

Editorial

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Jeff Korbelik, Editor, 472,1766
James Rogers, Editorial Page Editor
Gene Gentrup, Managing Editor
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Snowball fights

Annual tradition troublesome

Every year after the first legitimate snowfall, the Daily Nebraskan is forced into writing an editorial condemning the student population for the childish traditional snowball fight. This year is no different.

Greeks vs. residence halls. The winners . . . there are none. The losers . . . the university as a whole. An event like this does more damage than one can really see. Last year the Daily Nebraskan noted in an editorial that situations like this damage the image of the university. When legislators look at a university that needs budget cutting, what do they see? Five to six hundred of this great institution's student population causing damage to university property and to each other. Not good, especially in light of Gov. Bob Kerrey's cal-

ling a special session to look at more cuts in the state budget, possibly including the university. After all was said and done:

- Delta Upsilon suffered six broken windows and \$1,650 in total damages.

- Sellen and Neihardt residence halls suffered \$220 to \$250 damage. The money will come from the halls' residents.

- Six to eight people suffered facial cuts and scrapes. One student was bitten by another.

- The safety of drivers along Vine, 16th and R streets was endangered.

Is property damage, personal injury and a tarnished image worth a few hours of fun? Not really. Maturity levels seem to lower at this time of year, and it really is too bad.

Praising a good sailor Boatman an asset to UNL

Sara Boatman, director of Campus Activities and Programs, is a credit to UNL.

In a time when the university is losing faculty members and administrators because of the never-ending budget cuts, it's refreshing to see someone with Boatman's credentials enjoying her job.

She is nationally known for her excellence. In 1983-84, she was elected chairwoman of the board of directors of the National Association of Campus Activities, which represents more than 1,000

different colleges and universities. NACA even created a "Sara Boatman Award for Outstanding Volunteerism," which she presented in 1984 and 1986.

Her job is the students. Boatman says the best thing she can do for her students is to further develop the talents they have and to discover and develop talents they don't know they possess.

Sara Boatman is a teacher, a leader and a motivator. Keep up the good work.

'Good-news' unrealistic Up-to-date and accurate figures needed

A "good-news" account of Dun & Bradstreet Corp.'s report of 1985 business failures would begin, "Nebraska ranked 50th in the country in 1985 for avoiding growth in business failures." Of course, everyone can tell that really means trouble. In fact, business failures in Nebraska rose from 106 in 1984 to 485 in 1985 — a growth of a whopping 357.5 percent.

By any accounting, that's bad news — and Steve Williams, a research analyst for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, says the pace of business failures probably hasn't abated. But Williams pointed out that the report raises more questions than it answers about what Nebraska's business climate is today. The unanswered questions suggest we shouldn't panic just yet.

Problem No. 1 is that the Dun & Bradstreet report is a piece of history. Since 1986 is almost gone, the report already is almost a year out of date. A more authoritative analysis for today would look at business failures in the

first 11 months of 1986. But officials of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Omaha, the final source of the Dun figures, say they don't have 1986 figures showing how many businesses have failed this year.

Second, the figures don't reflect the total number of business closings last year; the numbers reflect only "business in court proceedings or voluntary actions involving losses to creditors." Finally, Williams says, Nebraska's small size and "smaller universe of businesses" distorts the change in percentage from one year to the next.

Another Dun & Bradstreet analysis, measuring business failure rates per 10,000 businesses, puts Nebraska 24th among the 50 states. That's probably the better figure. No one wants to support Nebraska's economic troubles are merely imagined, but it doesn't help recovery efforts to trumpet cries of doom over a report that may not reflect today's reality. Let's stick to numbers that are accurate and up-to-date.

'But, honey, it's Lincoln!'

UNL visitors have many 'wonders of the world' to pursue

You know those publicity plugs that colleges run during halftime of televised football games? Well, I saw a very interesting one produced by the University of Pittsburgh a few weeks ago. The film crew took a camera around campus and asked students, "If you could show the world any one thing on the Pitt campus, what would it be?" Then, while the student described some landmark, they would show highly professional footage of it, designed to entice and allure you into a college career in Pennsylvania.

Well, I must say I was surprised that one of the great eastern independents would have to stoop to such shenanigans when trying to attract students. I thought those schools still had the kind of stuff that made them naturally attractive — like promises of good education and prospects for gainful employment.

However, it struck me that such institutions as our own, which have long since given up on the idea of building a school worth attending for its own sake, could really benefit from an advertising campaign that emphasized the physical comeliness of our quaint little campus. So I took my own informal poll and asked students at random, "If you could show the world anything on the UNL campus, what would it be?" Here are some of the more intriguing selections.

The Mysterious Oldfather Corridor Wind Tunnel. Have you ever tried to walk between Bessey or Burnett and Oldfather on any given day? It's not the place for toupees, looseleaf notebooks or full skirts. There are some benefits, however. I hear Boyd Epley allows repetitions of closing the Old-

father doors as a substitute for more conventional bicep and tricep training.

The Military and Naval Science Building and its Pershing Rifles Memorial. In Nebraska, we like to emphasize our native heroes: William Jennings Bryan, Willa Cather, Johnny Carson and Tom Brokaw. But none is more revered than the founder

James Sennett



of the UNL military science school, Gen. John J. "Blackjack" Pershing. I don't know, though. Can you imagine living your life in such a way that, when you died, the way your country thought it could most honor your memory was by naming a medium-range nuclear warhead after you?

Memorial Stadium: Temple to the Great God Big Red. I must admit that, on my first tour of this campus, this was the thing that impressed me the most. I like what Brian Bosworth said: When you go inside there, you know you are someplace special.

I have been a college-football fanatic all my life. When I first found out we were moving to Lincoln, I just sat on my Indiana couch, stared into space and whispered, "Wow! Lincoln, Nebraska!" My wife asked, "What's so special about Lincoln, Nebraska?" But all I could do was stare right through her and say, "But honey, it's Lincoln, Ne-

America descends into Northgate: Send the law breakers to jail

What started as a mistake and grew into a fiasco has now become a scandal. Bad enough that the arms-for-hostage idea became a series of secret and futile arms shipments to Iran that undermined anti-terrorism policy, Persian-Gulf neutrality and Reagan credibility. It now turns out, sensationally, that it was a conduit for illegal funding to the Nicaraguan contras, too.

We are about to descend into Northgate, months of endless questions about every detail of the funneling operation run, apparently, by Lt. Col. Oliver North at the National Security Council. Northgate, beginning last Tuesday noon, marks the real end of the first Reagan administration (proponents of the six-year presidency have gotten their wish) and the beginning of the second. In the split second between them, a prefatory note on the distinction between persons and policy.

It is difficult to separate the two. That is why when a policy fails, its architects must go too. That is why it was so important for John Poindexter to resign, albeit two weeks later. Iran policy failed, and the people go with it. On Nicaragua, the opposite may very well happen: The people failed — disastrously, illegally, perhaps feloniously — and they may take the policy with them.

Judging individuals is important and no doubt will be the focus of the coming months of hearings. (One reporter already asked Ed Meese during his White House news conference whether a grand jury — presumably to inquire into sending North to jail — had been convened.) But just as the national interest was subordinated to individuals in the swap of arms for hostages, national interest may be subordinated to individuals in the hunt for the arms-swap malefactors. History hardly remembers the names of Serretti and Colson, nor cares about the fate of Halderman and Ehrlichman. It does remember — and records in the successive national defeats America suffered post-Watergate — the consequences of the fall of an administra-

tion. It is quite likely that an immediate casualty of the North affair will be the cutting off of the contras. If such a policy follows from a national debate on the merits of armed resistance to the Sandinistas, that is one thing. If it follows from anger at the deception of a particular administration (or of a rogue

Charles Krauthammer



elephant within it) and a desire to punish the President for his men's circumvention of congressional will, that is another thing — and a historic mistake.

It may happen. Less than three hours after Ed Meese's announcement of the secret funding channel to the contras, Sen. David Durenberger said, "It's going to be a cold day in Washington, D.C., before any more money goes into Nicaragua." Should the United States really decide whether to abide a Soviet satellite on the American mainland on the basis of whether Oliver North acted illegally.

Everyone knew that the contras were living off something during the two years that Congress had cut them off. Most presumed that they were getting help from friendly third countries with a shared anti-communist interest and many debts owed to the United States. Countries like Israel, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan. Had checks simply been issued by the governments or the secret services of these countries, it would have been no big deal.

It is a big deal that the money came from profits from the Iran arms-for-hostages swap. It shows a deep disrespect for the law by the Americans involved. It shows an abject and unhealthy willingness to please American representatives on the part of the Israelis involved. It shows all involved

braska!" The uninitiated could never understand.

The East Union. I understand this building has won lots of awards from people who give out awards to buildings. I guess there's a lot to be said for a construction that size that has no noticeable front doors. I wonder if any of those awards had to do with having more corners per square foot than any building needs or deserves?

The Selleck Quadrangle Basement. That's a scary place down there. I have had nightmares about going down to the MILII lab, getting lost and never being heard from again. I wonder if Selleck SAs are especially trained in search-and-rescue procedures. While we're on the subject, does anyone have the slightest idea why a building that has six sections and is shaped like a backwards "J" is called a "Quadrangle"?

Well, there were many other worthy responses. The fourth floor of the Nebraska Union (talk about spooky), the Dairy Store (no comment needed), the Apollo Nosecone (has anyone figured out just why that thing is there?) and the Old Coliseum Swimming Hole were among the nominations that could not be elaborated upon due to lack of space.

All in all, I think we can agree that we have a pretty funky campus here and one that is deserving of the pedestrian gawking it so often receives from those who visit for the first time. Like my daddy always said, "Eighteen hundred screaming fourth-graders can't be wrong."

Sennett is campus minister with College-Career Christian Fellowship and a graduate student in philosophy.

to have been too clever by half. But it does not in any way alter the fundamental strategic situation in Central America. It does not alter the answer to the question: Ought the United States support a resistance whose aim is to turn Nicaragua from a Soviet satellite into a country friendly to the United States?

A leading anti-Sandinista intellectual who has closely watched American reaction to Nicaragua since the revolution said to me plaintively two years ago that he feared losing his only chance to regain his country because of domestic American politics. To punish Reagan, Congress will sacrifice Nicaragua, he said.

He may be right, though premature. My concern, however, is less for him than for us. The loss of Nicaragua would be the most severe geopolitical defeat (aside from the military defeat in Vietnam) of the United States since the integration of Cuba into the Soviet bloc. Destroy the resistance to punish Reagan, Sen. Durenberger, and you will have forfeited a vital and enduring American interest — a Central America free of Soviet control — for sweet revenge.

It does not matter if the next six months reveal that Calero or Cruz or Robelo or even Don Regan knew of any illegality. Get rid of whomever you must. Send lawbreakers to jail. But don't punish the country too.

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Krauthammer is a senior editor for the New Republic.

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