

# Marijuana bill wins approval in first round

A compromise bill which would decriminalize possession of an ounce or less of marijuana on the first offense received first-round approval in the Nebraska Legislature Friday.

The amendment to LB808 also would stiffen penalties for subsequent convictions.

The bill is a compromise between Sens. John DeCamp of Neligh and Patrick Venditte of Omaha. DeCamp wanted the decriminalization provision and Venditte wanted stiffer penalties for possession.

The bill provides for a maximum penalty of \$100 on a first offense of possession of an ounce or less of marijuana and the offender would be issued a citation, similar to those issued for minor traffic violations. First-time offenders would also be required to attend a seven-day drug abuse program.

A second offense would carry a \$200 fine and a possible five days in jail.

Subsequent offenders would pay a \$300 fine and face a mandatory jail sentence of up to seven days.

The bill was advanced on a 26-4 vote.

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A bull rider at the 11th Annual University of Nebraska Intercollegiate Rodeo, held last Friday through Sunday, appears to be having second thoughts about his participation. See page 6 for more photographs and related story.

Photo by Bob Pearson



# People call the shots in pinball pastor's hectic life, job

By Joe Starita

It's 5:30 p.m. and the Satin Doll pinball machine in the Nebraska Union basement is lit up like an electrical storm trapped in a wind tunnel.

Funneling a steel ball up the rack, a bearded man in black boots, black jeans and black shirt gets set to strike another lode of neon paydirt.

Watch him now. He's talking to the machine, body-languaging the ball into

position.

"Come on now. Come on!" Thunk. A ball careens across a bank of lights. Points gang-blast off the board ticking like a cash register gone berserk.

"That's it. That's a baby. Keep it rolling now." Tat-tat-tat-tat. The steel ball is caught in a savage cross-fire between bumpers. Lights pop. Points pump out in ticker-tape fashion.

"Come on. Come on. Don't quit now!"

A deft flick of a flipper pulls a Lazarus ball out of the hole and another spray of light pinwheels across the glass.

"I am a self-admitted pinball addict," confesses Bruce Berggren, 42, later in his office at 535 N. 16th St.

If admitting to a pinball jones doesn't make Berggren particularly unique, the office he retired to after a Satin Doll session does.

It's located at the Lutheran Student Center and the sign on the door reads "pastor," a position Berggren, a native Lincolnite who is married and the father of four children, has held since August 1975.

Lest there be any confusion that St. Peter secretly said, "And upon this pinball machine I will build my church," Berggren is quick to make a point.

"I really do enjoy playing, but I only play when I have the time," he said. "I play out of fun and relaxation like others do with golf or racquetball."

Berggren said he plays the Satin Doll game 95 percent of the time and limits himself to one dollar per Union trip.

On one trip he took Satin Doll for 42 games on a single quarter, he said.

"But it can be an expensive habit. That's why I take only a dollar. When I can get into it, pinball can be very relaxing. As a workaholic, it's a great way to release tension."

Berggren's office looks like a place where Excedrin headache No. 9 might might frequently regularly.

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Photo by Bob Pearson

Rev. Bruce Berggren of the Lutheran Student Center is a self-admitted pinball addict.

# Nader is scheduled speaker

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader will speak Thursday, April 27, at 7:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Centennial Room, the UPC Talks and Topics Committee announced Friday.

Bonnie Lutz, co-chairperson for the event, said Nader will conclude this semester's speakers' series. His topic will be "University Students as Consumers."

Lutz said Nader is scheduled to arrive late Thursday afternoon when he will address a group of about 60 consumer affairs students.

She said Nader will deliver the main

address following a scheduled 7 p.m. press conference. A three-member panel of community professionals will question Nader on his address before the event is thrown open to a general question-and-answer session, Lutz added.

Nader will receive \$3,500 for his appearance, she said, which includes transportation, costs and lodging.

"Because of the topic and personality involved, we are expecting the largest crowd of the year," Lutz said.

Admission is free to students and \$1 to the public, she said.

# Hearing investigates charges made by two campus groups

ASUN has a preliminary hearing Friday to examine the constitutions of the UNL Chapter of Young Americans for Freedom and Nebraska University Public Interest Research Group to determine whether charges of constitution violation made against them warranted investigation.

"It's hard to use the word 'charges'—both sides have made accusations, (against the other) but nothing formal has been done," said Dan Lamprecht, a junior agriculture major from Bloomfield and a member of the Special Topics committee, which is conducting the investigation.

Both YAF and NUPIRG explained their organizational structure, distribution of their finances, purpose and understanding of the controversy in separate sessions. The committee then went into closed session to discuss the issue.

ASUN president Ken Marienau, when questioned after the meeting, said the committee closed the hearing because Don Macke, NUPIRG student director, had several allegations to make against YAF. Marienau would not elaborate on the charges.

"All we've got now is lots and lots of questions," said Lamprecht after the meeting. "It'll take a few more sessions to figure out what we should do."

YAF, whose basic purpose is "the furtherance of conservatism," is part of a national organization and all of its dues and funding are handled through national headquarters, according to UNL chapter president Jeff Chizek.

Chizek said NUPIRG is a politically slanted organization and should not receive free office space in the Nebraska Union since "it doesn't represent all the students

on campus."

NUPIRG serves as an educational lab for people to learn research, governmental and educational skills as well as provide a mechanism for social change, according to Macke. Although it does lobby in the Legislature, each issue is decided on its own merits, not in support of any political group, Macke said.

NUPIRG is independent of any national organization and has its finances centered in the student activities bank. Macke said NUPIRG was the victim of a statewide slander attack by YAF during a letter writing campaign.

The special topics committee will meet again today at 12:30 to discuss the investigation.

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