

JUSTIN FIRESTONE

Infomercials late night highlight

When I stay up late, which is every night, I watch too much television. If you've watched television after midnight, you know there's nothing on except infomercials. My favorites are the infomercials for kitchen appliances. Although I realize these new inventions are things most kitchens have never needed and will never use, every time I see them, I think there's absolutely no way I can live another minute without one.



It comes with accessories to make linguini, rigatoni, lasagne, meatballs and gnocchi. I don't know what gnocchi is, but I'm sure going to make a lot of it!

Watching infomercials, coupled with having recently received a paycheck for writing these columns, has made me decide I'm going to buy myself a new kitchen appliance. All that's left for me to do is decide which device I'm going to buy.

My favorite so far is the Ron Popeil Pasta Machine. This godsend is from the same man who gave us Popeil's Pocket Fisherman, the Ronco Door Saver, and the Ronco Food Dehydrator.

The pasta machine is amazing. You can make fresh pasta, right in your own kitchen in under three minutes. You can make plain pasta, or if you use different liquids, you can make carrot pasta, spinach pasta or chocolate pasta. (Yum).

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It even comes with a videotape, a recipe booklet, valuable coupons and a bagel cutter. I don't eat bagels, but I bet I will after I get my bagel cutter. A brief note: Ron Popeil said that he'll only throw in the bagel cutter if you promise to tell a friend about the pasta machine. Now that I've told you, I'll be getting the bagel cutter.

My second choice for appliances is the previously mentioned Ronco Food Dehydrator. This is the machine that

is famous for making "turkey jerky." I'll make turkey jerky until I puke.

I can even dry my own potpourri and spices with the dehydrator. I can also make prunes and raisins. Again, I don't eat prunes and raisins, but I'm sure that will change.

Third is the Juice Tiger. This machine gets most of its value from the nutritional drinks it makes. You stick any fruit or vegetable into the top, and only the juice comes out of the bottom.

The demonstrator was so kind to point out that with the Juice Tiger, you can mix carrots and broccoli all together for the healthiest drink you've ever seen. I'll bet that you can use this liquid to make the healthiest pasta, too. I wonder what the Juice Tiger could do with a steak?

My fourth choice is the Snackmaster. This machine looks like a waffle iron at first glance. With a second look, you realize this is the Snackmaster, the machine that makes cute, triangle-shaped grilled cheese sandwiches.

You slap some buttered bread on it, put some cheese on the bread and top it off with the other piece of buttered bread. Then you close the lid and lock it shut. In about three minutes, you've got four grilled-cheese sandwiches.

The Snackmaster boasts versatility. The demonstrator showed how to get rid of leftover mashed potatoes and cans of tuna by plopping them on the Snackmaster. She closed the lid and locked it in place.

What happened next is the most spectacular thing I've ever seen. She opened the lid and, instead of being a huge pile of leftovers that no one would eat, the mixture had magically turned into "tuna puffs." Not just any puffs, though, they were four cute, triangle-shaped tuna puffs to be eaten.

The lady also went on to show how one might make an apple pie using bread and some apples. I'd always thought there was more to an apple pie than bread and apples, but the Snackmaster has magical capabilities that put Siegfried and Roy to shame.

My last choice is the Braun Hand Mixer. I was stunned to see this small machine make mayonnaise from ordinary vegetable oil and eggs.

The lady also showed the Braun Hand Mixer turn milk into really foamy milk. I used to get in trouble for making really foamy milk by blowing bubbles through a straw in elementary school. Now, I can do it in the comfort of my own home and people will congratulate me.

No matter which machine I purchase, I know it will bring days of endless fun. I'll be making foods I've never heard of or liked, and a lot of them. The ultimate meal of chocolate gnocchi, turkey jerky, tuna puffs, watermelon juice and apple pie is almost mine.

Firestone is a sophomore economics major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

JAY CRUSE

DN for more than just laughs

The phones have been ringing lately more often than usual down here at the Daily Nebraskan. And the teeming masses are not singing our praises.



It's as if we're striving to provide coverage of a campus community just so students will have several pages to flip past on their way to the inside back cover.

According to our non-scientific phone poll, it would seem most everyone is indifferent to our coverage of the Nebraska Legislature and Committee for Fees Allocation meetings. If callers are unhappy, they're keeping it to themselves. Our in-depth reports on such topics as drinking on campus and Generation X garner few rave reviews. None of our movie reviews, sports coverage or editorial columns are eliciting an outpouring of unhappy readers.

No, the No. 1 reason students call to complain about the Daily Nebraskan is, drumroll please... the days the crossword puzzle, "Far Side" or "Calvin & Hobbes" do not appear.

I don't just hear complaints from those people unfortunate enough to field incoming calls. I also receive my share of flak from friends and peers who know of my position as Daily Nebraskan Advertising Manager. If your staff sold more ads, they mention, there would be plenty of space for the crossword and comics.

Local businesses seek to capitalize on the popularity of the crossword and comics. Some advertisers specifically ask to have their ads placed next to these features.

I am one of many students who toil in the murky depths of the Nebraska Union basement, trying to put out a Daily Nebraskan newspaper five days a week. We don't put forth the effort for the marginal fame we achieve on campus when something we produce connects with campus readers. (OK, bad example, I like having my picture in the paper). And with few exceptions, the pay doesn't put much beside macaroni and cheese on the dinner table, if you get my drift.

No, the reason so many students consider the Daily Nebraskan their second home is to gain experience for careers after college, and, if I must say so myself, it's a way to hang out with some pretty, well, interesting people.

So it's just a little disheartening when the most popular features in the Daily Nebraskan are ones that University of Nebraska students do not create. It's as if we're striving to provide coverage of a campus community just so students will have several pages to flip past on their way to the inside back cover. After a chuckle and a puzzle, the DNs litter the hallways of countless classrooms.

Don't get me completely wrong. "Calvin and Hobbes" do a good job making me laugh, and the crossword puzzle has kept me awake in more than a few dreadfully boring political science classes. But I also make the time to flip to the front of the paper and read about the soap opera that is the Board of Regents and Ernie Chambers' latest filibuster. Be it ever so humble, I try to be somewhat well-rounded.

Wait, I'm reading your mind right now. Who cares about Association of Students of the University of Nebraska and the green space issue? My sociology and chemistry classes give me plenty of issues to contemplate, and hey, when I graduate and leave this frozen tundra of a state, they still won't have solved their problems that are irrelevant to my life.

All I ask of the Daily Nebraskan is that it provide me a little light-hearted entertainment to get me through another day. I get my news from CNN anyway.

Is this a pretty accurate reading of your feelings? Trust me, the staff knows this. In an effort to entertain readers, newspapers use big pictures and stress soft news stories along with increasing attention to sports and entertainment events. Humor is used in columns and advertisements to capture your undivided attention.

To those who occasionally miss the crossword and comics, head to the bookstore when we don't quench your desires. They have comic books and puzzle magazines to satisfy the kid in everyone. To those who send letters debating the opinions expressed and stories covered, keep them coming. We honestly do value your input. And to the majority of people like myself sitting somewhere in the middle, thanks for letting me vent.

Who am I kidding? Nobody is still reading this. You flipped right past this on your way to the inside back cover.

By the way, 38 Across is ELIAS and 41 Down is AMEN. You can figure the rest out yourself. Hallelujah.

Cruse is a senior advertising major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

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