

opinion



Efforts to lend respectability to the homecoming elections will take any of the fun out of them.

The homecoming committee chairman wasn't the least bit tactful earlier this week in letting UNL students know he considered the late Ralph Crabtree a "degrading" homecoming king. Now, we admit our biases and we were all pretty fond of old Ralph around here. Thus, our indignation.

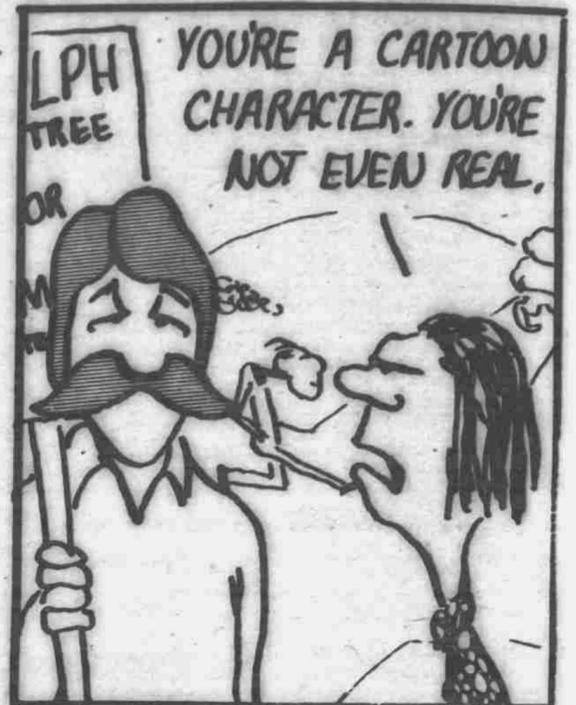
Is it more Mickey Mouse for our beloved Ralph (cartoon character though he was) to represent the student body as homecoming king than it is to give students a choice between two candidates who were nominated for the position simply because they are the only two who applied?

As far as we can determine the duties of the homecoming royalty, Ralph lacked none of the qualifications needed to carry them out. He had a nice smile, he went to football games, he was well-liked. . . (o.k., so he was a little narrow in the shoulders).

The homecoming royalty at UNL seems to serve the same purpose as the homecoming king and queen at the high schools—to give a focal point (besides the football game) to the whole celebration. Sounds harmless enough.

I doubt if students meant any disrespect when they elected Gary Brantz homecoming queen in 1974 and Ralph Crabtree homecoming king in 1975. They were just trying to lend a little festivity to the festivities.

In defense of Ralph Crabtree



Pep rally atmosphere surrounded local debate crowd

By L. Kent Wolgamott

The search for Fritz began as usual, one hour late, but it became a glorious adventure, not only a search but a journey to the inner workings of American politics. This was a chance to observe the Great Debates with 500 screaming Democrats, and then to observe their candidate for the easiest job in America, the vice presidency. Who wouldn't want a job that pays more than \$60,000 per year and supplies a house, personal jet, etc. for making speeches?

Halfway to the Big O, the spiritual condiments began to take their demonic effects. Visions of fighting with Secret Service (SS) Agents flashed through my brain. I considered the night's festivities and what could be expected or dreaded for the remainder of the evening.

organization but on selling the candidate, making the people feel he or she is needed and has something to offer, and that people should take time to purchase the product, by going to vote.

This year, we are seeing two styles of campaigning, a personal public approach by Jimmy Carter and a reserved private approach by President Ford, I think the difference is becoming apparent between the two men and their philosophies.

Back in Omaha, the evening then digressed to an infamous South Omaha restaurant for sustenance and more politics. Talk turned to a comparison of Carter-Ford and Ali-Norton, two epic battles in the same week, both

ending with bruised and bloodied opponents and the questionable decision.

Mondale, of course, brought up the horrid subject of his opponent, the hatchet man from Kansas, Bob Dole. But that is another story for another time. The remainder of the evening is nothing but a cloudy blur of forgetting the tape machine, of driving back and joining civilization again. But we had traveled to the mountain and seen Mohammed (Jr.) and survived.

We had seen the debate and its effect on a partisan crowd and had seen modern American presidential politics as it is.

What more can you ask?

grownups game



Then we arrived the Hilton. We were off to the great rally in the sky.

The fun began. As I walked through the door, the SS man grabbed my arm and pulled me to the side. He wanted to look at my marvelous little tape machine, he thought I was going to blow up Fritz with my tools of the trade. After he became convinced I was peaceful in intent, he let me enter. The first move was obvious, negotiate the crowds and get to the bar for fortification. Struggling through the teeming masses, we reached our destination and purchased the necessary portions of America's national drug.

Finding seats was not too difficult and we sat back to drink our beer and wait for the debate to begin.

Downhill for Ford

Jimmy Carter came out with his guns pulled and let go with both barrels on question once. From that point onward, Ford went nowhere but down. With each attack by Carter the hall would ring with cheers and applause, each response brought laughter. It was as if the crowd was being led by cheerleaders, like a high school pep club.

As the debate continued it became evident that many of these people were responding out of blind faith.

In past debate babble it became obvious who had won, both from a Democratic and Republican viewpoint. As we waited for Mondale, the consensus gave Carter a victory and set the stage for the speech which would be forthcoming.

After a long half hour, Mondale appeared. It was easy to find him, just follow the press, swarming like flies to a carcass. Mondale supported Carter and pointed out inconsistencies in Ford's positions, but soon left to meet the national press. But his appearance satisfied the crowd. It was not so much what he said but that he said it, that here in Omaha was the next vice president of the United States.

That is perhaps the strangest aspect of American politics—personal contact. Nowhere else does the speech making, handshaking and parade riding happen on such a large scale for so long a time. The media campaigns try to portray a personal contact, the candidate is speaking directly to you, the individual. It is this aspect of a campaign which cannot be measured by public opinion polls.

Selling the candidate

The effectiveness of a campaign depends not only on

Life on presidential campaign trail proves difficult for candidate's wife

By Arthur Hoppe

That Harvard-educated gorilla who's running for President has proved himself a serious contender. Like the other serious contenders he has sent his spouse around the country to tell the public how wonderful he is. The candidate's wife was wearing a puka shell choker and clutching an embroidered handbag when she met the press. In answer to the first question put to her, she said she had no favorite fashion designer.

"I just get my handbags off the rack," the attractive, neatly-groomed primate said.

The still-shapely simian said she and her husband were wed when both worked for Ringling Brothers. "At the time, everybody said our marriage was only a publicity stunt," she said.

The short-stemmed former juggler said she and her husband had remained together despite the fact that his vocabulary included 500 words while hers was limited to 250. She said she felt her lack of a more formal education had been no handicap to her husband in his career. "He says I certainly have a large enough vocabulary to be First Lady," she said.

The busy mother of four said the couple's three brown sons were campaigning for their father in various states. "I thought I spotted one in Chicago the other day," she said, "but it was only a Democratic precinct worker."

She was quick to say she wouldn't be surprised if her daughter was having an affair. "If she wasn't," she said with an infectious laugh, "I'd be surprised."

She added that if elected, her husband and she not

only planned to sleep together in the White House but would do so without pajamas and in a single bed. "It won't be easy she said, "but we have always tried to give the public what it wants."

Shy by nature, she said that at first campaigning had proven difficult for her, but that now she enjoyed it. "Even so, fame has its drawbacks," she said. "I can't walk through a hotel lobby without drawing a crowd."

Asked for her position on such controversial subjects as abortions, gun control and Federal monetary policy,

innocent bystander

she frowned. "Speaking for myself, I fully support my husband's stand on every issue," she said, "whatever it may be."

The hard-working little helpmate said she wasn't sure what they might be because she hadn't seen her husband for the past six months. But she denied rumors politicking was ruining their marriage.

"Win, lose or draw," she said, a hint of tears in her big, brown eyes, "I just can't help loving that big ape."

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