

OPINION

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Page 4

Daily
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Censorship?

Channel 14 could get the illegal axe

The fate of Public Access Channel 14 will be decided today in a Lincoln City Council meeting.

According to the proponents of its dissolution, the issues are complicated and various.

Mayor Mike Johanns said cable consumers shouldn't have to pay for a public forum that they don't like, don't watch and don't use.

Cablevision chimed in with what amounted to a threat: According to Rick Kiolbasa, director of public relations, basic cable subscribers may lose CNN if 14 is not sacrificed to accommodate the arrival of Lincoln's new ABC affiliate.

But our country has a long and proud tradition of supporting public forums at public expense.

And at an estimated total share to each cable subscriber of about \$1.33 a year to Channel 14, we could hardly hope for a better deal.

Also, Mayor Johanns has admitted that moving CNN off the basic cable tier would cause enormous public outcry.

Such a decision on the part of Cablevision would be bad business. It represents an extremely unlikely move — unless the company feels it has a convenient scapegoat in the form of Channel 14.

So the stated reasons for removing the station cannot possibly be the real ones.

Then what's it all really about? Why the smokescreen and idle threats?

The real reason behind all the so-called "reasons" is painfully obvious: The Closet Comedian.

Aka Scott Harrold, the Closet Comedian hosts the "Cosmic Comedy Show" on Public Access.

He shows, among other things, clips from "adult" movies.

And this is perfectly legal. A public forum, as such, represents a format for the kind of no-holds-barred discussion that keeps America resilient and strong.

And therein lies the problem, in the minds of our would-be cultural watchdogs.

If just anyone can get into a public forum and say or show just anything they like — well, that's got to stop.

According to those who would pronounce upon the public morals, this show — and any other it might inspire — is unacceptable.

But much more indecent than naked human bodies — what is really unacceptable here is censorship.

This is still America isn't it?

The mayor and the cable company are bound to make excuses for what they really want to do for a simple reason:

Dissolving a public forum because they dislike the things said there would constitute an illegal act.

What is about to happen, what may already have been decided here, is infringement of the freedom of speech in a declared public forum.

Such actions are un-American, immoral and obscene.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Smart cyber shopping

I've got some comments for Matt Woody about his Cyberscape column ("The Web's taking off; get aboard," Sept. 21).

Near the end of his article, after discussing rates for both Internet Nebraska and Navix, Woody goes on to emphasize what a great deal Navix is for students.

What he fails to mention is that Internet Nebraska has similar accounts with more hours of free usage for a lower fee. I've had an account with Internet Nebraska since they first offered access last year.

I've been very pleased with the service they've provided and the rates they've charged, and comparisons that I've seen have consistently placed their prices below those of Navix.

For comparison: IN's "network" account, which is targeted at students and is comparable to Navix's UNL account, costs just \$39 for four months and includes \$48 worth of free usage per month (40-80 hours, depending on the time of day).

Additional usage is just 1 to 2 cents per minute.

If Woody is going to be providing unsolicited advertising for one of Lincoln's Internet service providers, he should at least give equal time to what many people consider the better of the two.

Ben Hollingsworth
Grad Student
Computer science
via e-mail

Huh, huh, he said "hole"

I read some of Steve Willey's column the other day ("Offending others a guarantee," Sept. 21).

I thought this article was great. This country is way too full of people who do nothing but bitch about everything.

Sometimes I wonder if they just do not have anything better to do or what — such as politically correct (expletive deleted), who cares?

Why do people complain about a

"manhole" that it should be "personhole?" I mean deal with it, accept it and move on.

I thought the article overall rocked and was really funny. Give my congrats to the writer and keep up the good work!

Tony Arlt
Freshman
Undeclared
via e-mail

Omaha Engineering

Generally, I curse the administrators and regents of this university, but I commend them on their stand against the



engineering college at Omaha.

Mayor Hal Daub and business leaders claim that the city has lost business opportunities due to the fact that the city has no accredited engineering college.

I seriously doubt that the 45 minutes that separate Lincoln and Omaha would destroy the effectiveness of any function a company would require from a university.

The problems that Mayor Daub and the business leaders of Omaha have stem more from their contempt of the rest of the state than from the actual need of an engineering college.

As a resident of Nebraska for almost 20 years, I have noticed that the city of Omaha feels that it is better than the rest of the state, and does not want to deal with them;

whether it be in the state legislature, or in this case, with its little college UNO.

In this age of cost cutting within the government, educational institutes must be efficient if they are to provide a high quality of education.

Building a new engineering college next door to an existing one is by no means efficient.

The focus should be on improving our existing facilities so that we can compete with other institutions across the country with more up-to-date equipment and computer resources.

The reason many high-tech companies opt not to build plants in Omaha does not lie in the fact that there is no accredited engineering college within 10 minutes of downtown Omaha, but rather the fact that there is no high quality engineering college within 2 hours.

Let's use a little common sense before pouring millions of dollars into the wrong place.

Gene Paulsen
Graduate Student
Mechanical Engineering

Farmer "We"

In the Sept. 20 issue of the "Daily Nebraskan," Jamie Karl has a column entitled "Farmer's plight needs thanks."

Although I cheered Mr. Karl's effort, a few minor corrections must be made.

Throughout the article, Mr. Karl continually refers to the farmer as "he."

I am not lobbying for "politically correct" speech for its sake alone, but for validation for the countless women farmers who have been ignored throughout history or relegated to the role of "farm wife."

On the vast majority of family farms, the man and woman are equally involved in the running of the farm. Sometimes the duties may differ, but there are countless women who run combines or drive truck alongside their male counterparts.

Most family farms are run by "the farmer we" not "the farmer he."

Emily A. Carlson
Graduate Student
English