

# Museum offers step back in time

By Mary Louise Knapp

Open the door of the Nebraska State Museum in Morrill Hall and step back in time—back thousands of years to the prehistoric era.

One of the first things you'll see is the world's largest elephant, in Elephant Hall, of course. Huge fossils and skeletons of the mammoth creatures that once walked the earth can be found in the Age of Dinosaur Display.

Stargazers can enjoy astronomic sights in the Ralph Mueller Planetarium. The Behlen Hall of Time and Space is devoted to the history of astronomy. An Apollo 9 Space Capsule, veteran of an unmanned sub-orbital flight, can be seen in front of the museum.

Established in 1871 at the first meeting of the NU Board of Regents, the museum has expanded from a small room in University Hall to a vast operation requiring two buildings—Morrill Hall, for exhibitions, and Nebraska Hall, for research.

James Gunnerson, who has directed the museum for the past five years, is responsible for the overall operation of the museum. He said his duties include "public service, research and general administrative duties."

Current events at the museum include the expansion of the Health Sciences division, a project that is being directed by the Medical Auxiliary.

"In about three or four weeks, we will open an 'encounter center,'" said Gunnerson, "where visitors will be able to handle the exhibits and children can experience a 'hands-on' policy."

At the Hall of Paleontology, which officially opened two months ago, a display depicting invertebrates and paleobotany is under construction.

The most spectacular research project, according to Gunnerson, is the excavations in northern Nebraska of many large animals killed by falling volcanic ash. So

far, about 80 skeletons have been found, most in "excellent condition."



Photo by M. Billingsley

The largest elephant skeleton in the world captures the attention of these grade school kids.

# Kelly makes plans for LB221 campaign

By Gordon Johnson

Even while the Legislature is in recess, State Sen. Ralph Kelly of Grand Island is preparing a campaign to get LB221 passed by the 1980 legislature.

LB221, a bill to raise the legal drinking age in Nebraska from 19 to 21, failed to get approval from the 1979 legislature.

Kelly said he has been keeping up on reports and studies done in the past six months that deal with teenage drinking.

A Michigan report cited by Kelly shows a decrease of alcohol related traffic accidents and deaths since Michigan changed its drinking age to 21.

In Nebraska from 1971 through 1978, Kelly said, alcohol related accidents involving teenagers increased 233 percent. In Kansas, where 18-, 19- and 20-year-olds are allowed to drink 3.2 beer and those over 21 all alcohol, the increase from 1971 through 1978 was 147 percent.

In Missouri, where the age is 21, the number declined by 10 percent over an eight-year span.

"I can't think of a better statistical representation of how wrong Nebraska is," Kelly said.

A legislative hearing on a resolution sponsored by Kelly has been tentatively scheduled for Oct. 1. The purpose of the interim study, is to find out what law enforcement officials, school officials, and the liquor industry are doing to control abuse of drinking laws, Kelly said.

However, the study will likely have very little impact on the legislature or the public, he said.

"Because the study is meeting only one time, it will be buried and never come to light," Kelly said.

The study is being conducted by the Miscellaneous Subjects Committee. David Newell of Omaha is chairman of the committee.

According to Kelly, Newell said he doesn't think more than one day is needed for the study.

Kelly said one of the main reasons LB221 did not pass in 1979 was because the liquor lobby was so active in the Legislature.

Kelly said that in 1978, \$35 million worth of alcohol was sold to 19 and 20 year olds in Nebraska. Kelly claimed the liquor industry doesn't want to lose that much money, he said.

The liquor lobby, through their representatives, can filibuster or try to postpone the bill, but Kelly said he is confident that it will pass in 1980.

"The liquor lobby shows they cannot defeat the bill," Kelly said.

Kelly said he has been trying to gain more support for LB221, but would not disclose how he is going about it.

A compromise with the liquor industry is not out of the question, Kelly said. He has tried many times to come to a compromise, he said, but the two sides have not been able to agree.

One such compromise would allow 18, 19 and 20 year-olds to drink 3.2 beer as long as the persons selling the beer could be held legally responsible for alcohol-related accidents or other infractions of the law.

Since introduction of LB221, Kelly said he has been a frequent victim of vandalism and harassment. He has received many late night phone calls and has found broken bottles on his lawn.

Members of Kelly's family also have been harassed, he said.

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Larsen, who also was involved in the summer meetings, called them a "positive exchange" and said APU has some very constructive ideas.

"We do have very serious problems," he said. "We don't have very many black faculty."

Larsen said there is no sizeable black population in Lincoln, so it is hard to keep black faculty at UNL when it may be easier for them and their spouses to find good jobs in bigger cities.

"Any time we have a position open we advertise for minority members," he said, adding that it is common for no minority members to apply.

Larsen said UNL's affirmative action policy calls for the hiring of a minority member if two equally qualified applicants, one black and the other white, apply for the job.

Larsen said demands on the time of black faculty members are great. They are always being asked to be advisers for black groups on campus, he said.

LARSEN SAID UNL definitely needs more black students and faculty members, although not specifically to teach courses about blacks.

"I believe all faculty members are objective in dealing with scholarly matters," Larsen said.

It's my impression that we do a good job of representing minority authors in literature."

APU currently is resubmitting its constitution for approval by ASUN, Charles said.