

DAILY NEBRASKAN

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Our VIEW

Not quite out of time

Y2K won't be the end of the world as we know it

Y2K.

The acronym can send some to crawl beneath their sheets, clutch onto whatever safety blanket they can find and whimper.

Between computer programmers, media speculators and panicked masses, much has been said about the dreaded year 2000 problem, most of it heavy on possibilities and short on facts.

People have called it everything from a "bomb" to "the end of the civilized world."

While the facts about Y2K are still coming in, a lot of people are worried about things they shouldn't be. In addition, a lot of things they aren't worried about, they should be.

Some say that banks will crash, credit cards will be back-charged for a century and that everything will fall into the earth.

Others have said that the world's power will turn off, hospitals will shut down, and the computers of the world will explode into a mess of silicon.

From the facts known so far, the truth isn't as bad as all that.

Most analysts are confirming there will be major problems in the year 2000. Power very well may go out for some time, be it three days, three months or almost a year. The electrical infrastructure is perhaps the most vulnerable spot on the Y2K problem.

Also, many pilots are planning on not flying until they are sure that the jet they will be on has been updated. Boeing and the FAA have admitted that problems with their systems are indeed genuine, and they are looking into them.

These two possibilities compose most of the largest concerns. Many rumors, however, have been disproved.

Credit cards should be fine, and the majority of commercial businesses will adapt in time to avoid significant problems. Business always looks out for No. 1.

The problem is being addressed, perhaps a bit too lackadaisically, but people are aware.

Some people have gone into hiding on mountaintop cabins, stockpiling food and firearms, like they were in a "Mad Max" film.

This, we feel, is a bit much.

We can make sure that the products we use and the services we employ will be fine when the calendar turns over, but running away from technology is not the answer.

Will Y2K be the end of the world?

Probably not.

Is there anything the people on the low end of the spectrum can do?

Buy lots of canned food and hope. Like much of the computer industry, it's out of our hands.

We'll pull through. Don't we always?

Mook's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Good sports

As Aggies, we know how hard it is to suffer a loss to anyone, much less an upset, but the Cornhusker fans that traveled to College Station, Texas, on Saturday deserve a lot of praise. From the fans we saw leaving Kyle Field to the fans at the Dixie Chicken and the rest of Northgate, every one of them congratulated us on the game we played and showed the utmost respect for our team and for our faith in our team.

It is rare today to find fans who know how to suffer a loss gracefully, but the Cornhuskers showed us that they know how. Without a doubt they are the best group of fans I have ever seen at Kyle Field in my three years at Texas A&M.

The Huskers played a great game and were starting to have us worried in the fourth quarter until we intercepted a pass. They deserve a lot of credit for not falling apart and making such a strong run at us. Every person I have talked to has agreed that it was the most exciting game we've ever seen played at Kyle Field.

I'm already looking forward to our trip next year on Nov. 6 to Lincoln; if it is half as thrilling a game as Saturday's was, we will be lucky. I only hope that the 12th Man will be as great a group of guests as the Cornhuskers were. We look forward to a rematch of last year's Big 12 Championship game this year, but we are hoping for a different outcome.

Best of luck with the rest of your season. Go Big Red and Gig 'Em Aggies!

John W. Kretlow
proud member of the Fightin'
Texas Aggie class of 2000
construction science major
Texas A&M University

Righteous royalty

I would like to take this opportunity to set the record straight on the Homecoming royalty selection process. First of all, there are three tracks available – campus involvement, community service and athletics. Applicants were self-nominated and responsible for picking up applications at the designated, centrally located spots and completing them to the best of their abilities.

A selection committee was formed for each track, consisting of one resi-

dence hall, off-campus, faculty and greek representative. This means that in each of the three separate committees selected to focus on each track, only one-fourth are affiliated with the greek system.

Matthew Eickman recently made the statement: "Ideally, maybe the make-up of the Homecoming court should be determined by what the students have done, and not by where they live."

Idealistic or not, Matthew, this is what happened. Based on their written presentation of their qualifications, their sincerity and their articulation in the interview, 22 excellent candidates were selected from a very competitive pool of highly qualified applicants. However, the majority of the applicants were greek, and so it is not surprising that the majority of the finalists also are greek. The finalists were chosen on their merits, regardless of where they lived, which is exactly what Matthew calls for.

I had the pleasure of being a member of the selection committee under the campus involvement track, and I had the honor of meeting and interviewing Matt Boyd and Lisa Schkade. They were both excellent representatives of the highest ideals we as involved students hope to maintain. So were the other 20 finalists. I do not find it fair to discount or attack the other members of the royalty court simply because of their greek affiliation.

It was not an easy task narrowing down the cream of the crop, but it was done in a fair and impartial manner by a group of diverse students and faculty members. I would like to challenge everyone to vote for their king and queen and also to consider applying next year. Those who want to see change need to take action. By the way, which track did you apply under, Matthew?

Gina Toderio
junior
biological sciences

Beliefs?

Mr. Wimmer's editorial Thursday quoted Webster's dictionary for a definition of the word atheism. Unfortunately, the definition given does not completely encompass the views of many atheists.

Within atheism there are varying

degrees of unbelief and disbelief. Some people hold the "hard atheist" position that completely denies the existence of any gods. Others are "weak atheists" and are merely skeptical of the existence of a god or higher power. Still others hold agnostic positions, maintaining that the existence and nature of any higher power is unknown or even unknowable.

Mr. Wimmer attacks the strongest atheist positions while largely ignoring the more agnostic positions. He argues that it's silly to reject God's existence because it can't be proven. But then he turns around and decides that we should reject atheism because the non-existence of God can't be proven.

To be fair, Mr. Wimmer does cite a bit of evidence and even quotes a few atheist arguments (though checking out some Web sites to get an understanding of atheism is not a whole lot more informative than listening to Brother Jed for an hour to get an understanding of Christianity).

His responses to these arguments are supremely insightful: "That's just one of those unknowable things about God" and "God ... obviously isn't bound by [the rules of nature]."

For the theist side, he cites evidence from the wonder of biology, math and physics – things like the fact that pi shows up a lot in physics and people are medium-sized compared to the universe.

Without proof either for or against the existence of God, we are left to decide on the basis of such scant evidence. Atheists and agnostics conclude that there is not enough evidence to warrant belief in a god. This is not to say they deny the wonder of nature.

To quote Albert Einstein, "I do not believe in a personal God ... If something is in me which can be called religious, then it is the unbounded admiration for the structure of the world so far as our science can reveal it."

Just because the world is really neat and there is much about it that we don't understand doesn't necessarily mean that a god is the best explanation for this.

Jill Matlock
junior
vice president

Travis Fisher
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secretary
Campus Atheists and Agnostics

P.S. Write Back

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