

Independence means challenge

by Joseph J. Wheeler

Freedom isn't cheap. Independence will be costly in time, effort and devotion to the task of turning out a quality paper.

When the student senate voted to allow (and the operative word here is "allow") *The Yellin' Rebel* to become independent, there was an outburst of applause from the gallery. Yell staffers led the ovation, some of the beating hands enfeebled by the battles that had led to the moment of victory.

Bonar Tucker, editor in chief, was quiet throughout much of the lengthy hearing that preceded the vote. Although the senate finally voted to approve *The Yellin' Rebel's* independence, it took more than an hour of discussion on the part of the senators before the crucial vote was taken.

Tucker sat, listening for the thousandth time about the Yell's budget and policies, most of the talk from people with nary a clue as to how a paper should operate, and found herself at last in a unique light. As editor during the tumultuous time that *The Yellin' Rebel* sought to break away from Student Government's oftentimes heavy-handed control, Tucker will always be recalled as the champion of that movement. She will occupy rarified air in *The Yellin'*

Rebel's history.

After the vote, she could be seen talking to a reporter from *The Las Vegas Sun*. Basking in the glow of her new-found celebrity, enjoying the moment, Tucker must have been realizing, after so many battles and so many words, that a person can make a difference.

But Bonnie Tucker would be the first to tell you is that she didn't do it alone. There were many voices involved in the final proposal that was approved by the senate.

Richard Crow, former editor of the paper, was there in the gallery when the vote came down. It was Crow who began the process which culminated with the paper becoming free of governmental control. An earlier proposal authored by Crow was shot down by the senate, and kicked off the long campaign to draft something suitable for adoption.

It wasn't that Crow's proposal was so far off the mark that it was summarily dismissed; it was that the issue of independence was too new for the senate's ears, too strange, and not yet politically dangerous to oppose. Crow may have lost his one-man battle, but he helped win the war.

Barbara Cloud, professor of journalism, was there when *The Yellin' Rebel* began a new chapter

in its history. Cloud has been a faculty member for 18 years, much of it spent working with *The Yellin' Rebel* in all its various forms. She pushed, she prodded, she advised, and she instigated the completion of the proposal that the senate passed. She attended committee meetings, offered suggestions, and was always there with an answer when a question

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had mired down the process.

Bud Benneman was there, at his usual post of senate pro tempore. His job is to be available if the senate president doesn't show up, so he can run the meeting. This time, his presence was a crucial element in a drama played out to the tune of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Benneman had worked closely with Tucker, Cloud and Gary Puckett to draft the proposal that won approval. He devoted tens of hours of his time to the indepen-

dence of the paper, all at his own expense. In a student senate often criticized as being anti-Yellin' Rebel, Benneman made his own feelings known and stuck by them without compromise. The victory was as much his as anyone's.

Most of the staff of *The Yellin' Rebel* was there. Some of them had been waging the fight for independence since Richard Crow's proposal met with a speedy end. The staff had started out as a neophyte bunch interested only in writing and the work that goes into making a paper, but after dozens of encounters with the forces of government, bureaucratic red tape, inefficient operations, and rules upon bylaws upon amendments upon restrictions, the *Yellin' Rebel* staff had become a seasoned, astute group well-acustomed to the inner workings of government bodies.

Listening to the applause, short-lived as all such moments are, one got the feeling that something had been accomplished, that a new way of doing things was imminent, that change was possible.

The Yellin' Rebel is now independent of Student Government. With that independence comes responsibility in greater measure than ever before. The paper must work at being the best it can be or the shining promise will be lost.

All those who fought for independence must now earn the freedom to stand alone without support and without restriction.

To earn its independence, and to make the issue one that got the senate's attention and made it politically dangerous to oppose, *The Yellin' Rebel* often printed editorials which weren't nice. Several pieces ran on the front page, much to the consternation of Student Government. When the only weapon available is the power of words, every comma counts. Justified? Yes. Newspapers aren't nice, nor should they pretend to be.

Likewise, freedom isn't cheap. It must be continually earned. Independence will be costly in time, effort and devotion to the task of turning out a quality paper. It should be, or the prize would not have been so dear.

Tucker and the others must take up the fight anew. *The Yellin' Rebel* and its supporters have a new battle before them. This time, the enemy isn't those members of Student Government who would control the press. The enemy is complacency and indulgence.

This time, the enemy is wielding the words.

Wheeler is editorial section editor of *The Yellin' Rebel*.

Letters to the Editor



Yellin' at the Yell

Dear Editor,

The Yellin' Rebel has written many articles on why Joe (Bunin) must go, and I am not going to try to defend Bunin, because that is not my job.

However, I believe that William Holt must be fired from all his positions at *The Yellin' Rebel* because of the libelous article that he wrote, (April 4 edition), entitled "I took Joyce seriously."

Holt must go. Holt is not the only one to blame for the article, because it is the responsibility of the editor in chief (and staff martyr) to make sure that no libelous articles are published in *The Yellin' Rebel*. *The Yellin' Rebel* has sunk to the level of the *National Enquirer* by allowing writers with a personal vendetta against UNLV Student Government to write articles attacking everyone involved with Student Government.

I don't need to prove my

point that Holt has maliciously attacked and defamed the reputation of Joyce Garcia because *The Yellin' Rebel* has done that work for me. I offer as my evidence an article written by Karen Splawn, entitled "Senators criticize column" (April 4). Holt is quoted as saying, "... I

have not seen any success in communicating with them. Therefore, I feel an attack was long overdue."

Holt's logic is that two wrongs must make a right. There is no way he can repair the damage he has done. The only way that *The Yellin' Rebel* can prove to me that they have any credibility left is to fire Holt and print a public apology to Joyce.

Student Government is lucky to have Joyce Garcia because besides being an excellent secretary, she is a very helpful friend to many students on this campus.

Philip L. DaQuino II

Why don't they just govern

by Eileen Brady

I thought the role of a government is to govern. Silly me, the role of UNLV's Student Government senators is to read *The Yellin' Rebel* twice a week and lambaste individual articles in a public forum every Thursday at 4 p.m. (or 4:30, whenever they decide to start).

Unless these people are all journalism majors who have worked regularly at a newspaper, I question the validity of their criticism.

Because they are supposedly interested in learning about government, they need to brush up on lesson number one about being in the public eye: Learn to take criticism. If they can't take comments from the student paper, they'll never make it in the real world. After a Publications Board meeting in which a Publications Board member blindly criticized that week's paper, spouting off inaccurate comments about the layout of the newspaper, I tried to explain some journalistic aspects of creating a newspaper.

I attempted to tell this member the reason everything couldn't fit on the front page and that the editor of the *Review-Journal* had suggested the position of the editorial that issue. (For some strange reason, I weighted his opinion higher than that of a freshman with an undeclared major.)

Although she tried to outwalk me, I followed her to another building and up the elevator. I was satisfied that I had told *The Yellin' Rebel's* side of the story.

That is, until she got off the elevator and called me a bitch.

What kind of wanna-be professional government official is that? She publicly ripped the paper but when I privately tried to clear it up one-on-one, she called me a name. Although I wanted to kill her, I kept my calm and refused to call her something back. I demanded an apology. When she refused to give one, I simply left. After all, I was representing a student organization and wanted to remain a professional.

Besides complaining about

"They need to brush up on lesson number one about being in the public eye: Learn to take criticism."

The Yellin' Rebel, the senators get to vote to approve or disapprove money from different accounts for different events. It is quite amusing to watch them unanimously pass \$8,600 for Springfest activities without any discussion, then turn around and discuss the merits of approving less money to send reporters to the NCAA tournaments—out of *The Yellin' Rebel's* own account, no less—with some senators actually voting against it.

In the last senate meeting, the senate spent most of its time openly impugning individual articles in *The Yell*. One female

senator said it's too bad *The Yellin' Rebel* "rapes" the students twice a week.

I do not appreciate a public official making light of the term "rape" in an open forum. Instead of spending time berating the paper for not making them look like saints, the senate should work to prevent real problems, such as rape on campus.

I cannot picture the U.S. Senate sitting around whining about the *Washington Post* making them look bad and claiming they have no way to defend themselves. I want to believe they have better things to do.

As soon as Student Government begins having intelligent conversations and debates about pertinent university problems, they will start to resemble a real governing body. Until then, they will look like a petty student council.

Brady is campus events editor of *The Yellin' Rebel*.

WRITE US!!!



The *Yellin' Rebel* wants your opinions.

Letters should be approximately 300 words, and have name, address, phone number, major and year in school. Send to:

The *Yellin' Rebel*
c/o Letters to the Editor
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Las Vegas, NV 89154

To accommodate as many letters as possible, *The Yellin' Rebel* reserves the right to edit all letters for space and clarity.

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