

Unicam debates marijuana usage Coe requests coin use change

By Val Swinton
and Julie Bird

By Michelle Carr

A man suffering from glaucoma told the Nebraska Legislature's Public Health Committee that his right eye might have been shrunk to the size of a raisin had it not been for marijuana.

Roger Wright, a 32-year-old Omahan, said he had undergone surgery to release the pressure behind his eye six times in as many weeks and twice more in the next two months.

At one point during treatment, Wright said his doctor told him he had three choices: additional surgery, another treatment which would shrink his right eye which was afflicted with glaucoma, or smoke marijuana.

Wright said he opted for marijuana, and has not undergone surgery since.

Wright was one of three persons who testified before the committee Tuesday advocating the legalization of marijuana for medicinal use.

Therapeutic Research Act

A bill known as the Therapeutic Research Act, the subject of Tuesday's hearing, would allow persons suffering glaucoma or undergoing chemotherapy as part of the treatment for cancer, to use marijuana if more conventional treatments had failed.

Two other persons, who, like Wright, had purchased marijuana illegally, also advocated its legalization.

Norris Emry, whose wife Alva died of cancer last August, said he purchased marijuana off the street last summer in an attempt to help his wife recover from chemotherapy treatments. Emry, a 53-year-old farmer from Allen, said when he opened the packet on the kitchen table, two worms crawled out.

Robert Randall, of Washington D.C., who was smoking marijuana with a doctor's prescription, said only by using marijuana which was grown under government supervision would problems such as controlling what went into the drug be solved.

Recreational use

Randall went to court to be allowed to smoke marijuana after he accidentally discovered its effect on his glaucoma while smoking it for recreational use.

But it was the government control which worried opponents of the bill. Rex Higley, director of the bureau of examining boards in the department of health, warned the state may have to form a "mini FDA" if the Legislature legalized a drug not proven safe by either the Food and Drug Administration or the Drug Enforcement Administration.

"It might be opening a Pandora's Box, if you individually determine at the state level which drugs can be on the pharmaceutical commercial market specifically for Nebraska," Higley told committee members.

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The donor of almost \$1 million in gold Kruggerands to the UNL College of Engineering and Technology has requested that two changes be made in the allocation of funds from the coins' sale.

In a letter to the Daily Nebraskan, James Coe of Phoenix said that equal money should be allotted to undergraduate instruction and research, in addition to money allotted to graduate instruction and equipment.

As a result of the undergraduate allocation, Coe said, the money from the coins' sale will be spent in five years, rather than 10. Originally, Coe stipulated that the university sell 130 of the 1,300 coins every year for 10 years. Now, 260 coins will be sold every year.

According to Coe, the two funds are to be kept separate. If any item is used regularly for undergraduate instruction and for research, the item should be purchased from funds allocated for undergraduate instruction, he said.

"I do not believe that these funds will come anywhere near meeting present and future needs, and the dean probably will have some difficult decisions to make, but after all, that's what a dean is for as I see it," Coe said.

According to Ed Hirsch, vice president of the NU Foundation, when a donor requests a change in a donation, the change usually is allowed.

A new agreement will be drawn up to accommodate Coe's request, Hirsch said. The dean of the college receiving funds usually is notified before a change in the agreement occurs. Hirsch said Dean Lyle Young was contacted about the change.

Young said he will go along with the change.

"I think we have such a great need in this area, we can utilize the funds either way," he said.

Coe also said equipment purchase with the funds is not limited to instruction and research, but may also be used for studies and testing on matters of interest to Nebraskans.

Hirsch said that most research done by the Engineering Dept. does benefit the state.



Photo by Jon Natvig

At 4 a.m. this streetlight substitutes for the sun, casting shadows of telephone poles and leafless trees on empty, snow-tracked streets and darkened houses.

Feb. 29 earliest date for Student Court decision

By Mary Jo Pitzl

A decision in the Persson vs. Campus Crusade case will not be delivered until Feb. 29 at the earliest, the ASUN Student Court said Tuesday night.

Their announcement followed three and a half hours of testimony in a case which alleges violations of the university's religion and campus mail policies.

The case centers on a charge brought by two UNL students against the four student organizations that sponsored Christian lecturer Josh McDowell's speech in the Nebraska Union in January.

Sophomores Scott Persson and Randall Lambrecht filed the suit against Campus Crusade for Christ, the Baptist Student Union, the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship

and Navigators-UNL. The four organizations are Christian based.

Most of the questioning Tuesday night centered on a definition of "testimony." The NU Board of Regents' policy on religion, adopted in 1973, states "university facilities will not be available for any event or activity if one of its essential elements is religious worship or testimony in any of its various forms."

Student Court definition

In its closing argument, Tim Binder, co-counsel for the defense, said that only the Student Court can define what testimony is.

"The court has a duty now to define what testimony is," Binder said.

John McDermott, co-counsel for the plaintiffs, said in his closing presentation that testimony given by witnesses has proven that McDowell did indeed give religious testimony during his Jan. 30 speech in the Nebraska Union.

The other major point examined Tuesday night was the plaintiffs' allegation that the four organizations illegally used the university's campus mail policy. About 2,000 letters prepared by the four groups were sent via campus mail to faculty members, administrators and leaders of campus student organizations inviting them to attend McDowell's speech.

McDermott said that the defendants showed no effort to assure they were complying with university regulations when they were preparing the letters.

Dismiss charges

Binder contended that the plaintiffs failed to prove that a mail policy even exists, and therefore, the charge should be dismissed.

Four of the eight witnesses called were questioned at length on their definition of "testimony."

Kirk Conger, a former member of Campus Crusade for Christ, recounted his meeting prior to McDowell's campus speech with two Union officials and McDowell.

Conger, who coordinated McDowell's Lincoln visit, said that Nebraska Union Director Daryl Swanson met with McDowell to "make Josh McDowell aware of the (religion) policy."

He said Swanson did not ask McDowell or any of his sponsors for a definition of testimony. According to Conger, Swanson also said that he had received some pressure from university officials to make sure McDowell knew the limits of the university's religion policy.

Vi Schroeder, director of publication and mail services, testified that the four organizations did send letters through the campus mail system.

However, Schroeder said, "We really don't have a definite policy on student organization mailings." She added that the policy is currently under review.

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