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NU Alumni president spurs talk on college

By Chad Lorenz
 Staff Reporter

Raising awareness was the aim of a letter asking alumni to express their views on the creation of a second NU engineering college at Omaha.

Bryan Van Deun, alumni association president, sent a two-page letter to members of the Alumni Association. The letter posed questions about the proposed college at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

A task force is making a plan to create the separate college. But the University of Nebraska Board of Regents must first decide whether one is needed.

Van Deun, who said he had no opinion yet on the issue, said the letter would encourage needed discussion on the issue. The associations' role is to involve alumni in university issues.

J.B. Milliken, NU vice president for external affairs, and Joe Rowson, NU director of public affairs, had no comments about the letter.

The task force should present its report in mid-November, Rowson said. Based on the report and his own judgement, NU President Dennis Smith will make a recommendation to the Board of Regents by December.

The Regents will decide, possibly by year's end, whether to implement the college.

Van Deun raised the following questions in his letter:

● "How can we consider establishment of a new multimillion-dollar college which duplicates an existing college?"

The state is facing an \$80-100 million budget shortfall, the university is facing budget cuts, and taxpayers are facing a tax increase, he wrote.

Van Deun compared the engineering issue to an earlier decision made about a separate veterinary college.

The state rejected a proposal to create a College of Veterinary Medicine for rural Nebraska and reached an agreement with another institution 150 miles away based on affordability, he wrote.

● "Is it reasonable to have enhanced programs managed within the same university at a distance of 50 miles?"

In the letter, Van Deun asked whether the college would grow once implemented or stay limited in scope.

He asked what economic impact the money for the school would have if used in other programs.

● "Do we want a political solution to an academic question?"

Board of Regent members, state senators, and Smith must hear the opinions and questions of the Alumni Association, he wrote.

"Do not wait for one to act before contacting the others," Van Deun wrote.

Since sending the letter, Van Deun said alumni association members had given him positive letters and phone calls.

Architecture students to rebuild main streets

By Andrew Lucas
 Staff Reporter

A new program will give architecture students and faculty hands-on experience while improving downtown areas in rural Nebraska communities, the program's director said.

John Gaber, an architecture professor, said the Lied Foundation Trust donated \$350,000 this month to start the Nebraska Lied Main Street Program.

The gift was the result of a formal proposal put before the foundation last year by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, the Nebraska State Historical Society, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Architecture and the Nebraska Department of Roads.

Communities interested in improving their main streets will go through an application process that will include a statewide workshop, Gaber said.

Projects will include rebuilding building fronts, landscaping and working with signs, traffic patterns

and parking.

The program also will work to help improve community pride, advertising and the downtown renovations, he said.

Four communities will be chosen this year for assistance through the program, and four more will be chosen each year after that. State and local participants in the project will provide \$1.30 for every dollar the Lied trust contributes.

"This is part of the college's commitment to the long-term community involvement," Gaber said.

The University Foundation will handle the funds, said Terry Fairfield.

Gaber said students would have the opportunity to work with personnel in local and state agencies. Each community will present the Main Street Program with a renovation plan, he said. The students will work on technical problems and other problems in those plans.

Each community will appoint an individual from its community to work with students and to direct its renovation plans, he said.

Renteria

Continued from Page 1

Healey and Wieland law firm of Lincoln since 1990, has served as special prosecutor in grand jury investigations in 1990 and 1992. Both cases involved people who died in police custody. Bartle said Endacott called him Wednesday morning. Endacott told him he had talked with four other judges and decided to appoint him, he said.

Bartle accepted a few hours later. Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey turned over the files of the

Renteria case Wednesday afternoon, Bartle said. Lacey had requested a special prosecutor Tuesday morning.

Bartle said he viewed his role as a "special investigator" who gathers all necessary information for the grand jury. Only if the grand jury decides to indict will he become special prosecutor, Bartle said.

Bartle said he had followed the case closely and had made no decision about what information to release. Lacey, when he was prosecuting the case, had said he would not release autopsy results.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Finance

Continued from Page 1

the largest contributor to her campaign, giving about \$16,000.

Candidates in the 5th District race were the smallest spenders, according to the report.

Incumbent Robert Allen of Hastings has spent about \$5,900 during the campaign, raising \$6,500 from individual contributors. Allen

was the largest contributor to his campaign, giving \$5,000.

Allen paid Andrew Sigerson, former president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, about \$500 to develop a political plan for his campaign, the report showed.

Allen's opponent, Robert Prokop of Wilbur, was the smallest spender of all the candidates, spending only about \$5,800. Prokop was the sole contributor to his campaign, the report showed. He contributed \$9,500.

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