

Column submissions explained

Written by Mary Kay Quinlan, bureau chief Nebraska News Service
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A letter to the editor in the Gothenburg Times was recently called to my attention, and I hope you can help me with a concern that I have. The letter was from a Neil A. Davis, and he takes issue with a couple of opinion columns I wrote, which he is more than entitled to do, just as I am entitled to express my views.

My concern, however, is his implicit criticism of the Nebraska News Service as a provider of the columns. It was indeed a departure from the mission of the Nebraska News Service. Here's why: Allen Beermann asked the Nebraska News Service to provide a weekly column for Nebraska Press Association members who subscribe to the Capital View commentary during the nearly three-month period that the regular columnist was ill. We didn't seek the opportunity to add this task to our reporting responsibilities, but Allen has been a great supporter of the Nebraska News Service, so we were happy to help out the NPA and its members. My reporters and I took turns providing commentary, and, in retrospect, we no doubt should have made clear that the columns represented our individual views, not that of the Nebraska News Service.

I certainly stand by the views I expressed in the columns I wrote, just as I'm sure Mr. Davis stands by his. But I don't want him, or any of your other readers, to think that the Nebraska News Service is taking political positions or expressing opinions in the news stories we send to you or the nearly 100 other client news organizations around the state. I regret that I did not anticipate there could be confusion in this regard.

Thanks for anything you can do to clarify the situation for your readers.