April 2017

Letter from the editor

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Recommended Citation
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“If you’re just passing through or you’re here to stay — hooray! Let’s hear it for the city of Ames!”

This lyric may seem familiar if you were one of the thousands of people lucky enough to watch the viral “Hooray for Ames” video promoting our town of residence before it was tragically taken down from Youtube due to a “copyright claim” by the university. (I didn’t know deep, scarring shame could be copyrighted?) Complete with campy lyrics, liberal green-screening and grimacing professors, the video is a ridiculous, loveable mess — perhaps not an entirely off-base message for the subject matter.

While the topics the video chose to highlight — great water quality, low crime rate, cultures living together “without any wars” — may not be at the forefront of college students’ minds, it does make a point. Sure, this town we call home for four years of our life isn’t a glitzy metropolis, but it still has a lot going for it. There may be a straight-up sad mall and seven Subway restaurants [why?], but those things are minor when compared to all of the good things Ames has to offer. For instance, Reiman Gardens is home to the largest concrete gnome in the world. The world! Now that is worthy of a song.

Sometimes it’s easy to complain about Ames, or really let the town have it by slapping an “L” in front of its name, but we’re here anyway, so we might as well enjoy it — or at least appreciate what the city has to offer. You might pick up on some of these things just by reading this issue of Ethos. People living here [both in town and attending Iowa State] are skilled motorheads, award-winning thespians, passionate environmental activists and forward-thinking entrepreneurs — and that’s just the start of the list. There’s also a thriving local music scene that keeps out-of-town bands coming back, and strong university traditions [some of which may be a bit overrated], and perhaps most importantly, an abundance of delicious food trucks.

Even though you may have to explain it has “about 40 miles north of Des Moines” to your out of state friends, I hope after reading this issue you’ll see that Ames has more going for it than just geographic proximity to our state’s capital. Whatever niche or group you find yourself in here, there’s a lot of cool people to meet and things to do — and these unique opportunities come with the comforting, albeit sometimes suffocating, small-town charm.

Whether or not it’s worth the three-minute musical tribute, Ames is still a great town in which to spend our college years — so soak it in, and make the most of it while you’re here.

So, even if it doesn’t quite make you fist pump and yell, “Hurray” — let’s hear it for the city of Ames. ☛