

Cans with trash

Low-cost recycling hits residence halls

Beginning this week, University of Nebraska-Lincoln residence hall students will be able to dump cans along with trash.

Through a cooperative effort of the Office of University Housing and Ecology Now, receptacles for aluminum can recycling have been placed on every residence hall floor.

Glen Schumann, assistant director of housing for maintenance operations, said operating costs must be kept minimal for the program to succeed.

The project is starting on the right foot. Schumann said the housing department has spent about \$10,000 so far, mostly for the purchase of receptacles, liners and lids. That is less than what other universities have spent to start similar programs, he said.

Part of the credit for the low cost should go to residence hall custodial employees, who initially will be responsible for can collection. Credit also should go to Ecology Now's Jeff Riggert, who spent his summer working on the project.

In the future, recycling in the residence halls also may include glass and paper. But for now, can collection is a good place to start.

The residence hall project was prompted by the success of a can recycling program in the Nebraska Unions. If the residence hall program is as successful as its union counterpart, a comprehensive, campuswide recycling plan should be implemented.

Ego trip

Model environment project not scientific

It sounds both like a visit to a fun house and a trip to a torture chamber.

Beginning Thursday, four women and four men will lock themselves for two years inside Biosphere II, a space-age model Earth the size of three football fields.

Biosphere II is composed of seven different ecological systems, called biomes. The airtight glass house contains more than 3,800 species of plants and animals, combined with the work of more than 200 researchers.

Financed by about \$150 million in private funds through project developer Space Biospheres Ventures, Biosphere II carries the aura of human scientific knowledge conquering the environment.

In reality, the project has very little to do with science.

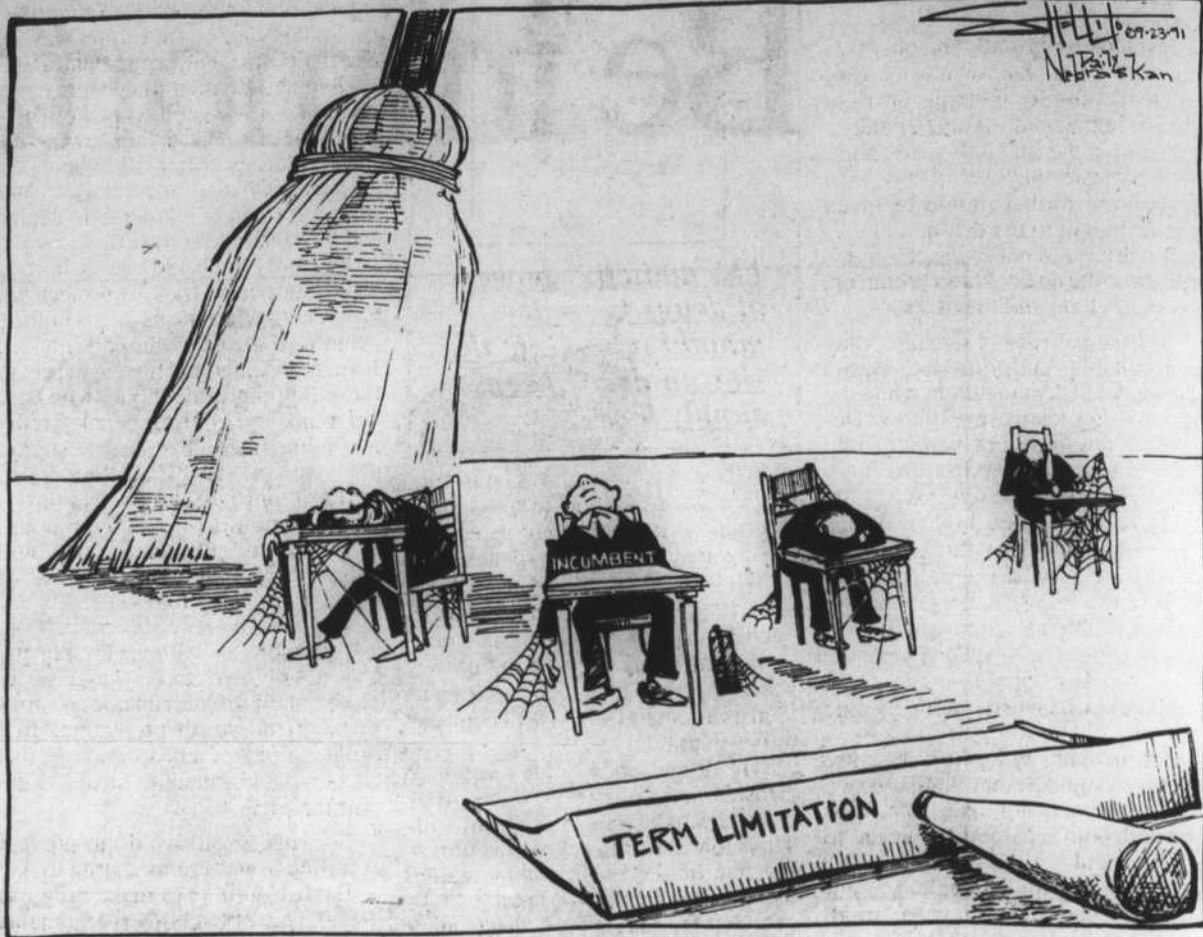
Margret Augustine, president and chief executive officer of SBV, told The Associated Press, "We're a business, number one. We are not a big-time science project."

That's evident from Biosphere literature, quoted in Life magazine, which describes the project "as a struggle to survive, all pervasive and relentless, but for the transient forms that populate it, moments occur in which the whole process is seen, an identification with the life-force surges through the organism, delight dances our blood."

It sounds like those behind Biosphere II are trying to play creator. Meanwhile, the media — and the American public — are eating the project up.

Here's to hoping the eight "biospherians" will emerge in two years from a more prosperous journey than the ego trip their glass house appears to be built on.

Brian Shellito/DN



CHRIS POTTER

Beware of DN monopoly

You probably are being duped. If you are reading the Daily Nebraskan uncritically, you are being duped.

The way you perceive the University of Nebraska-Lincoln — its institutions, its controversies and aspirations — depends largely on the people who create the newspaper in which this editorial column appears.

They have a political agenda. I have a political agenda. Readers must realize that.

This is not to say that diabolical Orwellian conspirators are deliberately feeding you a political orthodoxy that will, once implanted in your mind, make you a brainwashed drone. It is merely to say that in the process by which you came to read this piece of journalism, journalism was colored by innumerable biases.

Subjective journalism is not unique to the Daily Nebraskan. All newspapers are created by human beings who have human opinions on the way the world should be. The goal of a purely objective news source is unattainable, even when journalists strive for it.

But that does not mean that journalists are inherently unprofessional or lack integrity. It does mean that readers should be aware of the nature of a newspaper and the people who write it.

This is particularly critical for a college newspaper, when readers may not have developed the art of critical reading and journalists have not yet perfected their own art. Many students read more of the Daily Nebraskan than they do of their class assignments. They can hardly help it. DNs are strewn so liberally about campus that to avoid them would be Herculean.

Because of its prevalence, the Daily Nebraskan becomes invisible. People stop thinking about it. They absorb its stories and headlines as by osmosis without thinking critically about them. Day after day after day.

This gradual uncritical acceptance is natural. After all, the Daily Nebraskan is a newspaper. It has a bold



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nameplate. It has headlines. It has typeset stories. It has quotes. It looks like other newspapers. It looks very slick and authoritative.

But behind this slick appearance lies the Daily Nebraskan's substance. Simply because it has a pretty photograph placed in an aesthetically pleasing place next to the very professional looking story does not mean that the newspaper reflects an unbiased picture of what happens here and elsewhere.

A former ASUN president and student regent once remarked, off the cuff, that the editor of the Daily Nebraskan is the most powerful student on campus. Given the decisions the editor makes in determining the content of this newspaper, and by extension the "news," he was almost certainly correct.

It is no secret that the Daily Nebraskan has for many years been a

very liberal newspaper on many issues. It opposed the war with Iraq. It supported divestment from South Africa. It initially favored the creation of a racial affairs committee and later the creation of a subcommittee within ASUN last year. As such, its analysis of the news is bound to be a very liberal one.

A simple explanation for the liberal stance of the Daily Nebraskan is elusive. A new editor is hired every year. Reporters and editors are certainly not given a political litmus test before being hired. It may be that liberals are more inclined to enter a career in journalism.

But it is no crime for a newspaper to espouse a political agenda. As long as readers recognize that agenda and read critically, agenda-driven news is healthy. It inspires debate. But the fact that the Daily Nebraskan is the only student newspaper with a large readership makes that difficult.

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Some colleges and universities, such as Harvard University and the University of California at Berkeley, have at least two newspapers competing for student readership. Just as at UNL, they began with only one. But the natural evolution of the institution inspired students to break the news monopoly and establish new student newspapers.

The time is overripe for this to happen at UNL. A number of fledgling newspapers have sprung up, but have yet to command a readership comparable to that of the Daily Nebraskan. Establishing a second newspaper here will be difficult. It takes enormous effort and money.

In the meantime, readers must beware. What they read in the Daily Nebraskan must be read critically.

Potter is a senior math, physics, philosophy and history major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

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.

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.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R

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