

## Arts complex

A cultural wasteland. That's how some critics still describe Nebraska.

The University and Lincoln itself could help cripple such scoffing by jointly funding a proposed \$10 million performing arts complex, plans for which were outlined last week by a Yale University theater designer.

Both the University and the Lincoln community have responded well to cultural events, especially in recent years. For example, the nationally known Menhuin family, in Lincoln to help celebrate what might be called Willa Cather days, were featured in a concert that was sold out within two hours after the ticket office opened.

According to the theater designer, Kimball Recital Hall is the only local building suitable

for fine arts performances; at that, its suitability is limited to recital and chamber music performances. And Kimball's capacity is for a scant 800. Thus culture can come only in small doses. But construction of a new building, which could seat as many as 3,000, would accommodate drama, musical comedy, chamber and recital music and dance performances.

In the recent past, the University has shown commendable willingness to assume a leadership role in promoting cultural arts. The person behind most of such efforts is NU President D. B. Varner, who has justifiably earned the reputation as a friend of the arts.

The problem, as always, is money. Varner said that he and civic leaders had "some assurance that citizens of this community might put up as much as \$1 million" for the new structure. But this is not enough—Lincolnites must overcome their monetary diffidence. And while most of the

funding should come from University and Lincoln interests, additional money should be sought from such groups as the Nebraska Arts Council, the American Symphony Orchestra League and the National Endowment of the Arts. Additionally, a portion of student fees might be allocated to finance the structure, as could a slice of income generated from city sales taxes.

Granted, it would cost only \$6 million to convert the Coliseum into a comparable performing arts complex. But the Coliseum, vintage 1926, would not seat as many as a new building and is likely to incur major repair bills in years to come.

No matter what the source of income, plans for a performing arts complex must not be allowed to vegetate. In just months, \$10 million figures have a way of ballooning and sailing away, putting necessary construction financially out of reach.

Mary Voboril

## Students' support for alcohol bill asked

Editor's note: Con Zutavern, ASUN Senate Legislative Liaison chairperson, asked that the following letter be published as a plea to all students concerning LB783, which would allow alcohol on campus.

A legislative bill which provides for the sale and consumption of alcohol on college campuses, LB783, has been reported back to the floor of the Unicameral. It now stands on general file and will come up for consideration within the next two to three weeks.

The fate of the proposal largely depends upon how visible student support for the bill becomes. It is crucial that those students living on campus let their senators know how they stand on this issue.

In order to coordinate student input, the ASUN Legislative Liaison Committee will sponsor an information booth in the Nebraska Union beginning today. Free postage stamps will be made available to those students wishing to send letters to their senators.

Also, for those who do not know who their state senator is, a map of legislative districts in Nebraska, including those specifically for Omaha and Lincoln, will be provided. Maps of the legislative districts and lobbying information will be distributed to the Greek houses and each floor of each residence hall.

Students are encouraged to send letters, asking their senator's support for LB783. Many state senators have been contacted by people opposed to the bill.

If a student does not have the time nor the will to write a letter, he should consider talking with his senator personally.

The bill was voted successfully out of the Miscellaneous Subjects Committee, largely because almost 400 students took time out to show their concern by attending the hearing.

As Sen. Terry Carpenter said, when he addressed the student group who attended the hearing, "It will take 10 times as many students to show up down here at the Capitol building when the bill comes up for consideration." Only if wide student support is shown will the bill have a good chance of passing the floor.

Con Zutavern



... to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the United States—as I see them. . ."

## Alcohol, visitation issues enforce 'adulthood'

Editor's note: the following guest opinion is that of a group of off campus students. It grew out of a discussion Sunday at Commonplace-United Ministries in Higher Education. It concerns ASUN President Ann Henry's letter to State Sen. Ernie Chambers on LB783, which would allow consumption and sale of alcohol on college campus, and Chambers' response (Daily Nebraskan, Feb. 22).

The current controversy over students' rights to visitation and alcohol on campus seems similar to the situation of the teenage girl who tells her mother she is taking birth control pills.

The purpose is not to inform Mother of the activities implied by taking the pill; the purpose is to say, "Look, Ma, I'm an adult, and now you must acknowledge me as such."

Ma may know her girl is on the pill; parents and legislators may know students drink in residence hall rooms, but as long as they're not confronted with the fact, they can pretend it isn't happening.

Many students apparently would prefer to maintain this game of what-they-don't-know-won't-hurt-them. The issue must be brought out in the open, however, and the issue is not whether students have the right or privilege to 24-hour visitation or alcohol on campus.

The true issue at stake here is society's perception

of what constitutes adulthood and how education may be used to enforce that perception.

The realities of education in this country are not goals of academic excellence or broadening of experience or even preparation for a career.

Education is, in practice, a means by which society trains human beings to accept the rules and regulations which have come to define adulthood.

This is illustrated by a recent decision by the state parole board to enforce penal complex hair and sideburn length regulations for parolees as well as inmates. The rationale was not specifically hair; it was the idea of parolees learning to live with rules and regulations. (Lincoln Journal, Feb. 23).

## guest opinion

Another example is the type of reinforcement used in many mental institutions. If patients talk about cars and dating and getting a job "on the outside," they may receive merit points in the form

of grounds privileges.

If, however, they talk about drugs, spiritual enlightenment or existentialism, they may be moved to a high security floor and have their tranquilizer dosage increased.

The parallel is clear: mental patients learn to discuss Sartre in the bathroom; students learn to hide their bottles in the closet and sneak their honeys down the back stairs.

Now the issues of alcohol and visitation are coming into the open, and both sides are persistently ignoring the real question.

Instead of asking whether we should be educated as human beings or trained as automatons, students are insisting, "Look, Ma, we're adults!"

And instead of acknowledging society's narrow definition of adulthood, parents, administrators and legislators are replying, "Don't talk to us about booze or war; you're there to get an education."

Before both students and legislators buy the concept of education as "adult" computer programming, they should ask themselves whether adulthood depends upon others' perceptions of the individual or upon the individual's self-perception.

And they should consider an alternative model of education: a model based on freedom to take risks, to make choices and to live with the responsibility of the freedom of decision. That's what maturity is really about.