

Editorial: Military draft looms

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the war on terrorism has been the subject of intense debate. The United States is fighting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, severely depleting the military's manpower. With these and other overseas deployments, U.S. forces are spread quite thin.

It doesn't appear as if the situation is getting any better either. Every day more and more U.S. reservists are called up to active duty. If this problem is not corrected soon, the nation's reserves could quickly be depleted, making it necessary to reinstate the draft for the first time since the Vietnam War. This could have a huge impact on Rider students, who could be forced into active military service as they are of age and will be eligible once they graduate.

According to government officials, several more events must occur before we can begin comparing the current situation to that of the Vietnam War era, during which the draft was reinstated for the first time since World War II.

"We ought to stop with these rather bizarre historical illusions," Secretary of State Colin Powell was quoted as saying on CommonDreams.org. "Let's deal with the facts on the ground and where we are now."

However, current happenings seem to indicate that America is indeed headed in that direction. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said that he plans to use his emergency powers to expand the U.S. military by 33,000 troops and will increase it by more if necessary. In addition, 190,000 National Guard and Army Reserve members are on active duty this year as opposed to 79,000 last year. Also, military enlistment rates are declining and 40,000 servicemen and women have had their tours of duty involuntarily extended as a result.

These events show a trend of increasing militarization that could potentially exhaust the military's reserves and make a draft necessary. The numbers show an increase of 141 percent in active-duty reserve members, a massive jump. In addition, Rumsfeld's words seem to indicate that the situation is not getting any better.

Presidential speeches from the Vietnam era and today also bear a striking resemblance to each other. President Lyndon B. Johnson has been quoted as saying "If we quit Vietnam, tomorrow we'll be fighting in Hawaii and next week we'll have to fight in San Francisco."

During a televised speech on Sept. 7, 2003, President George W. Bush said, "We are fighting that enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan today so that we do not meet him again on our own streets, in our own cities."

Johnson intensified U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and it appears that current events are headed in the same direction in Iraq. If this progress is not stopped, a military draft will be required to support Bush's increased military activities.

If a draft indeed becomes necessary, Rider students would not be affected at first. Previous draft laws stated that while any U.S. citizen could be drafted at age 18, college students would only be called up in cases of emergency.

However, since the war in Iraq shows no signs of slowing down, it is quite conceivable that such a level of emergency could be reached. Once the U.S. military reserves are worn down, the huge jumps in newly active members will be applied instead to those who are drafted. If there were a 141 percent increase each year, it would be only a matter of time before 18-year-old college students are needed.

In addition, Iraq is not the only current U.S. adversary. North Korea has publicly announced that it is in possession of nuclear weapons. This has made it a potential target for another U.S. military strike.

With the military already overstressed in Iraq, adding another front of war would be disastrous. The massive increases in militarization would skyrocket even further and a draft would almost certainly be required to sustain the attack.

Rider students should take an active role in reversing the current trends towards militarization in this country. History has shown that involvement in the Vietnam War was costly and today we seemed poised to dive right in again. If nothing is done, expect the draft to be reinstated with millions of American citizens being sent to fight a war in which they may not believe.

This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion editor.

Letters to the Editor: *The Rider News* welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the campus community. Letters must be typed and include the name, address, phone number and signature of the author for verification. Send to *The Rider News* via e-mail (ridernews@rider.edu), campus mail, or hand deliver to Ridge House. All letters must be received by midnight Monday preceding publication. *The Rider News* reserves the right to edit all letters for space and clarity.

Quote of the Week:

"Love is not something that you can put chains on and throw into a lake. That's called Houdini. Love is liking someone a lot."

— Jack Handey

A Student's View: Keep it in the Zoo

In last week's edition of *The Rider News*, a letter was written complaining about the lack of attendance to the Rider basketball games at the Sovereign Bank Arena (SBA). This is certainly a legitimate complaint. After all, when Rider reserves a nice arena like the SBA to play a game, one should expect the campus to respond by showing up with a good amount of students. When you look at the big picture, however, one would realize that it is an inconvenience for a student to attend a Rider game at the SBA.

As a student, I feel that the Alumni Gymnasium, as small and undistinguished as it may be, is the home of the Rider Broncs. The Bronc Zoo, as the gymnasium has come to be called, gives Rider basketball a distinct home court advantage. The atmosphere that students bring into the "Zoo" makes fans who would ordinarily not cheer and yell for a team get up, scream and make noise.

After attending the Rider basketball game last Friday night against St. Peter's College, I realized that the Bronc Zoo is a place where students can go, cheer on their team and have a great time. They can yell, cheer, stomp and generally encourage the team to win by making as much noise as they can. This is something that students cannot do at the SBA.

Not to put down the SBA, but you simply do not get the same vibe and atmosphere that you get at the Alumni Gymnasium. In addition to not having the same atmosphere, the SBA is simply an inconvenience to get to compared to the Alumni Gym. Students must board a shuttle bus, take the ride and then have to wait for the bus to take them back

to campus. Even though the SBA is a mere five to 10 minutes away, college students are lazy; that's a fact. On the other hand, the Alumni Gym is conveniently located on Rider's Lawrenceville campus, making it much more attractive to attend.

On another note, this writer feels that there should not be conference games at the SBA. Why? Simply because it takes away Rider's home court advantage. In my mind, nothing is more intimidating to a visiting team than coming into a crowded gym hearing the echoes of students screaming at them. In the much larger SBA, the visiting team certainly does not feel that effect. Certainly getting a game at the SBA would be great for non-conference, like the Tuesday Feb. 3 contest Rider had against the University of Massachusetts. But when the games really matter, home court advantage is a key element to a victory.

So, when all is considered, getting games at the SBA is a great thing for the University's athletic department and this article is certainly not opposing scheduling games at the arena. However, college students want things as convenient as possible and that is most likely the biggest reason for lack of attendance to the games at the SBA. The Bronc Zoo is home for Rider University. Despite its size and lack of prestige, it is still home for the Broncs.



Ari Bluestein

From the Counseling Center: What is love?

It's that time again and, no doubt, love relationships on campus will be recognized and celebrated on Valentine's Day. So what is it about love that is celebrated? What makes for a loving relationship?

Loving and being loved tends to preoccupy people throughout their lives, according to Carol S. Becker, author of *Living and Relating*. It is part of the human condition and, as such, is part of the ongoing developmental journey in exploring self-love and love of others.

Self-love involves understanding one's needs and caring for oneself. It is becoming all the individual is meant to be and utilizing one's full potential. Self-love includes developing an in-depth understanding of one's priorities, abilities and desires. Without self-love, little can be brought to a relationship.

Relationships that are close to our heart comprise the deepest form of intimacy that people experience. Mutually rewarding love can stand

the test of time when it is created between two people in an equal relationship. It is important to note that neither person controls the relationship; each person is responsible for maintenance and growth of the relationship.

The joys of loving can be discovered when choices are made to create an equal and intimate relationship. The essential components of intimacy include an ongoing exchange of commitment, honesty, trust, respect and freedom.

- Commitment is a gift that is freely given. It extends beyond the effort and cannot be manipulated or earned. It is a mutual promise

See 'Love' page 9



Mary Nicoletti