

OPINION

Tuesday, April 18, 1995

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Daily
Nebraskan
Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Safety last

Expanded background checks help kids

We don't care about our children.

This was the message sent by the Nebraska Legislature's Education Committee when it killed a bill that would have authorized the Department of Education to perform background checks on those applying for a teacher's license.

Currently, people convicted of felonies are automatically rejected if they apply for licenses. A possible rule change could extend that ban to persons convicted of some misdemeanors, including abuse, neglect or injury to another person.

This is exactly what we need.

Our children are our most valuable resource, especially in these days, when so much is riding on the future. And we need to do everything possible to ensure their safety.

Keeping convicted abusers from being in front of the blackboard is a great way to do that.

State Board of Education member Kathleen McCallister said the Legislature will be participating in any abuse that could have been prevented by the approval of the bill.

The Daily Nebraskan agrees. Said McCallister: "If they have time to spend a week and a half on Micron, then they have time to spend on preventing child abuse."

Exactly.

Micron was supposed to be an investment in the future. This bill would have been investment in our children.

That's the same thing.

Perk up

Coffee bar puts students' interests first

The flavor and aroma of chicory is alive and well in the Nebraska Union. Behind that taste and smell is an idea students should take advantage of.

When Espresso Express opened last week in the union's Crib, it meant more than the birth of a trendy coffee bar. It signifies a university commitment to students' wants and needs.

Thoughts of turning the Crib into something other than a study room have floated around for years. The common objective remains: creating an alcohol-free alternative for students, faculty and staff.

Espresso Express might be the answer to that objective.

Organizers of the coffee house — which is open Monday through Thursday nights from 5 to 10 — say comedians, one-act plays, fire-side chats, disc-jockey nights, topical lectures and student talent nights will be considered for entertainment.

The Nebraska Union is faced with the constant struggle of reading students' minds and predicting what they will and will not like. During the last four years, the unions have become much more student-oriented, and Espresso Express is just the latest example.

Correction

It was incorrectly stated on Monday's editorial page that major-league baseball's Opening Day has passed. The editorial should have referred to the beginning of preseason exhibition games.

Editorial policy

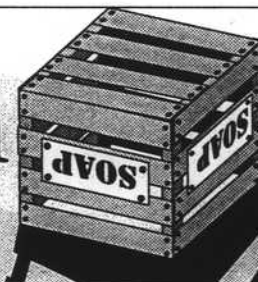
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to: (402) 472-1761. Letters
must be signed and include a
phone number for
verification.

Grading scales

In regard to grading scales and Beth Finsten's commentary (April 13), my point of view is that of an experienced high school mathematics teacher, as well as that of a student.

Education should not be limited to what you are tested, especially material within a major. I would want my pharmacist to have spent the time studying all "six chapters" so I could receive the best service, not because I wanted her to set the curve.

Grading scales aren't designed for poor students or for classes with an overload of information; they are designed to accommodate students at a wider range of testable knowledge.

Polly Ann Najarian
graduate student
agricultural meteorology

Horse racing

In the "Game over" editorial (April 11), the Daily Nebraskan writes, "It all started in the Cornhusker State with horse racing. Then it was keno. Soon after, it was the state lottery. What next?"

If I didn't know better, I would have thought that horse racing started a few years ago, with keno and the lottery following immediately on its tail. Horse racing is portrayed as the precursor of all gambling evil.

I'm guessing that there has been horse racing and parimutuel wagering in this state for better than 50 years. Keno came along in the last 10, and lottery in the last five. As a serious horse-racing fan, I take exception to the SPORT of horse racing being lumped with keno, lottery and slots as though there is no difference between them.

Horse racing is a tradition in Nebraska. Maybe some attention needs to be paid to the fact that horse racing is an industry. It's not just a few executives and grocery-store clerks selling tickets in addition to their regular duties. It's jockeys and trainers and

grooms and concession workers and farmers who grow the grain and hay for the horses. It is farriers and veterinarians and the people who sell the tack and those who deliver the feed to trainers. And it is valets who saddle the horses and exercise riders and security guards and pony people and tote technicians who work on the equipment and maintenance people to keep up the barn area, and let us not forget the breeders of these beautiful animals.

I wish I could say that Nebraska horse racing is a strong industry. Unfortunately, I can't. Most everyone knows that with all the competition in Nebraska and the neighboring states, horse racing is in trouble. But if live racing doesn't survive in Nebraska, let us not shrug off the industry with the attitude that it was nothing more than one of the many forms of gambling available. It is so much more.

Kristina Morrow
junior
veterinary science

firmly believe the education I have received is far superior to that of my institutionalized peers.

The editorial showed a lack of investigation into home schooling. Contrary to your statements in the editorial, home schooling provides more time to specialize in art, music or drama. I play piano, clarinet and violin. I am a member in a 40-piece orchestra that performs weekly, and I have taught piano lessons.

In addition to music, I devote time to studying the Jewish Holocaust. Both the Lincoln Journal and The Journalist have printed articles about my Holocaust research center — the only one in Nebraska.

In reality, home schooling provides more time to specialize in areas of interest. It is very clear the editor's skills in line-leading and being a crossing guard did not prepare him to do serious research, a skill needed in journalism.

Annie K. Lenzen (age 17)
director
Never To Forget
Lincoln

College rodeo

I am happy to report to Lynn Clark that all of the participants over whom she showed such great concern at the UNL College Rodeo received only minor injuries, and all are back in class doing fine.

I am also happy to be able to report that NONE of the animals that were used in our rodeo were killed, injured or hurt in any way, and I do hope her concern is assuaged by this fact. The idea that thousands of animals are killed and injured each year in rodeos is preposterous.

We in intercollegiate rodeo take pride in the humane treatment of our livestock, and while injuries do occasionally occur, they are in fact rare. We are also required to have a veterinarian standing by during our performances in case an injury does occur.

George Pfeiffer
associate professor
UNRA Advisor



Kerry Eddy/DN

Home schooling

As a home school student, the editorial "Time to test" (April 12) greatly offended me. I have been home-schooled for nine years and I