

daily nebraskan

Senators, Roskens discuss need for foundation probe

By Rocky Strunk

NU President Ronald Roskens met Tuesday at an informal breakfast with Sen. Harold Sieck of Pleasant Dale and Richard Maresh of Milligan to further clarify charges against the NU Foundation by Regent Robert Prokop.

"Roskens was able to answer all of our questions well and it clarified more of my feelings that they (NU Foundation) are aboveboard," Sieck said.

"The foundation is providing a tremendous service to the university and I now have a better idea of what is happening to funds," he said.

Sieck told the *Daily Nebraskan* Sunday that he had changed his mind about co-sponsoring a resolution calling for an investigation of NU Foundation activities and consulting positions held by professors. He said his decision came after information was provided him by the NU Foundation which "made him feel a lot better" about foundation operations and answered many questions he had.

On the other hand, Adams Sen. George Burrows said he is still interested in an investigation.

Burrows, along with Maresh, Sieck, and four other state senators, received a seven-page letter from Prokop charging of a cover-up of information by the regents and university officials. Those charges dealt with the NU Foundation, the veterinary diagnostic clinic in Lincoln, Eppley Institute in Omaha and faculty consultancies.

"I don't think any report I could look at right now could completely clear up my mind on this matter," Burrows said. He added that "it made him real suspicious" that the report given to Sieck and Maresh Friday was not made available to himself or the other senators.

"I was disappointed with the attitude Koefoot (NU Regent chairman) took toward the charges (Prokop's)," Burrows

said. "He totally placed it as an attempt to destroy the university."

According to Burrows, Prokop is serving the best interests of the state by "creating a healthy situation where a regent is probing into questionable areas."

"University actions should be open to the public since taxpayers are supporting it and university business should be subject to careful scrutiny," he said.

According to Maresh, he's still listening and looking into the charges.

"I'm not pushing for a resolution at the

moment," Maresh said. He added that the additional information obtained Tuesday was "valuable to his concerns."

"Roskens presented additional facts and figures on the foundation and he was real cooperative," Maresh said. "I think he'd like to see the whole matter resolved."

Roskens said the breakfast Tuesday wasn't limited to the topic of Prokop's charges and said it was a useful and helpful discussion.

Roskens said the facts and figures were minor and not related to any one item.

"It was a private conversation and I'd like to leave it at that," Roskens said.

On the subject of Saturday's regents meeting, Burrows said that he thinks some of Prokop's charges against UNL banking Professor Wayne Dobson are correct.

"How much and to what degree his charges are correct, I don't know," Burrows said.

"I don't like to see the board become as polarized as it has because it creates an undesirable situation," he added.



Photo by Jerry McBride

National Motocross invades rural Nebraska as 7,800 cycle fans watch the bikers speed their way to the finish line. See related stories and photos on page 8-9.

Three arrested for turkey roast

Three UNL students were arrested Tuesday in connection with Friday's early morning bonfire at 16 and R Streets in which six live turkeys were thrown into the fire.

According to Paul Jacobsen, UNL police investigator, all three students are males in their early twenties, live off campus, and are believed to belong to UNL fraternities.

The first student, a sophomore, was arrested Monday night, the second student was arrested Tuesday morning, and the third was arrested last Tuesday afternoon, police said.

The two have been charged with cruelty to animals, a misdemeanor offense punishable by six months in jail and/or a \$500 fine, he said. The students were issued citations and will be referred to the Lancaster County Attorney's office for prosecution, he said.

Jacobsen said the phone has been "ringing off the wall" with calls from students complaining about the incident and identifying the three involved.

The Lincoln Humane Society and the Lincoln Police Department have also received calls, and are working with the UNL Police on the case, which is expected to be wrapped up Tuesday night, Jacobsen said.

According to information received from the callers, six live turkeys were thrown into the fire, and two died immediately. The other four turkeys got away, but were thrown back in, where two more died. The remaining two escaped again, but one was so badly burned it had to be destroyed. The other is being cared for by the Capital Humane Society.

Jacobsen said the police still don't know where the turkeys came from, or whether or not they were stolen. No stolen turkeys have been reported, he said.

Drinking debate continues; vote today

By Cindy Coglianese

Statistics flew through a crowd of about 100 persons Tuesday afternoon as the question of raising the drinking age in Nebraska from 19 to 21 faced another round of debate.

The Nebraska Highway Safety Program sponsored the seminar with Sen. Ralph Kelly of Grand Island and UNL sophomore Mark Hirschfeld debating the merits of LB221.

Kelly, sponsor of the bill that will face a first-round vote today, told the crowd that the only crime that can be committed by Nebraskans in raising the drinking age is to do nothing.

"In 1971, when the legal drinking age was 20, 36 million gallons of alcohol were consumed in Nebraska," Kelly said. "In 1978, that figure jumped to 44 million gallons—an increase of 8 million gallons in 6 years." Kelly said a reason for the increase could be because the drinking age was lowered to 19 in this time.

Drinking epidemic

"There are about 26,000 19-year-olds in Nebraska that are awful busy drinking, or do they have the help of 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12 and 11 years?" Kelly asked the crowd.

Kelly said when the drinking age in Nebraska was lowered to 19, a drinking epidemic took place. He cited figures of driving while intoxicated charges in 1971 and then a year later. Kelly said in 1971

there were 88 DWI charges and there were 207 DWI charges the following year after the drinking age was lowered.

In addition to statistics, Kelly provided results of studies by two medical doctors researching teenage alcoholism.

Kelly said a doctor from the Michigan Medical Association has stated that the body make-up of late teenagers results in a more rapid metabolism of alcohol. In addition to these findings, Kelly said the late teen years are emotionally and psychologically unstable, according to the doctor's study.

Part of life

Kelly cited another study by a Veteran's Hospital alcohol rehabilitator who has found that drinking affects the thalamus gland of the brain to a great degree, especially in teenagers.

Mark Hirschfeld, a Government Liaison Committee member said that raising the drinking age is not the solution to the problem of alcohol abuse. He said a uniform education system needs to be organized statewide to educate "all age groups" on alcohol use and abuse.

"We have to face reality that alcohol is a part of our lives. If we push the idea for raising the drinking age, we are merely looking for an excuse for not addressing the real problem and the real problem is alcohol abuse," Hirschfeld said.

Hirschfeld said alcohol education can work and most effectively if the drinking age remains at 19. He said raising the drinking age could only hurt attempts to

educate.

Hirschfeld also said that raising the drinking age would not decrease the number of teenagers who now drink. Citing a recent survey of high school students in Nebraska, Hirschfeld said 91 percent of the teenagers responded that they would still be able to obtain alcohol.

Kelly responded that raising the drinking age will cut down on the amount of 16- and 17-year-olds consuming alcohol.

"If it's harder to get, young people won't go to the trouble," Kelly said.

Kelly used the explosion in downtown Hastings as an analogy to the drinking problem of teens and LB221. He said the gas leak that caused the explosion in Hastings had to be turned off completely before the fire could be put out and the damage could be assessed.

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