

Candidates show accord

BY BRIAN CARLSON
Senior Reporter

FREMONT — The hottest sparks that flew at Sunday night's Republican gubernatorial debate in Fremont were in the grill John Breslow's supporters used to cook some pre-debate hamburgers.

GOP gubernatorial candidates Breslow, Jon Christensen, and Mike Johanns showed broad agreement on conservative principles, often using similar language as they spoke of the need for tax breaks, greater government efficiency, family values and programs for retaining Nebraska's brightest students during the debate, sponsored by the Dodge County Republican Party.

Although the proceedings were amicable, candidates disagreed about plans to limit government spending and provide tax relief.

Breslow, the state auditor, promised to reduce spending by 5 percent during each year of his term by improving efficiency. He also would slash property

taxes by 25 percent, he said.

Christensen, the 2nd congressional district's member of the U.S. House of Representatives, favors tax breaks cemented by a constitutional amendment limiting the growth of state spending to 1 to 2 percent per year.

Johanns, the mayor of Lincoln, supports a constitutional amendment to cap state spending and efforts to lower the tax burden. He emphasized the importance of limiting state mandates that local governments have difficulty carrying out because of local spending lids.

Breslow compared state government to a gas-guzzling car. By eliminating wasteful spending in state entities, Breslow said, state government can save enough to provide property tax relief.

"I'm in favor of very strong lids on state and local government spending," he said. "Right now the loopholes in lid laws are huge."

Johanns said he has proven his ability to lower taxes. He also transformed a \$1 million deficit at the time he took office in 1991 to an \$18 million surplus

today, he said.

Johanns said his proposal for tax relief would address the state's labor shortage and student "brain drain" by providing economic incentives for employment in Nebraska.

The debate lacked fireworks or harsh words, but in interviews after the debate, candidates were more critical.

Christensen said Breslow's property tax relief proposal would be a tough sell in the State Capitol.

"Every commercial should have a little disclaimer saying, 'Subject to approval of 49 legislators,'" he said.

Breslow defended his plan, noting it had the support of former GOP governors Charley Thone and Kay Orr and Omaha tax watchdog Ed Jaksha.

Breslow, who handed out press releases claiming he led in the polls with 33 percent to Christensen's 23 percent and Johanns' 20 percent, said he would run a positive campaign, and Johanns reiterated his pledge to make no attacks on his opponents.

Staff has final say on rigor

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devoting their time to studying, not to cashing at a grocery store.

Because the changes Bahar calls for are societal, he said many people, including university faculty, students, parents and legislators, had to be involved in working toward a solution.

The solution, Bahar said, is allowing students to attend a university without working at jobs that have nothing to do with their majors.

With the extra time students will have by not working, Bahar said, they could take advantage of world-class opportunities at UNL.

Bahar said students have to put in the effort to take advantage of special programs like undergraduate research, which he said was offered at UNL.

"It's very hard to make students do anything that doesn't contribute immediately to their objective, which is just getting by," Bahar said.

To go beyond "just getting by," Bahar said, he creates challenging courses for his students.

But because UNL's student body consists of both those at the top of their classes and the average "rank-and-file student," it is necessary for Bahar to teach at two levels.

"The top students cannot be short-changed," Bahar said, "but we can't say (to the average students), 'We're going to put up the post, and if you can't jump over it, you're done.'"

Sean Courtney, professor of vocational and adult education, said faculty members should strive to use innovative ways of teaching.

By implementing "learner-based" teaching, Courtney said, the concern with academic rigor would take care of itself.

"(New research) is forcing us to rethink what classrooms are about and what the role of the teacher is in student learning," Courtney said.

He said traditional classrooms in which the teacher was the center of learning were outdated.

Instead, rigorous classrooms are those where students and teachers have a dialogue with each other, and a teacher is more of a "facilitator" than a lecturer, Courtney said.

The assessment of learning, Courtney said, was something under consideration by many faculty members.

Research shows, Courtney said, that students learn better when they set class goals and assess their completion of those goals along with teachers.

"You do have to give grades," Courtney said, "but grades become less important than the fact that the students themselves are sensing what they're learning, along with the teachers."

The focus of academic rigor discussions, Courtney said, should be on teaching.

Ford said continuing discussions will help "academic rigor" become a reality in all UNL classes.

"I want to say that we should just tend to our garden — just worry about students when they get here — and we should do that," Ford said. "But we also, as universities, need to try to influence society."

Store owner says closing forced by UNL

BY BRAD DAVIS
Senior Reporter

The owner of downtown Lincoln's Nebraska Spirit store said he's being forced to close his store because of unfair competition from UNL.

Brent White, owner of Nebraska Spirit, which also houses the Greek Shop, said it was no longer profitable to design and sell Nebraska athletic wear because two government-run competitors were less than a half-mile away from his shop.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's University Bookstore, along with UNL's newly opened Huskers Authentic store, have proved to be too much competition for his store, he said.

And when a government agency competes against you, White said, it has considerable advantages as a tax-exempt entity.

But Gary Fouraker, UNL's Associate Athletic Director for Business Affairs, said White had been "singing this song" for some time, and if other stores could com-

pete, so could White's.

"It's funny that there seem to be a lot of other stores that carry Nebraska merchandise that don't seem to be having the same problem," Fouraker said.

In any event, Fouraker said, Huskers Authentic carries different merchandise than White's store.

Huskers Authentic bills itself as carrying some merchandise not available anywhere else — most of which is worn by NU athletic teams.

White said Huskers Authentic's original plan was to carry merchandise that could not be found at other stores. But now, White said, about 75 percent of the store's inventory could be found somewhere else.

"It's a competition for revenue," White said, "no matter what they sell."

"That \$150 for a jacket could have been spent at any private business. A jacket is still a jacket."

Nebraska Spirit, White said, designs and produces its own apparel, which eliminates the "middle man" between factories and stores.

At the beginning of the year, White said, he put his Nebraska

Spirit and Team Spirit screen printing businesses up for sale, but with the increased competition Huskers Authentic posed, he was unable to sell the store.

White is requesting the university close Huskers Authentic's doors and move its inventory to the University Bookstore.

If closed, White said, the existing Authentic store could become an NU Hall of Fame museum.

He said it didn't make any sense for UNL to operate two stores selling basically the same thing.

Huskers Authentic's closing would bring justice to the taxpayers of the state, White said, by closing a store that competed against its own citizens.

But in a letter to the Lincoln Independent Business Association, UNL Chancellor James Moeser said shoppers would pay the same taxes at the university store as they would at any other store.

"While it is the case that the university is exempt from certain taxes, it is not the case that merchandise sales are exempt from any sales tax," he said.

Party seeks diversity in ASUN

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Miller said COMMIT's proposed NU Week of campuswide activities, similar to Homecoming, and an improved environment for international students would make more students feel welcome at UNL and ASUN.

Miller said right now he did not feel represented in ASUN.

"As a student of color, I can sympathize with international students," Miller said. "With COMMIT we are very open and very willing to make personal visits and let them know we care."

Miller said the biggest problem at UNL was "the (racial) divide," but an ASUN senate with all types of students could help close that divide.

"Diversity is so much more than ethnic and racial backgrounds," Linder said. "It's about different perspectives and being involved with different things."

Linder, who is a student assistant in Schramm Hall, said COMMIT senatorial candidates such as Miller, Urrvano Gomez, a member of Latinos United in Pursuit of Academic Excellence; Paul Schreier, who works heavily with UNL Information Services; and Olusegun Okubanjo, a UNL graduate student from England all would bring different perspectives to COMMIT.

COMMIT's platform also includes updating the ASUN Web site, introducing an award for instructor best integrating technology in the classroom,

and beginning an alcohol-awareness orientation for new students.

Through continued personal visits to student organizations by Hoffschneider and Linder, Russell said COMMIT remains on a mission to hear different opinions. "People tend to appreciate personal contact," Russell said. "You take time out of your day to come see them."

Linder said when she attends student organization meetings she is always listening for student concerns to add to her idea page.

"Our platform was developed from ideas and concerns students brought to us," Linder said. "We did not start it until January because we wanted to find students concerns."



Alleged murderer arrested

Lincoln's SWAT Team was called into action Thursday afternoon to apprehend a man wanted for murder in Omaha.

James Bradley was arrested at a home in the 1600 block of Southwest 10th Street after he fled, nude, out the back door of his house. Bradley didn't get far before SWAT Team members made the arrest, Lincoln Police Sgt. Terry Sherrill said.

Bradley was wanted for the September 1997 murder of Victor McFarlane, Omaha Police Sgt. Bill Kingston said.

McFarlane had just arrived at his veterinarian's office with his dog when Bradley burst in the door, shot the dog and McFarlane.

Bradley was positively identified by a witness at the scene of the murder, and police have been looking for him since September.

Bradley was transferred back to Omaha Friday, where he will be tried for murder.

Men arrested for possession

Police arrested two men for possession of crack cocaine around 10 p.m. Thursday after the Lincoln/Lancaster County Narcotics Task Force executed a search warrant at a home in the 1600 block of Whittier Street.

Mickey Williams, 33, and Terrion Atkins, 18, were arrested at their home after police found nearly 40 grams of crack cocaine and \$1,600 cash, Lincoln Police Narcotics Capt. Duane Bullock said.

Both men were arrested for possession of a controlled substance, and more charges could follow. The children found at the house were taken by social services, and the men were also cited for neglect.

Complaints from neighbors led police to the home, which they kept under surveillance for a couple of weeks before obtaining the warrant.

Chlorine found in water

Firefighters spent six hours Thursday night tracking down the source of a high concentration of chlorine in the water system on West O

Street that gave some Super 8 Motel customers an unpleasant shower.

Calls reporting a stinging sensation in the shower accompanied by a strong chlorine smell began coming in from the Super 8 Motel, 2635 W. O St., around 10 p.m., Lincoln Fire Department Chief Ron Kennett said.

Firefighters tested the water in surrounding businesses to find the extent of the contamination.

The chlorine originated from a new water main on West A Street that had been installed recently. As a precaution, the water department always sanitizes new pipes with a high concentration of chlorine.

One of the valves on the new pipe leaked, sending the chlorine into the water system.

Once the source of the chlorine was pinpointed, firefighters shut off the valve and opened fire hydrants to drain the pipe.

After the affected businesses ran their faucets for a few minutes, the chlorine was gone.

The only lingering effect of the chlorine was some additional sediment in the water system Friday that could be eliminated by running the water for a few minutes.

Don't steal the Charmin

A homeless man was arrested for stealing a package of Charmin Bath Tissue from the Region Three group home at 1405 C Street 4:30 a.m. Friday.

An employee found Danny Edwards, 31, hiding behind the office door after the employee was awakened by noise in the office, Sherrill said.

Edwards, holding a package of Charmin, told the employee he was just looking for a place to stay.

While the employee called the police Edwards ducked out, but police caught up with him not far from the home.

Edwards matched the description so police conducted a pat-down search, which revealed the missing Charmin. Edwards was arrested for burglary.

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