

# GAS ON THE RISE

Increased sanctions on Russia lead to gas price increases

aubrey LACAVICH

Aubrey Adams, junior, usually spent \$37 to fill up the tank of her 2010 Mini Cooper. Since the rise in prices, she now pays about \$50.

"I feel trapped because I have to stay home more often," Adams said. "Now, I have to be more conscious of my spending."

Driving is her way to clear her mind.

Although Adams' parents pay for her gas money, she is still concerned about gas prices.

"I don't want to waste my parents' money," Adams said.

In early February, gas prices started to rise in response to the impending invasion of Ukraine by Russia. The increase is mainly caused by increased sanctions by both the U.S. and other countries who have taken Russian oil off the market.

According to the National School Transportation Association, roughly 26 million kids board school buses on a daily basis. RSD is responsible for 13,600 of that number.

Mike Heyman, RSD director of transportation, said the district is able to handle the situation.

"In regards to transportation, the district will have no disruptions," Heyman said.

The district buys gas for a cheaper price because it buys in bulk, Heyman said. Currently, unleaded gas is about

\$3.95, and the district buys it for \$3.21. Diesel is sold for about \$4.25, and the district only pays \$3.52.

The budget will be affected because of a rise in fuel costs, Heyman said, but the district's finance department has fully anticipated and prepared for the increase in prices.

Almost 50 percent of the buses in the district are unleaded buses. Heyman said the transportation department is working its best to replace diesel buses with regular buses in the hopes of saving money and helping the environment.

The fuel budget from 2017 to 2020 decreased by \$197,584. This year, the transportation department had planned \$539,896 for the budget. Heyman said that in response to the price increase, the budget is planned for \$1,143,137.

Some local businesses such as Phillips 66 on Clayton Road, aren't seeing much of a concern with the rise in gas prices, but are still recovering from the decrease in the volume of gas sold caused by the pandemic.

"Our gasoline margins are based on our costs and what we sell at street price," Rick Grosz, owner of Phillips 66, said.

Dave Dyer, owner of Claymont Auto Repair, hasn't seen a massive rush to the pumps or an increase in panic. The only difference in cost is credit card fees.

Back when gas prices were \$2 a gallon, customers could get about a 3



Aubrey Adams, junior, puts gas in her 2010 Mini Cooper at Petro-Mart for about \$50, a jump from her usual \$37. Photograph by Jacob Robinson

percent credit card fee on \$2. Since the rise in prices, credit card fees have doubled with it now at \$4.

"People that need gas, need gas," Dyer said.

Prices have risen before during the 70s and 80s, and about 10 years ago, they were over \$4, Dyer said.

"It's nothing we haven't seen before," Dyer said.

Adam Starling, economics teacher, said inflation is currently at rates not seen since the 1970s.

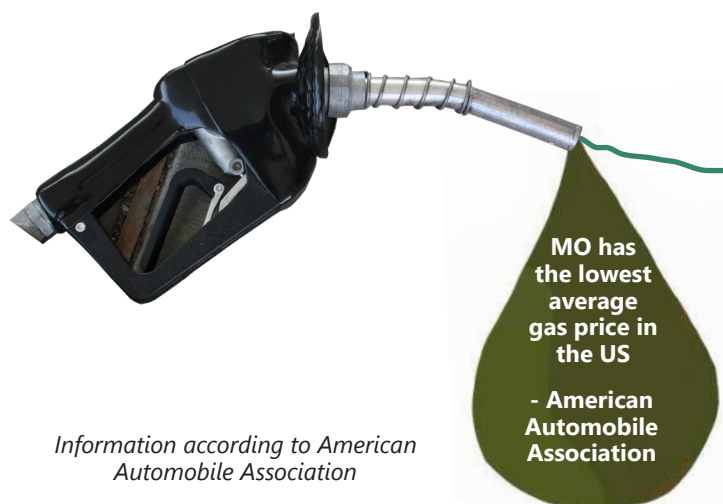
"Schools, businesses and families will have to make cuts to their spend-

ing to stay within their budget constraints," Starling said. "Rising more than just a couple cents, there isn't a reasonable way for consumers to avoid the financial strain."

Patrick Schrappen, chemistry teacher, drives 25 miles to get to work each day from St. Louis city. To save gas, he only drives if it's essential. If he has errands around MHS, Schrappen walks instead of drives.

"If I want to work here and live where I live in the city, I have to deal with gas prices being what they are," Schrappen said.

## Price Pinpoint: Gas prices in Missouri over a five year period



Information according to American Automobile Association

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Information by Geico's Gas Price Locator

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