

Daily
Nebraskan

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Quibbles 'n' bits

Oldest man in world claimed Husker roots

A man believed by his family to be the oldest man in the world at 114 died recently in his home. And it's possible he was a Nebraska native, according to the Associated Press.

Glen Post, who lived in Columbus, Ohio, for more than 60 years, claimed to have been born in Hayes County, Neb. His original birth record was destroyed when the Hayes County Courthouse burned in the 1870s. Replacement birth records in Lincoln and with the Social Security Administration list Post's age as 114.

Attempts earlier this year to have Post listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's oldest man were unsuccessful.

Post's wife, Velma, 39, said her husband was not disappointed about not making the record book. He enjoyed the attention he received while people were trying to verify his age, she said.

Hats off to the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, which awarded \$5 million in contracts for work on the second phase of the campus recreation and athletic building at the

University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The second phase will include constructing a wing on the east side of the Coliseum. It will include basketball courts and a weight room. The Coliseum stage will be renovated for handball court space, and a new swimming pool will be built.

This phase belongs to the students whose fees and moral support went toward the recreation center in the first place.

Congratulations also go to Daily Nebraskan advertising representative Dave Thiemann, who recently was given a prestigious award from the College Newspaper Business and Advertising Managers association. He was named national account executive of the year.

Thiemann competed among entries from the association's 300-newspaper membership. Criteria considered during the contest included letters from clients, letters from colleagues, budgets for clients, ad planning processes and service to clients. Thiemann increased ad sales in his territory 59 percent from last year.



The time has come

Lottery gives option to tax hikes, budget cuts

Gambling has long been a sensitive subject of debate in this country, particularly in conservative states like Nebraska. America's Puritan traditions have not died easily, and opposition to gambling is a good example to that fact. Over the years, we have seen only a very timid and grudging acceptance of moral evils like horse racing, pickle cards and bingo.

But Nebraska, unfortunately, is still without a lottery. It is difficult to understand how we can tolerate gambling on ponies and pickles but draw the line when it comes to a lottery. It is even more difficult to understand this inconsistency when it is clear that lotteries raise much more money per dollar wagered; lotteries typically clear between 25 percent and 42 percent of the total amount gambled, while the other methods net a much lower share of the gross.

Take horse racing, for example. According to Nebraska's Racing Commission, more than \$136 million was handled in pari-mutuel betting in 1987 (\$94 million from Ak-Sar-Ben in Omaha). But only a little more than \$2 million of that was taken in by the state. As a means of generating revenue, lotteries are much more efficient than racing.

Bingo and pickle cards are also less efficient than lotteries. The Department of Revenue's Charitable Gaming Division reported that more than \$23 million was wagered in bingo games and more than \$135 million of pickle cards were sold in 1987. Less than \$2 million from bingo went to the state, and only about \$4 million was cleared in pickles. LB1232, passed last week by the Legislature, will increase the take on pickles somewhat, but not signifi-

cantly. Like horse racing, bingo and pickle cards are greatly inferior means of raising state revenues.

At least 22 states and the District of Columbia currently administer state-wide lotteries, and several other states have seriously debated the issue in recent years, Nebraska included. More than \$10 billion in lottery tickets were bought in 1985 in the United States, and that figure grew to nearly \$12 billion in 1986. New regional lotteries between several states have also caught on and will probably push the level of sales much higher in 1988 and beyond.

someone believes he is being victimized by a lottery, he always has the option not to buy any tickets. Certainly an optional thing like a lottery cannot fairly be called a tax.

Secondly, gambling is simply stupid, not immoral. People should be free to decide for themselves what to do with their money. No matter how foolish it may be to buy a lottery ticket at 6-million-to-1 odds, people ought not be denied that choice just because it makes the Bible-bangers queasy. Some people can't stand to see their holy advice go unheeded, so they attempt to make their morals legally binding upon the rest of us.

Nebraska should try to make a unique, interesting lottery. One type that might do well in football-crazy Nebraska is a sports lottery suggested by New York Gov. Mario Cuomo. Husker lottery tickets would sell like crazy, and before you know it, we'd have enough money to build a Huskerdome.

Another unique lottery recently was begun by the city of Ishpeming, Mich. The city ran a quick ad campaign declaring that a winner would be selected from all parking violations paid within a short period of time. The tickets came in a flood, saving Ishpeming money and the hassle of towing a bunch of cars. University of Nebraska-Lincoln police should take note of this one.

The time for a state lottery in Nebraska has come. This year's \$60 billion budget surplus is not likely to be repeated. The next time we are faced with a choice between raising tax rates or cutting spending, let's consider a lottery instead. It's an option we've ignored far too long.

Snodgrass is a senior economics major.



As states have found it increasingly difficult to raise taxes and/or cut spending, lotteries have emerged as an obvious alternative. Lotteries are painless ways to raise revenues because they do not demand that people surrender their money to the government. Rather, they create a means of raising funds at the public's option.

Lottery opponents represent a curious combination of bleeding hearts and Bible-bangers. The former argue that lotteries constitute a regressive tax that takes advantage of the poor, and the latter preach that gambling is evil, immoral and sinful. Both claims are mistaken and misguided.

First of all, a lottery may be regressive, but it is not a tax. Lotteries are not mandatory, but voluntary. If

Letters

Reader questions expenditure of 1985 class gift donations

Class gifts come about now and again, usually at this time of year, as a way of memorializing an incongruous collection of people all completing their requirements simultaneously. These also do something good for the university and are probably a good thing overall.

When I crossed that landmark in 1985, the same thing happened; some young executive-hopefuls organized themselves and ran a campaign to collect a large sum of cash (they even offered a deferred-payment plan). That year it was to buy a large clock to mount on some building at which all the eager students of City Campus could gaze as they hustled to class (no such plan was proposed for East Campus or for the engineers to the north). Alas, as I stroll across City Campus three years later in a continuing quest for higher education and the current time, I still must rely on my Timex — there is no plainly visible clock.

What happened to the clock? What happened to the money? There must be some explanation. I am worried that since the collaborators are likely more right-wing than me, somewhere near the Ed Meese mentality, that our

class-gift funds may turn up in a congressional inquiry of WEDTECH. Or maybe my disillusioned classmates unwittingly contributed to a pipeline somewhere in the Midwest.

I hope the Daily Nebraskan's trustworthy and tireless investigators can turn up something enlightening on this possible clock scandal. I know my classmates will be very appreciative.

Edwin Siffring
graduate student

Editor's note: According to Declan Barr, assistant director of gifts at the University of Nebraska Foundation, the final amount pledged by the Class of 1985 has not been completely raised. Because of the deferred payment plan where students contribute \$10 their senior year and \$30 for three years following, the giving is still in progress. Connie Sullivan, adviser for the Student Foundation, said although the location and date of the unveiling is not known yet, the clock is currently being purchased and will be presented in the next school year.

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.

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. Requests to withhold names from publication will not be granted.

Letter

DN staff members need a basic course in geography, history

So, that paragon of collegiate journalism is at it again. A news item entitled "Exploding ammo dump kills 60 in India" (Daily Nebraskan, April 11) suggests that certain members of the Daily Nebraskan staff need a basic course in geography. Nowhere in this article is India mentioned. Pakistan and India have been officially separate since 1947. However, if you're trying to perpetuate or restore imperialism and the British Raj, we applaud your efforts. In these days when many

question the quality of students and the education they receive, is it too much to expect a college newspaper to display a basic knowledge of world geography and history?

Ignorance also reigned on April 7 when the DN, a frequent forum for topics relating to cultural awareness, chose to run a questionable picture with a Chicano heritage article. The only offensive stereotype omitted by artist Christina Geiger was a little man in a poncho, sleeping by a cactus. Are readers to believe that Mexican contributions to civilization consist of nothing more than sombreros, margaritas and bullfights? In a single careless moment of journalistic trivialization, the DN ignored centuries of

social and cultural achievement.

These two items perpetuate the perception of cultural illiteracy that plagues the Midwest and its accompanying naivete and insular priggishness. We recommend that the DN cease and desist in its effort to slam shut the door of the American mind.

Karla Carter
John A. Anderson
James W. Cox
graduate students
history

Editor's note: The correction for "Exploding ammo dump kills 60 in India" ran in Tuesday's DN.