

Daily
Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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1989 in perspective

UNL leaders must learn from mistakes

The Berlin Wall. Tiananmen Square. Exxon-Valdez. The big names stick out -- the good and bad of 1989.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus also saw some good and bad in 1989, and went through changes -- some of which won't be resolved until well into the '90s.

Newly-appointed ASUN Sen. Steve Thomlinson stood up at a meeting last semester and talked about morality, adding an assumption that "we are all Christians here," on a campus that does not discriminate on the basis of, for one thing, religion.

Then ASUN president Jeff Petersen decided against the use of student fees for gay/lesbian programming.

Regent John Payne said of not supporting the addition of sexual orientation to NU discrimination laws, "When you are 45, you look at the world differently."

A campus group called "Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Avacados (sic)" assaulted the homosexual community with a mock Committee Offering Lesbian And Gay Events newsletter.

James Hanson, director of the Nebraska State Historical Society, handed out sensationalized books depicting Nebraska Indians as savages, in an attempt to defeat a bill that would require the society to return human remains to Indian tribes for burial.

Jesse Helms introduced an amendment to restrict federal aid to art projects found obscene or religiously offensive.

Salman Rushdie wrote a book and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini asked for his head. Armen Keteyian wrote "Big Red Confidential" and Big Red fans everywhere asked for his.

The Ayatollah died.

Nebraska was chosen as the home of a new low-level radioactive waste site, someone bleached the words "die fag" into a lawn south of the capitol, and NU President Ronald Roskens stepped down.

The NU Board of Regents began a now-defunct presidential search, and a report showed that the NU system needed "fine-tuning." That fine-tuning now has turned into a complete revamp of Nebraska's higher education system.

Nebraska Sen. Scott Moore of Stromsburg suggested that NU Regent Nancy Hoch step down as chairman but retain her seat on the board, the regents voted to turn the Woodruff building into a parking lot and to keep Firs Tier as a financial adviser.

A survey showed that students at UNL consider parking their number one concern, above such topics as AIDS, stress, sexual harassment, safety and crime.

Other surveys showed that drug use, smoking and ACT scores were down among college students in 1989.

Early Warning! spoke out against the wrongs in our society by, among other things, building a Shantytown outside the Nebraska Union to make people aware of the plight of the homeless, and posting signs above drinking fountains that read "whites only" and "blacks only" to make students think about prejudice and racism.

The regents introduced a clause in their bylaws protecting people against discrimination on the basis of "personal characteristics." While it wasn't the sexual orientation clause needed, it was a step forward.

Ecology Now implemented some recycling projects that just may become permanent features on campus, and ecological concerns caused an increase in enrollment for environment-related classes.

Measles broke out on campus, and the University Health Center staff performed above and beyond the call of duty to keep the disease from spreading further. UNL police officer Bryan Kratochvil won the Carnegie Award for saving a 5-year-old boy from a fire in 1988.

1990 will show more changes for the UNL campus and education. Let's hope our leaders realize the mistakes and move forward with the good things they've begun.

.. Amy Edwards
for the Daily Nebraskan



A heavy metal Christmas story

Smiling faces, late checks can make mothers do strange things

I'm a 31-year-old rock 'n' roll fan and mother of two. Lately, however, I've been getting into heavy metal.

No, I'm not talking about Motley Crue or Iron Maiden.

I'm talking about heavy metal that can help me give my 9- and 10-year-old daughters another year of Santa Claus.

This heavy metal stuff can make my family money -- about \$50 a ton. Christmas-wise, that's about half a Nintendo machine.

So, I've become a junkyard junkie.

It all started last weekend when my husband, Mike, sat down and added up our debts. Then he totaled up our assets.

We had no assets.

What to do?

I called financial aid.

Busy. I called again. Busy. Again. Busy. Busy. Busy!!

Finally, someone answered.

"Will I be able to pick up my student loan check before Christmas?" I asked.

"No. Not 'til Jan. 8."

"Even though my disbursement date from the bank is Dec. 15?"

"No, we can't disburse the check until the 8th."

"But last year, we could pick our checks up earlier," I pointed out.

"That was last year," she said bureaucratically.

So, I don't get my check. So, I don't buy my kids any gifts.

Well, heck, darn, shucks. I'll just tell the kids that there won't be presents under the tree this year. We'll just have an old-fashioned Christmas. You know, real old-fashioned. Like before presents were invented. They'll understand.

Sorry. I can't accept that.

Thus, heavy metal.

My husband convinced me that we could make extra money moonlighting as junk metal scrappers. In one weekend, he said, we could make \$300.

No way, I said.

I remember the last time he had an odd-job money-making scheme for

us. In fact, it was just about this time last year that he suggested we sandblast 10,000-gallon diesel tanks at the co-op in his tiny hometown of Fairmont.

What a nightmare. I had sand sifting out of my nose and ears for weeks.

But, then again, I reasoned, how bad could collecting scrap metal be?

There was a pile of it right there on his grandfather's farm, I thought. We could have the whole pile all to our-

self," he said.

"We have to cut it?"

"Yep. None of the metal can be over 3 feet long or more than 18 inches wide," he matter-of-factly stated.

I looked around and saw that most of the metal was intact -- a 1920s two-row planter, a broken-down swingset, an old stove and hundreds of 20-foot-long assorted angle-irons and pipes. All quite rusty. Rusted to the max, in fact.

We began digging, pulling, carrying, yanking, straining, throwing and torching. Every so often, the torch lit a fire in the dry grass -- right underneath the truck we were loading onto.

Suspicious of being blown up, I found myself frantically on the ground throwing dirt at the blaze.

"Let it burn. It won't go anywhere," he assured me.

Yeah, right. I wasn't convinced.

Then it happened. I started to feel pangs of my physical limits -- my lower back hurt like hell!

But I gritted my teeth and scrapped to the end, as visions of dollar signs danced through my head.

After two days of 800 milligram doses of Motrin, my muscles stopped twitching and throbbing and I was ready to go Christmas shopping.

So all the torture was worth it. Why? Because I knew that my kids would have presents for Christmas.

Was it maternal instinct? A soft heart?

I don't know. Maybe I'm a sap, but a couple of smiling faces on Christmas morning can make a mother do strange things. And those same smiling faces make those same strange things seem awfully easy.

You know, by this time next year, I will have graduated with a degree in one hand and a job in the other -- a real job.

And I'll never have to do another odd job again. Never.

Unless, of course, they raise the price on Nintendos.

Schepers is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist and reporter.

C. J.
Schepers



selfes and make some Christmas money while cleaning up gramps' yard at the same time. What a sweet deal.

Of course, nothing is that easy.

Once we got to the farm and down to business, I changed into my scuzzy clothes and cotton tennies.

"I'm ready," I told him.

He laughed.

"Are those your good shoes?" he asked, shaking his head. "You'll have to put on mom's old tennies."

Fine.

Then he handed me these greasy green coveralls that were so huge the crotch hung down to my knees and the cuffs completely buried my feet.

"Here," he said. "You'd better wear a hat, too." He shoved this mustard-colored stocking cap over my freshly-curled head of hair. The cap was so snuggy-tight that it squeezed my glasses smack against my eyelids.

Picture it.

This is deja vu, I'm thinking. Something about sand. Yes, I think I've been here before.

We arrived at the scrap-metal pile and Mike carried out this machine that resembled a helium tank.

"What's that?" I asked.

"It's a torch to cut the metal down

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.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the 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, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

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