

Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Watch your tongue

Fining for use of 'outstate' is extreme

Outstate Nebraska. It's a term used generally to describe the parts of Central and Western Nebraska that are outside of the more populated areas of Lincoln and Omaha.

Is that so offensive? Evidently it is, because our state senators thought it offensive enough to pass a resolution banning the use of the term outstate, along with the use of "greater" and "lesser" Nebraska from the vocabulary of Nebraska citizens.

Is that silly? The resolution reads, "That the terms outstate Nebraska, greater Nebraska, and lesser Nebraska be permanently stricken from the vocabulary of Nebraska's citizens and that all citizens be encouraged to familiarize themselves with the geography and communities of the entire beautiful state of Nebraska so they may more precisely refer to all areas of the state in a manner that promotes statewide understanding."

Any citizen who hears a state official or representative use one of the terms can fine the culprit \$50 to be donated to that citizen's favorite charity.

"Did you say outstate? I distinctly heard you use the word outstate in that sentence."

"No. But you just said it twice. Hand over \$100 to my favorite charity, please."

State Sens. Sandra Scofield of Chadron and M.L. "Cap" Dierks of Ewing introduced the resolution and their point is well-taken.

The words outstate, greater and lesser don't describe accurately the parts of Nebraska they attempt to define, and people should be more sensitive to terms that offend others.

They also should have some basic knowledge of the state in which they live.

Even though the resolution has no power to be enforced, asking people to pay \$50 for using the word is a little extreme.

Good thing the Daily Nebraskan is not a state-run newspaper. Otherwise it would be asked to pay \$800 for this editorial.

— Amy Edwards
for the Daily Nebraskan

Minority hurt athletes' image

In response to McGraw Milhaven's column on the treatment of athletes (DN, Jan. 31), one can only ask how he can claim to be an "... ex-college athlete who sees things more objectively." Objectivity implies that one does not have a vested interest in the subject.

I also am "... sick and tired of the negative connotation associated with the word 'athlete.'" My own dislike of the negative image comes from a lifelong love of sports on the high school, college and professional levels and a dedicated loyalty to the Cornhuskers. Because of this interest in sports I am enraged by the blatant disregard for rules, laws and common decency by some athletes. It is this minority who cast a shadow on all who engage in athletic competition. When I read stories of the alleged rape of a University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman by a visiting University of Colorado football player, the suspensions of Roy Tarpley, Dexter Manley, and numerous others for the use of controlled substances, and a number of arrests and citations issued against UNL athletes, I question the circumstances which cause such behavior. Why does Dexter Manley think he can get away with the use of controlled substances? Perhaps it is because teachers, coaches and other authority figures allowed him the special privileges the article encourages athletes to take advantage of.

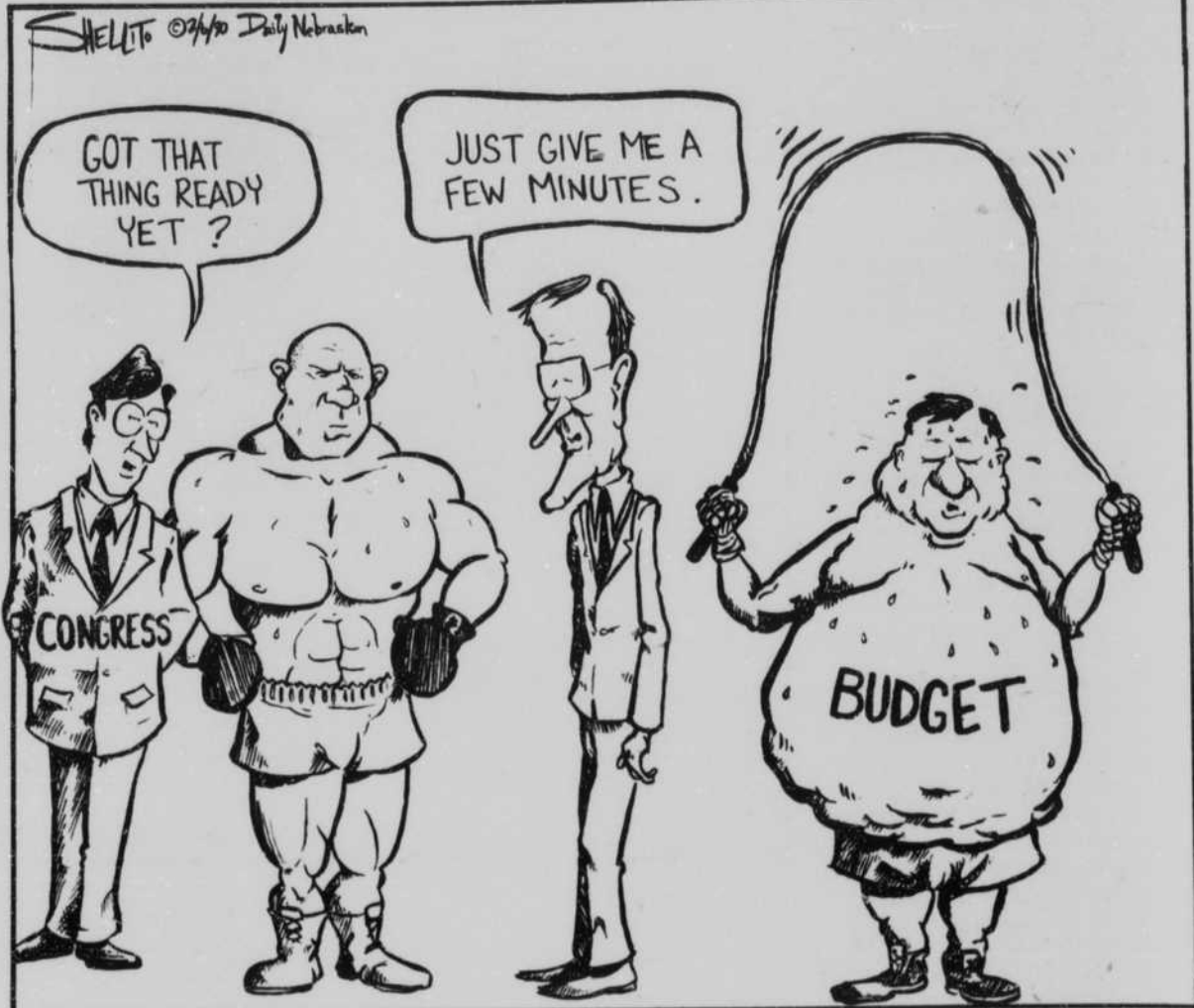
Mr. Milhaven, instead of encouraging athletes to get all they can, how about encouraging the fair and equal

treatment of all peoples? You use pathetic cliches like "Life is not fair" to justify the establishment of elite groups who are above the rules that everyone else must live by. Awarding scholarships and academic rewards to outstanding athletes is as fully justifiable as awarding scholarships in dance, music, academics or many other fields, because as Milhaven so correctly stated, "... the true nature of learning -- finding out what others do and appreciating their gifts" is very important. The problem comes when the privileges extended to athletes, or any other group, exceed the privileges of theirs.

The one privilege that scholarship athletes must take advantage of is the free education that they have earned, and yet there are athletes who use up their eligibility and never receive a degree. Knowledge is the greatest tool a person can have and any athlete, "art student," or child of "rich parents," who wastes an opportunity to acquire it is cheating him or herself.

I also enjoy your attempt, Mr. Milhaven, to insinuate that those who do not agree with you are commies who should "... go to the Soviet Union." The concept of, "America, love it or leave it," is the defense of those who cannot support their arguments. In the United States we are allowed to express our opinions, no matter how misguided some may be.

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Restructuring gets back burner

ASUN finds time for ballot counting, Colorado football game

In a characteristic move last week, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska failed to immediately pass a bill backing the restructuring of higher education in Nebraska.

Senators claimed that because the bill hadn't been introduced at an earlier time, they weren't prepared to pass it. They didn't have enough time to research the matter, they said.

But one day later, they had all the research they needed. In an emergency meeting, they passed an amended version of the bill.

I congratulate ASUN for actually doing research before voting on the bill.

I criticize the senators for not doing the research much earlier.

Even if senators weren't aware that ASUN legislation would address the issue, they should have taken the time to study the proposals. After all, isn't the restructuring of Nebraska's higher education one of the key issues at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln this year? Why did it take some senators so long to read up on the subject?

I find it difficult to swallow the fact that our student leaders didn't know enough about the proposed restructuring to have their opinions set before last Wednesday's meeting.

On Nov. 29, the consulting firm Widmayer and Associates recommended a total change in the governing of Nebraska's higher education. That gave ASUN senators two months to bone up on the facts. Yet, they had to take an extra day to make their decision.

Even then, ASUN had to amend the original bill to include its wish that UNL remain Nebraska's "flagship" institution. Had senators researched the issue thoroughly, they would have discovered that nowhere in the report did Widmayer and Associates suggest changing UNL's status as the leading institution in Nebraska.

But putting important issues on the back burner seems to be a tradition in this year's senate. I guess it should have come as no surprise when senators were unprepared to discuss the restructuring issue.

And speaking of restructuring ... as long as the Nebraska Legislature

already is considering changing the system, why stop at upper-level governing? Why not continue the philosophy and restructure UNL's student government as well?

The restructuring process would have to start somewhere. Why not start with what we've got -- 35 senators and three executives.

Let's leave the executives alone, for this column at least. Instead I'll concentrate on the senators themselves since they seem to me to be the biggest problem.

First, let me give a brief profile of what the "back burner" senate has done.

ASUN senators have tackled what



Jana Pedersen

students (sadly) have labeled the number one problem at UNL -- parking.

They've gotten us a bus shelter. (Actually Fran Thompson, a student who uses the bus system, was more to credit for that.)

They've tried to promote AIDS awareness.

They've rubber-stamped numerous student organization constitutions. They've assigned committees to study issues.

And they've volunteered, in mass, to count homecoming royalty ballots. (Well, somebody had to do it.)

Unfortunately, at the meeting the week before homecoming ballot-counters were called for, another volunteer project came up. This one was for marchers at a rally sponsored by Project Excel, a youth group dedicated to fighting drugs.

No one volunteered. In fact only one member of ASUN, an executive, attended the rally.

Senators kept their hands down because they had passed a bill earlier in the year to name the football game at the University of Colorado "1989

Student Migration Game." The Project Excel rally happened to fall on the same Saturday. Some senators already had tickets for the game. The rest must have had other plans. The game was televised, remember.

As the migration game bill said, "student enthusiasm for Big Red football is abundant."

To me it seems that ASUN senators just don't have time to do all that's necessary for the job. They don't have time for projects like Excel. They don't have time to research important issues concerning Nebraska higher education.

What we need to improve ASUN are senators who have more time, senators who are willing to give up other things, like part-time jobs. And how do we attract these super-senators?

Pay them.

Why not? U.S. senators get paid, don't they? What do ASUN senators get now but one more good line on a resume?

But resume-packing does not a good senator make. Then again, neither does bribery. A system would have to be developed to ensure students get the leadership they would be paying for.

Maybe the parking lot by Broyhill Fountain could be converted into an ASUN lot. Those who are excellent senators could park there. Consolation prizes of bus passes could be handed out for those who don't own cars. Those who don't make good senators wouldn't even get a bus pass. Of course, we'd need a judge to decide who's doing a good job and who's not. That could get messy.

So, paying senators probably wouldn't work. I'm no Widmayer. I'm not even an associate.

But I do know some change is bound to work.

And if we have to hire an outside consulting firm to figure out what that change is, let's do it. In the long run, it would be worth it.

In the long run, we might even end up with senators who don't like football.

Pedersen is a sophomore advertising major and a Daily Nebraskan night news editor and columnist.