

Article, veal, spending lid prompt letters

DN commended for enlightening handicap story

I wish to commend you and your staff for the enlightening article about the growing number of handicapped students (DN, Oct. 12).

I have a real concern for my fellow students with limited mobility in class on third floor.

Where are the disaster plans for a tornado or fire for these students? Can the university afford even one disaster? I think not. By the way, for a change of pace and attitude, use only handicapped access to your classes for one day! "Walk a mile" in the other set of tracks.

Camilla Booe
senior
journalism

Apathetic views can be overcome with persistence

Things ain't all bad. Hope, unity, coalition-building and respect for future generations were among the main themes of "Catalyst" — the second national conference of the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC). Twenty-eight members of the student environmental organization Ecology Now attended the three-day gathering Oct. 5-7 at the University of Illinois. Ecology Now sent delegates from among each of its four chapters — the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Kearney State and Creighton. The conference was entitled "Catalyst" to reflect its mission, which was (and is) to facilitate interaction among a diversity of environmental student organizations worldwide.

Catalyst was attended by about 7,500 students representing organizations from among all 50 states and 11 nations. It was by far the largest student environmental gathering in America to date, reflecting a rapid evolution of environmental consciousness among this nation's young people. Alarmed by widespread overconsumption, the ease with which environmental health is sacrificed for short-term gain, and the failure of government to effectively intercede, students are banding together in SEAC and are developing regional and national plans of action.

Nationally, SEAC has launched a "corporate accountability campaign" and is focusing largely on the cultivation of a national energy policy which emphasizes increased conservation and conversion to renewable energy sources. Regionally, the coalition is helping local student groups to network and to develop plans of action which can tie into broader regional and national plans.

Ecology Now is the coordinating group for SEAC's Midwest Region — which includes Nebraska, Kansas,

Iowa and Missouri. Ecology Now will be helping student groups in the four-state region to develop unified strategies for combatting irresponsible corporate and government practices. Among the strategies will be the negotiation of campus "accountability contracts" between students and school administrators. These contracts will encourage greater campus energy self-sufficiency and increased student involvement in school policy-making.

Catalyst delegates attended workshops on such topics as nonviolent direct action, composting and "Fighting the Corporate Takeover on Campus." SEAC'ers also participated in panel discussions on a wide variety of issues, including the need to draw more minorities and underprivileged people into the environmental movement. All drew inspiration from such speakers as Ralph Nader, Jesse Jackson and Robert Redford.

Nader encouraged the audience to "take over the media" by making greater use of public-access cable and community service announcements. Everyone agreed with Jackson when he acknowledged the evolution of a "new world order," in which "a clean environment is among the most precious and basic of our rights." Dr. Helen Caldicott, president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, told participants, "I've always known that if the planet is to be saved, it would have to start among America's young people. And now it has begun... I can't wait to get home (to Australia) with the good news."

That's how we're feeling now. We were there. A greater spirit is moving among and within us. We know that apathy is being overcome by a rapidly growing segment of the population. We know that through unity, sensitivity and persistence, this democracy is becoming more alive.

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Steve Wagoner
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Jeff Knoedler
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Teachers College

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J Burger
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natural resources

Inhumane excuses about veal farmers angers vegetarian

In response to Nick Hytrek's letter (DN, Oct. 16) concerning the care veal farmers give their animals, I attempted to remain calm while reading your opinion. I did not succeed.

I respond to your inhumane rationalizations, not as a "do-gooder" spouting out facts, but as a person who is

appalled by what we, as a species, will do to attain our shallow and self-centered desires.

You maintain that calves are not taken from their mothers immediately after birth, but are given the opportunity to stand and nurse once or twice before being whisked off to an isolated crate. What depth of sensitivity! How kind! (Of course, this freedom is permitted only because it is important to the ultimate pursuit of SSS).

So dairy farmers put cows in crates all the time, because it is recommended procedure. My question is, recommended by whom? Other profit-oriented dairy farmers? If you were able to ask the cows for a consensus, do you think they would agree with this recommendation? And how nice that calves can lie down and even turn around in these crates. Such immense freedom of movement and quality of life should be commended. I'll bet you and your father are very proud of all you do for your animals.

As for cows dying from being kept in damp, roomy pens while standing in manure, why don't you simply muck out their pens daily and put down fresh, dry straw? It would seem a more humane method of prevention against disease than confining an animal to a lonely, unstimulating existence in a crate. There are other causes and forms of misery than the purely physical, Mr. Hytrek.

I will admit that I don't know a great deal about raising calves, but if a young calf enjoys milk more than water (which I'm sure it does, since most babies do), why not let it nurse from its mother? There is more to an animal's quality of life than good ventilation in a sanitary box. I have never regarded farmers as hicks as you suggest, but I do wonder if they really care for their children as they do for their livestock. I sincerely doubt it, and fervently hope not. Most people do not raise their children with the intent from birth to kill and sell them for a profit to consumers more concerned with tasty delicacies for their palates than with the inherent value of the lives of other species.

Obviously, I cannot handle the facts of "modern" agricultural production. As a result, I am a vegetarian. (By the way, Mr. Hytrek, vegetables don't have legs to stretch.) I stopped eating meat several years ago for a variety of reasons, including the adverse affect of meat on human health, but also because I have respect for and value the other life forms on our planet. I cannot justify to myself the suffering and slaughter of animals for meat when I do not need it myself, to live.

Peace, Mr. Hytrek — we are all one!

Lorrilyn Rennings
senior
secondary education

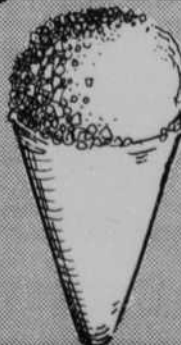
Budgeting process cannot be improved by 2 percent lid

As a student and a Nebraskan, I am just realizing the serious impact that Ed Jaksha's spending lid would have. My primary concern is with the lid's effect on education. Not only would tuition increase but all of the university's services would be in danger of being cancelled or greatly reduced. The lid will certainly affect athletics, but we can not forget the rest of the university.

Many people in the state do not realize the consequences of this issue. They can only see that their taxes could possibly go down. These pro-lid people will sure think it's a good idea when they are in need of assistance. I think that they will find out what a bad deal this lid is when their house is on fire and the fire department cannot afford to come and put it out. Better yet, they are in a serious car accident and no rescue squad comes to get them, and when it does, it takes them to a hospital that has a limited staff and is closed for the night.

I hope that all students are planning to vote against Initiative 405. The amendment's name should have been changed to "Ed Jaksha's Lack of Initiative 405". How can a complex budgeting process be helped by a "simple solution"?

Bill Matzke
senior
engineering



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