

Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Wage hike necessary

Bush can't afford to veto pay raise again

The U.S. House of Representatives voted 382-37 Wednesday to raise minimum wage from \$3.35 to \$4.25 by April 1991. The Senate is expected to do the same before Thanksgiving.

The legislation, considered a great compromise to many on Capitol Hill, could end a pay war between Democrats and Republicans that started during the Reagan administration.

Democrats have insisted that a minimum wage hike is the only way poor Americans can survive increases in the cost of living. However, Republicans have fought against the raise, many saying that minimum wage should be abolished altogether.

The legislation passed in the House Wednesday, however, could put an end to the stalemate. The bill calls for a 45-cent increase to \$3.80 next April 1 and another 45-cent raise a year later.

It also creates a subminimum "training wage" that allows employers to pay 16- to 19-year-old workers 85 percent of the prevailing minimum wage for their first three months in the workforce, according to The Associated Press.

The bill has been described as "our pitiful best" by some House Democrats, and the bill's Republican floor manager said, "No one got exactly what they wanted." But an agreement has been reached, and it seems to be acceptable for the time being.

According to government figures, about 4 million Americans work at minimum wage. Congressional researchers say two-thirds of them are women and 25 percent to 33 percent are heads of households, AP reported.

With today's high cost of living many single people can barely survive -- not to mention individuals trying to support entire families. A minimum wage increase is long overdue.

If the Senate passes the bill as expected, the only remaining person standing in the way of a better way of life for many Americans is President Bush.

Bush vetoed the minimum wage increase, without the current subminimum training wage, earlier this year. In light of his current push for a capital gains tax cut for wealthy Americans, many predict Bush cannot afford to veto a pay raise for the less fortunate again.

Let's hope so.

-- Lee Rood
for the Daily Nebraskan

Fee for new students unfair

Here it is, 1 a.m., and I finally decide to open my mail. And what is the first thing I lay my eyes on, but an asinine letter from New Student Enrollment stating that all new students are required to pay \$25 for "various programs and services."

What exactly does this new student fee go toward? One of Tom Osborne's children's college fund, or to an "enhanced credit analysis process," as the notice says? Who knows! Who cares! Why didn't they just tack it on to our student fees (which already are \$124) instead of bringing it up when all the students are broke (as well as Mom and Dad)?

Homecoming news neglected by DN

I would like to express my concern for the lack of coverage the Homecoming activities received. The only article during Homecoming week was about the Royalty Elections. That article told when the polls would be open and a brief synopsis of each candidate. All other information about Homecoming appeared as paid advertisements by the UPC Homecoming committee.

So while the Daily Nebraskan editorialized about student fees being improperly spent for Homecoming and the unfairness of the Homecoming elections, the amount of coverage on this event could have been reduced by more coverage of the other

What if we students didn't attend New Student Enrollment or did not receive any of the supposed "information mailed to transfer students." I didn't receive this information, and I certainly didn't waste my time at New Student Enrollment!

If they actually want us to pay this \$25 fee, they should have given us more than seven days notice. After all, now I may have to sell one of my textbooks (actually, about three) to pay this wallet-wrenching fee.

Cory Adamson
sophomore
political science

Homecoming activities. The Lincoln Journal had at least two informational articles about the Homecoming activities during the week.

Homecoming for the century of Nebraska football was a big event for UNL and the Daily Nebraskan failed to document the activities. I hope that you will realize the Daily Nebraskan is used as the source of historic reference for university events. In the future, those searching for information on past UNL events will not find any information if those events are not recorded now.

Tom Svoboda
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Yuppies invade middle-class fun

Clean air, nachos with cheese make up modern-day poolrooms

Out of curiosity, I wandered into one of the big new yuppie poolrooms that have sprung up in Chicago. It is the latest fad, which means it has lasted more than a week.

I don't know what Minnesota Fats would think, but it didn't look like a poolroom to me.

For one thing, it was so clean. Even the air lacked the traditional blue haze of smoke. But I shouldn't have been surprised, since smoking is now considered an act of aggression by those non-smoking yuppies who believe they will live forever.

And many of the players were of the female persuasion, which would have been unthinkable in the old-time pool halls. The only women who entered those places were either old biddies selling flowers or younger ones selling something else.

Because it was also a restaurant and bar, there seemed to be more people eating nachos with melted cheese and drinking light beer than shooting pool. Everyone to their own, but I've had nachos and melted cheese only once, and I'm convinced that those brave men died at the Alamo to prevent this dish from entering the United States.

But the most surprising thing about the place, besides its enormous size, was the skill of the players.

I had assumed they would be tearing up the felt surfaces of the tables, scuffing the balls, poking each other's contact lenses.

Instead, I saw smooth strokes, trim young lawyer-broker types dropping ball after ball while applying the proper English for good follow-up position.

At first that puzzled me. How could they have become so skillful when there are so few pool halls? In recent years, only a few of the true, grungy poolrooms survived, but not in neighborhoods where yuppies were spawned.

Then it came to me. Of course. They had learned to play in their basements. Not basements, of course. The rec room of the suburban bi-level or tri-level where they grew up. A few decades ago, no self-respecting suburban rec room was without the status

symbol of a pool table.

So as little lads, with the Little League season over and snow on the ground, they developed their skills with a pool stick, probably hustling their fathers for extra allowance money, which they could hoard until they had enough to buy a few joints.

I'm not being critical. In fact, it was a nice, civilized place. And after the initial shock of seeing so many female pool players wore off, I had to admit that they were a more pleasant sight than the bald, tattooed, baggy-eyed players who frequented the pool halls of my youth.



Mike Royko

One of the owners wandered over to chat, and he asked me what I thought of his place.

I told him that it depended on his bottom line. If his cash register runneth over, it was a good idea. If not, he should look to the future and anticipate the next fad.

He admitted that despite the crowd, the profits weren't dazzling. The problem with many yuppies, he said, is that they are so fitness conscious, they tend to nurse a glass of white wine or a light beer for an entire evening. And nobody ever got rich selling nachos and melted cheese.

So I suggested that when his accountant told him he was slipping into the red, he convert the joint into something else.

"Such as?" he said.

I pointed out that the place was big enough to put in several bowling alleys. Or lanes, as the image-conscious bowling industry prefers they be called.

He shook his head and said: "There are already a lot of bowling establishments. There would be nothing new about it."

He was mistaken, and I explained. "All of the bowling alleys in the city and the suburbs have one thing in

common. Automatic racks. Machines set the pins. Some places even have computers that automatically keep the score. It is all automated."

"So what do you suggest that's different?" he asked.

"Live pinsetters," I said. "Scooping up the balls, picking up the pins, slamming down the rack to set the pins. Just like when I was a lad."

He shook his head. "After a certain point, the machines are cost-efficient. And they're reliable. You don't have to worry about some teenager or wino pinsetter not showing up for work."

He still didn't understand. So I explained. "You don't hire pin boys. You don't pay someone to work back in the pits. There are no labor costs."

"Who does it?" he asked.

"That's the whole point. You take out an ad: 'Build your body. Get a great workout. Work up a sweat. Lose those pounds. Be yuppie-persons, male and female, happily picking up bowling pins. And you charge them to set pins. You can quote figures about how many calories you burn off setting pins, and how much cheaper it is to get a workout doing that than by joining a health club. They'll be standing in line for that deal. So you'll be making money on both ends -- bowlers and pinsetters."

He asked: "What about the social end of it?"

"You can set up a wine bar in the back for the pinsetters. Make it a private club. Charge a small membership fee. Let them bring guests and watch them bend and grunt."

"It's something to think about," he said.

"And one more thing to consider. Maybe you can get Cher to set a few games."

"Now that is something to think about," he said.

So the first time you see a yuppie pinsetter, remember whose idea it was.

Mike Royko is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune. ©1989.

editorial

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According to policy set by the re-

gents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.