

Ides of march

Band deserves student support

efficient horn player and a decent marcher besides (believe me, it's harder than it looks), I was fresh out of pride by my senior year. Being a section leader, a key role in the group's leadership, proved to be a definite conflict of interests. I can still remember the pep talk I offered my horn line after a grueling week of band camp at Peru State (side note: any change of locale for PSU has got to be a change for the better). Anyway, I think it went something like this:

"Look guys, this section is only going to be as good as you want it to be. I can't make you care any more than you can make me care. After three years of band, I've learned that the only reward for hard work is exhaustion and, later on, ridicule. And at this point, I'm fairly sure it isn't worth it."

At the time, I probably could have used a little help from Tony Robbins and his teeth, but my pessimism had its reasons. For one thing, the band was about twice as big as it should have been. After growing to respect a band director who bore closer resemblance to a drill sergeant (he actually made us do push-ups for moving at attention) than a music teacher, our new director was a funny little man who had a penchant for Hawaiian shirts and was later suspected of stealing from the band fund and having an affair with one of my peers (gag). What's more, anyone in the band was deemed a "band geek" by everyone outside the band, and my fellow geeks were doing nothing to shake the label. Needless to say, I expected more from the next level.

The Marching Red Experience proved to be a greater responsibility and a grander reward than the ordeal that was high school band. Besides having fairly good seats for every home football game, and a couple of championship games to boot, I can hardly describe the rush that accompanies stepping onto the field to the frenzied tune of 76,000 rabid Husker fans. Had I assumed, for a moment, that more than a handful of fans were

actually cheering for the band rather than their favorite primary color, I'd have surely been overwhelmed.

I can appreciate the band because I was once a part of it. I understand the sort of discipline it takes to attend a 7:30 a.m. class in Memorial Stadium in the dead of winter. I know how uncomfortable a wool suit can be on the streets of Miami. I also remember the pride that always follows a job well done, regardless of who appreciates it. It's the sort of pride that transcends parasites.

Over the past month, several members of our marching band have been afflicted by a parasite called giardia lamblia. This nasty little creature induces flu-like symptoms and, like most parasites, impedes nutrient absorption, thereby leaving its victims in a weakened state. Despite 25 band members displaying symptoms of giardiasis, the illness caused by the parasite, the band marched at full strength on Saturday. This is the sort of pride that inspires an athlete to play hurt. And while I've often heard of football players overcoming a broken wrist or a dislocated elbow, I've never heard of an athlete playing through a tapeworm.

The Cornhusker Marching Band is widely regarded as one of the best college bands in the country. Two years ago the band received the Sudler Trophy, an award given annually to a marching band that has demonstrated numerous years of excellence.

If neither praise nor parasites inspires your respect, consider instead the respectable reputation earned by the band over years of traveling abroad as representatives of the university. Time and again, the Nebraska band has been praised by Husker fans and foes across the country as the best Nebraska has to offer. Every time the Marching Red travels outside of the state, they give Nebraska a good name and consequently live up to their name as "The Pride of All Nebraska."

Think about that while the Huskers pound another poor team into the turf.



MATT PETERSON is a senior English and news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Drum roll, please.

"Now is the time ... for the Marching Red Experience!"

For anyone who's attended a Nebraska football game, these words should be familiar. They serve to commence every Husker home game.

For those who haven't had the pleasure of being a ripple in Nebraska's Red Sea, here's what happens next.

"The Pride of All Nebraska" (a.k.a. the Cornhusker Marching Band) bolts onto the field greeted by a roar from the "Ma and Pa Husker" section.

And an indifferent murmur from the student section.

In light of such general indifference, perhaps the band is in need of a new title - how about "The Pride of Geriatric Nebraska"?

While I'm sure that having the support of the "Red and Gray" is fantastic, there can be no substitute for the support and respect of one's peers.

Before I presume to blow my own horn, and tell everyone for the umpteenth time that the band is under-appreciated and deserves the respect of the entire student body not only for the hard work of its members but also for the symbolic station they occupy, I should qualify a personal bias.

I've been a member of a marching band for nearly one-third of my life (six of my 21 years, actually), right up until my sophomore year when shin-splints and disenchantment rendered me an alum. I've yet to look back.

Perhaps now is the time.

Upon graduating from high school, I was fed up with band. Despite having become a fairly pro-



LANE HICKENBOTTOM is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan photographer and columnist.

Two years ago today, hundreds of thousands of black men converged at the nation's capital for a day of atonement and reconciliation during the Million Man March.

Ten days ago, hundreds of thousands of Christian men did the same during the Promise Keepers rally.

Nine days from now, Philadelphia will be the place where hundreds of thousands of black women will gather for essentially the same purpose during the Million Woman March.

When will men and women of all races, religions, sexual preferences and political creeds converge to atone together?

The time is now.

Whether the event is the Million Man March, the Promise Keepers rally or the Million Woman March, there has (and with the case of the Million Woman March, presumably will be) a massive sum of positive energy flowing toward the betterment of each group's position. Each event rediscovers the worldly roles of the participants so that they can return to their communities as better people.

But each event is so separatist.

Stir the melting pot

Americans must unify, not stratify

The Million Man March was for black men. The Promise Keepers rally was for Christian men, which resulted in a predominately white rally. The Million Woman March will be for black women.

While each is fine and dandy in its own merit, the country as a whole should rediscover its roots and seek for ways to better itself. It is time for the citizens of the United States to consider why it is great to be an American.

What does it mean, historically, to be an American?

Most immigrants to this country from the very beginning came here seeking an end to the persecution they received in their homelands.

Remember the story of the Mayflower as the Puritans fled Europe to avoid further religious persecution? This very day hundreds of people will journey to the United States to flee religious persecution along with economic and political oppression.

The only problem: The ingredients of the "Great Melting Pot" have never fully mixed to make the perfect recipe of a country.

The people of this country need to remember America's grass roots. Americans need to reconcile with each other.

The nation's capital should play host to the Millions of People March. During this event, all people - whites, blacks, Christians, Muslims - would come together for a day of atonement.

Could you imagine it? A great sea

of polarized people, together, asking God for forgiveness, and striving together to be better people.

During this day, white would come together with black. Rich would come together with poor. Christians would come together with Jews who would come together with Muslims. Straights would come together with gays. Capitalists would come together with communists. Those who oppose abortion would come together with those who support it.

Take a brief moment to look at the person closest to you in proximity.

He or she has a different shade of hair, a different shade of skin. He or she is richer or poorer than you. He or she has different taste in men or women than you. He or she thinks differently about politics than you. Probably even thinks differently about the Huskers than you.

But none of these traits is any reason to separate yourself from that person. We are all the same in that we are all people.

We should take at least a day where we all realize that we look and think differently from our neighbor, but that we should love our neighbor despite the differences.

Just 24 hours could make our country a much better place. We're on the right track - getting large groups of people together for the betterment of the community - but the next step needs to be taken.

We've held the hands of those like us: It's time to hold the hand of some-

Abort? Retry? KILL?

Hackers feed paranoia



CLIFF HICKS is a junior news-editorial and English major as well as a Daily Nebraskan columnist. He has been known to hack from time to time.

Destroy the Internet? OK? / CANCEL?

James hovered his pointer over the box, the light cast by his monitor all that illuminated his tiny room. After a minute or two of considering each option, he pushed the cancel button - this time. He scratched his white T-shirt, faded from years of wear and tear.

He turned back to the Internet chat room where he was reminiscing with his friends and colleagues about some of their past exploits. His nickname, "DrFear," was the first one in the list of users.

"I swear, people fall for the dumbest things, don't they?" he told his cronies, who were waiting on his every word for more stories from the hacker underground. "Did you ever hear about that virus hoax I started - 'Good Times'? That damn thing is still floating around the Internet. One of the best bits of programming I ever did, and I never wrote a line of code."

A neophyte asks, "What's it do?" All the veterans are already rolling their eyes, debating on whether they should just kick him out of the channel, or let him annoy them for a time.

"Nothing. It's a false warning about a virus that you can supposedly get if you read an e-mail with the heading 'Good Times.'"

"How can people believe they could catch a virus through e-mail?"

"People are stupid. Yell virus and they'll run for an exorcist or the youngest nearby child. Even though thousands of people have said that it's a hoax, the letter still gets sent to an estimated 1.8 million people every year. I swear, 10-year-olds know more than the average adult when it comes to computers."

"Yeah. Old people suck."

James sighs in his room at home. He's getting too old for this himself, he thinks. Hacking is a young man's game, and at 33, he just can't cut files like he used to. People are like computers - the newer the model, the better it is. He was starting to feel obsolete.

"It's the same as that 'Send a Cancer Victim a Greeting Card' thing. They're social viruses, like urban myths, playing off the paranoia, fear and trust in people. People know nothing about the things that control their world. They're scared of the computers. I find that funny."

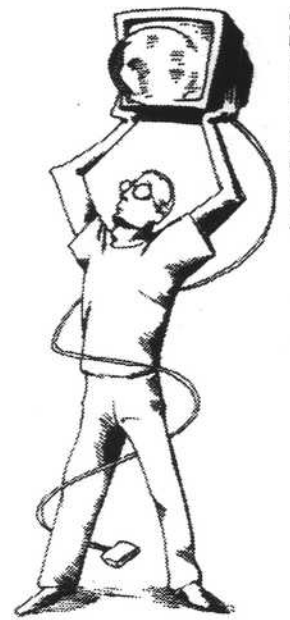
"Yeah. Did you hear that the guys who put out that art program you gave me a copy of last month went bankrupt?"

"Hell with them, then. Can't sell their product. One pirate can't make a difference."

"Was a good program though, doodz."

The habit all hackers had of replacing their Ss with Zs and phonetically spelling their words really got on his nerves, but the implication that the hackers were responsible for destroying something good did even more. "Hey! Shut up!" They were crusaders against the system, he thought to himself, they were the unsung heroes of the day, the digital Robin Hoods, saving the world from itself.

"Sorry."



AARON STECKELBERG/DN

James fumes, looking at his monitor. How dare one of his flunkies question him? Was he not the genius who programmed the Michelangelo virus? Was he not the one who turned the power off on the entire city of New York for half an hour? Was he not one of the greatest hackers ever to have lived?

The mouse pointer lingered over the OK? button as a sly smile crossed his face. With the push of a button he could erase millions of databases. It's all about buttons these days, he thought to himself. In ancient times, a parchment would have told armies to come raining down on a city, swords raised. The commander would beam as you handed him the order and you could hear the battle charge of your troops. Now, there are no faces, no cries of attack - just buttons.

His virus, which started floating through the Web months ago, and had now ingrained itself into computers speaking languages he had never seen, simply awaited a date to execute. The order was programmed to transmit itself to as many computers as it could, so that the command would be heard around the world. The earth would stand still, lost in a sea of confusion and isolation - all he had to do was push the button.

"James, dinner time," his mother's voice called. She had been calling up to his boyhood room for more than 30 years now.

"I'll be down in a minute, mother," James replied, "I have one thing to do first."

If he did this, even the hackers would lose everything they had saved. Any computer that had had any contact with the Internet in the past year would be erased clean - nothing would remain. No one knew about it because he had watched all the virus alerts, just waiting for someone to find a mistake and catch his little surprise - but no one had.

He stared at the screen a long time before he made up his mind and went to eat supper with his parents, thinking maybe he should move out soon. When they came to beg him to fix the world, it wouldn't do to be living with his folks. He wouldn't be able to restore all the erased data, but he could fix the systems so they would work again.

No one would know until it was too late. The virus was undetectable until it had already done its dirty work, wiping clean the slate of the world. No bank records, no phone bills, no ownership, no memory.

In his room, the countdown clock ticked closer and closer to the day, the day when the world would shift axes again - Darwin's birthday. As James takes a bite of his peas, he thinks, "I wonder what the world will be like after all the information is gone."

(Author's note: This is satire, meant to illustrate a common misperception of modern technology. The next time you get a doomsday message talking of great viruses, ask yourself what you believe.)