

Forum focuses on gay figures

By SARAH BAKER
Staff Reporter

Although many people have never realized it, historic figures and leaders of the Great Plains were not all heterosexuals.

Peter Boag, a history professor from Idaho State University, spoke Wednesday about the aspects and history of non-heterosexuals in the Midwest.

Boag's lecture, "Reality and Illusion in Great Plains Lesbian, Gay and Transgendered History," was part of the Paul Olson Seminars in Great Plains Studies.

Boag discussed how historic Nebraskans showed signs of alternate sexual orientations, but people did not recognize or accept those orientations.

Author Willa Cather may have been an example of a transgendered person, someone who lives the lifestyle of the opposite sex, but is not necessarily homosexual, he said.

"Cather definitely rejected the traditional female role. She boldly accepted a male persona in her adolescence," Boag said. "There is no evidence that Cather was a lesbian, but the theory of transgender fits her situation, and there is evidence to back the theory up."

Boag also talked about the changes in the Midwestern non-heterosexual attitudes long ago, after the coming of the Europeans.

"The Native American community had a much greater acceptance of those who fell outside the traditional male-female gender roles," Boag said. "The European standards penetrated the society over time and changed these values."

Boag said American Indian cultures gave non-heterosexual members of their community honored positions and respect. Boag said the gay members of the community were allowed to practice the roles of the opposite sex if they liked, and some were even allowed to pursue homosexual relationships.

To illustrate how society views non-heterosexual culture today, Boag used an example of pop culture.

"To Wong Foo; Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar" shows the initial impact of non-heterosexuals entering an unaccepting community.

"Three New York drag queens find themselves in the middle of rural Nebraska, and they truly make the best of the situation," Boag said.

In the movie, small-town residents do not easily accept the three drag queens, he said. The movie relayed some of the old American Indian values that had been forgotten.

"The drag queens put life back into the small town and they earn acceptance from the people that live there," Boag said.

Boag also made comments on the present state of the gay community. Boag said he was glad more people accept gays and lesbians in society, but also spoke of the horrible backlash that comes along with that acceptance.

ASUN honors, remembers deceased UNL staff member

By KASEY KERBER
Staff Reporter



after a voice vote.

ASUN opened its meeting Wednesday with a moment of silence for Kim Hobson, a student organization consultant in the Office of Student Involvement.

Hobson died Saturday of a heart attack.

ASUN President Eric Marintzer gave a short speech on what Hobson meant to the university.

"She was extremely dedicated to her work," Marintzer said. "And when I say she was a friend, she was to the many students whom she worked with."

ASUN also passed a government bill in honor of Hobson and sending ASUN's sincerest condolences to her family.

In other ASUN news:

■ Senate Bill No. 20 was passed, addressing the danger of pedestrian/motor vehicle accidents along the intersections of 14th and Vine streets and 17th and Vine streets.

Since there has been no immediate action by the Office of Public Works or the city of Lincoln, ASUN will direct its Government Liaison Committee to urge the appropriate city offices to resolve the issue.

■ ASUN also passed Bylaw F

The bylaw amended Bylaws 2 and 3. It required the ASUN president be part of additional committees, and an ASUN newsletter be primarily shifted to its World Wide Web Page. It also advocated forming an Information Services Committee.

■ Senate Bill No. 21 was passed unanimously, extending ASUN support to an idea proposed by the University of Nebraska at Kearney, suggesting a fall break during the middle of fall semester.

The fall semester would start two days earlier because of the break. Students would get a short break midway through the semester.

■ ASUN senators received Allocation Bills No. 5, 6 and 7, in which the Committee for Fees Allocation approved a 6.9-percent budget increase for Campus Recreation, a 1.9-percent budget increase for the Nebraska and East Unions and no budget increase for the University Health Center.

ASUN will vote next week whether to accept the recommendations of the Committee for Fees Allocation and pass Allocation Bills No. 5, 6 and 7.

Bars battle for title of oldest

BATTLE from page 1

beat-up decor — tattered bar stools at the Rail, dark wood paneling at Duffy's — but still bring in steady crowds from the universities.

The first liquor license granted in town belonged to a bar where Knickerbocker's now stands, but the bar has changed ownership and names several times, Duffy's owner Reg McMeen said.

Tommy Mausbach, owner of the Rail, says his proof of its "oldest bar" status is brittle, yellowed checks from the Rail to local companies dated 1935. A Lincoln resident found the box of old checks while remodeling his house and brought them into the bar, Mausbach said.

Mausbach, who has owned the bar for a year and a half, added that the Rail may have been a speakeasy before the 1920 Prohibition.

"The Brass Rail is the oldest bar in Lincoln," he insists.

But Duffy's owner stakes the same claim.

"I have documentation that says Duffy's is older than the Brass Rail," McMeen said.

McMeen said when he bought Duffy's 10 years ago, he went to the state archives and found records that showed Duffy's had received its liquor license two months before the Rail did in 1936. Although the Rail had checks in 1935, it doesn't mean it had a liquor license then.

Banding together

Duffy's brings 'em in with bands and bowls — fishbowls, that is.

The fishbowl phenomenon started six months after McMeen bought Duffy's. He heard about the fishbowl technique at a bar on a South Dakota Air Force base.

Take a fishbowl, fill it with any

well drink (and lots of ice), and stick in long straws for a drink that can be shared by several people. Fishbowls start at \$6.50.

Another big draw for Duffy's is its bands.

Andy Fairbairn books bands for Duffy's and said the bar started bringing in bands after another popular Lincoln bar, the Drumstick at 48th and Vine streets, closed.

"If you were any kind of cool band, you played the Drumstick," Fairbairn said. Those who had graced its stage included Soul Asylum and R.E.M., he said.

Duffy's boasts bands such as Nirvana, 311, The Millions, Henry Rollins and the Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

"I don't think the campus realizes this," McMeen said. "We've had all kinds of great bands here."

And if Duffy's isn't popular with this four-year generation of students, McMeen said, just wait a few years.

"It's a rotational thing," McMeen said. "Each generation of college students picks a bar to be theirs."

"There's one hot college bar for a couple years, then it's somewhere else."

Last call home

One might wonder at first glance why the Rail is consistently one of those hot college bars.

It's home to wobbly, mangled bar stools and bright green walls; it's smokier than a barbecue pit. Bartenders say the thick smoke even bothers smokers. Mausbach says he knows the bar lacks frills, and that's fine.

"I've heard it many a times and I don't take offense to it," he said.

One touch of class is boarded behind the Rail's west wall. A forest

scene with a deer, a lake and trees is painted on the wall, and it's been named a Nebraska state monument, Mausbach said.

According to his lease, he can't touch the wall if it would hurt the mural. And, anyway, to restore the painting might actually detract from the bar, he said.

The painting needs to be restored but would be too costly, Mausbach said, so it remains covered by boards emblazoned with the bar's name.

No matter the decor, students keep coming back year after year. Owners and bartenders at the Rail say tradition plays a big part in the bar's popularity.

Brad Mausbach, Tommy Mausbach's brother and a bartender at the Rail, said the bar's reputation as a greek hangout is grounded in truth, but groups who have frequented the Rail in past years have been more diverse than usual. He also cited tradition as a reason for the bar's popularity.

Brad Mausbach also said customer service might draw the crowds back. "We very much like to focus on service to our customer," he said.

One addition is the Rail's month-old World Wide Web site at <www.thebrassrail.com>.

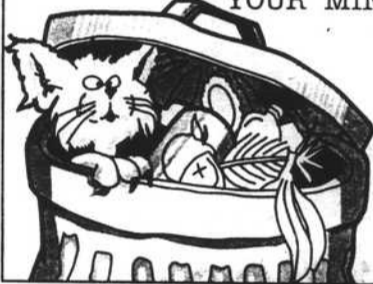
It features upcoming bands, drink specials, a "Family Photo Album" with pictures of regulars, and a special "bathroom" page — telling the reader to "Print this page out. You may need toilet paper while visiting the Brass Rail."

Like McMeen, Tommy Mausbach said he's not worried about shifting interest in college bars.

"Competitiveness is always there," he said. "But I'm not worried that the Rail will ever close because of lack of business."

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| F 28 WOMEN'S SOFTBALL/V AT COLUMBUS, GA 4:00 PM MEN'S TENNIS/V AT BOISE STATE 9:00 AM | S 1 WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS/V VS. IOWA STATE DEVANEY SPORTS CTR. 2:00 PM MEN'S TENNIS/V AT BOISE STATE, 9:00 AM MEN'S GYMNASTICS/V VS. IOWA DEVANEY SPORTS CTR., 2:00 PM MEN'S BASEBALL/V AT MINNESOTA, 7:00 PM | S 2 MEN'S BASKETBALL/V VS. KANSAS DEVANEY SPORTS CTR. 2:45 PM (TV: ABC) MEN'S TENNIS/V AT BOISE STATE, 9:00 AM MEN'S WRESTLING/V AT OKLAHOMA STATE, 1:00 PM |
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