

Our View International partnership is a smart move

Last week, a delegation from Truman State, including University President Troy Paino, traveled to the Balkan states in southern Europe to facilitate a partnership with a United Nations-affiliated European Centre for Peace and Development. We, the Index Editorial Board, think this international partnership is a step in the right direction for Truman, the ECPD and the two nations involved.

Paino, along with Patrick Lecaque, President of the Center for International Education and Kevin Minch, Director of the Truman Institute, promised Truman's continued cooperation with the ECPD-associated universities of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. Although no concrete plans have been made yet, Truman and the ECPD are committed to future joint educational and research activities.

The partnership represents Truman's participation in international academic discourse. The spreading of knowledge can only be beneficial — and not just to the partners in the agreement. This is Truman's opportunity to assist indirectly with the economic, social and cultural development of the Balkan states, which were torn by the war between Bosnians and Serbians less than two decades ago.

However, Truman — and the United States as a whole — stands to benefit from the partnership. We are excited for the possibilities of the agreement, and hope Truman students will have the opportunity to serve as ambassadors for this country. We hope this will benefit relations between the two nations — even if only by exposing Bosnians, Serbians and Croatians to American students. We also see how it might serve as a cultural experience for these lucky Truman students, as cultural understanding is the key to preventing terrible tragedies like the Bosnian genocide.

There is an old adage that claims two heads are better than one — we also hope Truman's agreement with the ECPD will be a boon to scholarship for the two institutions. One of a university's chief purposes is to generate and compile knowledge for the public good. While the partnership initially might seem strange, we see this as an opportunity for Truman — a liberal arts institution — to acquire new knowledge that brings new perspectives to contemporary issues.

We hope the institutions develop an exchange student program — we would welcome more Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian students on Truman's campus, and we hope our students would equally be welcome to serve as ambassadors and scholars at their universities.

Allow yourself to relax over break

About a week from now, Truman State students will be thrown into a time offering two extremes — the comfort of rest, family and food, and the stress of impending finals, projects and presentations. Each student will have to decide the big question of the season — will I study during break, or will I give in to the temptation to forget about school for one glorious week?

After three Truman Thanksgiving breaks, I know what I'll probably end up doing — I will tell myself I'll study, but I'll end up spending very little time productively.

When I pack my bags during the last day of class, I'll be sure to fill my carry-on bags with textbooks, envisioning a version of myself who can study on planes. I'll arrive at my house, dump my bags in my room and head out to dinner to catch up with my parents. As the week progresses, I'll occasionally pick up my books and try to absorb information, but mostly I'll be too distracted to make much progress. Then suddenly it'll be time to head back to school.

It is possible to study during break if you take some time away from your family and other distractions. If you tell them you love them but you need to take a bit of time to go through a few sections so you can pass your class, I'm sure they'll understand.

However, you'll have to decide if it's worth it to study. It's getting close to the end of the semester, so maybe spending your break buried in your textbooks will help you do well in your classes. On the other hand, juggling schoolwork with travel and family time might burn you out, leaving you too exhausted to buckle down to work when you return to school for the final push.

As with most things, I think the answer lies somewhere in the middle. I plan to set some time apart to study for my hardest classes, but I think mental recuperation is important for preparing for finals.

This is a busy time of year, before and after Thanksgiving break, so consider taking this oasis of time to focus on relaxing and spending time with your family before heading back into the fray.

Megan Archer is a senior computer science major from Morrison, Colo.

Letter to the Editor

The Index needs to provide more thorough pre-election coverage

We are grateful to both C. Berry for his reporting of local election results of November 4 and my good colleagues Matt Eichor and Rebecca McClanahan for their supportive electoral comments on last Tuesday's Voting Day local electoral victories. The reporting of local election day results gave needed information. I respectfully note the lead letter of A. Wheeler which praised the Index for its general election coverage and I, myself, praise Wheeler for his desire to be well-informed as a civic-minded citizen who values the right and privilege of voting.

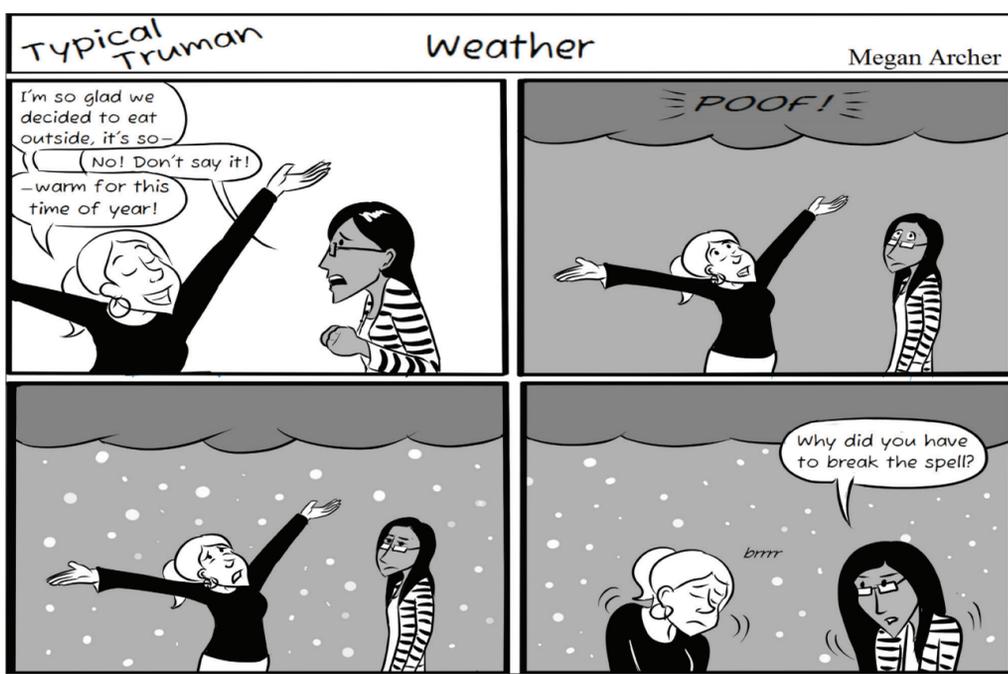
Election day coverage was effective and helpful and the Index gave very worthy reporting of that important day's events. Perhaps, in the future, the Index will also give more pre-election reporting, to help make the university community aware of approaching elections, candidates to consider, their positions and experience. The Kirksville Daily Express and our university's alternative news publication, The Monitor, provide this service and admirably

have increased their pre-election coverage space of races of local elections. With barely 75 students who voted in this precinct and less than six in the Republican primary last August, there is no cause for complacency or apathy, although your pictures did welcomingly show two students campus precinct voting this last Tuesday. We are a community who wants to encourage civic engagement, whose former President Magruder courageously ran for local School Board, and from among whom both still serving and retired faculty serve on local city commissions and give devoted political participation and community service, such as Dr. Cynthia Cooper who has brought the Adair Women's Democratic Club into the state federation, our independent colleagues Kuhns and Carpenter whose respect for civic engagement led them to hold City Council and Mayoral responsibilities in our community and for the many citizens of Kirksville, and administrators, faculty, students and staff who give of themselves to local and global service. For the civic value we profess, I also will be entering a local political race in

hopes of bringing one woman and one educator onto a five man City Council.

The Index has done splendid, moving reporting on social, human interest and environmental concerns and for that, we are most proud. But many are concerned at the great and pressing need for pre-election in-depth coverage to help students particularly but also the entire university community understand and realize how vital is the need to prepare oneself to carry out the most precious civic right and act of engagement our democracy grants us — the right to vote and to participate in determining our city, our county, our state and our nation's government. A few months ago, your newspaper advised students not to vote if they didn't feel well informed about the issues. We look to our community newspapers, to help inform and prepare us for the responsibility of voting. We hope to see more of your professional and helpful reporting through much more pre-election coverage.

Betty L. McLane-Iles
French Professor



Look up pronunciations



Conor Gearin

If you do not learn how to pronounce a person's name, at least do not say you are going to "butcher" it.

"Butchering" implies a method — careful and deliberate deconstruction, often of a cow or chicken. It requires training and uses sanitary techniques for safe food preparation.

The way people say they "butcher" names is an insult to the profession of butchering. Instead, they should use verbs such as demolish, ruin or obliterate.

It is especially jarring, given the context where I most often hear people say they are about to "butcher" a name is during student presentations. The student first warns the class they are about to "butcher" the name of a historical figure — perhaps Simone de Beauvoir, Mao Tse-tung or Gabriel Garcia Márquez. This calls extra attention to the fact that the student has not looked up how to pronounce the name to prepare for her or his presentation. This strikes me as rather sad, because sound files modeling the pronunciation of names from other cultures are available on Wikipedia.

Then the student delivers on the promise, giving a painfully flat pronunciation — about as pleasant to hear as if they had decided to scrape a nail across the chalkboard instead of actually attempting to pronounce the name.

In the event a student does not take the required two minutes to learn such a name, I would suggest not alerting anyone to this lack of effort and going straight ahead with the flat pronunciation. This at least minimizes the amount of time wasted.

I understand it is challenging for someone who has spoken only English to attempt to pronounce Russian

patronymics or Chinese place names. In many cases there are multiple ways to transliterate the word into English, meaning that because the languages' alphabets are different, there are multiple ways to write the word. However, taking the effort to pronounce these like a speaker of the language would show respect for the particular culture.

This is especially important given that we have many international students at Truman State. As native English speakers, if we do not take the opportunity to learn names beyond those considered typically American, we are not showing students from other countries the same welcome we would hope to receive if we studied in another country.

Not saying a person's name correctly suggests you do not think their identity deserves the same respect as yours. The process of learning someone's name is the first step toward becoming friends with them. If you never can say people's names correctly, this sends a signal that you do not think very highly of them.

I certainly admit being intimidated at pronouncing names from other cultures — such as Kilconquhar, which the Daily Record ranks as one of the 15 most difficult to pronounce Scottish place names. But resources for general pronunciation rules, as well as for specific names, now are abundant on the Internet for many languages and dialects. I used the internet to learn "Kilconquhar" is pronounced somewhat different than I had expected, as "Kin-uck-ar." It only took a minute to look up, and now I can pronounce it with ease.

Even if NPR reporters on the radio sometimes carry their enthusiasm to pronounce foreign names accurately to comical extremes — a precisely pronounced Chinese government leader's name, for example, dropped in abruptly among normally pronounced English words — I still think taking the step to learn more about a name has lasting benefits. I remember how charming it was to hear my Russian host family say my name when I studied in St. Petersburg. I could hear their accent, but I could tell they wanted to get it right.

Conor Gearin is a senior biology and English major from St. Louis, Mo.

Editorial Policy

The Index is published Thursdays during the academic 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 Editorial Board consists of the editor-in-chief, managing editor and opinions editor. 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 and submitted by e-mail to index.opinionseditor@gmail.com or at <http://tmn.truman.edu/theindex>. 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 per week.

Advertising Policy

For up-to-date information on current advertising rates or to inquire about the availability of classified ads, contact the TMN Advertising Manager at 660-785-4449 or advertising.trumanmedia@gmail.com

Contact

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, email index.editor@gmail.com, call 660-785-4449 or submit a letter via tmn.truman.edu/theindex.