

Bill would prioritize Richards Hall

By Becky Becher
Staff Reporter

ASUN senators tonight will vote on a bill asking the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to make the renovation of Richards Hall a higher priority.



ASUN President Keith Benes said the bill touched on a much larger issue. "It's the tip of the iceberg that gets into issues of overall strategic planning and the input that students will have on that planning," he said. Richards Hall is the eighth priority on the university's Capital Construction list.

Mark Byars, general studies senator, said the building needed many repairs and did not provide an environment conducive to studying.

Benes said students also were concerned about UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier's plan to turn the parking lot directly north of the Nebraska Union into a "green space."

Benes said students had approached the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska with concerns about removing the parking lot. He said students wanted to know why money would be spent on this project and what effect it would have on student parking.

Benes questioned the necessity of the project and Spanier's plan for parking.

Because the lot is used by administration and facility, Benes said students would not be affected directly. But, he said, students probably would be displaced when faculty and administrators were moved to different parking spaces.

Benes said students would be expected to park off campus and use shuttle buses.

Benes also said he was concerned about the student representation on the two UNL planning committees. Benes said the committees were considering consolidating, which would leave fewer seats for student members.

Nelson plans trade junket to China

By Steve Smith
Senior Reporter

Gov. Ben Nelson said Tuesday he would spearhead a delegation to China to stimulate trade between Nebraska and the Far East.

Nelson's delegation will consist of state businessmen, industry and agricultural leaders, state economic development officials and Nebraska Agriculture Director Larry Sitzman.

The announcement came after Nelson's luncheon at the Governor's Mansion with Chinese Ambassador Daoyu Li, where details of Nelson's 10-day trip were finalized.

The Nebraska delegation, which will leave Oct. 24 and return Nov. 2, is scheduled to visit Shanghai, Guangzhou, Beijing and Hong Kong.

Nelson said he was optimistic about what his trip to China would mean to Nebraska.

Daoyu said both China and Nebraska would reap benefits from the trade mission.

"It's well known that Nebraska is strong in agricultural products, which China would have a good interest in," he said.

"Hopefully, this trade mission will lead to better understanding between the U.S. and China," Daoyu said.

Secretary of State Allen Beermann said this visit would mark the first time a Nebraska governor had been to China.

Nelson said his 1992 trade mission to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan yielded excellent results. Since the 1992 trade mission, Japan's beef imports have dropped by almost 15 percent, while Nebraska's share of the market has jumped almost 300 percent.

UNITE aids petitioners

By Steve Smith
Senior Reporter

An American Indian student group at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is attempting to petition its way to a fair trial for a South Dakota man.

Members of the University of Nebraska Inter-Tribal Exchange have been asking for student signatures from their booth in the Nebraska Union.

The group plans to continue its efforts to collect signatures Friday in support of James Weddell, a Native American man who was recently convicted of manslaughter in South Dakota. The group began collecting signatures last week.

UNITE President Shawn Bordeaux said the petition drive would continue next Monday and Tuesday.

Weddell, who pleaded and maintains his innocence, was sentenced to 80 years in the Sioux Falls, S.D., penitentiary.

Members of UNITE say Weddell's appointed attorney failed to underline all the evidence that would have worked for his defense.

The group also objects to other aspects of the trial, such as a pathologist's controversial testimony that contributed to Weddell's conviction.

Bordeaux said rumors circulated at the time of Weddell's trial that one of the members of Weddell's jury was a relative of the victim.

Because of these and other circumstances, the group contends that Weddell was convicted unfairly.

"In the name of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the name of our own sense of humanity, we respectfully beg you ... to grant Mr. James Weddell a new trial, in order that justice will be done in the fair way, which every citizen deserves," the petition stated.

Bordeaux said he first learned of Weddell's situation through national television news reports.

Bordeaux found out about the petition drive when one of his South Dakota acquaintances visited Lincoln carrying the petition forms.

"I said, 'Let me have some,'" Bordeaux said.

UNITE collected about 200 signatures in the first three days of the drive, he said.

"That's a good start," he said. "But we're going to keep on going."

Bordeaux said the group wanted to get as many signatures as possible before sending petitions back to South Dakota.

Bordeaux said he hoped the statement would be a convincing one.

"I don't know how much it will do for (Weddell)," Bordeaux said. "But if we have 2,000 people or so who want to see him get a fair trial, we might get something done."

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