

Daily
Nebraskan

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EDITORIAL

Get a bike

UNL will never solve parking problem

The Don Quixote of parking is at it again. Parking vigilante Mark Goldfeder, ASUN representative to the Parking Advisory Committee, has declared the future of on-campus parking as grim.

"The mood on this campus, obviously, is that there's not enough parking to go around," Goldfeder said.

Oh, really. Goldfeder has spent a chunk of his fall semester surveying 50 students living in residence halls, sororities and fraternities on City and East campuses.

His conclusion: Students aren't satisfied with UNL's parking situation.

No way. And now those rascally university officials plan to steal even more precious parking spaces from students.

Construction on the 10th Street viaduct and widening of Holdrege Street will erase 400 to 450 student spaces by next summer.

UNL officials are just teasing students by offering them 350 spaces in a lot next to the Beadle Center. The spaces will be sucked away by faculty members as soon as the center opens.

And even if officials wanted to create more spaces, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln can't afford to build more parking lots.

But if it could, Goldfeder has a magical dream plan in the works that would take away UNL's parking pains forever.

The brainchild of Goldfeder is a \$10 million on-campus parking garage.

Goldfeder deserves a pat on the back for trying, but he must realize that taking on parking problems is like fighting windmills.

There's not enough parking to go around. There never will be.

Goldfeder: Get a job. Students: Get a bike.

Legalizing hate

Voters should not decide morality issues

Oregon voters are faced with much more than helping to decide the next president on Nov. 3. They have the opportunity to legalize discrimination based on sexual orientation in their state.

Measure 9, which would be the most powerful anti-homosexual law ever enacted in a state, would have state offices and departments actively discourage homosexuality as "abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse." It would require the removal of homosexual teachers from the classroom, ban several books and force schools to teach that homosexuality is a moral sin.

Backed by the Christian Right, Measure 9 would force the views of its supporters on the entire state.

"We view homosexuality as a wrong behavior. It isn't good. It isn't right. It's wrong. If teachers say to students that homosexuality is moral, is natural, they have promoted that behavior to our kids," said Lon Mabon, the leader of the Oregon Citizens' Alliance.

Oregon voters are not alone. An initiative in Colorado would deny minority status based on sexual orientation. And voters in Portland, Maine, are faced with a similar measure on the municipal ballot.

Polls show voters in Oregon oppose the measure by a nearly two-to-one margin, but tensions remain high. Acts of violence and vandalism are reported on both sides. Last month, a lesbian and her roommate, a gay man, died in their home when it was firebombed.

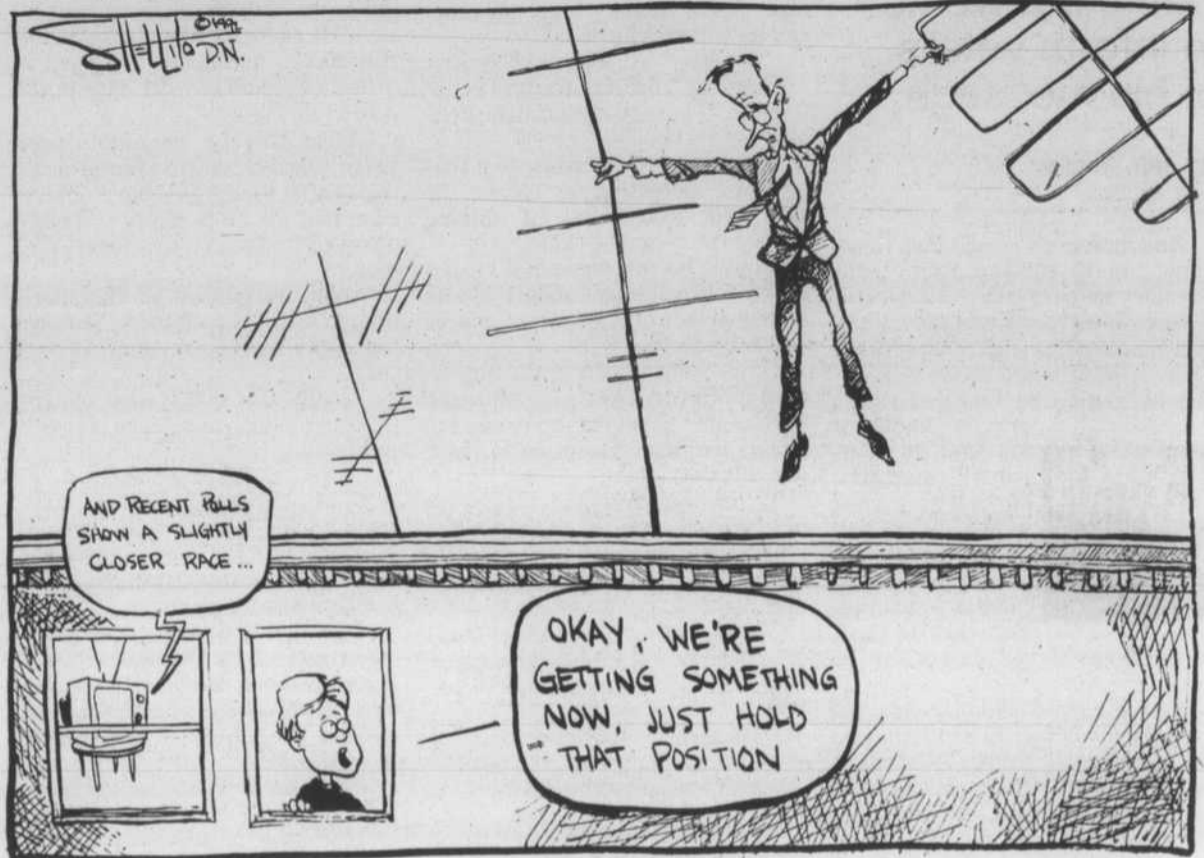
Proponents of the measure are trying to dictate their version of family values on a statewide level; they want to spread the values of hate and intolerance.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production 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.

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 or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. 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 St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



GUEST OPINION

Retreat reveals reality of racism

We, two white females, will never understand what minorities have to endure. Never.

We shop freely with the help of courteous salespeople who assist us instead of suspect us. We walk into any hair salon and get the cut we want. We enter any pharmacy and choose from a huge selection of cosmetics and styling aides. We pick up magazines or turn on the television and identify with the articles, characters and advertisements. We encounter police without apprehension.

And those are just the little things. How about looking for a place to live, a car to drive or a job to pay the bills? Racist attitudes flourish in these and all other atmospheres. No one is innocent of fostering racist attitudes and behaviors. Including us.

These things were never more clear to us than this weekend when we heard personal accounts of painful and humiliating experiences. Experiences that happen daily.

Denial wasn't a shelter for us this weekend as participants at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Cultural Diversity Retreat. Nearly 75 UNL students, staff and faculty members came together for 36 hours with little expectation that the retreat would make a difference.

It made a difference to us. We walked into the first workshop wondering what this weekend would accomplish. Throughout 10 hours of discussions, videos and group activities, we encountered various viewpoints and confronted reality.

Reality is racism. People of color are dealing with reality when they say they are tired of fighting discrimination. Tired of waiting for change. Tired of hearing that change takes time.

The retreat focused on the here and now — not on what our ancestors have done, but instead on what we can do. So many students think minorities are asking us to pay for the injustices they have been subject to in the past. They don't want us to pay for these things. They only want us to take responsibility for our own attitudes and actions.

Using the past is only a way to express that nothing but the form of discrimination has changed. Discrimination is allowed to slip through the ranks of society without anyone questioning that it occurs.

We learned that denial doesn't change anything. Denial is protection. It protects us from the situation and puts the responsibility somewhere else.

Accepting the responsibility is the first way to recognize our own feelings of racism, however unaware of them we have been. It's not a negative step to accept our own limitations, but it is a negative step if we don't act on our feelings and try to move past them.

Moving past ignorance sometimes removes people from their comfort zones, introducing an element of risk. As one retreat leader put it, risk is the bridge to awareness and empathy for others. We need to take risks in regard to combating denial that racism exists in us and our communities.

When we talk about risk, we are talking about taking a stand. Within our circles, our comfort zones, it's easy to let things we see and hear slide because they don't affect us. But by not saying anything about things that are clearly wrong, we are validating those viewpoints through acceptance. During the retreat we learned how to confront our denial in a non-threatening atmosphere. Our blinders came off.

For us it was a painful process, to see how powerful even subtle racism can be. We learned to focus on ourselves as individuals, as vehicles for change, and we realized that little steps do count.

Little steps involve taking action and shaking up the comfort zone — little steps such as correcting incorrect speech and not condoning racial slurs and ethnic jokes. Little steps will lead to bigger steps. When we set an example for the people within our circles, we are showing people that racism is not just a problem for people of color.

Before we went to the retreat, we didn't think that racism directly af-

ected us. We had held ourselves apart from the problem by putting the search for solutions in the laps of the oppressed instead of the oppressors.

At the retreat we saw videotapes and heard stories that left us feeling helpless. We squirmed as we watched and listened, not knowing how to reach out and make a change.

We felt like we made a connection within ourselves and found that racism does affect us. The old cliché that if "you are not part of the solution — you are part of the problem" is true. By not taking action, we are allowing the societal structure to dictate what position each race plays in society.

When the retreat ended, we were mentally drained, physically tired and incapable of expressing what we thought we had gained. But through the experience our perceptions were stretched further than we could imagine.

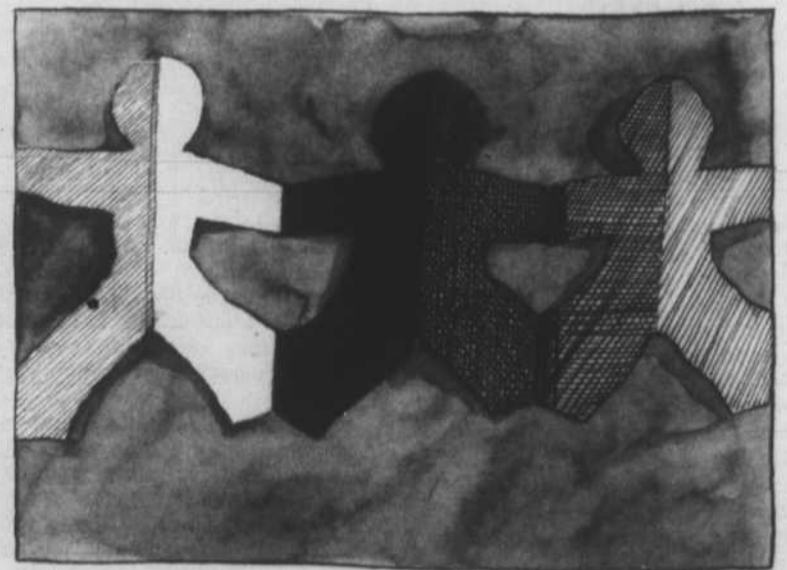
We don't want to lose that. It's easy to lose the energy gained in the workshop environment after the fact. The challenge for us now is to keep the conviction of combating racial injustice.

We want to live what we learned at the retreat: Racism is a problem that will not go away with the passage of time.

But there are no quick-fix solutions. Constant communication, interaction, responsible behavior and risk-taking are the only options we have.

In the words of George Moore, "After all there is but one race — humanity."

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David Badders/DN