

Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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EDITORIAL

Semester-long circus

ASUN legislation will prolong mudslinging

Prepare yourself; the circus is coming to campus early next semester.

This year, as every year, there will be candy on every corner, balloons on every light pole and posters everywhere else.

But something has changed.

Newly passed ASUN legislation that removed nearly all limits from student elections guarantees a bigger and better show than ever before.

Across America, people are just now getting over the year-long race for president. At UNL, students should be preparing for the treat of a semester-long ASUN campaign.

Formerly, the campaign was limited to a three-week period immediately before the actual election day and candidates' spending was capped at \$3,500. That, apparently, wasn't enough time or money for the strong-stomached members of ASUN.

Thanks to the members of the Electoral Commission and the 13 senators who supported the new legislation, students running for ASUN offices are going to be able to spend as much as they want on their campaigns and start them as soon as classes start Jan. 11.

Make that: Some things have changed.

The legislation also increased the number of signatures a candidate needed to get on the ballot. That change would have been fine without the package deal, but it was not the point of debate.

At the Nov. 18 ASUN meeting, the Electoral Commission proposal was rejected by a 12-8 vote of the Association of Students of



David Badders/DN

the University of Nebraska.

Much of the debate at that meeting centered on the legal questions surrounding the campaign spending limits. In fact, only one student senator openly objected to extending the campaign period.

Two weeks later, senators voted, 13-11 with one abstention, to approve the changes proposed by the Electoral Commission. Again, little was made of any point beside the spending limit.

The senators, of course, had their reasons for approving the changes. David Steinke, an arts and sciences senator, originally voted against the proposal. But Steinke said he changed his vote because voting improprieties had been hard to trace in the past.

That is simply poor reasoning. Student senators are subjecting UNL to a semester full of relentless campaigning because "there's always loopholes," as Steinke said.

Instead of working harder to enforce the rules, ASUN is simply getting rid of the rules.

ASUN senators say that the changes will make it easier for students running for office to get the word out to the student body.

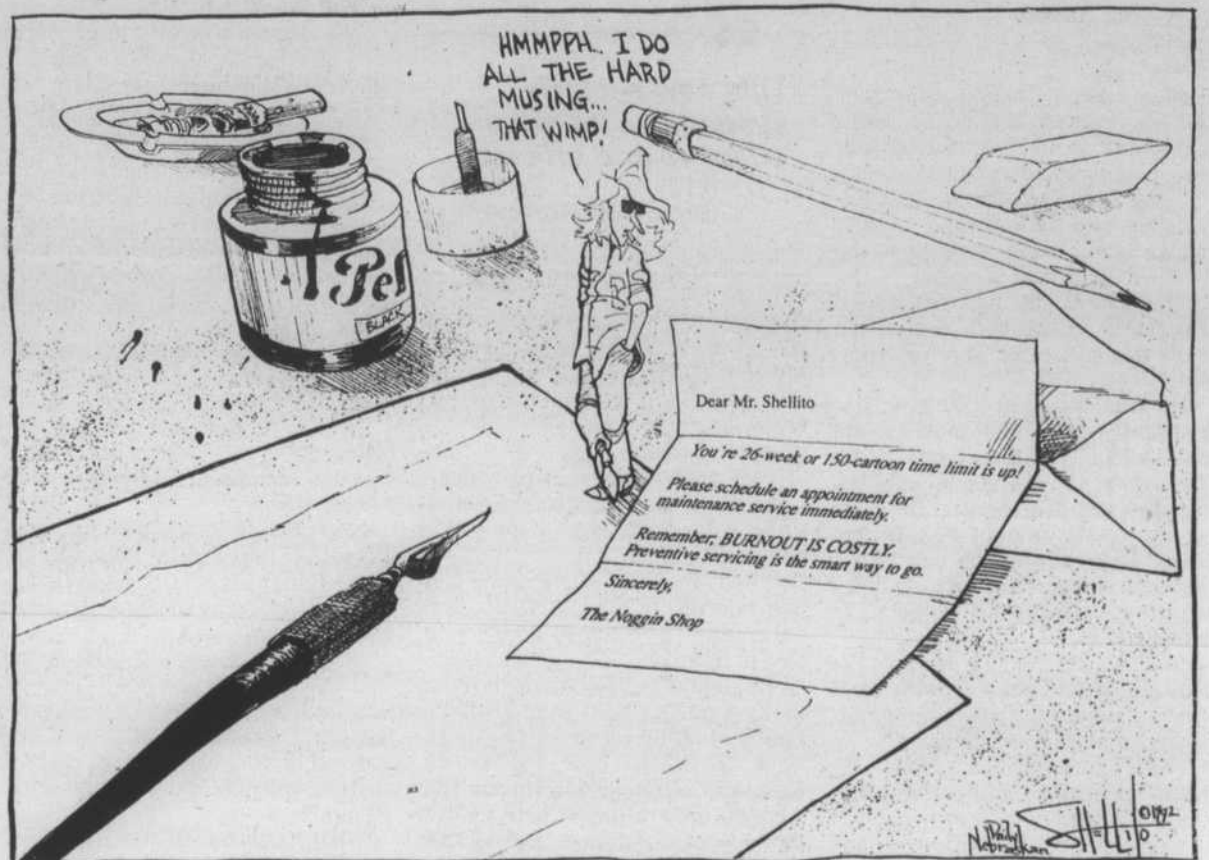
But all the changes really do is give ASUN hopefuls more time to sling mud at their opponents and more money to find ways to get on students' nerves.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Scholarships

I must commend Craig Heckman on his recent column (Dec. 8), particularly his observations concerning football scholarships.

Too many schools have too long enjoyed the advantage of players from rich, country club backgrounds. One simply cannot be successful at football these days without the money for a stylish mouthpiece, or high-priced football tutors. Athletics seems to be one of the few remaining occupations where a poor person isn't given a chance.

It's time we put an end to dominating football programs like Dartmouth or Columbia. Basing football scholarships on football ability is an antiquated idea. Now we just need to figure out how to stop all the smart people from grabbing up all the Regents scholarships.

Doug Mitchell
junior
chemical engineering

forefathers had assault weapons in mind when they wrote the Constitution. The arms they were familiar with were simple rifles and pistols, and they didn't have overcrowded cities where people murder each other on a daily basis.

It is truly ironic that the conservatives are so into family values and ridding the streets of crime, yet feel these weapons should be available to the public. To top it off, conservatives have opposed the Brady Bill, which requires a two-week waiting period before one purchases a gun.

Listening to the logic of conservatives, it only follows that I should be allowed to purchase hand grenades to give me a fighting edge on the hoodlums with assault weapons; after all, grenades don't kill people, people who pull the pins and throw them do.

The dictionary defines arms as anything that can be used as a weapon in defense. This provides for a lot of discretion. The line must be drawn somewhere, and conservatives, you're drawing the line too liberally.

Paul Koester
senior
agronomy

pects of our system of government is the principle of minority rights which "the majority should not run roughshod over," our system was also founded on the principle of majority rule; not tyranny of the minority.

Living in the United States, a nation founded on Christian principles, I would expect to find religious elements of a Christian nature here. Is this minority, who are offended by this, so thin-skinned that they are willing to discard everything that might offend them? The logical end of tyranny of the minority is either rule by that minority or it is anarchy. Neither of these is desirable.

Decisions by the majority should be kept unless they cause harm to minorities. What harm is there in sitting and listening to a 30-second prayer to a God you don't believe in if the majority does believe?

Ruth Marie Ediger
graduate student
political science

Sisterhood

The news has been blaring at us for several days now from the shrieks of radio and television to the boldface headlines of the newspaper. "Candi Harms found," "Candi Harms was almost home" and "Best friend depressed and afraid." I think my favorite though was an editorial entitled, "Suspense ends but not ordeal." For women, it will never truly end.

There is no woman on campus who does not feel a sisterhood for Candi. Have we all not been guilty of leaving a building just a little late at night, looking over our shoulder at the dark shadows? We've all walked to our cars parked just one block too far away — even though the street lights were blazing. What female doesn't check the back seat of her car when getting in? We look ahead, behind, beside and all it does is raise our consciousness. It doesn't protect.

Constance Bleam
graduate student



David Badders/DN

'Vocal minority'

Several people have written that the cancellations of invocations, benedictions or official prayers of any kind at commencement this year is a good thing.

They are, however, part of a vocal minority who believe that any reference to a higher being in a public place constitutes a violation of their "rights" under the First Amendment. Even though one of the best as-

Human rights

I have little or no hopes of this letter being printed, but I need to say that I am very skeptical about the prerogatives of your pathetic excuse for a daily paper. Dec. 7 to 11 was Human Rights Week, Dec. 10 being International Human Rights Day, but this got no coverage.

People who think Nebraskans are unaffected by human rights abuses are sadly mistaken. Yes, as Mr. Kepfield has so cleverly pointed out, there are places where the abuses are worse. Does that mean we are entitled to ignore the problems we have here? Is it not an important issue that only African-Americans were pulled out of class to be questioned about a suspected murder case? Is it not a human rights problem that it is legal for this state to execute its own citizens?

Speaking of capital punishment, it is ironic that Kepfield had his column printed that yearned for the killing of Ms. Harms' murderers during the very week of human rights, while there was no effort to raise awareness of the abuses he was calling for. Sam Kepfield is a living example of the desperate need for exposure to human rights at UNL, but I guess the Daily Nebraskan would rather be a part of the problem than the solution.

Ann Towns
senior
international affairs

Too liberal

Conservatives have recently written letters to the Daily Nebraskan defending our Constitutional right to bear arms. They carry this right too far by defending the ownership of assault weapons which are designed to kill large amounts of humans in a very short amount of time. I doubt our