

Coalition seeks to amend new drinking age law

By Val Swinton

Even before the new Nebraska drinking age becomes law, a petition drive has started to raise the legal age.

The Coalition for 21 announced Tuesday it will seek to put a constitutional amendment on the November ballot to raise the age to 21. A bill signed recently by Gov. Charles Thones raises the age from 19 to 20.

James Hamilton, chairman of the organization, and the Rev. Rowland Benedict, state coordinator, said Tuesday they would try to get the necessary 49,242 signatures by July 3, the deadline to put an amendment on the ballot.

Benedict said a loose coalition began to form when it became apparent that the Nebraska Legislature would raise the drink-

ing age to 20 instead of 21. Benedict said the coalition did not feel 20 was old enough.

"It didn't put enough years between the teen years and the drinking young adult," Benedict said. "The 21-year-old is much more mature."

Kelly neutral

Benedict also said the Legislature "let us down and let the state down." A press release by the coalition cites a 1976 poll indicating that 64 percent of those surveyed favored 21 as the legal drinking age.

Grand Island Sen. Ralph Kelly, who originally supported 21 as the legal age, but went along with a compromise raising the age to 20, refused to condemn or support the petition drive.

"I commend them for doing what they think they should do," he said. "But I support the Legislature."

"That should make me neutral," he said.

The coalition is mainly composed of religious organizations, including the Nebraska Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Nebraska Council on Alcohol Education.

According to Hamilton, the coalition will initially depend on church organizations and pastors to circulate the petitions.

Volunteers

"We feel like this is a legitimate avenue of approach, so we're going to utilize that avenue," he said.

He added that the coalition received offers from people in practically every county in the state to circulate the petitions.

Those volunteers would be important because of the time crunch, Benedict said.

"We've got a very short time in which to do this, but we feel it's possible," he said.

In order to get the amendment on the ballot, 5 percent of the voters in two-fifths of the counties must sign the petitions.

Getting enough signatures would be the hard part, Benedict said.

"Once we get it on the ballot, it's going to pass," he added.

The amendment would raise the drinking age to 21, but change little else in the current law. Persons under 21 working in liquor establishments would be allowed to keep their jobs.

"We're not trying to hit at somebody's livelihood," Benedict said.

The amendment also does not establish criminal penalties or weaken the liquor control commission.

Benedict said the coalition would try to raise money to offset mailing and printing expenses. He said a goal of \$60,000 has been set. He said less than \$1,000 had been donated thus far.

Bill introduced to raise state support for NU

By Gordon Johnson

The Legislature's Appropriations Committee introduced a bill Tuesday which would increase state support of NU for 1980-81 by 12.57 percent.

The appropriation is a 13.2 percent increase from last year's appropriation of \$115.9 million. The Daily Nebraskan in its Tuesday edition used an incorrect budget base in estimating the percentage increase of state support.

An appropriation bill earmarking \$483,000 for this year's utility deficit would be added to the budget base if it is passed. The emergency deficit bill was introduced Tuesday.

Appropriations Committee Chairman Jerome Warner of Waverly said that he does not expect much opposition to a 12.57 percent increase.

Defensible amount

"The total dollar amount is very defensible," Warner said.

Warner said that a state support increase of 12.57 percent does not mean that the university's budget has increased by that amount. Through losses of outside funding from the federal government, the university's budget could be significantly lower than 12.57 percent, he said.

The budget increase includes 1.57 percent to cover the rising cost of utilities during 1980-81. When the utilities appropriation is deducted from the total appropriation, the total increase amounts to a little over 11 percent.

Total operations and state aid to the university would be \$198.5 million, up 11 percent from this year's budget. This figure includes all sources of revenue except restricted federal funds.

Budget breakdown

The state general fund appropriation, the money given by the state for university support, comes to \$131 million. The dollar amount breakdown for each campus is as follows:

-\$48,931,648 for UNL city campus. The university request was for \$48,882,533;

-\$22.5 million for the Institute of Agriculture and natural resources. The request was for \$23.7 million;

-\$19,623,000 for UNO. The request was for \$19,712,000;

-\$37.9 million for the NU Medical Center out of a request for \$39 million; and

-\$2,235,322 for the central administration out of a request of \$2,261,176.

Included in the budget recommendation for 1980-81 are increases in the Veterinary Medicine and Optometry Student Contracts program.

According to a worksheet handed out by Warner, the increase in the university's operating budget, excluding utility costs, amounts to 3.79 percent



Photo by Tom Gessner

Brrrrrrr!

Maggie Johnson, freshman in political science, finds out that watching the UNL baseball team can be a pain in the ears, especially without a hat.

Yell squad rules omit allowances for minorities

By Mary Jo Pitzl

Although new guidelines are in effect, no special allowances are being made for minority members on next year's Nebraska Yell Squad, according to several selection committee members.

"We want to make the process a fairer one than it was," said Dolores Simpson-Kirkland, a counselor with the Multi-Cultural Affairs office and one of the eight committee members.

The changes introduced for this year's committee in-

clude adoption of a code of ethics for squad members and a 2.0 GPA requirement for all cheerleaders, Simpson-Kirkland said.

However, no special efforts were made to ensure that one of the 16 squad members be black, she said.

Early last semester, squad members complained when a black female cheerleader was added to the squad two weeks before the start of the football season. Football Coach Tom Osborne and Athletic Director Bob Devaney had ordered that she be placed on the squad "for recruiting purposes."

Diversification

After the squad appealed the decision, Devaney called for a revision of the selection process, saying the committee was "not diversified enough."

Meanwhile, the cheerleader was allowed to perform during the first semester. She did not return to UNL second semester because of academic reasons, according to Sally Pearson, yell squad captain.

Besides the ethics code and the grade point minimum, other guidelines incorporated into this year's selection process include expanding the squad from 12 to 16 posts, requiring past squad members to try out and revising the selection committee.

"We discussed what took place (last semester) and all together it's a very unfortunate thing," said Sally Fehrs, yell squad adviser and a representative of women's athletics on the selection committee.

Greeks visited

She said squad members talked to the black fraternity and sorority to promote turnout for last week's tryouts, but added this was done in all Greek houses. Fehrs estimated that of the approximate 66 females and 34 males who tried out, there were only two black females.

Late Tuesday afternoon, half of those trying out were eliminated in a preliminary cut, Fehrs said. A final cut to determine the 16 squad members will be made March 19.

Besides Fehrs and Simpson-Kirkland, selection committee members are representatives from the Athletic Department, the football team, the fraternities and sororities, the student body at large, women's athletics and the yell squad.

Steve Pederson, a student assistant with Sports Information, said he was appointed by Devaney.

"Coach Devaney said we (the Athletic Department) picked the committee, now you take it from here," Pederson said. "The minority issue was not discussed at all."

inside **wednesday**

Bong ban: Legislature holds public hearing on bill to ban drug paraphernalia Page 3
Outlet provided: English Department magazine provides creative outlet for spring fever Page 8
Reactions vary: UNL women's basketball team members react to coach's resignation Page 10