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Eclipse party wins in RHA election

By Julie Sobczyk
Staff Reporter

After receiving 54 percent of the vote, the Eclipse party won the RHA presidential election Tuesday night.

The Beetles party received 38 percent of the vote, and the remaining 8 percent went to write-in candidates.

Philip Cilliers, who was elected for the presidency, said he was excited about winning.

"I'm ecstatic," Cilliers said. "We worked hard and we won."

Cilliers said he and his running mate, Eric Vander Woude, wanted to begin anew in RHA by making it a more visible organization at UNL.

"We want to promote the residence halls more," he said. "Traditionally, RHA doesn't have that big of an involvement, and we want to get more people involved."

Eclipse also will work to change some residence hall policies, Cilliers said. Changing the open-flame policy was the most important priority, he said.

"We will meet with Housing to work to change the open-flame policy to satisfy both students and the administration," Cilliers said.

Creating more outdoor basketball courts, making additional meal plans and creating a debit card system for the snack bars are other ideas on the

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PHILIP CILLIERS
RHA president

Eclipse platform, he said. Jeremy Vetter, presidential candidate for the Beetles, said he wasn't surprised by his party's loss.

"I wasn't sure at all how it would come out," Vetter said. "I expected it to go either way because we had no way of knowing how the residents would vote."

Vetter said he was disappointed with the loss, but now he would have more time to be involved in other activities on campus.

Chad Pekron ran as Vetter's vice presidential candidate. Pekron and Vander Woude ran on the same ticket in the March 8 ASUN elections.

Though the opposing party won, Vetter said he had hope for the future of RHA.

"Cilliers is the most experienced person in the organization," Vetter said. "Both him and Eric are energetic and have potential."

Students

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County Election Commissioner. She said 3D normally had the lowest turnout of any precinct in a city election.

"I can't really blame students," Hansen said. "They aren't going to be interested in local issues, especially if they aren't going to be making their homes here."

Hansen said she predicted a 15 percent turnout for Tuesday's election. After 3 p.m. returns, she said, Lincoln was on course for a 14 percent turnout, or about 15,000 voters.

Ballot issues included an unopposed race for mayor, two Lincoln school board primaries, a primary for airport authority, two city charter issues, a school bond issue and a city council primary where both candidates will advance to the general election regardless of the vote.

Robert Sittig, a UNL political science professor, said students were normally apathetic about voting, but because Tuesday's elections were not of much interest to students, their voting would probably be extremely low.

"There's a shameful lack of contests," Sittig said.

He said if there were a large number of well-financed candidates, there might be more interest in the city and among students.

Both Wells, 51, and Goemann, 49, voted by absentee ballot Monday. Gross didn't vote; he said he had a flat tire.

"The issues don't impact students," Gross said.

That first voter at precinct 3D Tuesday wasn't a student. And as the day crept along, precinct 3D didn't see another voter until just after 1 p.m., and he, also, wasn't a student.

Wells passed the time reading a book on cub scouts, Goemann wrote letters and Gross studied for his history of economic thought class.

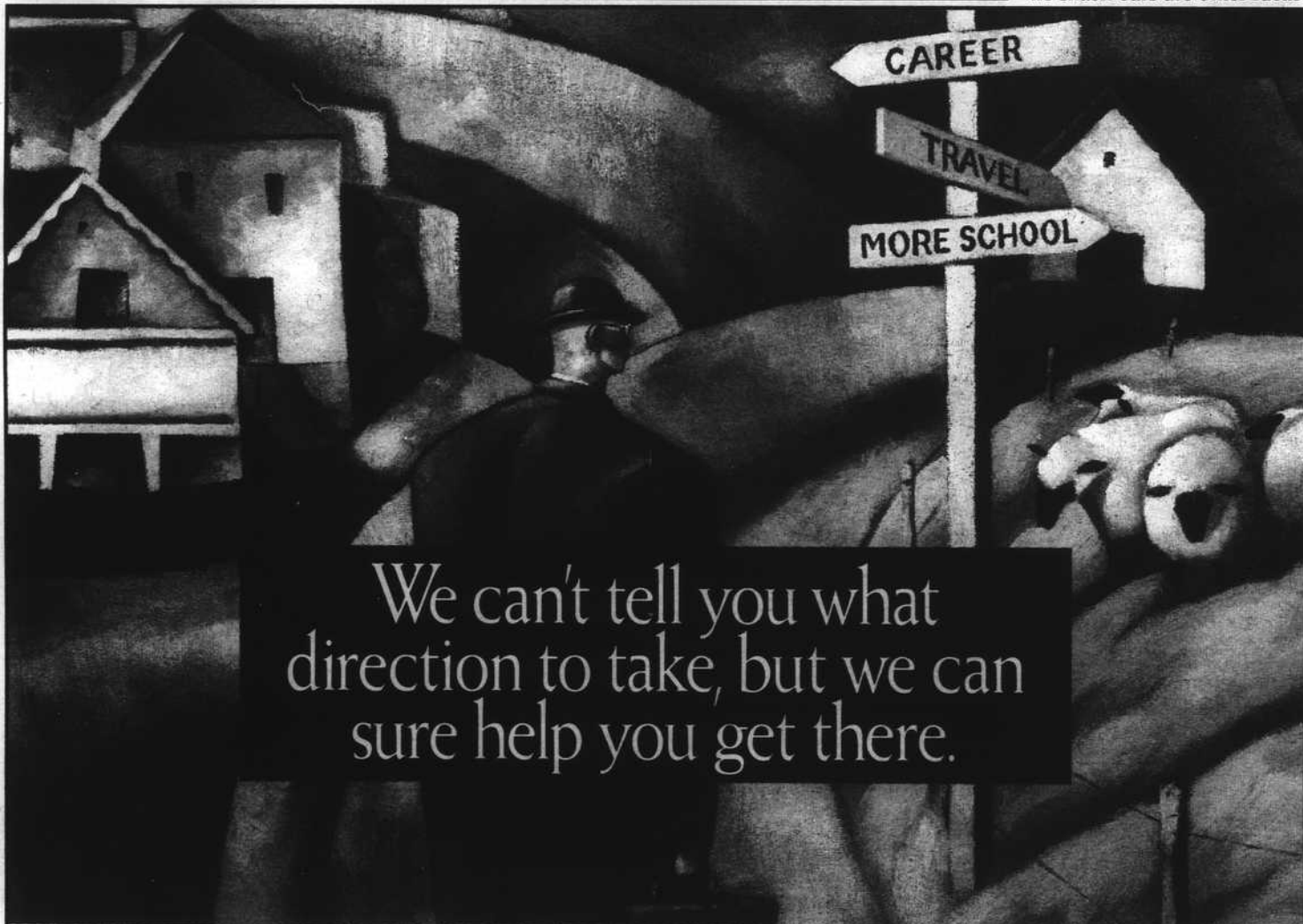
Around 3:30 p.m., they got one — a student. Anne Hjersman, a junior journalism major who lives in Neihardt Hall.

Hjersman said it was appalling that no other student living on campus voted in the election.

"I knew our age group was ill-represented in elections, but I didn't realize it was that bad," she said.

Hjersman voted because she was covering the election results for The Lincoln Star.

"I thought it would be cheap of me to do a story on the primary turnout and to have not turned out myself," Hjersman said.



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