



Photo by Mike Gibson

Smoke pours out of a Smith Hall window Saturday while firemen extinguish the blaze. As a result of the fire, four students were displaced to different rooms in the residence hall.

# Four displaced by Smith blaze

**By Betsie Ammons and Les Rushall**  
Four Smith Hall residents have been displaced because of a Saturday morning fire which gutted one room and caused smoke and water damage in the hall, UNL Housing Director Richard Armstrong said.

The fire broke out and was confined to room 1016 on the top floor of Smith, Armstrong said. Smoke damaged the ninth and tenth floors and water damaged rooms directly below 1016 and on every floor.

No one was in the room at the time of the blaze and no one was injured in the evacuation, he said.

Lori Hansen and Karen Graulich, who live in 1014 Smith, said they were sitting in their room talking when smoke started

to come into their room through cracks in the window.

They said they went into the hall where they met Cindy White, 1021 Smith, who said she smelled smoke.

The three got student assistant Denise Muff who opened the door to 1016 with her pass key. Smoke billowed out of the room and they pulled the fire alarm, they said.

Kim Lee and Judy Balwanz, who lived in 1016 could not be reached for comment.

Lee and Balwanz have been permanently reassigned to another room in Smith. The women living in room 1015 have been temporarily placed in other rooms as a safety measure, Armstrong said.

Soot still covers the walls of the tenth floor and the carpet will have to be replaced, he said. Custodians estimated that it will take two weeks to repair.

Armstrong said insurance probably would cover any losses the students may have suffered.

District Fire Chief Wendell Malcolm said firemen had "plenty of problems" fighting the blaze because of the amount of smoke. The fire was reported at 10 a.m. and brought under control about 11 a.m., he said.

The fire's cause and the amount of damage to Smith Hall will be determined after the state fire marshal inspects the building Armstrong said, but he said he has no idea when that will be.

## daily nebraskan

monday, february 21, 1977 vol. 100 no. 79 lincoln, nebraska

# Drinking age bill draws protest

**By Paula Dittrick**

An overflow crowd packed the hearing room and many waited in a statehouse hall Friday when about 100 people, many of them UNL students, came to protest a bill which would boost the legal drinking age in Nebraska from 19 to 21.

"It's difficult for me to understand how such a simple bill can get so much attention," said the bill's introducer, Grand Island Sen. Ralph Kelly.

He suggested adding a grandfather clause which would amend LB369 so those now 19 and 20 years old would not be affected should the bill pass.

Quoting statistics, Kelly cited a 460 per cent increase in the number of alcohol-related arrests of young people from 1972 to 1975. The Nebraska Legislature lowered the drinking age in 1972 in what Kelly termed "a disastrous experiment."

He called "18-year-olds the champion violators of the liquor laws in Nebraska," and said his bill would curb alcohol abuse by junior high and high school students.

### Entertainer favors bill

He said the 19-year-old associates with high school students, and underage drinkers would be less likely to obtain liquor from the 21-year-olds.

Hall County Atty. Sam Grimminger,

associated with the Central Nebraska Council of Alcoholism, and the senator's wife, Pat Kelly, testified in favor of the bill.

Opponents of the bill said a lowered drinking age would drive 19-year-olds into cars and country pastures to drink. It was suggested that teenagers would be encouraged to drive to other states where they could drink legally.

UNL student Dave Collins, 20, said, "We're being punished for the actions of high school students."

### 'Lack of trust, faith'

Claiming the bill reflects "a lack of trust and faith in people 19 and 20," Collins said this age group is capable of assuming adulthood responsibilities. He said he did not think this group had abused the drinking privilege.

Collins suggested a crack-down of law enforcement on minors and those supplying alcohol to them.

Another UNL student, William Watters, predicted an increase of the already "great amount of Nebraskans crossing the river to Iowa," if the bill passes.

Iowa has a legal drinking age of 18. "LB369 wouldn't discourage 19-year-olds and 20-year-olds from drinking, but from doing it elsewhere," Watters said.

Greg Johnson, co-chairman of the ASUN Government Liaison committee,

said he was representing himself in his testimony against the bill.

He warned that "this bill, with good intention, could actually cause a lot of evil." Johnson said the number of minors arrested for drinking would increase if LB369 passes.

### Would prevent jobs

Another UNL student, Cindy Gerner, said the bill would keep 19- and 20-year-olds from holding jobs in bars. She described her own job in a bar as one of the best she has had.

Robb Cole, owner of Horsefeathers and The Waterhole, testified "to the maturity of these (19- and 20-year-olds) drinking in my establishments."

He said two-thirds of his business caters to this age group. The bill is going at the problem "in the wrong way," Cole said.

He advised senators not to "punish these people for somebody else's problems." Cole said the easiest solution for bar owners would be to lower the drinking age to 18.

Bab Yarbrough, manager of Uncle Sam's, said the law would not deter underage drinkers. He said he has yet to see a fine or jail sentence enforced for a minor in possession of alcohol charge during his six months in Lincoln.

# Plan being developed to review NU administration

**By Theresa Forsman**

Interim NU President Ronald Roskens told the NU Board of Regents Saturday his office is developing a plan for review of the university's administrative structure.

Due to complaints that the administration is too large and because he believes in periodic assessment, Roskens said, a blueprint showing how the administration could be legitimately evaluated is being developed. The outline will be presented at a later board meeting for regents' approval, Roskens said.

In a presidential report to the board, Roskens reaffirmed his belief in the importance of coordination through the central administration and stressed that the "major endeavor of the university—education—is conducted on the campuses."

Roskens acknowledged disagreements among the three NU campuses and between campuses and the NU systems office. He pointed out that, in many cases, the procedures used to air complaints cause greater anxiety and irritation than the substance of a particular issue and asked his associates to follow appropriate procedures.

### Quality and scope

The president concluded that "the University of Nebraska is much stronger in quality and scope than many people both in and outside the University seem to believe."

The board also approved several additions to the 1977-78 state budget request.

-\$61,756 to pay for record-keeping for former students. "This item was overlooked in preparing the budget last fall, said William Erskine, NU executive vice president for administration.

-\$85,811 in salary settlements for 2017 extension employees of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. A U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals held that these

employees, all male, were underpaid. The suit was brought after NU raised some women extension employees' salaries in an effort to comply with federal anti-discrimination laws.

-\$81,476 still needed to repair damages to the UNL Plant Industry Bldg., damaged by fire in August, 1975. Total damage was \$706,476. The Legislature appropriated \$500,000 last year for the damages and the insurance company paid \$125,000.

-\$2,095,000 for construction of the UNL Plant Science Bldg. The Legislature authorized construction of the building in 1975 with costs to be spread over several years. The request is for an acceleration of funds, not an increase. The money is federal revenue sharing funds, not part of the state general fund.

### Raise ceiling

The regents also approved a request to the Legislature to raise the cash fund and revolving fund ceilings to allow the university to spend internally generated income such as tuition and patient fees.

The board received a report showing differences between its budget request and Governor J. James Exon's recommendations. The governor has proposed the regents receive approximately \$11 million less in state tax dollars than they asked for.

Exon's budget bill is "below what we need to maintain our present level" of operations, Roskens said.

In other action at the meeting the board:

-Accepted a Kellogg Foundation grant of \$436,244 to support an off-campus baccalaureate program in the College of Nursing. Students in the program would use outstate colleges and hospitals in earning their NU nursing degrees.

-Agreed to appoint a special regents subcommittee on agriculture to act as liaison between the university and

agriculture organizations in the state.

### Residency trends

-Received a report on residency trends of University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) graduates. The report showed that a larger number of UNMC graduates are choosing to specialize rather than enter family practice, needed in Nebraska's rural areas. Exon proposed holding back a \$1 million appropriation to UNMC unless it could reverse the trend of fewer UNMC graduates practicing in rural areas.

-Approved a \$266,000 AstroTurf bid to replace the seven-year-old synthetic surface on the Memorial Stadium football field.

-Heard an area of excellence report on the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER) program at UNO. HPER director Richard Flynn told the board the program was

growing and cited substandard facilities and equipment and limited faculty as major problems. A HPER building, estimated to cost \$7,389,000, is second on the regents capital construction priorities for next year. Exon recommends total project cost not to exceed \$4 million.

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