

## Daily Nebraskan

Since 1901

Editor: Sarah Baker  
Opinion Page Editor: Samuel McKewon  
Managing Editor: Bradley Davis

### See cities, too DN merely suggested Clinton visit unknown side of state

The assertion that everyone in Kearney is a hick is, of course, ludicrous.

Apparently, a good number of people in Kearney seem to believe the Daily Nebraskan thinks just that: Everyone west of Lincoln is an unsophisticated, small-minded rube.

In case you've missed the recent hubbub over a Wednesday Daily Nebraskan editorial - and unless you're connected to Kearney, you likely have - it goes something like this: This newspaper wrote in an editorial that President Bill Clinton also should visit Lincoln and Omaha upon the announcement that Clinton would visit Kearney.

Since the editorial ran, more than 140 people, mostly from Kearney, have posted mostly vehement responses to the opinion on the Daily Nebraskan's Web site.

The original editorial asserted that Clinton's trek to Nebraska was merely a token visit. The backdrop for his visit, the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, the editorial said, was appropriate because it, also, was meaningless: plastic, tourist-trap fodder.

It would make more sense, we said, for Clinton to visit areas of the state that have been more friendly to him at the ballot box, including Lincoln, which chose him over Republicans in 1992 and 1996, and Omaha, which also provides a relative hotbed of Democratic support.

Nebraska's 3rd Congressional District, of which Kearney is a part, is one of the most conservative in the nation, consistently throwing its support behind Republicans.

Because of this, we were happy to see Clinton will now be touching down in Omaha, where he will greet residents at Offutt Air Force Base, mingle with supporters at a private function and perhaps play host to another public engagement.

It makes sense for Clinton to see more of Nebraska than its famed small towns. Everyone knows Nebraska is rural, friendly and down-home, all-around good. Not as many people know Nebraska also has thriving urban areas in Lincoln and Omaha. Now, perhaps they will.

Reading some of the posts to the Daily Nebraskan Web site, [www.dailyneb.com](http://www.dailyneb.com), you'd think we had suggested Kearney, Chadron, Broken Bow and every other smaller Nebraska community be obliterated from the state map.

On the contrary, it's undeniable smaller towns make up a great part of Nebraska's fabric.

As so many people, including University of Nebraska at Kearney professors, UNK students and former Kearneyites from across the country, stated in their Internet responses to the newspaper's editorial, Kearney has a lot to offer: a friendly atmosphere where people know your name at local stores, a good university and a pace of life that avoids the typical big-city rat races.

We don't deny that small towns have good qualities - of course they do. And we never said they didn't.

But if President Clinton were to visit only one Nebraska community, as was thought when his visit to Kearney was originally announced, this newspaper's position is that he should visit a city that will let him, and millions watching and reading about his visit in national media, learn something new about the state.

It's common for Nebraskans traveling outside the state to be asked if they live on a farm or raise livestock. But a large number of Nebraska's population is misrepresented by that perception that we're all small-town farmers.

A visit to Omaha will show President Clinton, and thereby the rest of the country, that Nebraska, while proud of its rural heritage and small-town friendliness, is equally proud of its often overlooked urban areas - two unfound gems waiting to be explored by the president and media that follows him.

#### Editorial Board

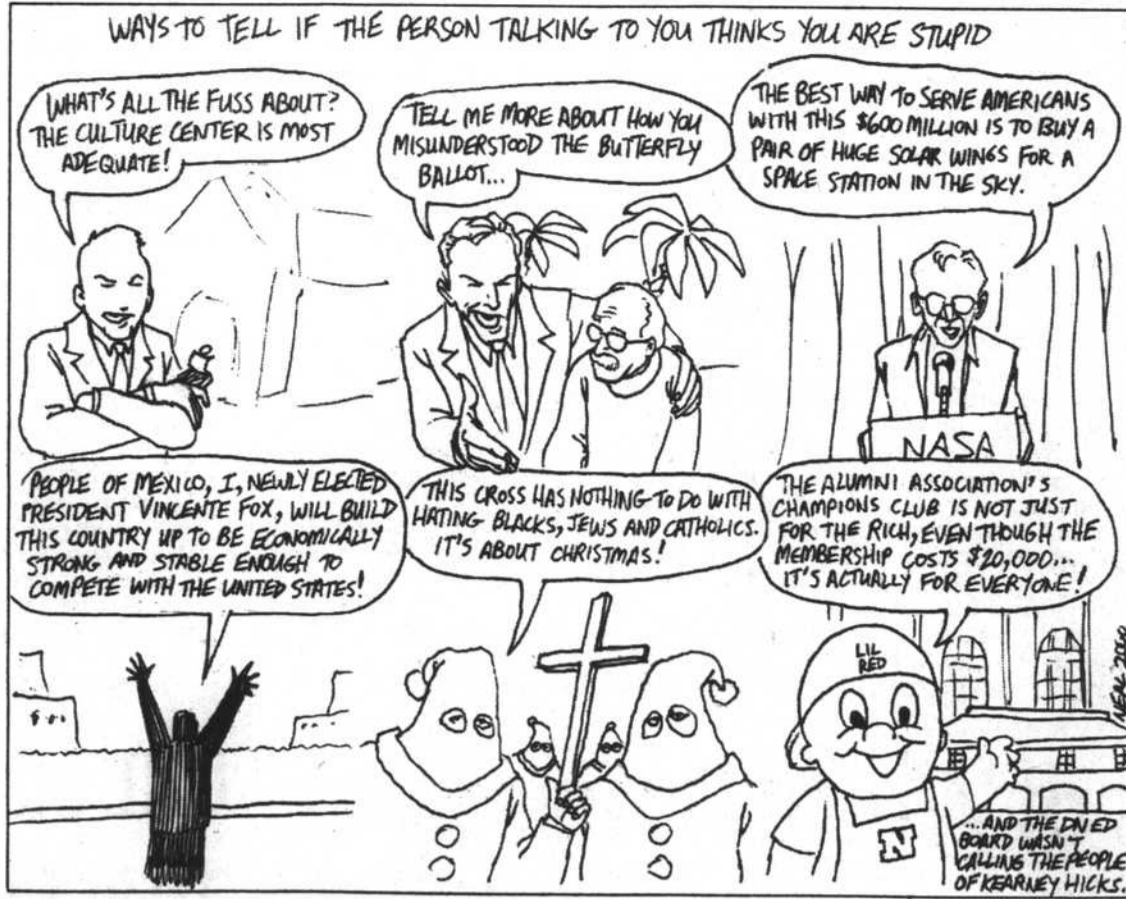
Sarah Baker, Bradley Davis, Josh Funk, Matthew Hansen, Samuel McKewon, Dane Stickney, Kimberly Sweet

#### Letters Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes briefs, 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@unlinfo.unl.edu](mailto:letters@unlinfo.unl.edu).

#### Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 2000 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; a cartoon is solely the opinion of its artist. The Board of Regents acts 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 employees.



### Letters to the editor

#### Vague policies

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This editorial policy, as posted, is ambiguous. Is this saying that a column is different than an unsigned editorial; or that it may be different?

You may state that a column is solely the opinion of the author, but that does not change the fact that there is an Editorial Board (Sarah Baker, Bradley Davis, Josh Funk, Matthew Hansen, Samuel McKewon, Dane Stickney, Kimberly Sweet, if the information on the Web site is current) and that a decision clearly must be made as to which unsigned editorials are indeed the opinions of the Daily Nebraskan.

I would be interested in knowing if that process broke down, or if it was the process itself which led to this editorial being published as something other than the opinion of the author.

One also cannot ignore the consequences that may come from an editorial, which is motivated, not by reasoned opinion, but by jealousy, ignorance and economic and geographical stereotyping.

While some may be trying to find a silver lining behind the misguided decision to allow this anonymous publication (by pointing to all of the attention it has brought the online edition of the Daily Nebraskan), in this case one cannot with a straight face say that "there is no such thing as bad publicity."

At least one alumni has expressed his outrage at the attitude expressed by making his own powerful editorial comment with the withdrawing of his financial support for the university system. One can only IMAGINE the numbers of alumni

who feel similarly (or will when the link to the editorial makes its way into their e-mail box). All Nebraskans (including those at UNK) should be saddened by this, for anything that hurts the University of Nebraska system, hurts the entire population of this state.

The converse also is true, and it is this that was lost upon the writer of the editorial and those responsible for its publication.

If there is a new lesson for journalism in all of this, it is that the rules of a responsible editorial policies in print journalism must be applied even more carefully for online content. Why?

Because with the "new media" it is possible for one to point directly to the piece, spreading the reference to it at the speed of e-mail. While your print edition may be seen by the very few outside the UNL system who care to read it, your online content need only be seen by one interested party.

Within hours alumni are reading with interest your editorial opinion and thinking about how they represent the values being taught at your institution as a whole.

You should be ashamed of the attitudes reflected in the editorial "Come, Bill, come." You should examine the policies that allowed this editorial to be published unsigned, as the opinion of the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board.

Finally, that board and those who oversee it (ultimately the Board of Regents) should do what it can to mitigate its damaging effects on the people of out-state Nebraska, and the city of Kearney in particular.

It is unfortunate that they have not already done so and that it takes an economic consequence to make them clearly see the seriousness of an error perpetrated upon the entire state.

It seems that many could see the mistake even before economics entered the equation.

Darren Addy  
Web Specialist Information Technology Services  
University of Nebraska at Kearney

Editor's Note: Starting today, the Daily Nebraskan editorial policy, as well as members of the editorial board, will be posted with the staff editorial online.

## Up close with the president

Bill, I just wanted to say how pleased I am that you're visiting Kearney and Omaha this week. I'd also like to say that I don't trust any political leader of the free world except those who've never had a chance in the free world to get elected - i.e. me.

If I've confused you, I mean to say that you are sometimes led astray by hormones, however, for the most part, I find you to be one of the more "edible" leaders of the USA.

Because I was made in the USA, I have taken it upon myself to ask you questions that I feel my fellow Americans could/should/would ask you if they had the chutzpah.

Thank god for them, I've chosen to accept the responsibility of getting "deep down and personal" with you.

Zip your pants up, Mr. President. Thank you, let's begin.

As a newcomer to our beautiful state, I'm truly glad that you decided to visit the Great Valley River Rat Archway Monument that overlooks (and sometimes urinates on) our wondrous interstate.

What did you think of it? Does it look a big piece of wood suspended over a road, or is it a magical and exacting representation of our state? You thought it was a beaut, eh? That's great.

Well, let's move on. Here's something I think most of America would like you to comment on. I will pose the ordeal now - most people believe in God. I happen to believe in vampires. Your reaction, quickly.

They're only bloody fictional creatures? I hardly think that. What's your proof? Oh, you used to slay them with your almighty "wooden stake" and then you realized you were seeing things because of the acid you ate for breakfast? Sorry, man.

So, if vampires aren't real because you haven't actually seen them, then what about God? Oh, it's a cover-up?

Let me get this straight, the FBI found God in 1947 along with an alien ship in Roswell. After you abducted them (God and crew), they falsified information, and you're not even supposed to know about it. Then why did you tell me?

No, I will not sleep with you. Sit down and talk to me.

Why are you unzipping your pants?

I'll strike it from the records if you put your pants back on, Mr. President. Do you want the U.S. police to walk in? How about Janet Reno? She's a bad ass, and you'd be so sorry if she caught with your pants around your ankles; she's killed a man.

Back to the important things in life. Do you feel



Karen Brown

that stupid rich Texans with a penchant for frying people, yet who avidly support anti-abortion laws have the right to be president? Only in America, huh. That's what I would say, too, good job. You are smart.

OK, before you put your pants back on, I have one last question, I swear. Ready? OK.

Are you going to grant Leonard Peltier executive clemency or what? I mean, regardless of whether or not you think the United States' problems are as significant as North Korea's, Peltier presents a home-based problem that will not go away.

You promised you would release him during your presidency, and, well sir, I believe your eight years is almost up, and the lame duck is about to be shot. Ha, ha, ha; I mean it, literally.

You see, I have a pistol in my pocket, and although I think you're a smart, generally well-meaning man, I will shoot you in the elbow unless you free him.

I'm sure you know that he's been in prison since 1975 for allegedly killing two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. He fled to Canada after he was targeted for his previous work with AIM, where he was extradited by affidavits manufactured by the FBI that the government now concedes were false and fabricated.

Bill, did you know that there was a hand-picked judge, favored by the FBI for his anti-Indian reputation, who refused evidence of Peltier's self-defense? I'm sure you're reviewing the case closely and seeing that information from the acquittals of his codefendants was also ruled inadmissible.

The government now has NO IDEA who killed the two FBI agents, and the only thing keeping him in prison is the FBI's own embarrassment for something it knows it grossly mishandled.

Embarrassment seems to make the government do REALLY DUMB THINGS.

Thanks for listening. While I'm at it, how about looking into our Nebraska's own innocent captives Ed and Mondo? It's another crazy story involving embarrassed FBI agents.

Anyway, that's all I have to say.

Bill, can I have a puff of your cigar? Thanks, I needed to take the edge off, as I'm sure you can understand. Do you smoke often? No, just when you think it's safe? I see. Hey listen, I would also like to show you the scrap book I made in second grade when I was just starting out in Girl Scouts.

Wasn't I cute? I mean, you can hardly tell that that's me anymore without the afro and the braces. What? You don't think I look much different? Well, I have gained a few pounds, but I really don't think that I look the same.

Come back here! There's a picture of me selling hash brownies to my next-door neighbor, Betty!

## It's time for an ASUN revolution

As the new global order creates concentrations of wealth and power on an unprecedented scale, it is appropriate that we fear its negative consequences as we reap its benefits.



Sean Zehtab

But if we are to remain healthy, there must be a limit to the amount of fear in our lives. As we devote our energies to keeping new levels of government in check, we must free up fear and energy at the local level.

The parliamentary style was developed to ensure that diverse and dispersed interests would have a mechanism to promote their interests in the absence of a king to keep them in awe. The office of president was added to that institution so that in times of crisis, there would be a functioning decision-maker to quickly act, preserving the slower parliament.

But one must wonder how appropriate this style of government is to the local level, and especially the student body of this campus, with its rough equality of class, background, age, ability and interests.

According to the bylaws of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, the students are authorized through democratic means to 1) select student representatives, 2) govern student fees and 3) participate on committees.

Of these three, the only interesting power is to dispose of student fees, which being ultimately under the regents is not a power but a task, relieving the board of some hardship. If student government causes the board more hardship than it hopes to lose, it simply overrides the decision.

As for the selecting of student representatives and participation on committees, the student "government" operates without the formal consent of the student body and caters to energetic people who, if interested in joining a committee to speak their mind, hardly need a parliamentary apparatus to do so. Frankly, students eager to participate in government should look to higher levels if they are after more than sentences on a resume.

After the election of the first non-greek as president of ASUN since 1978, there was a humorous piece in the Daily Nebraskan about a "mandate for change." How in need of change are we when a candidate getting 1,081 of 20,217 possible votes, or 5.3 percent seems like a mandate for change? A good margin of victory should be at least double that.

The implicit position of the non-voting super-majority is not that it does not want a voice in affairs, but that it wants a new method in giving that voice, one more appropriate for its level of energy. Instead of special days of polling, which run against the busy current of student life, let us utilize technology so that students can have their say each time they check their e-mail or browse the Web on a school computer.

When support for a position paper or a new bylaw surpasses 50 percent of the total student body, it is passed. We will no longer need special representatives; we can represent ourselves.

The overriding interests of the student body are constant despite the perennial change of faces; students want accessibility - the ability to get the classes needed for graduation and affordability of the tuition; and applicability - that the students want their degrees to help them get good jobs so they can be finally independent and start families of their own.

A new system would promote these crucial interests by channeling our energy and talents at the NU Board of Regents meetings and the Legislature rather than squander them in some horse race entertaining only to the few.

Does the new system make the senators, presidents, and committee members obsolete? Do they, like the state, wither away? Not at all, with the energy freed from campaigning, operating the machinery and talking among themselves, they can be the teachers and leaders of the student body to pass legislation.

This would appeal to students who want to be "involved" but find the current system childish and absurd.

A position, amendment, or resolution, though it may take time to surpass 50 percent of the student body, will carry far greater weight with the NU Board of Regents than any student elected under the current embarrassment of a system.

The university was founded in the 1800s. In those days before women's suffrage and the extension of the franchise to 18 year-olds, student government could compensate and prepare students for rights they did not have.

Now that we have these rights, we should use our training-wheels system to pave the way for the future: electronic, global federalism.