



Photo by Steve Boerner

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allowed alcohol on campus, but it didn't pass. The Unicameral and the Board of Regents are involved now in a court fight concerning the Legislature's right to make such laws (prohibiting alcoholic beverages on state property). As long as it's in court the Legislature won't do anything about the issue, Fowler said.

"It's going to have to come from the Board of Regents."

Fowler still keeps contacts with university students and knows many faculty members, he said, so he is in touch with university issues. He recently acted as an adviser to NUPIRG, a student public interest research group.

Fowler's work as a senator keeps him busy. Between his investigations, reports, and legislation, the senator claims, he has little spare time. And now he has to run a campaign. Fowler said that campaign is going "pretty well".

In a recent short speech to the Lancaster County Democratic Women's Club, Fowler gave a clue to his

campaign attitude: "If there's anything I've learned from four years ago it's not to be a complacent incumbent." He was speaking of his opponent in the last election, Sen. William Swanson, who campaigned modestly against Fowler.

In the same speech Fowler said he wants to raise an additional \$2,000 for his campaign, the money to be spent on brochures and newspaper and radio time. Fowler also said he wants to "build up to 130 canvasses" of the 27th district. Fowler said he has spent \$6,500 so far in his campaign.

The major goal of his campaign, of course, is his re-election. And the reason he gives is there are "issues I want to continue working on."

Last Saturday Fowler threw a party at what is claimed to be the oldest building in Lancaster County. It is a farm house south of Lincoln, near Crete. Music, food, beer, and soda were served free in an attempt to get people interested in working on the Fowler campaign.

Despite his age, Fowler said some of his support in the

"I'm not comfortable being fiery"

last election came from young people, but they weren't necessarily students. The 27th district is a cross section of all kinds of people with a sizeable amount of elderly and low income individuals, so he can't try to appeal to just one group, he said.

Steve Fowler is basing his re-election campaign on his accomplishments in the Legislature. The senator said he has been involved in investigating the programs and facilities of the state institutions. He has toured the state penitentiary and talked with penal complex employees and inmates. As a result, he has supported legislation to improve conditions there. Specifically, he has supported bills dealing with parole and the handling of grievances within the institution.

Fowler also introduced a resolution to examine the Lincoln Regional Center. The Regional Center is in his district, and several of its employees came and talked to him about conditions there, he said.

Fowler recently toured the Regional Center with legislators.

"Basically the facilities . . . are adequate, but some of the programs need to be revised," he said. He is working on a report to the Legislature.

As a senator, Fowler hasn't tried to represent just one group, just as one group didn't elect him to office. He doesn't work for only the young, but also for the elderly. Evidence of this is the Nebraska Public Transportation Act, which he sponsored. This bill provided a state subsidy for public transit and required a dime fare for senior citizens on regularly scheduled buses.

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One BIG family

After returning home from a Canadian vacation she was swamped with work at her desk in the juvenile court office. The phone jangled at least five times in an hour; two persons were waiting to see her.

She hugged the receiver between tilted head and hunched shoulder as she dialed. Aside:

"I'm calling a foster parent. They need all the support they can get."

Marilyn Beggs, 46, a probation officer for the Lincoln-Lancaster County Juvenile Court, is in the habit of giving support. In ten years time, she was a foster mother to more than 20 white, Indian and Mexican-American teenagers. Besides being a natural mother to five children.

"Somebody has to take these kids in. What are they going to do? Live at the YMCA the rest of their lives, hit the streets, get thrown in prison later?"

Her history of working with the young might have started when she counseled troubled youths through the local PTA, or for the Lincoln Action Program. It continued when she helped young people find jobs through the Neighborhood Youth Corp.

In 1959, through work on the Nebraska Commission for Children and Youth, Mrs. Beggs helped to push through legislation which established separate juvenile courts for Lancaster and Douglas Counties. In 1971 she became a probation officer for that court.

What did she tell the foster mother on the line this day? "I'll call the mother's lawyer this afternoon . . . Bless your heart."

Calls like that go on constantly in the little corner office on the fourth floor of the County-City building, where Mrs. Beggs works.

"It's hectic and it's interesting," she said of her job. "The biggest thing is to think that the decisions we are making affect kids lives."

The youngsters she places are up to 19 years of age. They may be infants. Cases involve custody problems after a divorce, child abuse crimes or behavioral problems in the child.

Mrs. Beggs and her husband Bob, a photo engraver for Capital Engraving Co., have dealt with many behavioral problems under their own roof.

They saw their foster children through their troubled teens, helped them with high school and planning for college.

They cooked Mexican food on Saturday nights and bacon and eggs at 5:30 a.m. They saw their experience as straightening out what society might call the "messed up" youth.

THERE WAS GEORGE, 16.

Embittered after his mother deserted him, he found himself in the Beggs' home. In a few months he had made it his home, as he never really had his own.

On Mother's Day the Beggs had company, and throughout the hectic day of cooking dinner and celebrating, Mrs. Beggs noticed that George kept "hanging around" as if he were trying to tell her something.

After everyone had gone to bed that night, George called her into his room, making small talk at first. Mrs. Beggs had had many talks with George before, trying to point out to him that his mother had needs too, that he shouldn't hate her.

This night, after a few moments, George rolled over in his bed, facing the wall. Pulling the sheet over his face, embarrassed, he said the unexpected:

"I love you, Mother."

"That was the best Mother's Day present ever,"

Marilyn Beggs recalled.

TIM WAS ALSO 16. He decided to drive his motorcycle up the steps of the Nebraska Capitol one night after drinking. The Beggs were called to pick him up at the police station.

The Beggs have no foster children with them now since both parents work full time. Two of their four sons, Steve 21, and Scott, 19, live at home.

Perhaps because of their home environment, all the Beggs children are interested in working with society's offenders.