

OPINION PAGES

Our VIEW

Run for the border

Location's sudden closing prompts outcry

Taco Bell, we hardly knew ye. The downtown Taco Bell, 245 N 13th Street, also known to downtown rats as "Taco Smell" and "Toxic Hell," has dropped the big chalupa, closing its door forever (as of yesterday), giving its employees a shameful three days notice and its loyal customers scarcely two.

The poverty-stricken among us, who pinched pennies all morning to slide another 69-cent burrito down their sorry gullets in the afternoon, will now have to go home hungry at night.

“Oh, Taco Bell! How will we ever make a run for your mythical border?”

Sure, there are other Taco Bells in other parts of the city, but they're even worse, some of them, than the one downtown used to be, and they're farther away – if you don't have a car, they might as

well be in another state.

(Can you imagine taking the bus to Taco Bell?)

For that refried-bean fix you still have Amigos, of course. Two locations, on and off campus.

(Help!)

And if you ever craved Mexican food, well, there has got to be a restaurant around here that serves it – several say so on their storefronts, anyway.

But Taco Bell was different. Taco Bell was its own thing: far from the nutritious, simple meals of Mexico, further still from the "all beef" patties of Burger King.

(Shudder!)

Oh, Taco Bell! How will we ever make a run for your mythical border?

Taco Bell was a place to meet other slackers, where you could exchange greetings with the friendly, familiar staff – or go around the side of the building and watch them assemble your order through the big windows.

You can't do that at Amigos. They could be doing anything back there. At Taco Bell you could watch them doing it.

But we're digressing from the point here.

The point here is not to say anything untoward about any other restaurant.

It's just a simple plea.

A cry in the metaphorical night.

To the faceless, nameless powers at Taco Bell corporate headquarters:

Yo Quiero Taco Bell!

EDITOR
Josh Funk

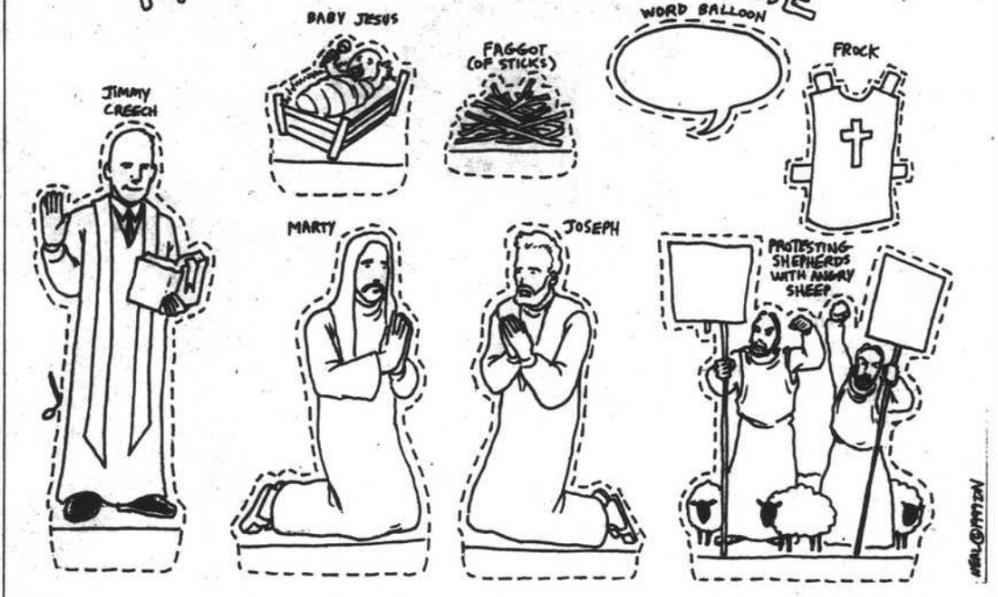
OPINION EDITOR
Mark Baldrige

EDITORIAL BOARD
Lindsay Young
Jessica Fargen
Samuel McKewon
Cliff Hicks
Kimberly Sweet

Obermeyer's VIEW

LIKE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS, THE BEST EDITORIAL CARTOONS ARE THE ONES YOU MAKE YOURSELF!!

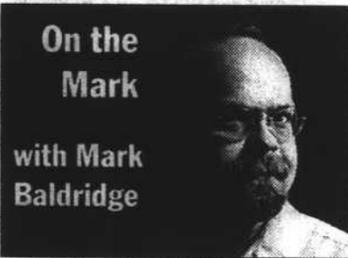
THE JIMMY CRECHE



Paste this cartoon to cardboard and cut out the figures! Arrange them in your own opinionated nativity scene, otherwise know as a creche. Will the Rev. Creech unite Marty and Joseph in holy matrimony before the protesting shepherds have him defrocked? Fill in the word balloons and picket signs. Color and enjoy!

On an Indian Summer

Warm weather creates worries of global warming



On the Mark with Mark Baldrige

The weather was nice. Too nice. I've been a lot of places, with a lot of different kinds of weather, but I have never been anywhere where nice weather could stir up so much uneasiness in people.

When I was a kid, we called it "Indian Summer," the warm patch the Great Plains sometimes runs into toward the end of fall.

We didn't mean any disrespect to American Indians, I don't think. We were just trying to say it was a beautiful time to go running around outside, a livable spot between the horrors of summer and the cabin-fever killing sprees of winter.

And anyway, it had those colors, those beautiful fall colors that make us think of Thanksgiving and that first, hypothetical meal – Puritans and American Indians eating together, before it all went to hell.

An idyllic time, and one that came, if not every year, at least often enough to have a separate name, a separate identity as a kind of semi-official proto-season.

Indian Summer: an all-too-brief, thoroughly pleasant time.

But not if you ask a college kid today.

This year's unseasonably warm autumn saw kids out and about, wearing shorts, playing in the dried leaves as usual – but all of them afraid.

Afraid, or at least slightly anxious. You could read it on their lips from halfway across a glorious public park: "Global warming."

Usually accompanied by a nervous, forced laugh, a little titter of half-amused dread.

Global warming? You know what it is: Fluorocarbons released into the atmosphere as the byproduct of industrial processes act as "green-

house" gases, allowing light energy through the atmosphere but bouncing heat back to the Earth.

Like one of those high-tech, foil survival blankets, it causes the temperature to build up beneath a certain layer of the sky.

Or that's the theory.

I'm sure I don't have to tell you that we have records of the weather on this planet going back only a very short time – at least compared to the very long time this planet has had weather – and that even within that period there have been warmer years, even centuries.

Though no reliable weather indicators exist from Roman times (for example), we have historical records that can be used in much the same way.

There was once a time, for instance, when the planet was warm enough that grapes were being cultivated in Scotland.

That's pretty warm, considering that Scotland is not, today, exactly renowned for its fine wines.

And this was long before the dent of human industry on planetary ecology had reached anything like today's levels.

Way back, you know, when the total human population of the planet could probably have been counted in millions.

But I'm pretty sure you already knew all that.

I'm pretty sure it's just a Nebraskan thing, a sort of deliciousness in guilt.

You feel guilty about the ozone, the greenhouse gases, the unsustainability of the "American" lifestyle being

lived elsewhere. You feel guilty, and you love it. Particularly if you have to suffer.

An Indian Summer is hardly punishment, and you feel so much more comfortable if you can somehow pay.

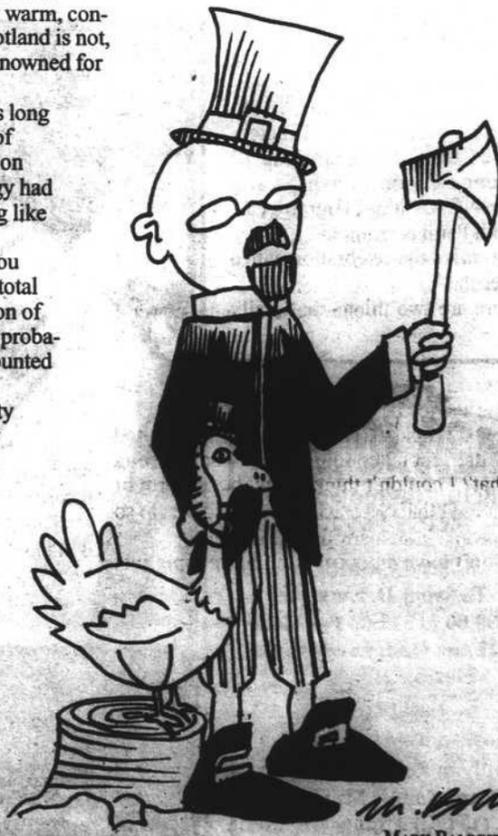
For instance, I know of no place else on earth where people show so much pride in turning on their air conditioners later in the summer than their neighbors:

"Oh, it was so hot last night; a thermometer in the house said it was over 100. We just finally had to break down and turn on the AC."

"Oh really! We never turn it on till after the Fourth of July! (Sniff!)"

It's too absurd! I think it's that Puritan thing again. That German Protestantism that looms so large in the Nebraskan genes.

I mean, what else could it be?



MARK BALDRIDGE/DN

Mark Baldrige is a senior English major and opinion editor for the Daily Nebraskan.

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 1999 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student employees.

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE, 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unl.edu.