

## Our View

# Time between elections is also important

It seems that for the past several weeks as the elections drew nearer, our social awareness antennas have been on high alert. The most apathetic among us cannot escape a basic knowledge of campaigns and the ambivalent have formed some opinion, however abstract or misinformed, about the direction our country should be taking.

We, as a group of writers dedicated to discovering and reporting the facts year round, have one request — don't stop your involvement in politics once you cast your ballot.

The world doesn't stop spinning, news doesn't stop happening and our leaders don't stop governing. The time between elections, when few of us are paying attention to politics, also is when the most important decisions get made.

The most dangerous thing we can do is look away from the political arena. Democracy functions best if we watch the people we place in power and hold them accountable, not just for election day, but all year, every year they're in office.

We should have relationships with our legislators. They have an obligation to work and serve us, and it is up to us to keep them honest. People fear election years because they're afraid of who will be elected — but instead we should pay equal attention to the off years for what could happen in offices while few are watching.

Legislative accountability is up to us. Read the news, write your legislator occasionally, sign up for newsletter from a local political group.

Whatever you do, don't look away. Don't quit. Don't give up after you vote and don't get discouraged if your candidate doesn't win. Those moments of defeat require the most careful attention, the most scrutiny.

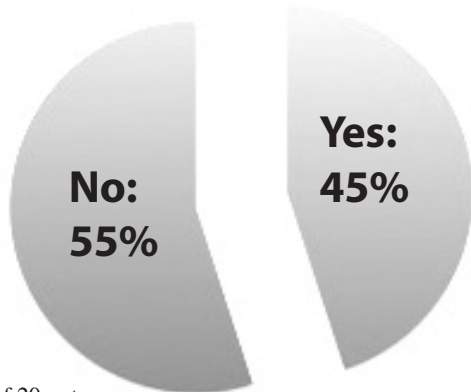
The political process between elections deserves excitement, too.

Where are all the excited Facebook statuses when house bills move out of committee and onto floor debate? Where is the Twitter storm when governors propose new budgets? Bureaucracy has the potential to be beautiful. Embrace it.

So stay tuned, remain informed and get excited for 2014. Meanwhile, in between now and the next election season, we'll still be here, reporting the everyday excitement of an off year.

## Web Poll

Are you looking forward to the new Star Wars films produced by Disney?



\*out of 20 votes

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## Corrections

In last week's page 16 story "Men's soccer defeats Upper Iowa State" "Upper Iowa State" is incorrectly named. The school's actual name is "Upper Iowa University."

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please email [index.editor@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## Letter to the Editor

### Third parties deserve Americans' consideration

Your paper is doing the whole community a great service in your final election issue. By suggesting post-results issues, we need a wider debate as to the whole efficacy of the very debates we have all been so restrictively given so far! Hopefully, you won't bourgeois-style yourselves, restrict such a wider debate to merely a we readers' opinion poll and a few columnists. Very debatively themselves, throwing out "condescension" jibes at the current US Vice President, unjustly because he rightly defended his form of pro-women's choice, social reform Catholicism against the intolerant pietism of jumped-up Mr. Ryan's version.

For me, what spotlights what's wrong with what we have all had to endure for nearly a year and a half in commercial, corporate US TV and papers non-college are two unsavory images! I wish I could free from my mind as both are so flagrantly Stalinist intolerant about what we were all not permitted to real-life "debate". Firstly, most recently here were largely fat, well-fed and, young alas, Romney supporters in Florida shouting down peacefully heckling and placarding "Climate Control" long-haired youths with nasty "USA! USA!" ignorance chants. Yet all these protesters were seeking was to get even one answer from the Right's official champion. As to "why," he refuses to talk about the issue, unlike as a State Governor, because he fears today's corporate-religious GOP climate-change deniers.

Then, lastly, in shame on, we the Left Center side, there was the truly upsetting spectacle only Free Speech TV and Russia Today TV and retired Larry King anchor in programs like "Democ-

racy Now" have third party coverage, have spotlighted in sheer outrage of our, yes, own kinds of suppression! Namely the shocking arrest, manhandling, cuffing by Hofstra New York so-called liberal arts "university," of both medicinal physician Dr. Jill Stein and her working class VP Green Party presidential running mate. When Ralph Nader predated, they both tried to access the Obama-Romney bi-partisan debates at the campus. Not only did "Live" we see Stein assaulted. But Hofstra DPS had even hired "a warehouse" where she was held even without lawyer access in denial of her debate rights. Please note, the Greens are the 5th largest elected group in the Strasbourg European Assembly, and have, here in the USA, with around 100 elected officials, the largest third party left representation since Norman Thomas 1930's Socialists articulating constructive remedies well real left of Obama's "liberal" rhetoric!

I submit, thus to your debate about your debates, the following radical thoughts. Until the USA can restore League of Women Voters fair non-commercial debates at all media levels, ban TV ads abusiveness; and give free air time as both Canada and my native UK, or France do today, you will not get real debate here. Just rich guys shouting at each other, all supposedly "moderated" by commercial journalists far too embedded inside to ask hence real debate queries on all we unrepresented types behalf. Vox Populi in the USA does not yet exist.

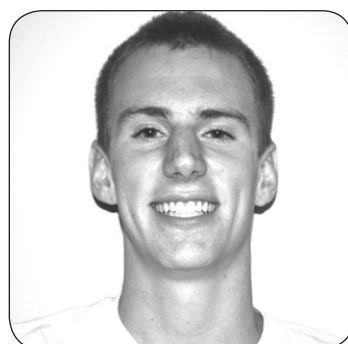
Larry Iles  
Kirksville resident

## Cartoon

By Megan Archer



# Preparing meals saves money



John Brooks

As current residents of the residence halls will tell you, Sodexo might not always boast the best food. I'm not interested in discussing the quality of the food they provide. Rather, I would like to look at what gets students the best bang for their buck: Sodexo's meal plan for off-campus students, or buying food from local restaurants and using groceries from Hy-Vee.

Sodexo's meal plans for off campus students cost \$1,185 per semester, according to Truman's business office website. I'm not a math major, but if you double that, it brings it to \$2,370 per year.

For the simplicity's sake, I'm going to make a few suppositions. Let's say you have a budget of \$15 for eating out each week. That would cover one meal at a more expensive restaurant like Colton's or two at one of the cheaper options like Taco Bell or

McDonald's. Now, Sodexo's meal plan doesn't cover your need for food when Truman's classes are not in session. Looking at Truman's calendar for the this year, I see the residence halls — and the dining areas — are available to students 227 days total. If we divide this by seven, it rounds down to 32 weeks — the amount of time you would have to feed yourself.

Back to the question of how much it would cost to feed yourself for 32 weeks. I previously supposed that a reasonable budget for eating off campus would be \$15 per week. Fifteen times 32 is \$480. Obviously, man and woman cannot live off fast-food alone. I mean, they sort of can, but it's probably a bad idea. Let's assume, then, that for the rest of your meals, you provide food for yourself from the grocery store.

Let's give you an allowance of \$50 per week of groceries, or \$200 per month. That's not too much, but you are eating out once or twice a week to add some variety. Fifty multiplied by 32 is \$1600, so at that rate you still would be spending less than you would if you went with the Sodexo plan. Is \$200 per month for groceries realistic? During September — the most recent date of the survey — the U.S. Department of Agriculture found the monthly cost for a low-cost plan for a male aged 19-50 was \$233.20, while the cost for a female aged 19-50 was \$202.40, according to the USDA's

website. If you're willing to spend less, the USDA found that a thrifty plan cost males 19-50 \$180.60 per month and females 19-50 \$160.40 per month. So, at \$480 for eating out, \$1600 for groceries, or \$2080 total, it is reasonable to say you could save money by preparing your own food as opposed to buying the off campus meal plan, particularly if you cut money from the eating out category.

When we look at the math behind the Sodexo off-campus meal plan, the facts that it doesn't factor in the cost of breakfast — which can be a fairly cheap meal — and relies on you buying your food at places that are not always open during the school year, at sometimes inflated prices, are clearly negative factors. However, if you frequently are rushed for time, don't enjoy cooking, shopping for groceries or budgeting to keep your food prices down, the Sodexo plan might be a good option. Granted, a meal at the dining hall is not the same as a meal you cooked yourself. For me, there's really no clear-cut option, though I admit the idea of preparing all my food for myself is somewhat terrifying. It's really up to you. There is money to be saved, if you don't mind a little extra work, go about it the right way and budget carefully.

John Brooks is a sophomore English and communication major from Columbia, Mo.

### Editorial Policy

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 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.

### Letters Policy

The Index welcomes letters to the editor from the University community. Letters to the editor are due by noon the Monday before publication and become property of the Index. Submissions are subject to editing, must contain a well-developed theme and cannot exceed 500 words except at the discretion of the Editorial Board. Letters containing personal attacks will not be published. All letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, signed by at least one individual and include a phone number for verification. They must be submitted by email to [index.opinionseditor@gmail.com](mailto:index.opinionseditor@gmail.com) or on our website at [www.trumanindex.com](http://www.trumanindex.com). Include the words "letter to the editor" in the subject line of the e-mail. The Index does not publish anonymous letters to the editor. No individual may submit more than one letter a week.

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