

Republicans criticize Nelson

Nebraska GOP leaders defend Hagel after governor's accusations



By MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

Nebraska's Republican leaders criticized Gov. Ben Nelson Wednesday, saying accusations of shady dealings on the part of Chuck Hagel's former company crossed boundaries of ethical politics.

In a press conference at the State Capitol building, seven of the state's top elected Republicans denounced Nelson for turning the campaign to the negative side.

Speakers, including Hagel's former senatorial rival Don Stenberg, said Nelson's attacks were "blatant lies."

The flap came after the Nelson campaign said Friday that Hagel had, among other things, rigged a Federal Communications Commission lottery for rights to cellular phone markets and struck a deal to avoid investigation.

Hagel's response to the accusations against his former cellular

company Vanguard has been heated at times, calling them "straight-out lies" and the governor "a liar."

On Wednesday, Hagel was more somber, saying an attack on someone's reputation is one of the worst attacks.

"The only thing a person takes to their grave is their reputation," Hagel said. "You're darn right I'll fight it hard."

The Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate hinted at possible legal action against the Nelson campaign, saying, "When we make a decision, we'll let you know."

Adam Branting, Nelson's spokesman, said Hagel was the only one hurt by the accusations.

"He was the guy who thumbed his nose at the system and rigged a lottery," he said. "And when he gets caught he turns red like a 5-year old and says he's sorry."

But Wednesday it was Nebraska's top Republicans doing most of the talking.

U.S. Rep. Doug Bereuter, State Auditor John Breslow, State Treasurer Dave Heineman, Lincoln Mayor Mike Johanns and Stenberg

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CHUCK HAGEL
Republican candidate for Senate

all condemned Nelson.

Breslow said Nelson was avoiding talk about his record, which he said was about broken property tax pledges and finishing his term.

"When that is your record, you do what Ben Nelson is doing — you smear your opponent," he said.

Branting scoffed at the list of speakers, saying most had political ambitions as motives for speaking.

Pumpkinfest showcases spooky Halloween art

By TASHA E. KELTER
Staff Reporter

Spooky, elaborate and Husker-themed jack-o'-lanterns lit up the Nebraska Union's food court at Wednesday night's Pumpkinfest.

The third-annual homage to the orange squash was organized by Chi Omega sorority to benefit the Nebraska Stroke Foundation.

About 80 pumpkins were entered in the contest, earning more than \$3,000 for the foundation. Last year's Pumpkinfest earned \$2,600, said Tami Feit, junior math major and Chi Omega philanthropy chairwoman.

James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, was one of the Pumpkinfest's judges. Nancy Osborne, Football Coach Tom Osborne's wife, was also a judge.

Griesen said he was impressed with some of the pumpkins' intricacy.

"All the prizewinners really did a remarkable job," he said. "There's a lot of cleverness reflected."

Grand prize went to a Lincoln General Hospital employee, whose entry was a blue-painted glittered pumpkin with stars and moons carved into it.

Jan Eden-Neal, who carved the Great Pumpkin, said she was trying for a "celestial theme" with her pumpkin. She said she would display the pumpkin at the hospital.

"I'm sure eventually it will end up in our home," she said, laughing.

First prize for the most difficult pumpkin went to Jim Buchanan, freshman electrical engineering major, who brought a pumpkin with an intricately-carved spiderweb.

It took Buchanan six hours to carve the pumpkin, using small saws and paring knives.

"I don't use any huge steak knives or anything like that," he said.

Buchanan won an 86-pound pump-

kin, which organizers said was the largest grown in Nebraska. He said he plans to immortalize two greek houses in gourd by carving Phi Kappa Psi and Chi Omega on the pumpkin and displaying it in front of his house.

"It took a lot of sweat and a lot of hard work," he said.

Kathleen Arends, 11, a fifth-grader at Calvert Elementary, won first prize in the youth division with her election-inspired elephant pumpkin.

Arends used one pumpkin for the elephant's face and cut up another one for the ears and trunk. As a finishing touch, she stuck two American flags out the top of the elephant's head.

"I wanted to just use one, but my mom said, 'No, it would look better with two,'" she said.

Other awards were given for the best Husker-themed and spookiest pumpkins.

Scott Wright, a senior general studies major, won the "Husker Spirit" award. Barb Feit, a substitute elementary teacher, won first prize for the spookiest pumpkin.

Pumpkinfest was supposed to be outside the Chi Omega house on 16th and R streets, but was moved into the union because of the weather.

"I think the atmosphere would have been more fun outside with the crisp fall feeling," Feit said.

Organizers said that last year there were so many people looking at the pumpkins when they were lined up outside the Chi Omega house that the pumpkins couldn't be seen from the street.

The first Pumpkinfest was about one-third the size of Wednesday's, said Karyl Newman, Chi Omega alumna and founder of the Stroke Foundation.

Feit said her goal was to get so many pumpkins they'd need "somewhere like the steps of the Capitol" to display them all.

"Give us 10 years."

ASUN approves Big 12 student alliance

By TASHA E. KELTER
Staff Reporter

Senators at Wednesday's ASUN meeting on East Campus unanimously approved a bill that unified the stance of student governments of the Big 12 schools.

The alliance was formed to give the schools a stronger voice with which to lobby the federal government on higher education issues.

Eric Marintzer, president of the

Association of the Students of the University of Nebraska, said the creation of the alliance will not eliminate ASUN's and UNL's autonomy.

"We want to make sure we have our own decision-making capabilities."

In other ASUN news, Marintzer said he was pleased with the turnout of Tuesday's mock election, especially the results of Initiatives 411 and 412, which were defeated by about 75 percent.

Marintzer encouraged the senators



to tell their families and friends about the initiatives.

"You might not be able to influence them, but it's worth a try."

Also at the meeting, appointments were approved for the Publications Board and the College of Law positions. Travis Brandt was appointed to Publications Board, and Jayson Nelson, ASUN's new law senator, will be sworn in at next week's meeting.

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