

DWI arrests may not change

By Tammy Kaup

Raising Nebraska's legal drinking age to 21 may not decrease the number of Driving While Intoxicated arrests, because 21 year-olds were among the key offenders in Lancaster County for 1982 and 1983.

According to statistics from the Lincoln Council on Alcoholism and Drugs, the 19- to 24-year-old age group accounted for more than 42 percent of all DWI arrests in 1982 and more than 44 percent in 1983. Twenty-year-olds were arrested most frequently for DWI.

Ron Dade, research analyst for the council, said it is too simplistic to think that one age is the "magic" drinking age in order to solve all alcohol-related problems. But, he said, no matter what the legal drinking age is, it should be universal. A universal age, Dade said, would discourage students from thinking of drinking as a game, which could tempt them to drive to neighboring states where the legal age is lower.

"Year after year the 19-to-24 age group is the high-risk group," Dade

said. He said this is consistent with other problems that this age group has, such as drug abuse. He said these problems occur because of increased freedom in college and continued experimentation that started in high school.

Prevention activities in high school could lessen problems, Dade said. Younger students would realize they soon will enter the high-risk group, he said, and students need to learn that it is all right not to drink.

In communities like Lincoln, Dade said, offenders can use the many human service programs offered. He said that without help, an alcohol-related problem worsens.

Total DWI arrests in Lincoln and Lancaster County reflecting all age groups showed a slight decrease from 1,779 in 1982 to 1,719 in 1983.

Dade said this decrease, although not significant, probably occurred because people were aware of a law enforcement crackdown on drunken drivers.

Chairpersons say candidates no serious threat for Reagan

By John Melssner

The Lancaster County chairpersons for President Reagan's re-election encouraged UNL College Republicans to get involved in the statewide campaign at the group's meeting last week.

Don Stenberg and Donna Bock, filling in for the statewide coordinator Glen Wilson, stressed the importance of getting Reagan re-elected and supporting his programs.

Stenberg, who served as legal counsel for former Gov. Charles Thone and as director of administrative services, said the problems Reagan inherited — high interest rates, inflation and unemployment — are being controlled, although he admitted the federal budget deficit was a real problem.

"If there is an Achilles' heel for Reagan in Nebraska, it would be a national thing like the deficit," Stenberg said.

Stenberg said Gary Hart's surprise showing in the recent primaries would

work to the president's advantage. The Democratic candidates will campaign on each others' many faults, he said.

"President Carter was a disaster, possibly the worst president this century, and Fritz Mondale supported him all the way," Stenberg said. Another drawback for Mondale is his ties to special interest groups, especially labor, Stenberg said.

"Gary Hart's campaign is reminiscent of Carter's in that we know very little about him," Stenberg said. "Carter said 'trust me' and everyone knows the result." Stenberg deemed Hart's advocacy of a military spending reduction as unacceptable.

Bock, an investment broker involved in the organizational part of the campaign, said she thought the 25- to 35-year-old age group will decide campaigns in the future, so college students should understand and voice comments on the president and his platform.

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