

JAY CRUSE

# Broyhill plunge eclipses voting

The combination of senioritis and the imminent spring warm-up is beginning to set in. Every experience I enjoy on this campus becomes an "is this the last time I'll ever experience this" question.

Is this the last time I ever have to walk the half mile between my remote parking lot and campus in below zero wind chills? Is this the last time I write a check and send it to somewhere in the depths of the Administration Building?

I'm already watching for one annual sign that spring is really here: Broyhill Fountain gets turned back on. I've dipped my feet into the not-quite crystal clear waters before and dipped a friend's shoe in just to watch her get upset. But I've never actually just jumped in, knowing I'll never be able to wear those clothes again.

This will hopefully change before I graduate. Some night after visiting some of our finer downtown distributors, I'll race my friends back to campus and dive in. It's an opportunity not to be missed.

There is one rite of spring I'm afraid I have missed each of my five years here, however. I never voted in an Association of Students of the University of Nebraska election. I've read all the articles about ASUN candidates. I've even known a few of the candidates. I've just never actually filled out a ballot.

Not that I'm upset. I consider myself part of the majority who just doesn't care, the 89 percent who didn't vote this year. Maybe I missed the balloon-filled boat.

I have voted for Homecoming King and Queen, however. For some twisted reason, seeing these winners smile on the 50-yard-line in October seems more relevant to me than seeing them on the front page in March.

It's probably for the same reason more people care about Princess Diana



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than John Major.

This has led me to justify to myself my non-action. For instance, the all-too-often-heard "ASUN is a joke, winning is just one big ego trip" gripe.

Maybe some of Nebraska's finest actually hope to make some changes on campus, but my guess is that nine times out of 10, it's just a résumé-filling springboard to a future political career.

No harm done here, most activities on campus fall under the heading of résumé-filling springboards. I just don't feel the need to be part of the political process.

There is also the feeling of: What have you done for me lately? Thanks for officially protesting the Associated Press football poll and honoring the football team on my behalf, but show me your power by making that morning walk from car to class shorter.

Another reason I didn't vote? Employed at the Daily Nebraskan, I've seen the dark sides of a handful of ASUN candidates and spin doctors.

Don't get me wrong, most ASUN-types are as lovable as Wally and June Cleaver, but a couple are rotten to the core. And, as with many things, one bad apple spoils them all.

Of course, these bad apples save their sinister actions for the Daily Nebraskan, a time-honored rival.

The student-run Daily Nebraskan has the journalistic audacity to question the inner workings of student-run government and to provide a forum for discussion, too often negative opin-

ions, about these elected officials. OK, if the truth be known, we also butcher their reputations in the annual joke issue and pass it off as sophomoric humor.

In return, ASUN considers ways to regulate the press and approves part of its annual budget, sometimes hitting back by decreasing financial support for the newspaper.

It's a vicious circle. All this, of course, matters very little to those not deeply entrenched on either side of the battlefield. All most students want out of ASUN elections is a few pieces of candy, an "I Voted" sticker and the chance to feed a friend's ego who's running for office.

Not to mention the cheap laughs the campaign provides. The write-in David Letterman campaign was classic, as was the idea of turning green space into a cabbage farm, complete with Peter Cottontail.

It wasn't enough, though. I guess the losing candidates should have played a musical instrument on Dave's show, and then the voters would have fallen in line.

Or they could have just filled Broyhill Fountain up a couple of weeks early, complete with hundreds of rubber ducks bearing signs saying, "Don't duck the issue — VOTE". That would have got my vote.

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

JUSTIN FIRESTONE

# Let government buy lotto tickets

I'm an economics major, which immediately makes me an expert in any matter dealing with the subject. If there's an economical problem to be solved, I'm the answer-man.

With this having been said, it seems logical for me to address and solve what most Americans see as the greatest problem today, the national deficit.

Keep in mind that the deficit is different from the debt. The national deficit is the amount of money that the U.S. government owes each year (about a zillion dollars), and the national debt is the total of all deficits and surpluses ever (about a gazillion dollars).

What frightens most people is that the debt is huge to begin with, and we keep adding more to it with each year, ending in a deficit. The deficit, too, is a big number, difficult for the lay person to comprehend. To help the lay person out, here's a couple of ways to understand just how big the national deficit really is:

If you like to picture things in an abstract way, envision the deficit as a "1" followed by a bunch of zeroes. Pretty big and scary, isn't it? If you want to envision the national debt, add a few more zeroes to the end of your number.

If you're the type of person who likes to actually see concrete representations of things, get about a zillion dollar bills and start stacking them up in a single pile. When the pile reaches the moon, you're done.

Take a step or two back and look at the pile; that's what the national deficit looks like. If you want to see the national debt, stack the dollar bills until they reach Federation outpost Deep Space Nine.

Now that everyone has a handle on the magnitude of the situation, let's take a look at some possible solutions to the problem.



**Most people will agree that there are basically two ways to reduce or eliminate the deficit. We can either raise taxes (boooo!) or cut government spending (yay!).**

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An alternative to these two options is to pretend that the deficit doesn't exist, which is the method that Congress seems to subscribe to.

So how can we raise taxes? I propose that since government is spending all of this money, why not tax government? We could start collecting a property tax on all government buildings.

Not only would this increase revenues, but it might curb government expansion.

A different and fun way to increase revenues would be to start a citizen-run lottery only the government could buy tickets for. Let government finally have a chance to win "the big one" instead of letting the common people have all the fun.

The ultimate tax would be a tax on air. Everyone has to breathe, so everyone would pay the tax. It would also encourage people to quit breathing so heavily.

These are all great ideas, but no one really wants to raise taxes, so what we have left is to reduce government spending and government programs.

The rule is "cut their programs and benefits, not mine." Luckily, I've thought this out and have come up with the perfect plan to slowly reduce spending evenly over the population.

I started the thinking process by

asking myself the following question: When is a government cheapest? The answer being: when it's not running.

The next question I asked myself was: When is a government not running? The answer being: on federal holidays!

My proposal is to gradually declare every day of our calendar a national holiday.

At a rate of four new holidays each year, we could eliminate government spending entirely by the year 2082.

This would finally give us the chance to recognize what is truly important to celebrate in America.

Haven't you always thought that Aug. 8 (8/8 or ate-ate) should be Oprah Day? Sept. 9 (9/9 or nein-nein) could be Otto von Bismarck Day.

For the mathematicians, March 14 (3/14, or 3.14) could be Pi Day. Jan. 23 (1/23, or one-two-three) becomes Waltz Day.

As you can see, it's not very hard to find things to celebrate for national holidays. It would be no problem coming up with 350 or so more holidays to complete the year. A side benefit of all these holidays is everyone would be celebrating, leading to happier people.

Never give up the hope that we will solve this enormous problem of the national deficit. It's just a simple task of convincing Congress to declare more national holidays. Call or write your Congressman today.

Firestone is a sophomore economics major and Daily Nebraskan columnist.

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