

Daily
Nebraskan
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Life lessons

Multicultural training benefits officers

Multiculturalism has become a buzzword. It is uttered often, but it is acted upon less. Cultural awareness classes have been implemented in schools of every level—it is only fitting that they also were implemented into the curriculum at the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center in Grand Island.

For two days last week, the Daily Nebraskan observed how law-enforcement officers were trained. It is obvious through watching classes and exercises that times have changed in the way officers are trained.

But have classes changed enough to keep up with the times?

Police officer candidates must take 516 hours of classes. It is unfortunate that the majority of these hours focus on legal aspects, arrest procedures and investigation. Only 13 hours are specifically targeted at cultural awareness.

Learning to understand those who speak a different language should be a topic discussed on a daily basis. It should hold just as high a priority as learning various police techniques.

But the law-enforcement center should be commended for making initial strides. Just months ago, only two hours were devoted to cultural awareness.

Hopefully the 13 hours will make future officers aware of what is out there in the changing demographical field. After all, that is where the real training begins — out with all people of Nebraska.

Pricey puff

Suit against tobacco giants unfounded

The cost of a smoke could soon go up dramatically. The physical toll of cigarette smoking already is high, and the financial burden could jump, thanks to a federal judge.

A Friday ruling by the U.S. District Judge Okla Jones II in New Orleans cleared the way for a class-action lawsuit against tobacco companies that could potentially include millions of plaintiffs—"all nicotine dependents persons and their families."

Anti-smoking advocates are reveling about what may happen. A lawsuit with that many plaintiffs could be funded well enough to play on an even field with the tobacco giants, who wield large amounts of both money and influence.

For that very reason, it would be nice to see the tobacco industry brought down. The cost of cigarettes would surely go up, but that doesn't really matter.

It is ludicrous that the industry still claims that there is no proof that nicotine is addictive or that cigarettes cause cancer.

But suing for damages because people became ill after years of smoking is even more ridiculous, and unfortunately a likely scenario in our ever-more-litigious society.

It seems that we will sue anybody for just about anything nowadays. The Daily Nebraskan has trouble believing that anyone could think inhaling hot, dirty smoke over and over would not have any affect on the lungs.

Sure nicotine is addictive, and many have been ensnared in the tobacco companies' web, but let us not forget that nicotine is, after all, a drug. And people make the choice of whether to use that drug.

When they do smoke, they assume responsibility for what happens to them and give up any claim they may have that cigarette companies are liable.

Editorial policy

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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.



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must be signed and include a
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verification.

Lincoln unemployment

The otherwise-informative article "Lincoln's unemployment stats misleading ..." (Feb. 14) missed the major reasons why our low unemployment rate is deceptive.

Usually people associate low unemployment with rapid growth in the demand for labor, so they think that it should be easy for someone like a college graduate to find a good job in Lincoln. But Lincoln's employment growth has not been extraordinary.

Lincoln is exceptional in that it has a high proportion of employment in government, education, health, finance and other technical services. These sectors are relatively stable, so there are few layoffs; they recruit their highly educated employees internationally so the workers already have a job when they arrive in Lincoln, and their workers tend to change jobs infrequently.

In addition, Lincoln's labor force entrants are relatively well educated, and these mostly young people are relatively mobile. When job prospects appear dim here, they leave the state rather than enter the ranks of the unemployed.

These are the unique characteristics of Lincoln that keep its unemployment rate deceptively low. Ironically, if Lincoln is successful in its efforts to attract more industry, it will drive up its unemployment rate.

Craig R. MacPhee
professor and chair
economics

Jamie Karl

I agree with the the statement "men have it bad, too." After all, men are often represented by people like Jamie Karl. Fortunately, the majority of men I know disagree with Karl's attempt to analyze gender relations.

In his Feb. 16 commentary, he claims, "that one sex can do a particular job better than another." Such archaic thinking limits and

oppresses both men and women. Imagine applying for a job at a day care and being told that you're biologically incapable of caring for children. In Karl's particular case, this may be true, but most likely because he's intellectually stunted, not because he's a man.

I'd also like to comment on Karl's so-called "gender war," which is not and never has been between men and women. The battle is between people who acknowledge the need to move beyond their expected gender roles in order to accommodate an ever-changing world, and those who resist such change.

I think that men and women have come a long way. It's Jamie Karl who has a long way to go, baby!

Melissa A. Borman
senior
art



Bret Gottschal/DN

Stories not 'filthy'

Reading about myself ("Phone tales from the Markside," Feb. 19) and my Storyline and posing for the photo was fun and all, but I resent the characterization of my stories, ANY of my stories, as "filthy."

Whose opinion does this represent anyway? Certainly not my own, nor that of anyone I know.

I hope no one is taken in by writer Hambrecht's editorializing on this subject.

Mark Baldridge
Lincoln

UNL Housing

I wonder if anyone at University Housing has ever taken a logic class. I doubt it. Let's look at their logic concerning the recently implemented rule banning the use of candles and incense in the residence halls.

At the beginning of this school year, UNL Housing announced that it had decided to ban the use of candles and incense for reasons of fire safety. This was best illustrated last spring when a student in Abel Hall left a candle burning, which subsequently caused a fire.

When the sprinklers in this person's room went off, every floor in Abel got wet, including the basement.

Now housing has decided to alter the rules a little. Candles can be burned for special occasions, but only if a housing official, such as a resident assistant or a residence director, is supervising it.

By making this rule, housing is saying, in effect, "Housing employees are more responsible than the average resident." I'll ignore the more insulting aspects of that for the time being and grant them the claim.

This is the problem: The person who started the fire in Abel was a student assistant.

Basically, there are two groups of people, A and B. A starts a fire; B loses the privilege to use candles. A can still burn candles in his or her room, because A is a housing employee. They will be there to supervise themselves.

Unless, of course, being more responsible than the average resident, they decide to light a candle, then leave for several hours.

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philosophy