his girlfriend Kasandra Perkins, then drove to the Chiefs' compound and shot himself, according to an article on Fox Sports. During the aftermath of these horrifying and tragic events, the Chiefs and the NFL faced a difficult choice in regards to playing their game as scheduled. Belcher committed suicide Saturday morning. The Chiefs played Sunday at noon — but should they have?

Ultimately, it wasn't a question the many fans of the NFL, myself included, had much say in answering. The NFL, after conferring with the coaches and players for the Chiefs, allowed the game to proceed. The Chiefs defeated the Carolina Panthers 27-21, ending an eight game losing streak. Just a few days before Belcher's death, if you had asked a Chiefs fan how their season was going, you would have heard it was a nightmare. Incompetent quarterback play, players going through the motions and a head coach retained because of one miracle win against a then undefeated Green Bay team would have been cited as the reasons. That Saturday, however, brought some perspective to the importance of football — as well as the choice of the NFL to play the game.

After Chiefs head coach Romeo Crennel spoke with his players, it was announced that the

Chiefs' captains were unanimous in their desire to play the game as scheduled, according to the Fox Sports article. Were the players motivated by selfish desires to get paid? In short: no. Had the game been pushed back to a Monday or Tuesday, as was discussed, the game checks would have been the same.

By deciding to play the game as scheduled, the Chiefs recognized an important truth when dealing with tragic events — life goes on. Had the Chiefs waited to play the game, it would have given them time to ponder. Time to brood. Time to ask themselves if they should have noticed anything, if they could have done anything different. Instead, they played the game — and played it well, winning only their second game of the season in a clean, turnover free game. I'm not trying to make Jovan Belcher into a hero. He murdered his girlfriend and abandoned their three month old daughter. We also don't know all the facts of the situation. Was Belcher depressed? We will probably never know.

What we do know is the Chiefs rallied and played together. Football is not just a sport, particularly for some of the guys who have been playing it since they were 8. When somebody close to you dies, particularly in such a traumatic and unforeseeable fashion, it's hard not to brood. Death weighs on a person. It can blot out everything else, as if nothing matters. It's hard to get up the next morning and keep going. My grandpa died when I was 18, and there were plenty of mornings I didn't want to get up and go to school. But I did, and I didn't let his death stop me from continuing my life.

Death is hard to deal with, and everyone involved with Belcher will struggle with it. But while the Chiefs and the families of Perkins and Belcher will continue struggling throughout the days ahead, the Chiefs have taken a step toward bringing their world a little closer to normal. The decision by the Chiefs to play last Sunday wasn't about football, or not rocking the boat, or interrupting travel plans or interfering with the NFL media giant. It was about moving on, and it was the right choice.

Cantoria sells cakes and carols



Submitted photo
Members of Cantoria sing during their 47th annual pancake day Saturday at the First Christian Church. For four dollars, customers ate pancakes while listening to Christmas carols.

Editor promotes giving



Editor urges students to give back to Kirksville during the holidays

BY ASHLEY JOST
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I get it. For most of you Kirksville isn't "home." But for me, it is.

Yeah, I'm from St. Louis, but if you asked me about what was new in the Florissant/Hazelwood area, I'd have to browse Google to answer you. Ask me about Kirksville, though. Go on, I dare you.

I can appreciate that everyone will head home throughout the next few days as they finish finals, leaving very little in their wake except for a few random

oddties in apartments, homes and residence halls.

Before you go, think about what you can leave behind to make your mark on Kirksville during the holiday season. In this section, you'll read about the different things happening across town that benefit different populations throughout the area, but what have you done to contribute?

Don't get me wrong, I understand what it means to be a broke college student. I'm a journalist, which is a total labor of love. But even my empty bank account and I am going to find a way to help out with the season's service festivities.

I've decided that during finals week, for example, I'm going to spend each day doing something to pay it forward to society.

Monday I think I'll spend a few hours at the Humane Society. Tuesday I might donate one of my scarves to Kiwanis for their upcoming warm winter wear parade. Wednesday I might try to discreetly put a few dollars into a few Truman State or A.T. Still University friends' coffee account at Costa Rican Cafe Co. so they can fuel up for finals. Thursday I'll scrounge my wallet and my couch cushions for any and all change, then bring it to a Salvation Army

kettle nearby. Then Friday, after my last final, I'll call around and see where I can help out during the following week. Maybe Hope's Kitchen, maybe Helping Hands. Who knows? But I'll be there.

So, like every other column, I guess this is where I, the writer, would insert some sort of call to action, right? Do I really need to, or can you see where I'm going? Too bad, you're getting the call anyway.

Spend your holiday season doing something for other people. There always are children, the elderly, the disabled, the impoverished or college students in need. And if people don't suffice, there always are animal shelters.

You don't need to donate your money, especially since you college students have none. Time means much more to many of the people who are on the receiving end of it than any tangible good.

You might not be staying in Kirksville during winter break, but no matter where you call home, there still are people in need.

Selflessness is a beautiful feeling, and as we're coming out of a rough semester, it might not be a bad idea to find a way to ease the heart as well as the mind. Service is mutually beneficial, after all.



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