

EDITORIALS



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IN OUR VIEW

Tech programs deserve support

As Utah Valley University adjusts to its new status, it's fair to wonder whether it will be able to stay attached to its roots as a technical school.

UVU continues to offer a wide range of excellent programs in fields such as cabinetry, automotive work, culinary arts, emergency services and construction. Many of the programs seem to be thriving. UVU ranked second in the nation in the recent SkillUSA competition in Kansas City, Mo., as its students won medals in events such as 3-D animation, plumbing, firefighting, video production, first aid CPR and robot and automation technology. Also, the university this fall is adding two associate degrees in applied sciences — one in technology and one in construction management.

These are encouraging signs that UVU is supporting technical education. Today's economy badly needs skilled technicians. Ritzzy corporate offices and modern technology won't be much good in the Utah summer if the air conditioning breaks down, for instance.

Many Utahns would do well to acquire technical skills. Such careers have a bright future, even in this fast-changing global economy. An air conditioner can't be shipped to Guadalajara or Mumbai; it has to be fixed here by local people.

But UVU has dropped a few technical programs, such as the welding and the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) programs. This worries some in the community.

Consider the HVAC program, which has been shifted over to Mountainland Applied Technology College. Area contractors say they won't be able to provide training at the same level that UVU offered. Local businesses and property owners will suffer, and some local young people will miss out on promising careers.

The HVAC program is, in a way, a victim of its own success, say officials at UVU. People were joining the two-year program, then quitting after six months because they had picked up enough skills to get a good-paying job. And so it will be no surprise

going forward that UVU offerings will evolve. In some cases, the school won't be able to do all that everyone in the community hopes for.

But will UVU be willing and able to support the bulk of the programs? To ask the same question another way, are the changes in the HVAC program a fluke, or a harbinger of the future?

It might yet be wondered if, despite best intentions, the trades might be downgraded at UVU in the future. A university is meant to be a place to look at abstract questions. That's well and good. But a university has a different atmosphere from a school that helps people learn to fix engines, fabricate kitchen cabinets and put up buildings. Combining the two is no simple task.

For example, UVU officials extol their current programs as ways for young people to learn not only technical skills, but also how to be managers and owners. Many such folks, however, plainly like to work with their hands, have little patience with sitting at desks and want to get that first good paycheck as soon as possible. There may be a disconnect between some of these students and the new, growing UVU.

Though the school currently intends to keep backing the trades, it also is certain to continue evolving. No one can say for sure where that evolution will lead.

UVU points to its partnership with MATC as a way to keep supporting some technical programs. Like HVAC, welding was shifted over to MATC. But can that school do as well? Some local HVAC contractors say that MATC just doesn't have the resources and quality of training facilities that UVU had built up over the years.

The Legislature should address this in its next session and find ways to better support MATC and similar schools. The next budget year is likely to be a lean one, but future budgets could be even leaner in Utah if technical education is neglected and the economy suffers.

Although UVU is doing a good job now, it is prudent to look ahead to see what the future might bring.

"UVU has dropped a few technical programs, such as the welding and the heating, ventilation and air conditioning programs. This worries some in the community."

MEDIA VOICES

Clash in Turkey

From the *Christian Science Monitor*, Friday, July 25:

Turkey's two most powerful political forces — Islamists, who head the government, and secularists, who run the military, courts, and bureaucracy — are engaged in a fierce battle for dominance in this NATO country. Their arena is the highly politicized legal system.

Completely ignoring last year's elections that returned the mildly Islamist ruling party, the AKP, to power with more popular support than ever, secularists are trying to overthrow the AKP in a constitutional court whose judges sympathize with the secularist cause.

Last week, the state's chief prosecutor argued that the AKP should be outlawed because it violates the constitution's strict separation of mosque and state. The trigger for the case was the AKP's recent lifting of the ban on women's Islamic head scarves at universities. It was a small but hugely symbolic attempt at greater religious freedom, but last month, the constitutional court rejected it.

The AKP's general counter-strategy is to arrest alleged secu-

lar supporters of a suspected coup plot. The tactics mirror an AKP tendency toward intimidation, in which critics are jailed for months without charge.

Both groups are at rough parity in the influence game. They need a trustworthy way to work out an acceptable balance for the role of religion in the Turkish public sphere. A strong democracy can provide that "safe" way — but not if it's subverted, as it is being now.

Given the high court's track record, it's likely to ban the AKP. A period of uncertainty will follow as the party tries to regroup, probably under a different name. Even with this murky outlook, the onus is on the governing party to take every possible step to reassure Turks that it indeed supports a secular, rule-based democracy — as it's said all along.

But if the undermining continues, and if Turkey's leaders fail not only to respect the democracy they have but to improve it through eventual constitutional and judicial

reform, they will simply drag their country down in a war of wills.

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"Good thing we made it harder for you to declare bankruptcy . . . look at all these bailouts you're on the hook for!"

HERALD POLL

A recent Herald Poll asked about building a bridge across Utah Lake. Some of the responses follow.

Don't build bridge

I hope they never build a bridge across Utah Lake. Nothing man-made ever compares to the aesthetic beauty that nature offers. Regardless as to how the Daily Herald may feel about possible "recreational opportunities," I find it very pleasurable to get in a sailboat and head out in any direction only to be turned back by nature's boundaries, not man-made boundaries.

As far as the Herald's feeling about the lake not living up to "Lake Tahoe" standards and being "infested with carp and clouded by silt," maybe we should just drain the whole thing, sell the land to greedy developers, so they can build thousands of "elegant" tract homes to add to the dead carp and barren soil left from draining the lake.

A visit to the Provo Center Street bridge, or any bridge for that matter will provide a look into the future as to how the bridge spanning Utah Lake will look. I love all the garbage, graffiti and other dirt and filth that gathers at the base of these "beautiful," "necessary" structures.

John R. Nicholes, Orem

Better ideas

Regarding the proposed bridge across Utah lake: No!

Better to provide unfettered access to the lake. Eliminate fees for parking and boat access. Allow home construction around the shoreline. Promote carp as food. Allow an island to be created in the middle of the lake from dredged material and make it into a for-fee pavilion. Promote the use of algae as fertilizer. Promote the use of and widen existing highways.

Suck it up Utah County! The progress will continue in spite of whining.

Stephen Street, Orem

Bigger vision

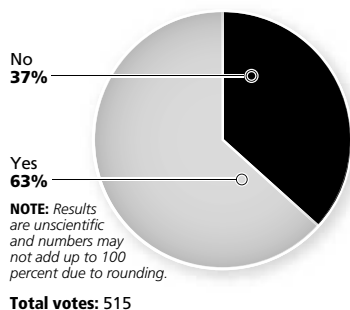
Costs for an aesthetically pleasing, minimum environmental impact, earthquake-safe, non-sinking bridge forever needing maintenance and patrolling will be daunting.

Why not incorporate a bridge as part of a bigger lake investment, one that really could pay for itself. Envision a 100-foot-deep, stone-lined lake bottom, filled with beautiful transparent fresh water, teeming with all kinds of game fish and wildlife sanctuaries. Beautiful artistic bridges, with ornate lighting, and biking and walking lanes, as well as a railed pier-like fishing platform on the lower levels. Imagine

Herald poll

Recently we asked the following question at the Daily Herald Web site, www.heraldextra.com:

"Should a highway span Utah Lake?"



Current poll: "Should schools expel junk food?" Polling is open at our Web site until **Thursday at 11:45 p.m.**

STAFF/Daily Herald

an endless loop of parks and protected wildlife observation areas. A scenic circumnavigating road around the lake's shoreline where the dredged bottom material was used to create beautiful parks and recreational launching pads. Bridge(s) could then be part of a much larger dream meeting the needs of a much greater percentage of the Valley's population.

Ed Trammell, Provo

Need is obvious

Our daughter recently built a house in Eagle Mountain. During the course of the last year and a half we have been traveling back and forth from Payson to Eagle Mountain, via the Lehi Main Street route.

It is obvious to see the huge problem they are facing and many times we have commented that building a bridge over that end of Utah Lake would be a great solution. It would save travel time and traffic hassle.

We are not engineers, but drive the route and anyone can see this is a great solution to a big problem.

Kim Lefler, Payson

Plan carefully

Recently, I stood at the summit of Mt. Baldy above Lindon/Pleasant Grove west of Mount Timpanogos — a beautiful view of Utah Lake without a bridge in sight. This view does rival Lake Tahoe from that vantage point. Furthermore, the man-made problems resulting from carp introduction is no basis for further poor planning.

We must grow and plan care-

fully — just like Tahoe in your article. Consider a raised scenic highway just north of Utah Lake. An aerial view shows few houses and the cost would be a fraction of a bridge.

John Pilmer, Orem

Beautiful bridges

Having always lived in places with some beautiful bridges (Oregon, Virginia, Florida), I can't grasp why people wouldn't want a bridge over Utah Lake. We'd use less gas going over instead of around; traffic on small-town streets would ease; home values would increase.

In a time of recession, I really wonder about people who are afraid of growth. Given the social demographics, Utah will never be California. Bring us some new restaurants, and businesses that employ people. Build an impressive bridge that draws attention to the lake. If other states build bridges without ruining lakes, why can't Utah?

Terri Rollo, Saratoga Springs

Look to La.

Elevated highways over large sections of swamps, marshes and open water in order to get from Point A to Point B are about as indispensable to southern Louisianans as airplanes are to people living in remote regions of Alaska.

Having moved from Utah Valley to southern Louisiana eight years ago, it's hard now to imagine resistance to an elevated highway over a stretch of open water as small and shallow as that represented by Utah Lake.

Thomas Tew, Houma, La.

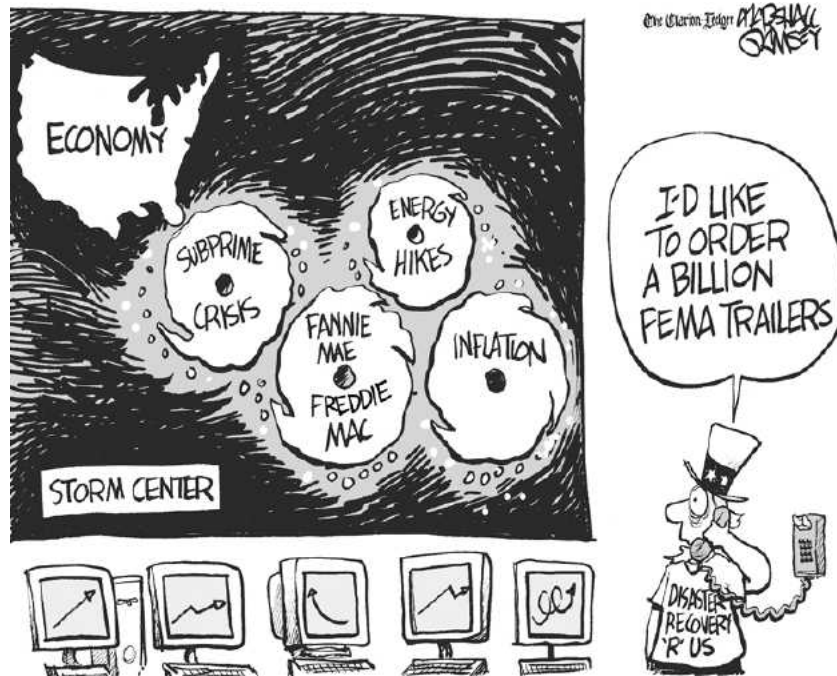
Golden Gate

Would the San Francisco Bay area be the icon it is without the Golden Gate Bridge?

Salt Lake City has its iconic landmarks and virtually all of them are man-made. The attraction that would come from a bridge would benefit Utah Valley's economy and make us proud of the improvements we can make to our county. It would make the drive time from Pelican Point to Orem less than the drive time to Lehi. I cannot imagine a more beautiful venue than a bridge across Utah Lake for a commute, bike ride or jog.

I am not aware of any bridge, built correctly, that is not a thing of pride for those that live near it.

Vance Winn, Orem



How to comment

E-mail letters to dhletters@heraldextra.com

Fax to 344-2985

Mail to P.O. Box 717, Provo, UT 84603.

Letters must include the author's full name, address and daytime phone number.

We prefer shorter letters, 100 to 200 words. Letters may be edited for length.

Writers are encouraged to include their occupation and other personal information.

Because of the volume of letters, we cannot acknowledge unpublished letters.

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