

## What others think Changing U.S. coins waste of money

Does Abraham Lincoln need a 'facelift?' The image of Mr. Lincoln, as well as of other former presidents who appear on the obverse of U.S. coins, will be revamped if Congress has its way. The flip side of the coins will be completely changed.

The director of the U.S. Mint, Donna Pope, testified before a House committee that she hasn't heard any demand from the public that the coins be altered. In fact, she said the only people who seem to be calling for new coins are coin collectors.

Regardless, Congress appears ready to go ahead with the redesign.

Congressional supporters of the change have pointed out that other Western countries alter their coinage every few years. In contrast, Mr. Lincoln's face on the penny has been the same since 1909.

Well, so what? With the United States falling behind some nations in vital areas such as the production and export of technology, should Congress be worrying about keeping up on pocket change?

In the end, the legislative debates promise to be time consuming and the redesign procedure costly.

To recoin a phrase: The penny's image saved is a penny earned."

-- The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville, Tenn.

## Drug programs should include Alice

Don't ask Alice. School officials in Ottumwa (Iowa) are considering removing the book 'Go Ask Alice' from its junior high drug education program because of what several parents deem as offensive and sexually explicit language.

The book is an anonymous diary of a young woman whose life is shattered, and finally ended, by substance abuse.

What Ottumwans really need is a major dose of reality.

Although many parents may deny it, the average junior high school student's language is filled with profanity.

Such common forms of entertainment as movies are laced with sexually explicit scenes along with scores of films, complete with heightened sexual content, (which) are just as easily picked up from the local video store.

Banning one piece of literature will not remove the students from such types of influence.

Besides, the novel presents a much better example of the dangers of drug use than cutesy anti-drug messages such as the "Just Say No" slogan initiated by Nancy Reagan. Reading the diary would provide first-hand information about the horrors of drug abuse."

-- The Iowa State Daily

## OU student gives pets second chance

About 200 stray pets have found new homes in Norman, Okla., since March thanks to Second Chance.

Jamie Harrington, a junior at Oklahoma University, directs the organization which boasts 300 volunteer members.

The organization receives about 13 calls each day informing members of the whereabouts of abandoned animals.

Harrington said these animals often are seriously injured or have acquired diseases. Second Chance accepts donations and charges adoption fees, which offset some of the medical costs.

The group's most recent venture was the establishment of an animal sanctuary in the country.

-- The Oklahoma Daily

## 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.

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 will not be granted.

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



## Downtown need not be a ghosttown

Recently, Mayor Bill Harris proposed a retail development study that would cost Lincoln and Lancaster County about \$100,000.

The city-council apparently is being bombarded with retail development proposals and is seeking some guidance. Where should retailers be allowed to expand?

This study may be needed to avoid construction of retail structures that later will be abandoned. If the study instead suggests bombarding downtown with new and improved retail stores, the money will have been wasted and downtown redevelopment plans will ultimately fail.

The retail base is declining downtown. Major department stores have balked when asked to be part of the downtown redevelopment plan. These retailers want to locate near consumers who have cash and want to convert it into goods.

Although many students reside in the downtown area, most Lincoln residents don't live downtown. Residents will shop where it is most convenient. Convenient includes locations near home, the availability of parking and the ease at which traffic can be maneuvered. Downtown simply can't compete in these areas.

Downtown can remain viable if city planners accept this retail reality and look at what continues to bring people downtown.

**Special events:** Flatwater Festival and the Star City Parade are events which bring carloads of people into downtown. These events are "memory makers" rather than strong money makers. Events featuring both adult and family entertainment will keep downtown alive and bring Lincolinites together periodically.

These gatherings are economic boosts for food vendors. The city should continue to accommodate events that provide good entertainment and let retailers cash in on the crowds that follow. However, if the planning of events ever shifts from what interests the public to what will open the public's pocketbooks, those events will fall flat.



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**Night life:** After 7 p.m. on any weekend people begin to congregate at street corners downtown. Most of the corner-hangers are junior high students waiting for a ride home after catching a movie. As the evening progresses the street crowd gets a little older and bar hopping begins. Those celebrating that rite of passage known as marriage usually can be found at the Hilton or Cornhusker Hotel, where wedding receptions spill into the lobbies on most Saturday nights.

**UNL:** The university is here to stay. The cash flow from 17,000 students can always be counted on, along with the income generated by Nebraska football.

The Lied Performing Arts Center should be a successful venture, both for the university and downtown. An evening at Lied will give one the opportunity to pull out the formal wear and take in several class acts.

**New development:** Developing condominiums downtown was an

inspired idea and has been realized through Centerstone and Georgian Place. Investors in these condominiums tapped into the local version of "yuppiedom." For some rising professionals, the American dream doesn't include a house with a lawn to mow. Some retiring business people want to have neighbors that still divide and conquer each day to swap stories with after dinner. These downtown dwellers will bring steady business to downtown merchants. This line of development should continue, and might include apartment complexes that cater to students.

**Office buildings:** The NBC building houses many businesses that are likely to be here tomorrow. These employees join those from state and federal office buildings at lunchtime and overrun the crosswalks downtown. These businesses will keep food vendors smiling and maintain a retail base downtown.

The above summation of downtown's strong points contains nothing new or revealing. The whole message coming from this column to city planners is -- let downtown redevelop itself. Downtown is naturally moving into a new era and reflecting a few new trends. Fighting these trends to avoid a downtown without people, will bring about that void.

Downtown is where the smallness of a city as large as Lincoln is still reflected. This is what makes Lincoln appealing.

Downtown isn't dead yet. Let's not kill it with too much money and not enough common sense.

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