

ASUN ELECTIONS

Different reasons suggested for apathy by students in preceding ASUN voting

By Tom Prentiss

When UNL students go to the polls tomorrow for the ASUN election, it will probably be in a trickle and not a stampede.

Historically, students have shown little interest in ASUN elections.

Last year, about 3,880 students voted, according to ASUN President Renee Wessels. She said this was less than 20 percent of the eligible voters, but the turnout was the highest in nine years.

But whether last year's high turnout was the beginning of a trend or an exception to the rule won't be known until after Wednesday.

Wessels said lack of interest in voting is not limited only to students. Americans generally are not exercising their voting privileges, she said.

Wessels said she does not think calling students apathetic is fair.

"I think it's more a feeling of hopelessness," she said.

Wessels said students who do not vote still do care about their education and the university but they just do not believe their vote will make a difference

Waste of time

She said that because ASUN is subject

to the whims of the NU Board of Regents, many students may feel getting involved is a waste of time.

She said she hopes the regents' recent decision to end salaries for student presidents will encourage students to voice their opinions.

Political science Professor John Comer said students probably don't vote because they think they have little control of major issues.

Many students may think it is useless to get involved with a system that won't help them," he said.

Comer suggested two other reasons why students don't vote.

"Because students are only here for four years or so, it mitigates the prospect for involvement," Comer said. Many decisions do not take effect until a year or two later, he said.

He also said many students probably think the regents will do whatever they want, regardless of student sentiment.

Regent disagrees

Regent Ed Schwartzkopf of Lincoln said he doesn't think that argument is valid.

He said he doesn't know why most stu-

dents don't vote, but it "doesn't speak well for the student body."

Schwartzkopf said students may be too busy to vote. Comer said students have different priorities.

Most students are more concerned with their career goals and finding mates at college than campus elections, Comer said.

But Schwartzkopf said the ASUN elections are an opportunity for students to make their choices known.

"They (the students) are the consumers and they have a right to increasing the quality of their education," he said.

He said he would like to see more students represented as they formerly were at UNL.

Then, six to 10 students would meet with regents the night before their regular meeting. Schwartzkopf said this was a better way of gaining student involvement.

Wessels said candidates have to spend too much time explaining ASUN to the voters rather than explaining what they want to do within ASUN.

Wessels said that each student's vote will be more important in this election because of the large number of candidates.

"Students have to take it upon themselves to be responsible," Wessels said. "They should take the time to contribute."



Election campaign funds differ between parties

By Lori McGinnis

The amount of money spent on campaigns by the parties running in the ASUN election is as varied as the party platforms.

The figures range from less than \$10 by the STUPID (Students Taking Unlimited Part in Democracy) Party to about \$900 by the SURE (Students United for Responsible Education) Party.

Rick Mockler, SURE presidential candidate, said about \$900 has been spent for posters, bookmarks, buttons, business cards and radio advertisements on KFMQ to promote the party.

The executive candidates for the SURE Party have each contributed \$30, the senate and Committee for Fees Allocation candidates have each donated \$15, and the Advisory Board candidates have donated \$10 each.

Steve McMahon, VOTE (Viable Opportunity for Total Efficiency) Party presidential candidate, said his party has spent about \$600 on posters and stickers. The money has come from contributions from party members.

Tom Vergith, presidential candidate from the CURE (Coalition for University Revitalization) Party, said about \$150 was spent for posters, business cards and photocopying for his party. Each party member contributed \$10 for the publicity, he said.

ARISE (Alliance of Responsible Individuals Stressing Equality) Party presidential candidate Doreen Charles said members of her party have spent \$100 for flyers and pins. The money has come from herself and from individual contributions.

Charles said that once a name is recognized as a candidate, people count more on personal contact, which she said she is stressing.

Eric Johnson, presidential candidate of the Feminist

Socialist party said he and his two running mates will spend no more than \$50 on posters.

Tim Higgins, PURGE ((Party for Urgent Redefinition of Government Expectations) Party presidential candidate, said about \$40 has been spent for posters and advertisements. Party members contributed \$10 each for the effort, he said.

Diane Walkowiak, an independent candidate, said she has spent about \$20 for posters and handouts.

STUPID presidential candidate Miske Frost said his party has spent less than \$10 on posters for a campaign he called ideological.

Poll shows ho-hum attitude toward elections

By Betsy Miller

Student leaders and university officials will be watching tomorrow's ASUN elections to see if the turnout is higher than it has previously been.

An informal poll conducted by the Daily Nebraskan showed that of 70 UNL students questioned, 31 plan to vote, 27 do not plan to vote and 12 are undecided.

The poll included 18 freshmen, 23 sophomores, eight juniors, 15 seniors and six graduate students.

Bridget Dawson, 20, an undeclared sophomore, said she doesn't think the election is highly regarded.

"It seems like it's made into a joke, that it doesn't seem important," she said.

"Why should I (vote)?" said Mike Wislon, a sophomore engineering major. "I can't think of anything they've done to enhance my education."

"I don't know the issues or the candidates to vote intelligently," said Roger Delight, 27, a sophomore nursing major.

According to the ASUN Electoral Commission regulations for the 1981 student elections, an executive candidate may spend up to \$100 for his or her own campaign. Candidates for the senate, CFA, or Advisory Board cannot spend more than \$50 each. If a senate or Advisory Board candidate pools money into a party, the candidate may spend up to \$37.50.

ASUN president Renee Wessels said that although the amount of money is important in these campaigns, it is more important how it is spent.

Money spent on posters and other literature helps promote name recognition, she said.

Students who said they are planning to vote mentioned the apathy shown toward the election in the past as one reason why they would cast ballots.

"I feel the students should take a stand. Nobody else is going to do it. Even if they can't have everything they want, there should be some way of saying what we want to the regents," said Theresa Goodall, a sophomore journalism major.

Jenny Dannenbring, 19, sophomore elementary education major, hasn't decided if she would vote because she wasn't sure who all the candidates were.

Brad Gifford, an 18-year-old freshman business major, said "I think I'll vote. I don't really know who to vote for but I think I should," he said. "I think it's something you should do. I'm not really up on the issues though."

Steven Schonberger, a freshman computer science-math major, said "If I can find the polling places, I will (vote)."



Scott Foley, a junior majoring in electrical engineering, said he voted in last year's ASUN election and will vote again this year. Foley, 20, lives in the Chi Phi fraternity house.

"I know some of the people running, and the issues are important," he said.



Jack Bergen, a senior recreational therapy major, said he does not plan to vote in the ASUN election this year.

"I hadn't planned on it because I just started back in school," he said. "I'm not involved enough. I think lots of the issues some of the parties are running under are junk. Some of them are relevant, like student fees, the rec center, the union and student health center."



Gary Hopkins, a sophomore industrial engineering major, said he plans to vote in this year's ASUN election.

"I think it's important to be involved in the school system," he said. "They (ASUN) have a good thing going with student activities."

Hopkins, 21, was not a student at UNL last year and so did not participate in the ASUN elections. Hopkins lives off campus.



Photos by Jon Natvig

Ann Muldoon, 20, a life sciences major, said she does not plan to vote in the ASUN elections this year because she is not familiar with the candidates or the campaign issues.

"I don't know a thing about it," she said. Muldoon is a junior living off campus.