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Our
VIEW

Greener pastures

Campus changes promise improvements

About a year ago, when we suggested Vine Street be transformed into campus greenspace between Memorial Stadium and 16th Street, we didn't think anyone was listening.

We said the wide, paved route into campus was dangerous and unnecessary, and it would better serve students as a grassy field.

One day, the idea was in print. The next day, it was forgotten.

Or so it seemed, until we got a peek at our campus' new Preliminary Master Plan and realized someone else shared our idea, and it could become a reality.

The transformation of Vine Street on campus from thoroughfare to mostly greenspace is one of many changes in the new Preliminary Master Plan that promises improvements to the campus environment.

All changes will create a campus better designed for pedestrians and a campus with a stronger identity.

Some proposed changes shocked students Thursday and will require sacrifices.

The absence of the present Alpha Chi Omega Sorority house on a future campus brought some of its members to tears. The university will pay to tear the house down and to rebuild it in another location.

Some students were concerned about the removal of several parking lots and the construction of three new parking garages.

Their concern about the increased cost of parking on campus is legitimate. Parking space in garages typically has cost much more than other parking permits. Therefore, shuttle and bus service must be improved as part of this plan in order to accommodate a greater level of pedestrian traffic.

Other students said they worried handicapped students could have difficulty getting to class when all students must walk greater distances. The university must keep such students in mind when crafting this new campus.

Others were frustrated about how long implementing the new plan would take.

But major changes take time. It took nearly two decades for Kim Todd, former campus landscape director, to create a laudably landscaped campus. We must have similar patience with this plan, for the Preliminary Master Plan is a triumph.

It's a plan that will visually unify campus, could improve recruiting efforts once complete and could ensure a greater level of pedestrian safety.

It's a plan that will make this campus more like a campus — a well-defined space separate from the city of Lincoln and subject to a different set of community rules and values.

It's a plan that will improve morale and will create a more livable campus with a more scholarly, more communal feel that will boost academics.

It's a plan that will create a campus we can't wait to visit a dozen years from now.

And it's about time.

Mook's
VIEW



Missing manners

Customers need to learn they're not always right



TASHA KUXHAUSEN is a sophomore news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Too many of the customers I encounter at work are extremely rude to me, usually without reason.

Even though I was taught that the customer is always right, there often are times when I beg to differ with this statement.

Customers are often very wrong. People don't seem to understand that I actually know something about the store's products. I have watched numerous videos and gone through weeks of training, yet the customer pretends to know more than me.

If a customer doesn't agree with my knowledgeable advice about a product, then to them, I am automatically wrong. I want to ask these customers why they have sought my help when they already have the answers.

And I can't count the number of times that I have wanted to scream at the top of my lungs at shoppers.

I run around the store waiting on customers who want a specific item that we don't even carry, but they won't settle for anything else that we have plenty of.

After I have worked up an intense sweat, and discovered many alternative products, the customers often are not impressed. They storm out without even a "thank you" for the time I spent trying to fill their needs.

I thought "please" and "thank you" were the most basic manners taught when a person learned how to talk, but apparently there are some customers who refused to learn these.

Aren't people grateful for help or friendliness? I never forget to show gratitude to a person who has assisted me in some way.

Adults aren't the only rude customers I encounter. The children they bring with them into the store often are worse.

Some parents don't watch their children while they are shopping. I have had to remove children from

countertops and had to rebuild elaborate displays knocked down by children chasing each other.

But since the retail establishment where I work believes the customer is always right, nothing is said to customers who are rude or don't silence their rambunctious children.

I also recall many occasions of children running rampant through the restaurant where I used to be a cashier. Parents often did not make their children sit for the duration of a meal.

Waitresses were usually carrying large trays of food to and from the kitchen. The ornery children would almost always cause the food to be dropped onto the floor.

Of course, my restaurant employers also were very tolerant of rude customers. It was better to drop a steak on the floor than it was to lose a customer's business.

I personally wouldn't want a rude customer's business. I would gladly tell them where to go.

One of the most ridiculous customers I have ever encountered was a woman who asked to be seated by the window for dinner. I politely told her that all the window seats were taken at the moment, and she would have to wait until another party left.

She responded to my statement with a shocked look on her face. Without so many words, she told me that she expected to get her window seat, even if that meant moving another customer to a different seat.

My manager then appeared — thank God — and after a few minutes of discussion, the woman and her husband were finally seated at a table that still had somewhat of a window view.

Most public establishments such as hotels, restaurants and supermarkets are there to provide services to customers. However, people should not take advantage of their facilities.

In the small town where I grew up, some friends of my family owned a small business. Last year, they retired and sold their store.

The former shop owners said that in the last 10 years, people in the community had become more demanding and rude. They couldn't believe how drastically people they had known for years had changed.

So has society in general.

I gave up the food business for many reasons, but one of the main reasons was because I was tired of

dealing with rude customers and their undisciplined children.

I got away from a restaurant job only to work with people again, this time in retail.

Don't get me wrong. I love my new job. Helping people who appreciate my advice and assistance is exciting. Many of the people I have met through the retail business have been grateful for my assistance.

But it is those few customers who have been selfish and rude who I don't easily forget.

I distinctly remember a customer I had fairly recently. The customer did have good manners. The problem was that the person was trying to return an item that was at least two years old and worn to the barest thread.

The customer expected us to hand over a brand-new item for the very worn-out version.

My manager kindly told the person that the article of clothing was extremely old and the fact that it had lasted for two years was a very good sign of high quality.

We could not give the customer a new piece of clothing for free. But the customer insisted that the item should have lasted longer and demanded a replacement.

We finally gave in and handed over a new item to the selfish shopper. The person didn't seem to understand that if we were to always give out new merchandise for free, we would be out of business.

Helping customers is not a problem; most retail establishments are happy to. It is bending over backwards for demanding, selfish people who simply want something for free that we don't care for.

When I meet customers who doubt my knowledge of the store's products, I have to grin and bear it. As much as I would like to strangle the shopper with my bare hands, I remain calm.

But if I owned my own retail establishment or restaurant, things would be different. I would bluntly tell know-it-all customers that if they can't accept our service politely, then I don't want their business.

Until then, I will have to accept the fact that the customer may always be perceived as right.

This means that even customers who are so dumb that they can't tell their left foot from their right are "right" and I'm "wrong."

No matter what they tell me, the customers aren't always right. And I doubt they ever will be.

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