

Daily Nebraskan

Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Eric Pfanner, Editor, 472-1766
Victoria Ayotte, Managing Editor
Darcie Wiegert, Associate News Editor
Diane Brayton, Associate News Editor
Jana Pedersen, Wire Editor
Emily Rosenbaum, Copy Desk Chief
Lisa Donovan, Editorial Page Editor

Cuts run deep

Law threatens students' pocketbooks too

Maybe President Bush is just being a sound financial planner.

But his threat to use a veto unless Congress arrives at deep spending cuts to comply with the Gramm-Rudman law could affect those most who can afford it least.

Gramm-Rudman requires across-the-board spending cuts of \$85 billion by Oct. 1 unless a deficit-reduction agreement is reached.

What if the court system breaks down, airplanes start crashing, children fail to be immunized, nuclear plants emit radiation, social security recipients go hungry, the tax man loses some money and farm loans disintegrate? None of those areas -- all of which are among the reductions that would go into effect -- necessarily would directly affect a student's pocketbook.

But wait a minute. The Pell Grant program could collapse, too. Gramm-Rudman would slice \$1.6 billion -- about one-third of the budget for this fiscal year -- from the federal grant program.

Nationwide, that would mean 1.4 million students would lose an average of \$1,000 each. A further 2 million students would lose an average of \$120 each. At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 5,261 students receive Pell Grants.

Although the cuts wouldn't take effect until next semester, the prospect of substantial losses to every student receiving a Pell Grant has to be discouraging.

Pell Grants are awarded on the basis of need. That principle assumes that students would be unable to attend college without the financial aid the grants provide.

The cost of a college education already discriminates against those who can't afford one. Reducing Pell Grant money only would add to the problem.

John Beacon, director of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, said students would become more dependent on loans if the sequester took effect.

"If it's cut, you'll find students replacing grant money with loan money," he said.

But Guaranteed Student Loans would be affected by the cut as well.

Fees that students are charged to initiate a loan would rise from 5 percent to 5.5 percent and special allowances to lenders would drop from 3.25 percent to 3 percent.

Loans -- as the federal government could attest -- aren't the answer. The constant cycle of borrow and spend during the 1980s is what led to the current budget debacle. In the end, the bill for the lifestyle that cycle allowed will hit the needy the hardest.

Students who can't afford college without aid shouldn't be forced to dig themselves further into the hole by taking out loans. But they also shouldn't be forced to quit school if they choose sound financial planning.

-- Eric Pfanner
for the Daily Nebraskan

Taxpayers should decide

All the quick responses to my last letter really got me thinking. If I correctly understand the main point most writers were trying to make, they said that my tax dollars support the arts so folks who otherwise would not have the money will be given the opportunity to see the displays or exhibits anyway.

Fine, I'll buy that. But that argument brings up more questions in my mind.

Are n't motion pictures considered art? If so, I would love to see "Postcards From the Edge," next weekend, but right now I can't spare the \$10 for the ticket and refreshments. Hey, Ernie Chambers, can you and your friends in the Legislature give me some state money so I can afford to go? Hell, I think that would be fair. What's that? You say movies do not count? Oh well, since I can't afford it, I guess I don't get to go.

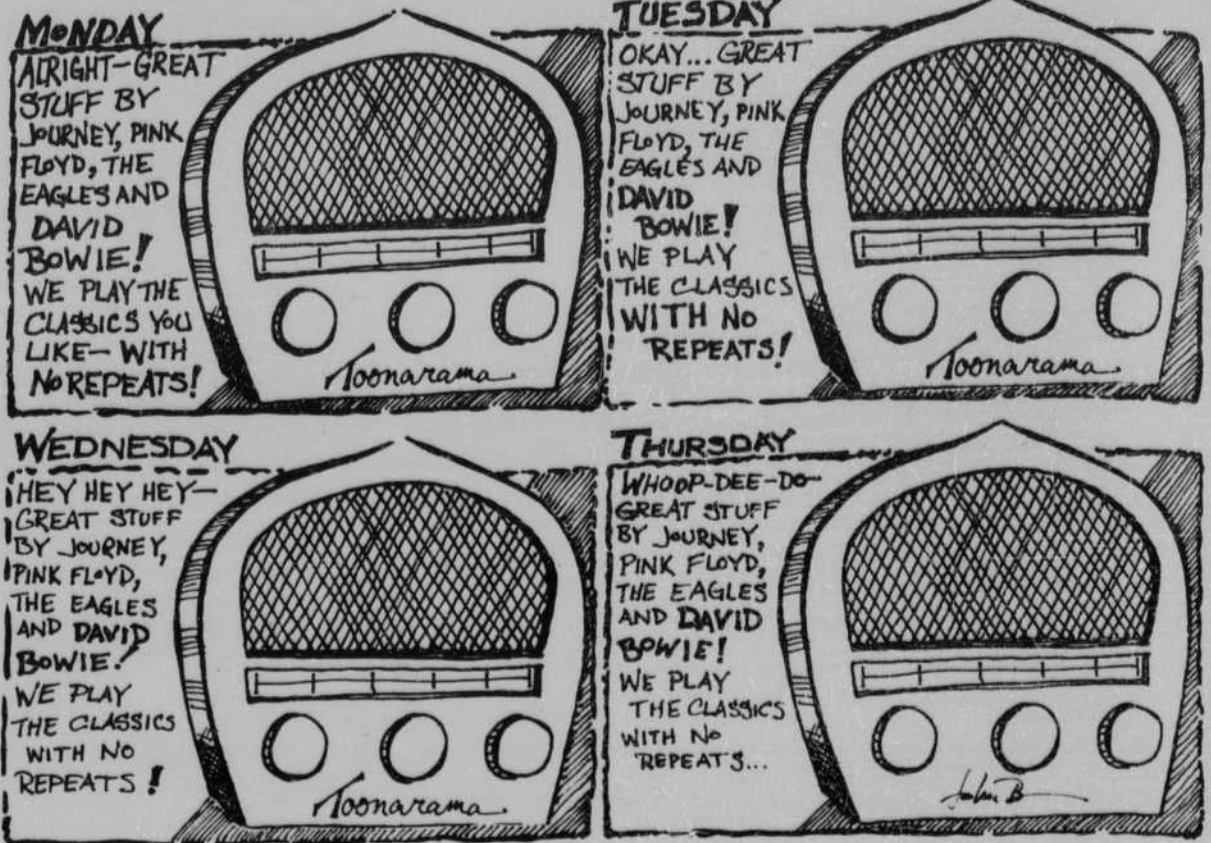
How about pictures? Photography is a hobby of mine. If I had my way, I would take dozens of pictures every day, but the film would get expensive. Hey Ernie, can I have some state money for this? No? Oh, I see. Only artists who are producing photos. I'm pretty sure I won't qualify for this kind of welfare support.

I know music is a form of art. Boy,

how I would have loved to see the Paul McCartney concert in Ames, a while back. Ernie, I know it's a little late now, but is there any way state money could have been used to help me, say, about \$200? I mean, lodging and transportation cost money too. Oh, gosh darnit, only this "new wave," "modern" music that I don't happen to be a fan of qualifies to benefit from me and my family's tax dollars.

These may seem like trivial examples, but they illustrate my point. One of the writers said they did not support the military action in the Middle East, but had to pay for it anyway. Listen, I understand your frustration. You should have a choice. The decision as to where people's money is to go should be left to the people, not Congress. If not enough people wanted to support Operation Desert Shield, Congress would know that. There wouldn't be enough money in Pentagon coffers to support the action, and it wouldn't have gotten off the ground. The taxpayers earn that money, they should make the decision.

Andrew Meyer
"the silly junior"
pre-med



CLASSIC ROCK AND BORE

Dreams interrupted by -isms

Energizer Bunny marches through, blurs TV-land with reality

I must be an idealist. I keep dreaming of a place where peace shines down like a cool autumn sun and those awful -isms are just faint memories of grouchy old women and men.

Then, someone, maybe it's John Madden, comes barging in, bursting through the screen of my dream like Porky Pig.

"Fool," he says, fist in the air, "there'll never be a place like that. Give it up."

I struggle for an example and tell him of Tibetan monasteries where scholars seclude themselves for a lifetime of peaceful contemplation.

"But they don't allow women there," Madden says with a smile that quickly turns to a cackle as he fades into the black screen that precedes commercial breaks.

Up pops Kathie Lee Gifford on a cruise ship, singing "Ain't we got fun?" And suddenly the Energizer Bunny appears, trampling her down and chasing after Jesse Helms.

Fade to black.

A talk-show logo appears from nowhere. "Platitudes," it reads, and I realize I must be watching Lifetime. Applause, and the camera zooms in on two men, grinning and saying, "Welcome."

It takes a moment for the camera to focus and for me to realize it's George Bush and Saddam Hussein. Softly, as if coming in from a great distance, I hear the drum of the Energizer Bunny.

Then I wake up. I figure I've been watching too much TV lately. My dad used to tell me that if I didn't turn off the TV I wouldn't be able to tell the difference between soap operas and real life.

Only, now I always watch Headline News. And the bunny hasn't showed up yet to bowl over anchorwoman Lynn Vaughn.

The news has become my lifeblood, a mode of reassurance that even though we've got troops halfway around the world, we aren't at war, yet. And if we do go to war, I'll be the first on my block to know. Maybe I take comfort in that.



Jana Pedersen

But between stories of the Persian Gulf, the struggling economy and what's in store for the premiere of Twin Peaks, come other little tidbits to pinprick my bubble of optimism.

Take last week, for example. I've always considered the University of Wisconsin a bastion of tolerance, a semi-clean corner on the smudged napkin of the United States.

Then, an -ism appeared on my TV screen, originating in Madison, Wis. Anti-Semitism.

Actually, anti-Semitism has been on the minds of the Madison community since July, when the brake lines were cut on a bus that carried children to a Jewish day camp.

Since then, synagogues have been defaced with swastikas and colorful phrases such as, "Rich Jews Die." Fraternities and sororities with Jewish members have had their windows broken. And New Order, formerly known as the American Nazi Party, has distributed white supremacist leaflets in the residence halls.

Jean Christensen, a reporter with the University of Wisconsin's Daily Cardinal who covered the events for The New York Times, said 23 anti-Semitic incidents had been reported in all. The FBI is investigating, but there are no suspects. No arrests have

been made.

"People are just baffled, because it's Madison and it doesn't fit at all," Christensen told me.

And I wished I heard the bunny approaching.

When I woke up one morning and switched on "Good Morning, America," there was the bunny, smack dab between a preview of "Coach" and the closing credits. Only the bunny actually appeared on the show this time, not just in the commercials.

Maybe that's a sign my dream's coming true.

At the very least, "Good Morning, America" is a pseudo-news show. Maybe the bunny's appearance there is a sign that the news is not as bad as it seems, I thought.

Then, with one flick of the remote control, economists told me we're headed for recession and gas could cost me \$2.00 a gallon soon. No bunny came along this time.

And even if that bunny keeps me from sitting through really stupid commercials, it's just a ploy to get me to buy something else, even if the bunny shows up on "Good Morning, America," it's just a ploy to get ratings.

The bunny's no superhero. It won't save us from Saddam, or the -isms, or a crumbling economy, or anything else for that matter. But I'm afraid too many people still hope for such an answer.

I have another dream in which the bunny wears a blue bodysuit and a red cape. This time, I'm chasing after it, trying to run it down.

Inevitably I wake up to the crackle of post-1 a.m. TV fuzz.

Maybe I just better turn the damn thing off.

Pedersen is a junior advertising major, the Daily Nebraskan wire editor and a columnist.

letter

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters and guest opinions sent to

editorial

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Letters should be typewritten.

Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily pro-

duction of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

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