

Housing disgrace

The married student housing situation on this campus is a disgrace.

UNL provides only 57 apartments for married students, which puts Big Red in the sub-basement compared with other Big 8 schools. Iowa State University maintains 2,000 apartments for its married students.

And so it's incredible that this glaring housing inadequacy was overlooked when the Board of Regents approved \$300,450 for residence hall improvements at its January meeting.

The plan is aimed at making dormitories more palatable to students—single students, that is. The money is to be used for carpeting floor lounges; public lounges; recreation, study and programming, and other miscellaneous projects.

Placing such non-essential improvements ahead of married student housing indicates wrong priorities or at least an oversight by the regents.

Only about 2 per cent of married students are housed in the on-campus furnished apartments, which rent for \$80 to \$90 a month including utilities. The other married students are shortchanged—they cannot live in single-student residence halls; they usually have to pay higher rent and often live at inconvenient distances from campus.

The shortage coincides with a low-income housing crunch in Lincoln. Single students might be faulted for snapping up the inexpensive apartments—10.8 per cent of available single-student dormitory space is unassigned—but married students have no choice. About 200 names are on a 15-month waiting list for the 57 units. In any case, some low-income families are hard pressed to find low-income housing.

The University should realize its responsibility both to the community and to married students. Cosmetic dormitory improvements should take a back seat to augmenting the number of married student accommodations. Married students without children should be allowed to occupy empty dormitory rooms. The rent, assuming the couple eats in the cafeteria, would have to be worked out.

It's probably too late to suggest that the \$300,450 be recalled and used instead to renovate unused space in singles dormitories for marrieds or to purchase alternate housing for them. The money also could be set aside for building married student housing in the future. But more money most likely is available somewhere. The \$300,450 was pulled from a University-controlled reserve fund generated mostly through student fees and board and room payments. If there was any red tape involved, it wasn't made public.

Mary Voboril



Farmingtonian fest big Brown beer bust

Every year in Farmington, a somewhat indistinct nation in the Caucasus, a festival is celebrated. Called, variously, the festival of Beer, Parliament and Seven Nights of Wild Parties, the festival is held in winter, beginning on the first Tuesday after the solstice or the first Monday after the second Wednesday after Santa Claus comes, whichever is first.

The festival convenes in a giant auditorium. As many as 15,000 Farmingtonians have been known to get together. A large hammer at one end of the auditorium is raised by four men (or 10 or however many it takes), dropped again with a resounding thud, someone yells "Ready, go!" and the festival begins.

All the Farmingtonians start drinking and yelling at each other. Every person who comes to the festival brings enough beer, wine or gin for 70 to 80 persons. Often the Farmingtonian carries with him a volume of trivia, ammunition with which to fuel his rhetorical fires. The festival is always successful, because every one who wants to attend does, and every one who doesn't, doesn't. A lot of Farmingtonians do make it.

And well they might, for the Festival of Beer is the government of Farmington, and here is where great questions of policy are decided. There is no organization, no structure, no voting, just a lot of swearing, name calling and nonsense. The only way to really understand it is by talking to someone who has attended. I've never been there, but a friend of mine has.

"What can possibly come of a week of drinking and swearing?" I asked urgently.

"Well," he said, "they just get together and argue. After about a week the juice is all gone and they sober up and go home."

Keith Landgren

desperate remedies

"But—but who runs the government? Who keeps things moving? Who gets things done?" I asked incredulously.

"Nobody. They just go home and mind their own business. It all seemed pretty weird to me, too, but it seems to work."

From what he says, Farmington is a strange place, with its own way of doing things. We'll be hearing more about Farmington this semester, as soon as I hear from my correspondent again.

There probably will be some other stuff in this space, but before I get started I'd like to comment on football.

That whole business of having a head for a mascot had a lot of us at Casey's pretty confused. Some of the shuffleboard players were going to apply for the job, thinking they'd be as qualified as any other heads to run around at halftime.

But then it turned out that the "head" was just a papier-mache bust of George Brown and everyone decided to forget it. Who wants to be a papier-mache bust of George Brown?

GERALD R. AGNEW



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