

KDIC hosts decorating contest

The Kirksville Downtown Improvement Committee is hosting "Fall in Love with Downtown," a Valentine's Day themed window-decorating competition between downtown businesses. The contest winner will be announced today.



Emily Battmer/Index

Downtown businesses, including Edna Campbell's Hidden Treasures and The Crossing thrift store, participated in the Kirksville Downtown Improvement Committee's "Fall in Love with Downtown" window decorating contest.

Press faces subsidy changes

BY ASHLEY JOST

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The Truman State University Press moved in an attempt to help bring the Press's operations closer to campus to increase exposure to the community and to convenience student employees, Budget Director Dave Rector said.

The Press moved to the third floor of the Grimm Smith Building on the corner of Patterson and Franklin streets during winter break from its former location south of campus on Franklin Street near La Harpe Street.

While other universities' presses, such as University of Missouri, have experienced issues — some closing completely — Rector said the Press at Truman has shown growth and success during the last few years. Regardless, he said there has been a plan during the last few years to make the operations at the Press self-sufficient and to eliminate the current \$50,000 subsidies coming from the University. He said the subsidy amount has decreased during the last few years, but there's no set timeline dictating when the funds will be completely removed.

"The goal is, in the next couple of years, to eliminate [the subsidy] totally," Rector said. "They've been well-managed and have a good reputation. Plus, they've carved out some specialties so they're not trying to do everything like [larger universities' presses]."

The Press, which has been operational for 27 years, used to have expenses and salaries completely covered by the University, said Nancy Rediger, University Press Editor-in-Chief. Recently, they've been asked to cover the entirety of the budgeting costs and a portion of the salaries.

"This year we have the greatest deduction of our budget ever, but we still have the full support of the President and administration," she said. "What this means for us is that we have to be careful in the [selection of the] books we publish, how we utilize our time and how efficient we are."

Rediger said she thinks there are multiple reasons the Press has and will continue to be successful on campus, including the benefits of being a smaller operation and its contribution to student learning.

"We're small enough to change with the market," Rediger said. "Sometimes small can be a hindrance in publishing, but we're now able to do things like e-book publishing, which many university presses have outsourced. [Outsourcing that process] means they're not getting as much revenue back on those products and can't control the quality. We've taken the middle man out."

Rediger said Press employees themselves how to create e-books — published books available online — two years ago and that has helped them stay viable and produce an additional type of revenue during the last few years of budget cut pressures.

Rediger said the production of e-books is now between five and 10 percent of their total revenue. The opportunities e-book production has brought to the Press is invaluable to the learning of the student interns and workers and has helped many of them move on to larger editing or publishing job opportunities,



Ashley Jost/Index

Sophomore Kailey Martin unpacks boxes of books delivered to the University Press Jan. 28 in its new office on the third floor of the Grimm Smith Building. Student workers, like Martin, have the opportunity to learn how to collaborate with authors and work with e-books, experience Martin said has been invaluable.

she said.

Senior Ashley Butner interned for the Press during last summer and said she enjoyed it so much she continued to work as a volunteer last fall. She now receives institutional pay for her work converting one of the Press's books to an e-book.

"It was an unexpected wealth of experience, connections and knowledge about something I was familiar with as a reader, but had no experience behind-the-scenes with," Butner said. "I am completely confident that I'll end up finding a job because of what I've learned."

Butner said she hopes the Press will continue to thrive because of the opportunities it provides employees to work with published authors and gain hands-on experience in publishing.

Rector said in the "higher education budgeting world," the Press is called an ancillary operation, meaning it relates to the University's mission because of the production of books and the learn-

ing opportunities for students, just not as direct instruction. Because of this, it's best to run it like a small business, he said.

"After what happened at the University of Missouri, I had a friend call me asking if we would be closing our press too," Rector said. "I told him we just spent [about \$10,000] creating a new and better space for our Press, so obviously we don't plan on closing any time soon."

The money toward the new space for the Press allowed the University to install new carpet, paint and other updates the office needed, Rector said.

The building the Press moved out of currently is vacant because the University hasn't decided what they'd like to do with the building next, Rector said. He said among the ideas they're considering, one involves moving some Physical Plant operations to the old building to be closer to the Delaney Baldwin buildings where some of the Plant's other operations are housed.

ITS completes upgrades

ITS completes campus-wide technology upgrades during winter break

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Classrooms and computer labs across campus received multiple upgrades during winter break.

More than 600 classroom computers and public computer operating systems were updated as part of an annual update, seven classrooms received new projectors and control systems and the campus storage systems were revitalized, among other projects, said Donna Liss, ITS Chief Information Officer.

Liss said the biggest project, which affected almost everyone on campus, is the implementation of the newest version of Blackboard.

Before the upgrade, Liss said a group of faculty and staff from the Blackboard committee looked at the tools and features with the new version of the online program, and decided they wanted to use it.

Senior Julia Judlin said she has yet to notice any feature changes with Blackboard aside from the colors and designs, but she has heard from other students who have classes that function using Blackboard say that they've noticed a few changes.

She said as a teacher's assistant during the past, she's experienced the hassle of trying to help students who have been timed out of quizzes online or had problems with discussion posts, but hasn't heard if students have experienced those problems yet this semester.

So far, she said she's grateful all of the main links for courses are in the same places, making the transition easier.

An additional winter break project included the installation of new projectors and audio-visual control systems in seven classrooms across campus. These control devices were developed by ITS staff, Liss said, and piloted last semester, proving to be efficient and saving about \$4,000 per classroom.

The control panels allow the user to turn on the projector, the DVD player, control the volume and power the SMART board, unlike before when each classroom had a different system, she said.

"The hope is to install 60 more controllers during the spring and summer," Liss said.

Mathematics professor Jay Belanger said while he has noticed faster Internet, he hasn't experienced any of the other upgrades yet.

Belanger teaches college algebra and plane trigonometry online courses to a few hundred students each semester, offering open computer lab hours and testing opportunities where students use some of the public computer labs that have experienced operating system upgrades. He said he has yet to hear from his students about these lab changes.

Liss said these larger updates were routine and occur about three times each year, though what they update changes each time. Otherwise, she said there almost always is some type of upgrade.