

Editorial

Nebraskans won't drive 55 speed limit

*One foot on the brake,
One foot on the gas
too much traffic up ahead, I
can't pass
...Take my license,
all that five,
I can't drive 55!...*

At least 47 percent of Nebraska's drivers are singing Sammy Hagar's lament and putting the pedal to the metal so to speak.

The Nebraska Department of Roads recently issued a report about speeding during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, but anyone who has driven on I-80 knows that if you drive 55, you're driving in the slow lane.

The department recorded the speeds of 197,207 vehicles at 33 locations on four different types of highways. The percentage of those driving more than 55 is just .4 percent less than last year, the report says.

No law has been more universally ignored since prohibition. Many folks are calling for the abolition of the 55 m.p.h. limit on stretches of rural highway, like many of the stretches in Nebraska.

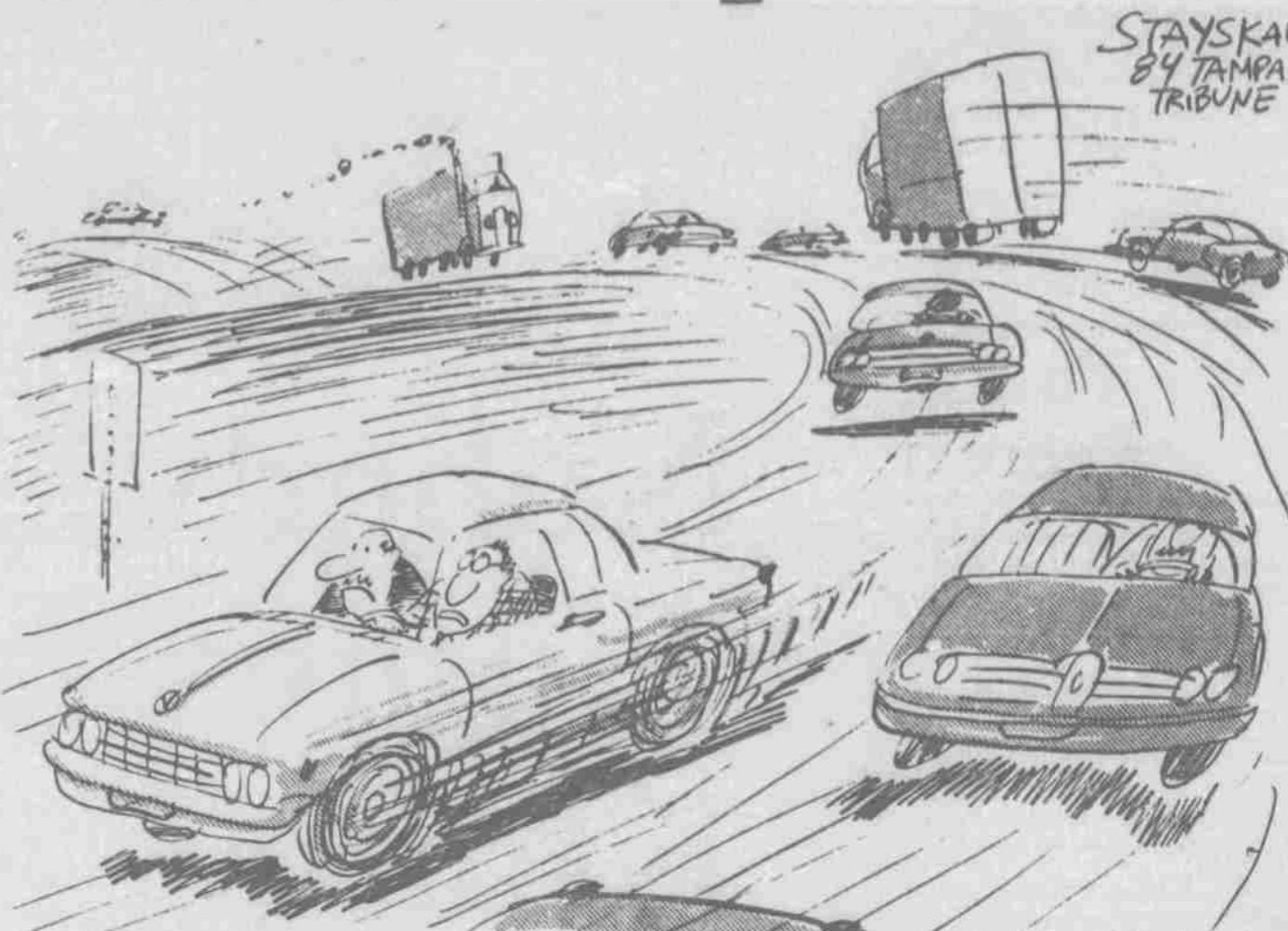
That isn't necessary. Anyone who has traveled Nebraska's highways knows traffic generally moves about 60 m.p.h. in spite of the law.

Obviously the state patrol hasn't passed out enough tickets, or people don't care about tickets, or both. Traveling on the nation's big freeways, one also finds a blatant disregard for the speed limit; people drive as fast as "traffic" is moving. In my experience, it's rarely 55 — usually it's closer to 65.

Abolishing the national 55 m.p.h. limit, even on rural highways, would be ill-advised. The limit has saved thousands of lives, according to its advocates, and about \$2 billion a year in fuel costs. Those saved lives and gallons of gas are much more valuable than saved hours.

If the limit was 65, drivers would probably be tempted to travel 70. Some drivers who were motoring before the 55 limit said travel at 80 m.p.h. wasn't unusual when the limit was 70 m.p.h. in Nebraska. Raising the limit would cost lives and money.

Nebraskans just won't drive 55!



STAYSKAL BY TAMPA TRIBUNE

Dagger-wielding Santa to replace red-nosed deer

Call me sappy, but the aspect of holidays which I most enjoy is the sweet celebration of sentimentalism found in the visual media. Take the current Christmas holiday season. The media presents us with precious Grinches who steal Christmas, and then give it right back better than before; we are provided with precocious Rudolphs with red noses, oh, so bright; and just recently Hollywood has given us yet one more sugary celebration of this most merry of seasons: A crazed Santa wielding bloody death at the end of a dagger.

Jim Rogers

I get all choked up when I think of the millions of little eyes lighting up with a child-like innocence as corpse after bloody corpse is deposited before them in the movie "Silent Night, Deadly Night." What can I say, but golly, thanks Hollywood. Once again you've enriched our lives truly beyond what we had a right to desire or even imagine.

"Silent Night, Deadly Night," for those few readers who did not begin their joyous celebrating with this movie, is yet the

latest playful, tender holiday film in the respected genre begun by such great films as "Halloween" and "Friday the 13th" parts 1 through X (where X is any natural number between zero and one million). Gee, I just hope "Silent Night, Deadly Night" isn't the last of the vanishing set of truly excellent modern holiday films.

Frighteningly enough, if some spoilsport scrooges have their way, our holiday seasons will no longer be graced by the senseless violence of the mentally deranged and the half-deads or undeads, whatever.

These mischievous miscreants are picketing the film in certain cities to prevent its screening to individuals of tender years. Now, the protesters really don't bother me so much. After all, people have a right to speak their minds. It's just that they spoil the season for the kids, that's what bothers me most. Christmas is a time to be joyful, a time of giving. And just because there's a movie about a Santa giving frontal lobotomies at the neck instead of electric trains or little dollies that cry "mama" doesn't mean that it's not in the Christmas spirit — it's all giving after all.

Well, happily, I don't think "Silent Night, Deadly Night" will be the last holiday flick which gets us in the mood through mindless and gratuitous violence — without a doubt the perfect addition to any family holiday celebration. Indeed, I've discovered that Hollywood is planning to season other seasons with a slight dash of senseless bloodletting.

Before we take a preview peak at these

other Hollywood gifts, however, I must posit a caveat of sorts: The titles and thematic concerns are based only upon what I've managed to glean from the trade papers. Thus, they represent only suggestions and may be modified or withdrawn completely without notice to the public.

The first movie I've caught wind of recently isn't due for release until later next year. Its name is "A Cold Turkey Thanksgiving." The story is about a guy who gaged on a turkey bone when he was but a youngster. The experience left him with the convoluted desires to use a chain saw, make everything red, and have potatoes instead of Stove-Top Stuffing any old day. Anyway, this guy then, in the mood of the season, puts on a turkey costume and bludgeons gluttonous, half-dressed teenagers with a drumstick.

Another film that I've heard hushed whispers about is due to come out sometime this spring. It doesn't take too much to guess its title: "Easter Bunny, Killer Bunny." The theme song already has been released as one of those great stocking-stuffers for the toddlers. I've discovered that if you softly coo the song to your children or younger brothers or sisters as they go to sleep, you ensure the sweetest of sweet dreams for them as they travel to the land of Nod. Here it is:

*"Here comes Peter Cotton Tail,
Chasing you with a railroad nail,
Hippity - Hop - Hop
Hippity - Hop - Hop
He's as regular as the mail."*

Obviously, talk of this being nominated for an Oscar for best theme song already is well advanced.

"Easter Bunny, Killer Bunny" is recommended for children who can't yet discern the difference between fiction and reality. Their squeals of childish delight mixed in with the gurgles of people drowning in their own blood will be thanks enough for taking them to this movie.

There is also some talk of mixing the new patriotic and neo-fascist genre, represented best perhaps by the film "Read Dawn," and the holiday-horror genre in a delightful film entitled "Mayday, Mayday." In this flick thousands of undead comies invade from Mexico stringing up stoned teenagers on Maypoles and bloodying their noses with overturned May baskets.

However, the film "Mayday, Mayday" is not just for family holiday fun — it is instructive as well. Indeed, it rather definitively answers the hypothetical still hanging from this last election year. Namely, whether there really is a bear in the woods. There is. We'll see him in Stephen King's "Bearjo."

It is enough to say that our society owes an inestimable debt to the visual media industry. Holiday after holiday these humble giants of American culture unselfishly sacrifice mere profit in order to bring the simple joys of random death into the hearts and minds of American children everywhere. All I can say is thanks. Thanks a lot.



Student support justifies cable in residence halls

For more than a year now, cable television has been an issue for students living in the residence halls. Last year all UNL residents were polled on the cable TV issue, and we discovered large support for cable (of the surveys returned, almost 90 percent favored cable). This semester, in a more scientific survey, 68.2 percent said they wanted no unnecessary items added to next year's rates.

At its Nov. 26th meeting, the Residence Hall Association Senate held an open forum to gather as much information as

possible and vote on whether to continue fighting for cable in the halls. As chairman of the rate study committee, I proposed that the senate approve the installation of cable television and that the rate study committee consider cable television in the budget for 1985 and 1986. In the interest of keeping housing costs competitive — we rank seventh among Big Eight schools in costs — the proposal requested that University Housing and the rate study committee "insure that the increase in the total housing rate is as low as possible."

The senate approved the proposal by a vote of 15-3. The senate's overwhelming support for the cable proposal means

that if there is room for cable television in next year's rate increase and if University Housing can clear some legal hurdles, there is a good possibility that cable television will be included in next year's housing budget. I am sure that if room and board rates increase more than expected, neither University Housing nor RHA will want cable next year. I feel that if there is enough leeway in next year's budget to include cable without increasing the total housing rate substantially or lowering services, there now exists enough student support to make cable television in the residence halls a reality.

Pete Castellano
RHA rate study chairman

Letters

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