

Political, personal accusations climb

Fowler, Sellentin swap charges of 'low politics'

By Mary Kempkes

The 27th District race for the Nebraska Legislature has already become the most expensive in Nebraska history. It also promises to be one of the most hotly contested.

In a letter to constituents last week, Lincoln Senator Steve Fowler accused opponent Jerry Sellentin, personnel manager of St. Elizabeth Hospital, of "low-road politics" and of being supported by special-interest groups from outside the district.

"We're behind," Fowler said in the letter, "and if we don't catch up and win this race we're all going to be in big trouble."

Trouble, Fowler said, refers to Sellentin's acceptance of more than \$5,000 from 12 special-interest groups and to what he called the "dirty politics" he said Sellentin introduced into Lincoln.

"There is kind of campaigning style becoming popular called negative cam-

aigning, primarily associated with right-wing and conservative candidates," Fowler said Sunday.

"It involves three elements, Fowler said, "First you avoid taking a stand on the issues. Second you focus on attacks on your opponent's records. And third, you take a highly emotional and sensitive issue and play that up the media."

Denies name calling

Sellentin, who won the May primary by 700 votes, responded Sunday to Fowler's comments and said if anyone has resorted to "low politics" it has been Fowler.

"I have not called him any names. In fact, I sent him a telegram on his wedding," he said.

Fowler, Sellentin said, has referred to him as a "Thone-clone."

Sellentin said he has stuck to campaign issues and that Fowler just doesn't like what he has to say.

But Fowler, facing the toughest campaign battle of his eight-year legislative

career, said Sellentin has misrepresented facts.

In one release early in the primary, Sellentin said Fowler could not fairly represent labor because he has never worked, having entered the Legislature full-time after dropping out of UNL.

Fowler said this misrepresents the facts because he has made the Legislature his primary concern. Fowler said he has not held a job other than the Legislative seat so he can better serve his constituents.

But Sellentin said, "I think the voters don't want a full-time politician in the job, they want a working man."

Record setting spending

The two are setting Nebraska campaign spending records for a legislative seat that pays \$4,800 a year.

According to the candidates' unofficial August reports, Sellentin has raised more than \$30,000 and Fowler \$23,000.

Sellentin said he needs to spend a large amount of money to overcome inflation and the edge Fowler has as the incumbent. Fowler has the media readily at his disposal, Sellentin said.

Sellentin readily admits to receiving contributions from special-interest groups and said: "We're both guilty of that."

Sellentin received contributions in the primary from 15 special-interest groups, including the Nebraska Association of Commerce and Industry, the Nebraska Bankers Political Action Committee and the Nebraska New Car and Truck Dealers Association.

Fowler accepted contributions from three groups — Nebraska State Education Association Transportation Political Education League and the Nebraska Association of Public Employees.

Fowler has accepted the largest contribution from any single lobby — \$2,000 from the State Education Association. Sellentin was not far behind with \$1,880 from the Republican State Committee. Sellentin, however, has received the largest total from combined interest groups — more than \$5,000 from 12 groups; most with businesses located outside the largely residential district.

"Well I think these interest groups are backing him (Sellentin) because they feel he is going to vote in their behalf," Fowler said.

"I've tried to stay as independent from these types of interest groups as possible and to vote directly for the needs of voters in this district," Fowler said.

Oregon lobbying ability gives woman top GLC job

By Patti Gallagher

ASUN President Renee Wessels said last week that 1980 is the year the Government Liaison Committee will "make it or break it."

Wessels then announced her appointments to the executive positions of the student lobbying group.

Nette Nelson, a junior with an undeclared major, will head GLC. After working five years in the Oregon governor's office, Nelson is returning to school after 20 year absence.

At 41, she classified herself as an "un-traditional student."

Nelson said she almost didn't apply for the job because of her age. She said her age makes no difference to her, but she thought some students and ASUN members might feel awkward working with her.

Nelson said she thinks ASUN's welcome was a warm one, however. The Senate approved her appointment almost unanimously at its last meeting.

Although an independent organization, GLC will clear major projects with ASUN, Nelson said.

During the years she worked in the governor's office, Nelson supervised a \$120 million employment training program and was involved in lobbying efforts for federal programs for senior citizens and youth.

Oregon involvement

Nelson's involvement in other Oregon organizations also will be an asset to her GLC job, she said. She was a member of the Oregon school board and worked with affirmative action programs, served on the advisory board for Women in Management, and was involved in Metro Club, an urban issue research and lobbying group.

Nelson completed two years at Oregon State University, before dropping out "by necessity." The "necessities" include daughter Meri Blaylock, a pre-med UNL freshman, and two sons, who live in Oregon. She has been in Nebraska four weeks.

Joining Nelson in the executive branch of GLC will be Ann Block and John Vitek. Vitek was appointed chairman in charge of the university budget.

Incomprehensible budget

Although "nobody understands the university budget," Vitek said he will employ his experience as a UNL debater to research budgetary problems and to add verbal strength to the committee.

Vitek is a junior English and economics major.

Block, a 21-year-old senior, will be vice chairperson in charge of coalition building.

Her duties will include research and lobbying for all campus and non-campus issues, excluding the budget.

Block, a psychology and political science major, said she will work to determine and be responsive to student sentiment on campus. She would like to implement either poll-taking or surveys to gauge opinions on issues, she said.

According to Nelson, one immediate plan for GLC is to research past committee records to see "what worked and what failed and why."

Block said she would like to initiate all GLC members with a crash course on the Legislature. She said she would like GLC members to be familiar with all legislative processes, from the views and personalities of senators to the procedure by which a bill becomes a law.

Nelson said the executive committee was scheduled to meet with Wessels Monday to begin organizing the group.



Photo by Kent Morgan Olson

A view from the top—Dave Roseland and Jack Fitch clean windows on the First National Bank Building, as seen looking down from the top of the building. The building takes two days to clean.

High court hears Ellis evidence

By Jim Faddis

The Nebraska Supreme Court Monday heard arguments on whether evidence of other alleged acts by John Ellis should have been admitted as evidence in the Debra Forycki case.

Ellis was convicted of manslaughter in Lancaster County District Court in 1979 in the death of Forycki. He was sentenced to one to 10 years in prison.

Forycki, was a 21-year-old UNL student when she disappeared Oct. 3, 1974. Her decomposed remains were found Sept. 13, 1978, in an old water wagon near Elmwood in Cass County.

Ellis was arrested Sept. 21, 1978, in Evanston, Ill., where he was a student at an Episcopal seminary.

Ellis' appeal was first heard by the Supreme Court on April 10. But the court called attorneys back to further discuss why certain evidence should or should not have been admitted.

The evidence in question was testimony by Carol Nelson and Lynn Miserez.

Nelson testified that she knew Ellis and that he had identified himself to her using an alias similar to a name found on a note in Forycki's possession. The prosecution

used this in its attempt to show that Ellis knew Forycki.

Miserez testified that in 1976, Ellis took her to a secluded location near Elmwood and assaulted her. This location was 75 feet from where Forycki's body was found. This was used by the prosecution to show Ellis' knowledge of the area.

Robert Creager, Ellis' attorney, told the court that the Nelson testimony did not prove that Ellis knew Forycki, only that he had used an alias before.

The Miserez testimony did not show that Ellis had a knowledge of the area, only that he had been there before, Creager said.

For evidence of other acts by a person to be used in a trial on another matter, there has to be clear and convincing proof that the two matters are related, Creager said. This proof was not there, he added.

Creager said the prosecution used the Nelson and Miserez, testimony to show Ellis as a "bad person," not because the Forycki case.

Sharon Lindgren, assistant attorney general, told the court that both state and federal courts have allowed evidence of subsequent acts as evidence.

She said the Nelson and Miserez testimony had any relevance to the Forycki case.

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