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# F R I C H

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## Budget Shortfall Announced; Critics Call for Accountants' Heads on Sticks

The St. Vrain Valley School District announced last week a shortfall initially estimated at twelve million dollars, in the operating budget for 2002-2003. Although the figures were originally unclear, it is now apparent that not only is the district \$10.3 million short, it also owes \$12 million to the state of Colorado.

Even before all the details were clear, the school board was taking action. A memorandum was issued outlining the first twelve steps that are being taken to correct the problem. Some of these included cutting wages for substitutes, lowering the temperatures in all buildings, and freezing all district accounts. On a grander scale, the school board is hoping that the state will bail them out. They've asked for more time to pay back their loan current and for another loan to help with the shortfall.

If the state does not grant these requests, the district will be left with the daunting task of trimming more than \$20 million from a budget of \$122 million by the end of the school year, and Niwot will definitely feel the effects. With seven first year teachers and twenty-seven new teachers who are not tenured, any Reduction In Forces (RIF) based on seniority will hit the staff here hard, and with countless programs that don't directly apply to the district's four goals of literacy, numeracy, technology and civility, cuts are virtually inevitable. Principal Don Haddad stated that, although his had staff balanced Niwot's budget down to the penny and even had a substantial surplus, because they are waiting for news from the state, they don't know now where the school stands financially. Although Haddad hopes that the

shortfall won't have serious effects on students until 2003-2004, he described the situation as "very serious" and said there is "no easy way out."

This reporter, however, is optimistic. There *must* be an easy way out. A really, *really* big bake sale, for instance, or a mandatory blood drive. Perhaps the school could confiscate all illegal drugs or brand name clothing here at NHS and sell them for a profit; that would more than cover the deficit. Surely, students could solicit donations from corporate sponsors, such as IBM or Columbian drug cartels, or even from their parents. If their houses are any indication, the families in Somerset have millions to burn. The Senior Women could help out with a trip to Canada, where the legal age to be a stripper is only sixteen, and the district could earn whatever that didn't cover by selling freshmen into slavery.

Sadly, the only actual solution would probably be to travel back in time and prevent the district from making ill-advised financial decisions, but this would not be easy. Even here at Niwot, no one could stop Student Council from squandering hundreds, perhaps thousands, of dollars on decorative metal recycling bins, and the school board would probably be a whole lot harder to persuade.

Stay tuned to FRICH for further updates. Not that you'll have much choice. After all, because we operate independent of the school, we might be the only form of student expression left in a couple of months.

$\pi$  John Nash  $\pi$  with  $\pi$  Jane Addams  $\pi$

### Give us all your Shineys!

Alright, wanna know a secret? This costs a lot of money.

We're not gonna ask you for donations (not until Senior Wills time, anyway), the biggest reason being that we don't think that you'd give us anything substantial. We do have a better idea, though.

It's come to our attention that FRICH is marketable. No, we're not gonna publish ads or anything, but we're gonna do something else: make *you* our ads!

We've set up an online store filled with t-shirts, sweatshirts, girls' shirts, and many other non-shirt items (Our proudest creation is the "<censored>" thong). We make a buck or two off of every item sold.

With the holiday season coming up, what better gift is there for all of your closest friends than FRICH gear? Show your love for everybody's favorite underground newspaper by embracing the fact that we've sold out!

Visit [www.cafeshops.com/frich](http://www.cafeshops.com/frich) to buy our crap!

## Graduation Nostalgia

Every high school senior must undergo certain transitions in his or her move toward graduation. Of course, there's the very satisfactory and exciting title of "senior," which allows all of the people bearing it to stretch the rules of the school just a bit. Seniors can be late and miss class, and some can even sign themselves out of school because they are eighteen.

The other day, I was subjected to one of these "senior" moments: ordering graduation announcements, caps, and gowns. This experience was also an enjoyable one, not due to pleasure, but simply because it was so amusing. First of all, some of the most hilarious items to order along with the announcements were a "Dazzler 2003 Toe Ring" and a "Miniature Diploma." With my play-sized diploma, I'm sure I could practice receiving my diploma and rehearse over and over again until I have it down pat, thus being filled with confidence the day I really have to shake the principal's hand and close my fingers around that coveted piece of paper.

While all of these things were somewhat disturbing, if not strangely amusing, the most pathetic scene that I witnessed was when I was in line to turn in my form for my "Diamond Encrusted 2003 Emblem" and "Bling, Bling Tassel." There was a group of senior girls standing in front of me, and each and every one of them ordered shirts inscribed with "Grad Gear" and "Senior Survivor." (By the way, since there are only four grades in high school, and every year one whole grade graduates, you are "surviving" with one fourth of the nation's high schoolers. Therefore, you are in no way unique, special, or otherwise cool.) At that moment, I was thinking, "I'm sure all of your friends at college will be so impressed you survived high school, even though that is something of a prerequisite in order to attend college." However, my thought was quickly remedied when the girls, on the verge of tears, squealed, "I'm gonna miss you so much next year when we're both at CU." Obviously, the irony of the situation was lost on them.

Now, to everyone who isn't a senior, there are a few very specific reasons why you should care. First, these are the seniors many people at school notice, if not admire, but everyone should realize that these might not be the actions to emulate. Second, when you're seniors, try not to act like this unless you want to amuse your fellow classmates. High school may be fun, and the pinnacle of this time is being a senior, but it is in no way the best time of your life. In the end, to all of the underclassmen, try to avoid being a person who thinks that once your senior year is over, you have experienced and accomplished the finest and most important thing of your entire life; that kind of thing is for those people who will miss each other so much at CU.

π Granola π

## Top Ten Things on My Mind After Reading the Last *South Paw*

10. Gee, I wonder how the "Beef of the Month" ended.
9. Who are they kidding? Those weren't places they went for dates. Those were places they went to <censored>.
8. They don't do research, part 1: The closest place to ice skate is in Westminster? What about the rink in *Longmont* that was due to open last Monday?
7. If a middle aged man were to sneak into a high school and hide in a locker to spy on teenage girls, wouldn't that somehow be illegal?
6. If they volunteered to be in IB or the Honor Society, then it's not really forced volunteerism now is it?
5. They don't do research, part 2: The month or so between issues wasn't enough time to call Skyline and ask them if the cameras had been there for two or three years?
4. Well, that piano prodigy, with his incredible skills, his varied interests, his numerous bands, and his jobs playing piano professionally sure makes that girl who liked to draw comic book characters look less impressive.
3. They don't do research, part 3: There was an article on the front page of the *South Paw* that stated that the \$12M budget shortfall "will not" affect the bond. If only they'd read the Times-Call article that was conveniently available *before* their deadline, they could have replaced "will not" with "might" and saved themselves the embarrassment of printing something that's blatantly wrong.
2. Wait a second... The fact that there were horrendous errors in their first issue made that editor feel the need to address me personally, and call me, and every other reader, self-centered and stuck up?
1. If I were the newspaper advisor, with results like this, most of the newspaper staff would be getting F's at semester, or at least D's. Just think, part of the school's budget goes toward printing a newspaper that contains articles that have horrendous comma errors, articles that have words or parts of words missing, articles that are badly researched, and articles on which they never bothered to run spellcheck. You know the worst part? I'll bet 10.3 million dollars that they all pass anyway.

<Editor's Note: Just a little friendly criticism...>

π John Nash π

## Are We Really Prepared?

I am sure that all of you remember the Violent, Swirling Windstorm talk and fire drill that we had a while ago, not to mention every year for the last several years. We get a long talk about what a Violent, Swirling Windstorm is, and then we all leave our stuff and go outside for the fire drill. It's nice to know that, in the case of a fire or a written test on what a Violent, Swirling Windstorm is, the school will be ready. However, I ask you this: What do you do if there is a fire and a Violent, Swirling Windstorm at the same time? The school is completely unprepared for such an emergency. Moreover, what if there is a fire, a Violent, Swirling Windstorm, a lock down, and a flood at the same time? What should we do? I mean, are we supposed to leave, cover our heads, block the door, or get to higher ground? Even though the probability of this happening is almost impossible, it is important that we are prepared should such an emergency arise. With that said, in the case of a fire, a Violent, Swirling Windstorm, a lock down, and a flood, here is what you should do:

The first and most important thing is to not panic. Panicking leads to talking, and talking leads to complete anarchy. Also, keep a heavy textbook with you at all times; you'll need it later. Next, you will need to block the door with some desks and chairs so that the intruder cannot get in. After you build this barrier, look on the wall for your classroom's evacuation route to get to higher ground. Once you know that, tear down the barrier, grab something blunt to protect the class, and proceed to either the Auditorium rafters or the wrestling

loft. On your route, stay away from outside windows, and check all doors for heat or a psychopath on the other side. If your path is blocked by one thing or another, go back to your classroom and look at the alternate route on the wall.

Once you are in the auditorium or loft, you should block the entrances with anything you can find to keep out any intruders. Now, the flood should put out the fire, so you can stop worrying about that. The intruder will try to find his way to higher ground, as well, but not have access because of your clever barriers. The only emergency that still poses a threat is the Violent, Swirling Windstorm. You should find heavy, mounted objects, such as the stands in the loft or support beams in the rafters, and wrap your arms around them in case the roof gets ripped off. Lastly, crouch and place the heavy textbook above your head. This textbook will provide life-saving support if the roof caves in on you, plus you can read it during the emergency so as to not fall behind on your studies.

Wait there until the all-clear call comes over the intercom signaling that the emergency is over.

Now you are ready if such a situation occurs. Thank you for taking the time out of your school day to prepare for this emergency. You may now return to your normal activities.

π Chester William Nimitz π

## Nothing At Which To Laugh

A rising problem has beseeched our society. It is like no other dilemma through which we have gone. It's futile to try and find somebody at whom to point our collective finger, for this is a problem unlike any other from which we have suffered. The infraction about which I am writing is the misuse of prepositions.

This common English error is one for which I refuse to stand any longer. The number one mistake about which I am concerned is the placement of prepositions at the end of sentences. It is simply not a location at which they belong! Besides being incorrect grammar, it also makes it extremely difficult with which for one to follow along and to determine about what the author is describing, a burden without which I could live.

There is hope, however. A coalition has assembled, of

which iron-fisted English teachers mainly are members. Calling itself the Society for Prepositional Usage, they have begun mentoring students in order to make ending sentences with prepositions a mistake past which they will have moved, but it sometimes seems to be a bad habit out of which they will never grow. This faction has united to make poor preposition usage downwardly go. My complaint is one behind which these teachers are standing, and our cries will be heard!

I suggest that any time after which you have read this article you decide to end a sentence with a preposition, this article will be that about which you will think. And if ever you hear your friends incorrectly using prepositions, tell them they'd ought which to not. Maybe, in a place of which I dream, you and I will be role models like whom which little children attempt to becomewardly be.

π Winston Churchill π

## Intelligent WF Seeks Mutually Rewarding Relationship

A key element in the advance of human civilization was the ability of societies to develop specialization, a system in which the individual produces goods or services according to his or her talents and then trades or sells them to get goods or services that he or she is unable to make. Specialization turned out to be a great idea. It was responsible for the philosophical, mathematical, scientific, and literary advances of every civilization from Mesopotamia's Fertile Crescent to Rome, Greece, and the modern Europe that emerged after the Renaissance. Freed of the demands of finding food, clothing, and shelter, the smarter members of society could attend to art, music, and technology.

Then came the American public school system, and all bets were off. Specialization was slaughtered by those intent on ensuring that every student was proficient in every area. We are required to take math, English, science, social studies, practical arts, and foreign languages. When spread too thin, none of us can devote our attentions to our true strengths. Because the district isn't likely to change course requirements any time soon, I suggest an alternative: mutually rewarding relationships (MRRs) in which an unrestricted, uninhibited exchange of vital information can take place.

This system would allow specialization of the highest degree. For example, let's say you are very good at Algebra, but your Spanish skills are lackluster. Simply find a classmate who is good at Spanish but bad at Algebra. You'll do your Algebra homework every night, and you'll do his too; he'll do his Spanish, plus yours. Not only will your grades improve, but this MRR will take up half the time that the old homework system did; once you've finished your Algebra, you can simply copy the answers over onto your partner's paper.

The MRR system could fail as soon as you encounter a test in your respective classes. For this reason, it is best to be in the same block class as your MRR partner and to be seated near him or her. Barring that, set up a sign language alphabet for exchanging information across distances. Be creative! Problem solving is one skill that everybody should know, no matter how specialized their community.

Some people have nothing academic with which to barter. However, the MRR system can work for those unfortunate students almost as well as it does for the others. Everyone has some sort of skill, so if you have no academic skills to trade, get a job and find a MRR partner who needs cash. If you're too young to get a job, consider offering services to your (sexually frustrated) MRR partner as an alternative. Of course, if you're ugly, you may be out of luck. However, the MRR system works remarkably well for the majority of students.

The MRR system may be confused with its dirty cousin "cheating" by teachers and overly scrupulous students. Until the MRR system is widely accepted, it may be necessary to hide it from those unenlightened people, but don't be deterred from using it. Eventually you'll be proven right. When you enter the real world, your advanced understanding of specialization will serve you well. After all, no one would accuse your parents of cheating because they hired an accountant to file their tax return. And no one in his right mind would expect George W. Bush to write his own speeches; he has a hard enough time just reading them.

That said, I'm looking for something in an MRR partner who's got an A in eighth block Spanish. Will write history papers in return.

π Margaret Mead π

### Disclaimer:

Alrighty, we're gonna take this time to clear a few things. First of all, the whole Senior-Women-stripping-in-Canada crack was pre-approved by a senior woman, which makes it okay. Besides, they'd never buy plane tickets for all you chicks, anyhow.

Oh, and before you *South Paw* folk get any stupid ideas, "Top Ten Things on My Mind After Reading the Last FRICH" is a bad idea. Most of these articles are satirical, thus being riddled with faulty logic and intentional errors. You wouldn't want to show your ignorance by not getting the joke, now would you?

But we digress. In the end, everybody should take everything a lot less seriously; you'll live longer. Oh yeah, buy stuff from [www.cafeshops.com/frich](http://www.cafeshops.com/frich), and as always:

**Please don't sue!**