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Our
VIEW

Empty promises Tax-reform proposal creates foul stench

It's that time again. Several notable Nebraska politicians have grabbed a podium and their patriotic neckties, and announced their gubernatorial bids to cheering hometown friends and supporters. The politicians have wrapped themselves in the Nebraska state flag and have paraded their families through newly fallen leaves in golden sunlight.

Those moments were captured on film, and now there's a sea of cookie-cutter campaign commercials emerging during TV news slots.

In those pretty commercials, candidates fling promises like cow patties in a pasture, hoping to appeal to everyone's desire for a safer, more moral America and a few more dollars in their pocketbooks after April 15.

Those foul-flinging promises come around every year, and they always smell like the pasture they came from.

Yet one emits a radically stronger odor than the rest.

The promise to reform property taxes has littered the media with empty rhetoric for several years, and it's already back on a few candidates' TV commercials this fall.

Meanwhile, the need for property tax reform has intensified, especially in western Nebraska where farmers struggle to pay sky-high property taxes on large plots of planted land.

Gov. Ben Nelson helped push the Legislature for some reform, endorsing measures to place huge caps on property tax.

But schools depend on those property tax dollars, and no one has replaced his lost revenue by redistributing the tax base. Proponents of last fall's ballot initiatives 411 and 412 tried, but voters and reluctant politicians defeated the measure.

Now children in Arthur, located 45 minutes north of Ogalala, can fear traveling 90 miles to school if their small school shuts down without property tax funding.

Those students would have a lot of time on a school bus to think about empty tax-reform promises. And their parents would have a lot to think about on election day.

Yet candidates preach that property taxes should be cut further. They should be, but not without an alternate tax system that would produce revenue to support public schools.

A candidate who would save Nebraskans a few dollars by stealing their children's quality, local education, would also rob Peter to pay Paul.

It's counterproductive. It's foolish. In politician speak, "It doesn't make good common sense."

The governor who leads the Legislature to straighten out this mess likely will be remembered as one of Nebraska's best.

And the candidate who steps forward with a honest, respectable tax redistribution plan that helps all Nebraskans will be remembered at the voting booth.

Haney's
VIEW



DN
LETTERS

An apology

We would like to say to each person who read the column on "Motor control" in Wednesday's Daily Nebraskan that we apologize for the language you read from one of the young men in our hall from his recorded message that was left for Todd Munson.

We cannot start to apologize for the young man in our hall that took the initiative to not only embarrass himself but the majority of the individuals who live in Burr Hall, the professors and East Campus in general by speaking for everyone when he had no right.

Mr. Matthew Waite is right. Our resident has done nothing more than reinforce any stereotype that has ever been hung on East Campus and Burr Hall, and that has set us back many long hours, days and years spent trying to combat and eliminate those stereotypes of our campus and our hall.

In the same section of the DN, a young lady from East Campus had her letter published and (wrote) with dignity and intelligence. Regardless of what your opinion was before and what it is now, Burr Hall and East Campus is a place where numerous university and organizational leaders reside and work, and it is very disappointing to see the effects of what that one individual has and could have done to tarnish the achievements that great individuals have worked for and accomplished because of where they live.

As an intelligent group of students, faculty and staff we know that one person can seem to be the majority simply because they are the one making the most noise. In actuality, it is just the opposite.

I believe that you already have an opinion of East Campus and especially Burr Hall, but listen to the majority who have written this response. Do not do what would be

the easiest thing to do: judge all of us by the actions of one.

Philip Erdman
Burr/Fedde Hall resident
with residents of Burr and Fedde Halls

It's a sad day

Every so often I am forced to shake my head, laugh and weep bitterly for the future of America.

Today is one of those days. While I didn't read Mr. Munson's chilling exposé of the "Dukes of Hazzard" and "CHiPs," I did see the backlash created from this article.

I am amazed. With all the issues that are in need of attention in our world, our nation and our campus, some of my intellectual colleagues have chosen to get their collective panties in a wad over television.

News flash: It's entertainment. Use your intellectual resources for something more worthwhile next time. It seems ridiculous to me that in 1997, we are even discussing 1970s television in anything more than a purely nostalgic way. Come on people, let it go.

Kari J. Holman
junior
pre-physical therapy

I want my Free Speech

I disagree with many of the statements that Gregg Madsen made in his Wednesday column "Price of pornography."

Firstly, his conclusions about the relationship between pornography and crimes such as pedophilia and rape are logically unsound. In order for a direct relationship between pornography and sex crimes to be established, he would need to examine the statistics of how many people who read or look

at pornography become rapists or pedophiles, and not the other way around. This would be the result that would be needed to prove a causal relationship.

Secondly, as far as his conclusion that pornography is bad because of the fact that crime is higher in the areas with "sexually oriented businesses," I have a simple question. If you happened to be in such an area, and somebody were to steal your wallet, would you hesitate to report it, fearing the stigma that might surround having been in such an area? Do you think that it's possible that the people doing the stealing might know this? Do you think that this would tend to make crime go up or down?

Thirdly, it is absolutely necessary to protect the rights of people producing pornography if we want to protect free speech in this country. If you start eliminating pornography, where is the line? What about works of art? What about information about sexuality? What about information that is intended to provide AIDS education? What about the publications of feminist groups, or those from the gay community?

Heck, if pornography causes violence, perhaps we should outlaw religion. Just look at everything that happened during the Crusades, or the Thirty Years War.

Everything has the potential to be harmful. It is up to individuals to control their own actions, and to be responsible for them.

I am not saying that pornography is good. However, I am suspicious of anyone who will try to tell me what not to read. The writers of the Constitution may not have had Playboy in mind. However, they did know what it was like to be denied the freedom of speech.

Amy D. Young
graduate student
German

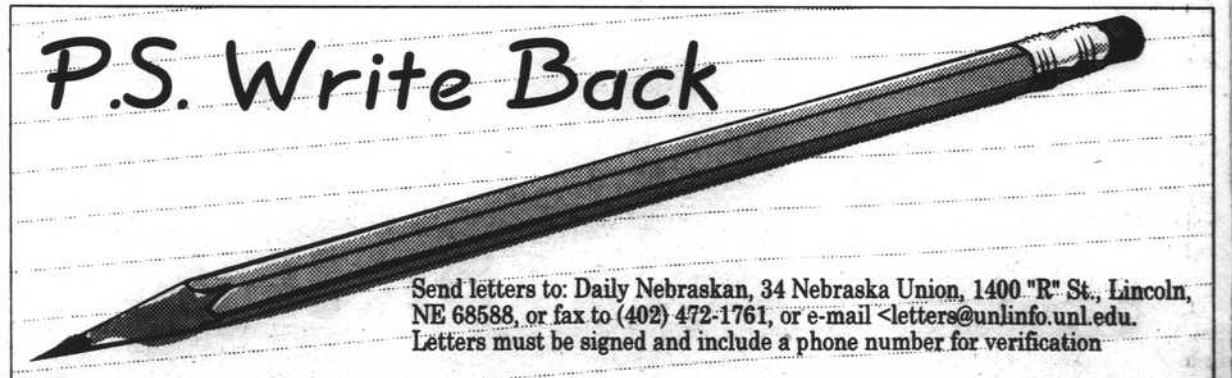
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P.S. Write Back



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