

Editorial

Editor sings praises of DN staffers

It's a tale of pathos and pleasure, hubris and humility. It all began in the steaming days of August, when a band of intrepid scribes gathered near the banks of the fragrant Salt Creek.

They were a diverse group — you might even call them a rag-tag band — but they had a mission: To inform and enlighten (sic) the campus community.

That group was this semester's Daily Nebraskan staff, and, as tradition dictates, this is the time for their tale to be told and their praises to be sung to the high winds.

After meeting at the fragrant Salt Creek, the band set out in search of a home. They found it in the uneasy climate of the basement of the Nebraska Union.

Michela Thuman served as news editor. She fought late copy and argumentative coworkers while hanging off many a participle. The quality that issued from her very pores will someday become legendary.

Vicki Ruhga led the copy desk through an angry field of bad puns, liberal editorials and suspicious persons in police reports. Ruhga never lost her dignity under some extreme circumstances; she had grace under pressure. She could often be heard mumbling, "Isn't it pretty to think so?"

Ward W. Triplett III, known as "the General," ruled the sports desk with an iron fist, but he was fair, conscientious and innovative. He also wrote more than James Michener every day.

Chris "Maniac" Burbach — known wide and near for his unique style on the rugby pitch — rounded up the paper with a witty entertainment section and The Mag. His way with turns of phrase brightened the editorial page as well as his own section. A little known fact: Burbach was leader of the exodus from Salt Creek to the Nebraska Union — no one ever thanked him for that.

Joel "Partayer" Sartore, his surname in Italian means "party," gave a consistent



Chris Welsch/Daily Nebraskan

The DN newsroom in full swing.

and professional performance, and even sang "Stairway to Heaven" when the staff got bored. David "Assistant Partayer" Creamer, which in English means man who milks cows, performed well and often recited Portuguese poetry when Joel wasn't singing.

LouAnne "Goodwill" Zacek's sharpened pencil and Captain's Log kept everyone on their toes and kept the DN looking sharp.

Kema "Monkey-shiner" Soderberg was the grease that got put on the squeaky wheels at the DN. She grew and matured as a layout editor and her talent will be put to good use again next semester...we'll be using her to grease chairs and typewriters, too.

Stacie Thomas and Kevin Warneke were the jackette and jack, respectively, of all trades. They did everything from editing copy to writing stories. Both were conscientious and devoted.

Julie Jordan Hendricks, night news editor, caught more mistakes than any night news editor in memory. That's something. Her eagle eyes saved us embarrassment many times and her engaging insider references were enticing.

Judi Nygren also was a night news editor. She also saved us many mistakes. We called her "Hawk Eyes," though.

Lauri Hopple edited the wire column, night newsed and, on occasion, quacked like a duck. Her meticulous editing and quick wit were well-appreciated. It was a good thing her wings were clipped.

Teri Sperry was probably the quietest and least visible of our band, but what she lacked in appearance she made up for in not being around the office. Her wire columns were always timely, carefully edited and a pleasure to read. She will be even less visible next semester because she will be in Costa Rica.

Dan Shattil was and is the group's "professional" adviser. His wise words and immaculate skill as a bowler led the DN team to its second consecutive UNL recreation league last-place finish.

Kitty Policky, the production manager, is probably the most sane person on the staff, by her own definition. Kitty has untold devotion, unlimited talent and long, sharp nails.

Last, but not least, are the DN's own great romantics, Jeff Browne and Mona Koppelman, who are soon to be joined in holy matrimony. Mona and Jeff put out quality supplements and columns all semester and they put out themselves whenever possible. We really love 'em.

There's also the wonderful readers who supported us (sic) through thick and thin.

And who could forget those crazy advertising people who brought us revenue. Tom Byrns, ad manager, was always quick to be late to a meeting and has been a true DN patriot. Kelly Mangan as assistant ad manager, also has been quick at meetings and a great help in general.

I'd also like to thank the reporters and copy editors. Some didn't make the trek from Salt Creek, but they put just as much blood and guts into this paper. We could not have done it without them.

The tale has not ended. Many of this semester's intrepid staffers, and I, will be back to bring you the low down on the campus scene again next semester. Until then, have a happy vacation.

Chris Welsch
Daily Nebraskan Editor



Christmas called non-Christian event

Jeff Browne's editorial last week on the injustice of the Christmas hype to non-Christians was to my mind a good example of convoluted logic.

First, Christmas is not, to the majority of Americans, a "Christian" event. It is a cultural holiday. I am convinced that some people do not even know whether the celebration's origin is Christ's birth or His death. How many Christmas shoppers do you think would say they believe Christ is the Son of God — let alone that they are sinners and dependent upon Him for salvation — and yet these are the basic premises of Christianity.

Santa Claus, Christmas trees, candy canes, colored lights, lavish gift-giving and reindeer are not Christian traditions. Most of these can be traced back to either pagan or secular origins. But, whatever the origin, they have become American traditions which trigger "the spirit of the holidays," a vague but somehow positive atmosphere.

Second, the commercialization of Christmas is, in fact, resented by many fundamentalist Christians. Santa Clause and the excitement of presents detract from the importance of the birth of Christ, just as Browne suggest they overpower Hanukkah.

Third, assuming Christmas was a Christian event, is the threat to religious freedom any less a threat

when it is against the majority than when it is against the minority? In Lincoln the public schools are prohibited from having Christmas celebrations, singing Christmas carols, making Christmas-oriented crafts or in fact mentioning the existence of the holiday.

Christmas, totally separated from Christianity, is an American holiday.

Frank Comito
junior
business

Student's holiday tarnished by ads

Where has the meaning of Christmas gone? The daily emission of advertising tells us that it is buying, buying, buying and giving, giving, giving. Capitalistic ideals from the television, newspaper and radio are shaping our Christmas-like feelings.

For me, Christmas is a season of sharing, whether it be sharing of ideals, gifts or love. It is a time of reunification of families, people and our nation.

Modern commercialism tends to take away the spirit of Christmas. The spirit that once led us to share and unite, now leads us to follow the examples displayed in our media.

We do have a choice for Christmas. We can buy gifts to show our affection or we can express how we feel in words and actions. It can be a celebration of our love for each other. So I ask you, what do you choose — the commercial

way of showing feelings or the one that costs the least and means the most?

Rodney A. Bell II
senior
political science
psychology

Reader questions sculpture 'critic'

Thank goodness Rob Wetowick has appointed himself and the recent East Campus sculpture vandals as guardians of good taste when it comes to sculpture around the campus. Were it not for these unselfish servants of the public good, we might have to judge the merits of campus sculpture for ourselves.

We can only hope that Wetowick doesn't restrict his interests to the world of art, after all there are three large libraries at UNL, just brimming with potentially offensive ideas.

Fred Holbert
associate professor
criminal justice

Former fighter pilot remembers loneliness

This Christmas time again sees many American boys and girls away from their home and family and friends. Far away from home, in places like Beirut, Frankfurt, Subic Bay and Diego Garcia. Those young Americans can feel lonely

at Christmas. So important is a letter from home! Is there a way to motivate some of us Americans who are safe and warm in the United States to drop a line to those who are not so lucky? Write a letter to an American serviceman or woman overseas. Here's a poem I wrote a few years ago while in the same position:

From the green mountain tops of Europe to the deep blue China Sea, I have traveled the world over, and I thank God, America is home to me!

Snow falling soft and white brightens the Black Forest of Germany, and brings back beautiful memories of a Christmas in America, the only home for me!

From the Vienna Boys' Choir, a Christmas song for all the world to admire, but my ears listen for America, the only home for me!

Trouble now in foreign lands, where the gods of war make slaves of people who want only to be free, Makes me believe again in America, the only home for me!

As Christ was born in Bethlehem on this holy Christmas night, we give thanks, Oh God, to Thee, and I say a prayer for America,

the only home for me!
Dick Schaffert
former fighter pilot
graduate student

Letters

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names from publication will not be granted.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.