

Editorial

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Quips and quotes SCC newspaper threatened

Some things are just inexcusable.

Take what is happening to the student newspaper on the campus of Southeast Community College in Beatrice.

On April 21, SCC board member Lloyd Bevans of Waverly threatened the constitutional rights of the SCC-Beatrice student newspaper, the Challenge. He stated that he was "serving notice that he was watching" the newspaper, and if what he perceives as negative editorials continue, he will make a motion to "dispense with publication."

The editorial was based on an advertisement printed in the 1987 state boys' basketball tournament programs. The ad highlighted features of SCC's campuses in Lincoln and Milford, but not Beatrice. The paper felt that without proper exposure the Beatrice campus will suffer the same fate as SCC's Fairbury campus, which closed a year ago.

Bevans' comments are ludicrous. If anything, he should be praising the Challenge's editorial for exposing the administration's lack of commitment to the Beatrice campus. Unless, of

course, Bevans is for the closure of the Beatrice campus, which his statements imply. The students only want support from their administration.

• Kudos to those few students who have organized the UNL chapter of Amnesty International, a non-profit organization that works for the release of political prisoners by writing letters to officials in other countries who are in positions to free them. The organization also helps political prisoners by writing

• The Daily Nebraskan would like to compliment the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery for its acquisition of a 40-foot sculpture by Mark di Suervo that will eventually be placed in the courtyard of the Lied Center for Performing Arts. The original cost of the piece was \$500,000, but Sheldon got it for \$450,000 with a grant from the Athena Foundation of New York City that paid \$200,000.

• The DN recommends that union officials move the weight machine away from the UNL Dairy Store. There's nothing more depressing than standing in line waiting for ice cream and seeing that scale. Talk about guilt trips.

Du pont presents alternatives Dark-horse candidate breathes fresh life into stuffy GOP

I hold that political cynicism is justified. While I am a registered Republican and hold to a number of the idea clusters associated with what is termed "Republican" ideology only in the broadest sense of the term, I hold no delusions about the party. To wit: The party is too often controlled by parochial interests that guarantee a disheartening homogeneity of policy options.

John Anderson was the last serious Republican presidential candidate with what could be termed "new ideas" (though I can't say that I would vote for him today). And we know what happened to Anderson.

In contrast to British conservatism, American conservatism as expressed through the Republican Party is an anemic cousin, hardly knowing what to do except to blither mindless platitudes about free enterprise and commies. It lacked (and lacks) a substantive positive vision. That is, it lacked a substantive positive vision until the candidacy of Peter du Pont.

I went to his speech last Thursday half expecting another Bush clone (or Dole clone, whatever). Yet I must confess I was impressed, very impressed.

It's difficult to use positive phrases in association with political candidates these days that don't sound trite. One of the most trite phrases candidates like to associate with themselves is that they are running a campaign of ideas. But I'll say it anyway (I'm cynical and have no personal interest in his campaign): du Pont is a candidate of ideas.

When I was listening to him talk I had to keep pinching myself and repeating, "I don't think I'm running for president, am I?"

So what are the ideas? A fair question for a candidate proffering himself as the Republican candidate of change (or is that an oxymoron?) Three issues caught my eye in his discussion.

First, effluency fees (that's my term for his proposal). Du Pont is actually talking about doing something about pollution. In good conservative fashion, he recognizes two facts. The first is that pollution (effluents) has costs: It costs people in terms of health and well-being, in terms of property and recreation. If polluters can pollute freely, then all they're doing is transferring a cost they legitimately should bear to other people. (Economists term this an "externality.") Second, du Pont recognizes the force of financial incentives in altering business behavior.

Jim Rogers



Effluency fees are the free-enterprise solution to the pollution problem. What they force is the "internalization" of costs. That is, the firm that pollutes must pay the cost of its garbage: it can't shift the cost of that garbage onto third parties.

Second, du Pont strongly supports an educational voucher system. There are an overwhelming number of reasons to adopt a voucher system for educational financing. Du Pont pushes the argument that government monopolies are inefficient and that the surest method of increasing quality and holding the line on costs is to foment com-

petition in the educational system. Vouchers will do that.

What vouchers do is provide each parent with a government coupon that can be redeemed only for the education of the child. But the coupon can be redeemed at the school that the parent chooses — not necessarily the government-run school. Thus, the system allows real competition — with all its benefits. (I presume the method of implementing the system would be to refuse federal educational monies to the states unless they implemented the system.)

Finally, du Pont is a firm and forceful supporter of the Reagan Doctrine. Now, that isn't a doctrine that President Reagan thought up and implemented. Rather, it is a term invented by the New Republic to describe an idealized version of Reagan's commitment to freedom in every country in the world. It includes supporting every democratic movement against tyrants of both the left and the right. Consistent with this, du Pont favors a much stronger U.S. line against South Africa while still supporting government aid to Nicaraguan freedom fighters.

I've done little justice to the subtlety and sophistication of du Pont's "new ideas" campaign. Yet du Pont is a candidate to watch and one of the few exciting prospects on what proposes to be a lackluster race for the Republican nomination. Even if du Pont ultimately loses the race for the nomination, a strong showing in the early primaries, thereby drawing attention to his platform, can do nothing other than sweep away some of the many cobwebs residing in the G.O.P.

Rogers is an economics graduate student, law student and Daily Nebraskan editorial page editor.

Articles distort hearings about KZUM DJ

I'm writing in regard to a column by Charles Lieurance "Radio station progressing?" (Daily Nebraskan April 27.) I spoke with both Lieurance and DN Editor Jeff Korbek to request a retraction for a portion of the column that was incorrect.

In the column, Lieurance creates a scenario depicting P.T. Martin, KZUM station manager, and me conducting a "witch hunt." Lieurance said, "In this case we have a radio station, KZUM, notoriously liberal, notoriously free-speech, notoriously anti-Reagan, that has decided for some unknown reason to be the first station to implement the new FCC crackdown on broadcast indecencies. That's a new twist — the progressive liberals as the bloodhounds of Reagan policy."

Guest Opinion

The FCC on April 17 did in fact crack down on broadcast indecency. On the surface, Lieurance claims his editorial was correct. Had he done a little investigation, he would have learned that the complaint against Ron Kurtenbach was filed with the KZUM Programming Board on April 6, almost two weeks prior to the "new FCC crackdown."

Complaint before

In my conversation with Lieurance and Korbek, Lieurance told me that the FCC had ruled in 1975 on the Pacifica Radio case (George Carlin and the "seven dirty words") and had had in the past two years additional rulings regarding broadcast indecency and that consequently, was the "cracking down." The critical "fact," crucial to his case, is his insinuation that KZUM acted after the fact and in response to what he refers to as "the new FCC crackdown." It's an absolute fabrication and does the DN, its readers and the public at large a great disservice.

In regard to the unfavorable references to myself by Lieurance, I would like to address the following comments:

First, I am a KZUM volunteer and

programmer. I have been elected to the Programming Board by members of KZUM. The board is comprised of seven members, and any recommendations, policies, procedures or directives must be arrived at by a majority vote of this board. I am chairman of this board and a voting member. At other commercial radio stations, a Program director, usually salaried, "heads" programming. I do not get paid for my participation on the board. I am one-seventh of the board, and not a program director.

No program director

I work 40 hours a week and attend the university, in addition to my volunteer duties as a KZUM programmer and chairman of the board. Consequently, I have very little use or time for the assumptions about me that you have chosen to publish.

Lieurance writes, "Greg Harm, who heads the Programming Board, was hard-pressed even to come up with a coherent definition of the part of the KZUM policy Kurtenbach had violated or even the policy itself. He just kept mumbling something about 'using discretion.'"

For those who didn't attend the meeting, during the 20 minutes allotted to Kurtenbach, his lawyer introduced a memo issued by the programming board, dated Oct. 20, 1986, regarding the use of obscenity in programming. The memo was issued in response to a complaint by a listener about a song aired on a KZUM program. The listener had not heard any warning or disclaimer about listener discretion. The song, I told the hearing board, was entitled "I Want To F--- The Dead." I wrote on this memo that it would be hard to prove that it had socially redeeming value, a criteria used in judging obscenity. I explained this in my three-minute statement to the hearing board.

No muttering

After all other testimony was taken, the board asked me whether programmers are told not to use obscenity. My understanding is that programmers in the training stage are told that it is acceptable to air recorded obscenity,

but only with a disclaimer, and only between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. In his statement to the board, Thomas Irwin, a new programmer, also said that he had been told that the use of recorded material was acceptable, but that saying it was forbidden.

If Lieurance felt that I was "muttering," it is hard to imagine that I was inaudible to just one person "in an airless room."

Opinions fabricated

Where Lieurance obtains "an exceptional psychic ability" to read my mind is beyond me, but obviously he knows my innermost thoughts. He writes referring to the station manager and myself: "They wanted Ron Kurtenbach gone. Outta there." Again Lieurance exclaims his fantasies to be factual opinions of others. At the time his column was printed I had not met him, nor was I ever interviewed by him, and yet he attributes feelings and attitudes to me.

Concerning Kurtenbach, I have debated issues with him. We do not always agree. The board agreed (in our April 11 public meeting) as a body to pass this complaint on to a hearing, feeling this was a correct adherence to station policy. We also felt that given Kurtenbach's at times stormy relationship with the board, the issue would be better served by a more impartial body than this one. I also stated this during the hearing, but perhaps I was still "mumbling."

Programming a privilege

Lieurance writes, "Ron Kurtenbach has earned his right to a program." Please be informed that broadcasting, like a driver's license, is a privilege, but not a right. It has its restrictions. Although Kurtenbach (among others) helped establish KZUM and contributed to the establishment of the rules and bylaws that govern all station operations, he is not above these rules.

All programmers and volunteers have to adhere to the same guidelines. When alleged complaints of violations of these rules arise, the Board of Directors, the programming board and the station manager have given the authority and duty to resolve these issues.

Programmers who decide to test the limits of these rules face discipline ranging from oral reprimands to loss of programming privileges.

How many times in the future will the board be required to consume valuable meeting time to field complaints such as "Ron is using his show to attack my personal integrity" or "He denied me access to the studio," or "He harassed me in front of my son in the studio," or "He used profanity in voicing his opinion of other programmers over the air?" No one can predict, but these are all examples of issues which have been addressed during the past year since I have been on the board.

Release unappreciated

For one who professes the value of solidarity (a concept I have spent the last decade struggling for as a volunteer union organizer), Ron does little to actually promote it when the station itself is concerned. Instead of promoting harmony and mutual understanding, he criticizes all who in his opinion, are exploiting the station. His victims include those who make a living by playing live music, those who work in record stores, those who sell records or are employed by other radio stations. As long as these people refrain from advertising, announcing their own gigs, etc., the board stands up to protect its privilege to broadcast.

Recently, violations of the station's non-commercial policy resulted in the suspension of two programmers and the cancellation of one programmer's show. The board decided to shorten the suspension of the other programmer from six weeks to four weeks because of good behavior, sparking another reaction and expression of injustice from Kurtenbach: "It wasn't on the agenda!"

In the case at hand, Kurtenbach elected to further publicize this incident by sending a "press release" to the local media. (This was done the week after the announcement of the new FCC policy of April 17.) He has never been elected or appointed as a designated official KZUM spokesman, nor did he have any authority to act on

behalf of the station or to misrepresent his views as being those of the station. There are at least 70 other programmers at KZUM and more than 500 KZUM members. The news and opinions of one person must be put in proper perspective.

If the aforementioned issuance of a press release, the perpetual debate, harassment of colleagues, and the use of the organization for personal publicity do not constitute exploitation of the station and of the time and energy of those other programmers with an unnecessary hindrance in the performance of station duties, I don't know what does.

Story biased

Finally, I take exception to what Lieurance considers to be, in his words, a "hard news" article in the same issue, "Board clears DJ of obscenity charge." I have never taken any journalism classes, but it is my understanding that "hard news" is that which shares pertinent, timely items of interest and is presented in an unbiased manner. Only one word was attributed to Martin. No other reference was made to the opposition. Several quotes were attributed to Kurtenbach.

I asked Lieurance why no opposing viewpoints to the decision were presented, and he indicated that everyone had left too quickly, and he had tried unsuccessfully to reach Martin by phone. I was at the station that day until 5:15 p.m., but it is apparent that no other information mattered to him.

It is unfortunate that Lieurance writes news stories disguised as editorials and vice versa. His personal bias should remain out of his "hard news" stories, and his editorials should at least be based on facts he and the DN chose to omit.

Perhaps Lieurance would like to become a KZUM programmer while still a paid staff member of the Daily Nebraskan. He might then learn a true understanding of what "conflict of interest" means to Kurtenbach and what others interpret as harassment.

Gregory P. Harm
chairman, Programming Board
KZUM