

Kirksville celebrates bacon



Left, Kraft Foods Plant Manager Thuan Moran hands out BLT sandwiches Saturday at the second annual Bacon Fest on the Square. Above, pastor Chris Cordes takes a bite of his sandwich. Bacon Fest was organized as a fundraiser for local food pantries and included events such as recipe contests, a beauty pageant and an Oscar Mayer Wiernmobile appearance.

Online learning curtails knowledge



BY JENNIFER MARKS
Assistant Features Editor
index.featureseditor@gmail.com

Online classes are the pits. Other than improved disease control, the Internet might be the greatest perk of living during the 21st century. I love Facebook, Skype and Wikipedia as much as the next person. The Internet is great, except when it comes to online learning.

High school was my first exposure to the pitfalls of online learning. Because I'm a complete overachiever, I signed up for AP Art History online. Not only was the entire year-long course self-paced, my "supervisor" was a teacher in Florida. Had I been a Florida resident, that would have been just dandy, except I was more than 1,000 miles away in Missouri. In addition, there was no textbook and no course pack. It was just my computer screen. I finished the course and scraped by with an "A," but only after dealing with quizzes that most students would cheat their way through, a crashed computer during the final and hundreds of multiple choice questions testing only rote memorization.

After high school, I thought I was free of online classes. Boy, was I wrong. During my freshman year at Truman State, I was forced into the online Trigonometry class. I'm a history and English double major, so math isn't exactly my forte. I'm not sure who decided online math was the best choice for non-math majors, but that probably was not the best decision. My friends (who are

exceedingly intelligent) struggled more with online Trig than any other class. The majority who didn't drop the class passed using questionable and occasionally dubious means. I, on the other hand, spent four hours in the testing center taking the various versions of the second exam until I had an A. By that time, I just had to memorize the answers from the previous tests. Not much legitimate learning going on there.

Education should be like most of my history and English professors — inherently perfect. When I sign up for a class, I have high expectations for the quality of learning I will receive.

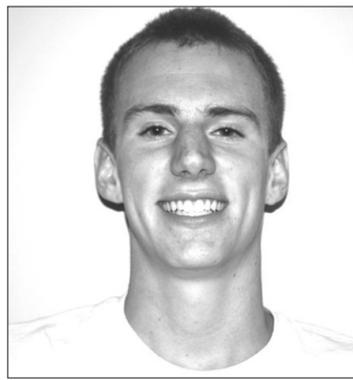
First off, I want a real professor. I want a tangible person, not an email address or a virtual instructor. Furthermore, a professor's attire might be the most important judge of his or her teaching methods. I expect a professor wearing a sweater and loafers — spectacles and classy facial hair are optional — to stand in front of the class and write almost illegible notes on the chalkboard. If it's not a sweater, I expect a tweed suit jacket with elbow pads. There needs to be a healthy dose of quirk in my professors. Cat lady professors are completely acceptable. In fact, they are down-right encouraged.

As far as actual instruction, I want him or her to intentionally leave out a few questions that will be on the exam to test my critical thinking skills. My professor should also know my name and be able to recognize me from a moderate distance on The Quad. If the professor desires a discussion-based class, I want it to contain no more than 20 people. I can lead the discussion, but I need feedback and a guide to where we should be going.

I also want active learning. I want to build a cathedral with people, or have to recite 10 lines from Shakespeare. And when I receive a test or essay back, there should be real words on it, written with some sort of writing utensil. Finally, I either want a textbook or combination of smaller, real books, or both. I want to be able to touch my reading materials, not just read them on a screen.

I've experienced all of these qualifications of excellent learning environments while a student here. Now it's just time to let everyone experience true learning. I know I have high standards — but so does Truman.

Technology and narcissism damage



BY JOHN BROOKS
Staff Reporter

It's common to see people text or even take phone calls during movies. "Hang on just a sec, bro. Let me take this call. Nothing, just watching a movie. We're down by the front." We're a rude, loud, self-centered society. Where did the politeness go? Where did self-awareness and shame go? We text at social gatherings, talk during movies, don't hold doors for people and mock each other every chance we get.

When we aren't interacting face-to-face, we revel in the anonymity of the Internet. It gives us the chance to say everything we ever wanted to with none of the consequences. Hidden behind our computer screens, we feel free to say whatever pops into our heads, regardless of who it might hurt. Maybe we're overstimulated. Maybe we see more pain and suffering on a wider scale than our parents or grandparents because of the nature of news in the Internet age. I can read the headline, "19 Dead in Plane Crash" and barely feel a twinge of sorrow for the victims because I've read similar headlines daily for years.

The advent of the Internet has brought out rude attitudes online. But we're rude in person, too. Men smirk at poor athletic ability and women critique one another's appearance. We can't wait to tear each other apart to make ourselves feel better.

So what's the underlying cause of our rude, loud society? It's difficult to say with certainty what the cause behind anything is, just ask any historian. But I think the reason our society is obnoxious, insensitive and boorish is because our general attention has turned inward to ourselves.

We live in a me-first world. My sweet 16 birthday party, my car, my house, my phone. I don't want to take anything away from people who have worked hard and who enjoy the fruits of their labors. I do take issue when I see spoiled brats on MTV throw temper tantrums because daddy didn't buy them the right car. How can anyone truly feel the world owes them anything? It doesn't. But we, my generation, think it does, because by and large we've never really needed anything.

Let's imagine for a moment that you know how to juggle. You're pretty good at it. In fact, you're the best juggler at Truman State. Big deal, that's a few thousand people out of billions. We have an internal narrative in which we are the heroes of our lives, and we deserve to be happy and end up with the perfect person because we are so awesome — even though nobody appreciates it. But in reality, we are not so awesome.

Because we believe the world owes us a comfortable life, we do things like stand in line all day for \$800 phones to replace our \$600 phones. While it's certainly a person's right to make that choice, actions like these reflect an over-privileged mindset. If you get the chance, visit a country with less wealth than America. Preferably a lot less. They're pretty easy to find, even though we would like to ignore them most of the time. When I visited Mexico three years ago, I saw homes the size of my bathroom. I saw people with one garment. And we whine when our computer's battery drops below 10 percent. We have so much, and we take it for granted because we think we deserve it. We can't think about anyone else because we're so focused on ourselves.

Not only are we obsessed with ourselves, but we're obsessed with celebrity status. Shows like American Idol make millions promising to make somebody famous — and everybody at those auditions knows it's them. They've got the dream and the ambition and the talent. They want the attention and the spotlight, but 99.9 percent of them will fail pursuing an ultimately selfish and meaningless goal.

Our lives revolve around ourselves. We don't think about others, and our actions reveal this fact. For many people, their parents have provided everything they could need or even want. But we can't get enough, and many of us will spend our whole lives selfishly pursuing more for us and, by consequence, less for others. We have nobody to blame but ourselves.

202 S. Hwy 63, Greentop, MO
660-949-2130

Serving Fresh, Local Food & Drinks
With food made from scratch, our menu features locally-raised beef & pork.
We also use local produce as much as possible.

Open Wednesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. & 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. with a
Sunday Brunch Buffet from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

www.sebrees.com
Check us out on Facebook for our daily specials.
Reservations required for parties of 8 or more.

Parrish... FURNITURE 1002 N. Osteopathy
Kirksville, MO 660-665-7557

WE CARRY ONLY THE BEST BRANDS FOR ALL YOUR FURNITURE NEEDS!!

ASHLEY ENGLANDER KING & KOIL COASTER COMFORT SOLUTIONS Signature DESIGN ASHLEY

- * DESKS/HUTCHES
- * BOOKCASES/ SHELVES
- * SOFA/LOVESEAT SETS
- * RECLINERS
- * LAMPS, MIRRORS & ACCESSORIES
- * COFFEE / END TABLES
- * BEDROOM SUITES
- * TV STANDS
- * TABLES / CHAIRS
- * PICTURES, DECOR & MUCH MORE

Buy It Today ...

SLEEP ON IT TONIGHT!
Mon - Fri - 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
* SAME DAY IN TOWN DELIVERY ON MOST PURCHASES

Wide Selection for EVERY Room or Dorm Room

Tower Loan
12 Months
NO Interest

REDUCED DELIVERY RATES

FAST FRIENDLY SERVICE

LOWEST PRICES TO SAVE YOU MONEY

Find us on Facebook

VISIT US @ www.parrishfurniturestore.com