

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

Waste not

NU needs only one engineering college

The University of Nebraska at Omaha may gain an engineering school if some Omaha businessmen have their way. They say a separate engineering college at UNO would draw qualified employees to existing businesses and attract more industries to the city.

Currently the UNO engineering program is part of UNL's engineering school. Most engineering students can take their first two years of classes at UNO, but they must complete their degrees at UNL.

David Sokol, president and chief executive officer of California Energy Co., said Omaha industries are even willing to absorb the cost of a second engineering college to "make sure costs aren't borne by other taxpayers in the state," he said.

This move shows that Omaha businesses want to attract workers and industries to Nebraska. They also realize the university budget could not handle the costs of a new college at UNO.

But rather than building another engineering college, these businessmen should consider donating that money to help bail the university out of a crisis budget situation.

A new engineering school would need a dean, staff members, labs and equipment. It would be like buying another engineering college for a state where one works fine.

University employees who lost their jobs in the last round of budget cuts might agree that a new college at UNO is an extra expense at a time when there doesn't seem to be enough money to go around.

The issue is not that the state needs a new engineering college or has outgrown the one it has. It is a matter of convenience. Even if businesses have offered to foot the bill, it is not a necessity.

Any money given to the university now should be used to make sure university employees do not lose their jobs, not to pay for a college identical to one that already exists.

Lean machine

Plan to shrink military not strong enough

Wednesday the Pentagon unveiled a five-year defense plan designed to give America a "lean, mobile, high-tech force." The plan is supposed to make the military more efficient while allowing it to fight wars on two fronts.

The plan maintains a high level of military forces, which means more base closings will be likely because of budget restraints. Only two defense programs are canceled in the plan.

Defense Secretary Les Aspin formulated the plan, and it was approved by President Clinton on Monday. It calls for the shrinking of the Army from 14 to 10 divisions by 1999, the loss of one of the Navy's 13 aircraft carriers and the reduction of the Air Force from 28 to 20 wings.

But the plan also calls for the building of an additional Seawolf nuclear attack submarine, and approves the construction of the Air Force's F-22 stealth fighter and new versions of the Navy's F-18 strike aircraft.

It does not call for reductions that are large enough.

The United States faces an uncertain world filled with many challenges and difficulties. But it also faces an uncertain world at home. Our domestic problems cannot be ignored.

Clinton is right to reduce the size of the military to make it more capable of responding to today's foreign threats. But he must go further and ensure the United States is also capable of readily meeting its domestic challenges.

If the United States is unable to handle the challenges it faces at home, it won't be able to respond to those it faces in the world.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1993 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.



ANNE STEYER

'Beer gut' not worth bragging about

A story in yesterday's Daily Nebraskan said that despite UNL's dry campus status, someone had been walking around the university with "a very obvious beer gut."

The reporter was talking about the recent onslaught of vandalism here — "beer gut" graffiti is everywhere.

The perpetrator has spray painted, stenciled and freehanded the phrase on stop signs and buildings, trash cans and UNL sculptures.

So now the question of the day is: "Who is this beer gut?"

Or, more importantly, "Why is beer gut?"

The vandal's identity remains a mystery, as do his motives.

I know I'm being sexist by assuming the vandal is a male. But society pushes men to puff out their chests in relation to the amount of alcohol they can consume, so my assumption is based entirely upon my socialization. Speculations regarding the vandal's identity have run rampant in my rumor-filled head.

When I first saw the graffiti, I was driving west on Vine Street. I spotted the colorful words on the concrete barricades outside the Sigma Alpha Mu house.

My first assumption was that some drunk fraternity boy had done a physical appraisal and tried to purge himself of his shame.

But then I thought the vandal could be boys from rival houses poking fun at heavy drinkers on the other side of fraternity row. But I quickly dismissed that because they had so many other things to poke fun at.

Then I thought he was perhaps some older, blue-collar, working-class Joe who wanted to show those damn college kids that he was proud of who he was.

But now I have to wonder. Isn't "beer gut" an odd choice for a self-proclaiming moniker?

If I were to paint my nickname everywhere, I would choose something self-congratulatory or egotistical. Something like "buns of steel."



It's so American. What other culture could so succinctly sum up an entire drinking pastime? What other culture celebrates the consumption of hops and barley?

That way no one would ever tie the name to me. The closest I've ever come to buns of steel was a trip to the exercise section of Blockbuster Video.

One of my friends suggested he would call himself "slender thighs" or "sinewy shoulders."

But to proclaim yourself the proud owner of a "beer gut" is insane. Or worthy of a stint on Sally Jessy.

"And today's show features people that say 'I have a beer gut and I'm proud of it.'"

But maybe it is a real statement of pride. The vandal could appear on Geraldo, soliciting others of his kind with the slogan "Beer guts of America Unite!"

It would be a call to armchairs.

"I drink, therefore I am."

Or if the vandal is a woman, "I am beer gut, hear me hurl."

I'm not a fan of graffiti, but not because it's illegal. My objection comes from the presentation of graffiti. Usually it's sloppy, means nothing and cannot be deciphered. Usually it's done by teen-agers with nothing better to do and even less to say.

But this beer gut guy takes graffiti to a new level. It's clearly inscribed, it's colorful and it makes a statement.

It's so American. What other culture could so succinctly sum up an entire drinking pastime? What other culture celebrates the consumption of hops and barley?

No self-respecting person in Japan would spray "beer gut" everywhere. And "saki gut" just doesn't have the same rhythmic flow.

The French prefer wine, so it would be "Dom Perignon gut" or "Chablis

gut." If it were me, it would be "Mad Dog gut."

But heavy wine drinking is associated more with headaches than bloated bellies. So it just wouldn't be the same.

Perhaps the celebrated beer gut is just following in the footsteps of the Romans — revelers and partiers of unequalled fame. As Rome was being sacked, proponents of drunken orgies probably painted the Pantheon with "BEER GUT."

But if beer gut is following in Roman steps, then the Empire's end doesn't bode well for the beer drinker. Rome wasn't rebuilt in a day, it's been said. And beer gut will not reform his drinking and painting ways in a day either.

He'll stop his self-graffiting ways, give up that Old Milwaukee for Bud Light. He'll hit the weight machines, do crunches daily and develop a washboard stomach.

He'll go on Letterman promoting his new take on the Abdomenizer — a Thighmaster for big bellies.

But until that day arrives, I guess we'll all have to put up with good ol' gut. His "artistic expression" will serve as a daily reminder that I must actively pursue a diligent exercise regime.

Maybe gut's scribbles could inspire me to use a little self-control in my life and motivate myself. And maybe UNL's vandal could use a little self-control and express himself in another way.

Like giving up the gut.

Steyer is a senior English and history major, an arts and entertainment senior reporter and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gay bashing

The editorial on gay bashing (DN, Aug. 30) left out some things.

Harold Grover was a friend of mine. I am not writing this to advertise my grief, but to make a point that was not made in the editorial. There are two other lives that have been ruined because of this incident: the two 19-year-old boys that are suspected of his murder.

Hate and fear like those boys felt isn't spontaneous. It was their families and community that taught these

two boys that gay people were bad or sick or whatever the term was in their lives. They are the true killers. As long as this society allows judgments of a person's worth by their sexual preference, we are all guilty. It is the "innocent" gay joke, the snide remarks, the fear that makes us all share in the guilt of Harold's death.

As long as this continues in our society there will be more lives taken and more lives ruined, and for that I truly grieve.

Kathryn Hollerman
sophomore
theater

Gun control

Sam Kepfield's argument that gun control is the "easy, gutless solution" (DN, Sept. 1) to the problem of violence in our society strikes me as rather illogical.

I'm well aware that gun control will not reduce the number of unstable, violent people out there. But it just might reduce their capacity to kill. I'm sure the people at that McDonald's would have preferred that Dion Terres had had a knife than several guns.

Stephen Witte
graduate student
history