



Moving in shouldn't be such hassle



Adam Rollins

I moved into my room in Ryle Hall almost two weeks before classes began this semester. Besides the odd experience of a nearly-empty Truman State campus, I enjoyed a mostly observational perspective of the fall move-in process.

I was reminded how much effort is put forth to make new student move-in as smooth as possible. Not only were there volunteers directing traffic at major campus intersections, there also were Truman staff members at each residence hall to assist students with checking in and finding their rooms, and even student volunteers from Greek Life and other campus organizations waiting to help unload and carry luggage and furniture. I even was sent an e-mail two days before the move-in stating all vehicles must be removed from residence hall parking lots to make room for freshmen and their families to park and unload.

Fast-forward two days — I finally retrieved my car from Stokes Stadium's parking lot and moved it back to Ryle Hall, and then noticed something that astounded me. Ryle Hall's parking spaces were nearly all occupied the night before upperclassmen were supposed to arrive.

A survey of the vehicles around me offered an explanation. Most of the cars had a single, green, home plate-shaped parking decal at the bottom left of their rear windows, implying most were owned by the freshmen who had moved in two days prior. A quick look revealed the same situation behind all the residence halls on the east side of campus — a large majority of parking space occupied before most students returned to campus.

The end result at Ryle was many students parked across the street in the only generally-open parking lot, and then having to move their belongings across the busy street into the back door. I helped a couple friends move in, and we had to make several trips to carry many bags and boxes by hand because the carts all were taken. I remember last year being even worse, with all available parking spaces crowded with people moving in during the oppressive heat of a summer drought. That day was miserable.

Maybe I'm being selfish, but I would like to see a greater effort by Truman to facilitate as smooth a move-in for the upperclassmen as they take so much care to do for the freshmen. Even things as simple as reserving convenient parking spaces or stretches of curb as designated unloading zones would benefit the process. That way, people like me won't have to haul awkward, heavy bags of clothes an extra 300 feet through a parking lot, a park and across a busy street.

This year and last I wished we had as much help as was available my freshman year. I have no ill feelings toward this year's freshmen, but why weren't they asked to move their cars to make room for the upperclassmen moving back into the residence halls? It would seem like the right thing to do, considering freshmen are a minority of the population, at least in Ryle.

Why wasn't there a throng of student volunteers waiting to help my friends and I move their belongings into the building? I understand freshmen are prime recruiting targets for Greek Life, but can't someone in Residence Life convince Greek Life to help both days, instead of just one?

Why does Truman seem to be less concerned with assisting the larger body of students to move back in? Just because we've gone through the process once or twice before doesn't mean we suddenly enjoy carrying heavy boxes in the heat.

I think many students would agree with me when I ask for more assistance. We shouldn't have to feel nostalgic when we wish for a few helping hands.

Adam Rollins is a junior communication major from St. Charles, Mo.

Sex offender registry changes are ill-advised



Sarah Muir

A big change is on the horizon for Missouri juvenile sex offender law as the Legislature considers overriding Governor Nixon's veto on House Bill 301. Lawmakers should think twice before they cause a serious public safety issue. While reform is needed, the poorly-worded HB 301 is not the answer. Lawmakers should not override Governor Nixon's veto.

House Bill 301 addresses several issues, but most controversially, it changes laws regarding juvenile sex offenders. According to this bill, anyone younger than 18 when they committed any sex offense immediately will be removed from public notification sex registry websites, according to the bill. These are the websites that allow the public to look up registered sex offenders throughout their area.

Additionally, the bill allows juveniles to petition courts five years after their conviction or release from custody to be removed from the state's sex offender reg-

istry. According to an Aug. 22 Missouri Times article, 870 sex offenders could be removed from the Missouri registries.

An override is well within the realm of possibility. According to an Aug. 21 CBS-St. Louis article, the bill passed the House 153-0 and the Senate 28-4. A two-thirds majority is needed to override the Governor's veto in both chambers.

To support removing juveniles from public registries, the bill's sponsor, Rep. Kevin Engler, R-116, uses examples of minor offenses that now have left a permanent mark on the offenders' life, like public urination or a 17 year old and a 14 year old having consensual sex, according to The Missouri Times article.

While I agree there are certain offenses that can place someone who isn't a threat to anyone on the sex offender registry, the bill doesn't make the distinction between minor offenses and serious ones.

This bill removes juveniles from the public registry who were convicted of public urination but also removes juveniles who were convicted of rape, sexual assault and sodomy. I have a hard time accepting that a person convicted of rape should be removed from the registry just because they happened to be younger than 18 when they committed the offense. If lawmakers want to stop grouping these different types of offenses together, they should have written the bill as such.

The public registry websites are quite popular too. The Missouri State Highway Patrol website had 4.2 million hits

during the last year alone, according to The Missouri Times article. Whether it's parents searching for a new neighborhood before choosing to raise a child there or a young adult trying to find a safe neighborhood to buy their first home, these websites are useful to people. Removing all juvenile sex offenders makes the sites less useful than they should be. People should be able to feel safe in their own house — knowing if sex offenders live nearby is part of that.

Then there are the victims of these offenders. Victims aren't allowed to voice their opinions before offenders are removed from the public registries or when they petition to be removed from the state registry. Even if you believe the public shouldn't have this information about juvenile offenders, the victims certainly can claim some right to it. The current laws are in place to protect victims and this bill goes directly against that mission.

In this case, bad reform is worse than no reform, and that's exactly what HB 301 is — bad reform. Missouri's Legislature definitely should consider reforming the sex offender registries, but should do so in a way that grants victims a chance to be heard and separates serious offenses from lesser ones.

Sarah Muir is a sophomore political science major from Lee's Summit, Mo.

What's your favorite aspect of where you live?

"I live in Centennial Hall. People are so friendly in the dorms. You get to be friends with people faster."

Amber Wienhaus sophomore

"I live in Mo Hall. You can sit in the lobby and everyone walks by and says hi ... It's a pretty friendly place."

Zach Vogel freshman

"I live [off campus] in a fraternity property. Being with brothers ... and being on your own [is my favorite aspect]."

Dan Richards junior

"I live in Mo Hall. My favorite thing is how the girls in my hallway have become really close in the week we've been here."

Sophia McCormick sophomore



AROUND THE QUAD

Living on campus has costs and benefits



Mackenzie McDermott

Going away to college, especially where you don't know a soul, is a terrifying and exhilarating proposition. While I felt plenty of excitement during move-in day my freshman year, a good portion of my emotion was complete and utter dread. But as I walked into my residence hall for the first time, there were smiles, handshakes and welcomes left and right. I found the residence halls are extremely friendly places.

Living on campus is a huge part of being a freshman and becoming acclimated to the college environment. Spotting the huge groups of freshmen on their way to Ryle Hall will be easy these first few weeks, but that shouldn't deter them from sticking together. That's a privilege you get from living on campus — the security of a big group of people you have gotten to know very well from living in close quarters with one another.

Living in a residence hall means you get an entire hallway of instant acquaintances — and some very close friends — in a place you arrived knowing no one.

Residence hall common areas help you meet people you never would come into contact with in a different situation. I was correct to fear shoebox-sized rooms, but not evil roommates or inevitable shouting matches that might come with four girls sharing one bathroom.

My first night in the residence hall, about 10 strangers and I sat in a lounge with a guitar making up songs about each other — scary, indeed. Because of the familiarity, old, creaky, haunted, not air-conditioned Grim Hall became home to me, right down to the uncomfortable couches and occasional heavy flooding.

Aside from the perks of being a freshman living on campus, there are plenty of other benefits to cramped residence hall living — buffets of food prepaid and available for you at every meal, proximity to classes and amenities like water and electricity without paying any bills.

I live in an off-campus apartment this year, and so far I have had one meal that didn't come out of a can, so appreciate the abundant, if sometimes not-so-delicious, amount of food that comes with your meal plan.

Living on campus also means very short walks to class. An extra two or three blocks doesn't seem like

it should matter. And it might not, if we didn't go to school in Kirksville, also known as the coldest place that isn't inhabited by penguins. Being across the street from your class is an absolute life-saver when there are gale-force winds and two feet of snow on the ground.

Having said all this, there also is an argument to be made for assuming the responsibility of an apartment off campus. I had a great time living in the residence halls, and I wouldn't give that time up. However, this year I wanted my own living room and kitchen and not to be locked out of my living quarters because it's 10:30 and I forgot my Truman ID.

My apartment will become home the same way my residence hall did, and I feel a lot more like an adult than I did last year. Living in an apartment means paying bills and dealing with landlords and loud neighbors — all things that add responsibility and help you grow up

a little more than cushy residence hall life allows.

Privacy isn't an issue off-campus, and neither are quiet hours, renting pots and pans or swiping into residence halls after midnight. Also, there is so much room. The bedrooms accommodate regular-sized beds where your feet don't hang off the bottom, and you can sit up without hitting your head. The added decorations you can put in an apartment living room make it feel more homey than a residence hall space ever could.

But no matter where you live, the important thing is to have a friend who never uses their meal plan and will swipe you into the dining halls when you're out of money or meals.

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