

Off-campus groups debate lid's elements

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you there's going to be a taxpayer's revolt," Wolf said.

Ed Jaksha, a longtime tax watchdog and leading proponent, was just as adamant about the need for tax relief.

"I think it's troublesome that anyone should refuse to respond to the hue and cry of people generally for lower taxes," he said.

Taxation seesaw

But Jim Griess, executive director of the Nebraska State Education Association, said the amendment would hurt schools both by ending property tax relief efforts and forcing cuts in staff and programs.

One cause for increased government spending in recent years has been greater state aid for local governments and school districts. But Griess contended that the amendment's spending restrictions would freeze state aid to schools.

For instance, he said the Legislature's 1997 allocation of \$110 million in state aid to schools, designed to compensate for state-mandated property tax mill levy reductions, would have been impossible under the lid.

With less state aid, he said, two things could happen: Property taxes could be increased to replenish school funding, or school's staff and programs could be cut - or both.

Christiansen agreed.

"The irony is, this proposal raises property taxes," he said.

But Wolf said the contention that the amendment would hurt property tax relief efforts was "unmitigated nonsense."

He said the amendment stipulates that cuts in state aid would have to be across the board - no single agency, institution or program would carry the burden.

A share of the pie

Opponents of Initiative 413 also have noted that since the 1960s, total state and local government spending as a percentage of the total income of Nebraska taxpayers has stayed relatively constant, at about 10-11 percent.

Bill Lock, a research analyst for the Legislature's Revenue Committee, confirmed those figures and noted that the percentage, now at 10.2 percent, was actually lower than in past years because of tax cuts passed by the 1998 Legislature.

"It's coming down anyway, and quite frankly it's never really gone up," he said.

But Wolf said the comparison of state spending growth to the growth

in citizens' incomes was an inappropriate comparison. The fact that citizens' incomes have grown doesn't give the government the right to claim its share of that growth, he said.

"To set a revenue plan not based on what you need but on what you think you should be taking out of someone's pocket ... that's such a backward way to determine the revenue you need," Wolf said.

Just as businesses must keep their spending in line with inflation, Wolf said, so should state government.

But Christiansen said schools and governments often face costs that rise faster than the Consumer Price Index, a federal government measurement of inflation.

For instance, he said, libraries have faced rapidly increasing costs for books. Schools have confronted paper prices rising at 10 percent annually - much higher than the CPI, now at about 2 percent.

Calling for accountability

Wolf also criticized University of Nebraska administrators for their protests that NU would face a \$20 million cut under the amendment.

That assessment was based on a study by the Legislature's Revenue Committee. The study determined the amendment could force the state to cut \$77.5 million of existing programs, some of which NU would have to bear.

But Wolf and Jaksha both said NU administrators should examine their administrative effectiveness under current budgets, especially given the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's slip to the third tier of universities in this year's U.S. News & World Report ratings.

"If I were a parent or a student, I would take a look at the administration of the university," Jaksha said. "Before the university cries foul, it ought to prove it is doing a good job of managing its resources."

The next step in the amendment fight is a Nebraskaans for the Good Life legal challenge now being considered by the Lancaster County District Court. The group contends the amendment violates state law limiting petitions to one subject.

Christiansen said he expects the court to rule soon on whether the case will go to trial in October. In any case, he said, the legal action probably would not keep the amendment off the November ballot.

Opponents of the initiative plan a rally Saturday at the Orpheum Theater in Omaha, starting at 10 a.m. U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey will be the featured speaker.

Students Against the Lid meets

By IEVA AUGSTUMS
Staff writer

Students Against the Lid met for the first time Thursday to discuss strategies and techniques on educating UNL students about a proposed constitutional amendment they said would increase tuition.

"We need to show people that they do have a vested interest in this issue," ASUN President Sara Russell said. "This is a big university - it affects all of us."

The newly formed organization is concentrating its efforts on lobbying against Initiative 413, a proposed state amendment that, if passed, would cut \$20 million from the NU system's budget, according to university budget estimates.

Russell, who helped organize the group, said Students Against the Lid would help inform the UNL commu-

nity about the lid's adverse effects. "I'm at a loss on trying to get students off their butt," Russell told the 15 students at the meeting. "This is where you come in."

ASUN Government Liaison Committee Chairwoman Angie Klein said students don't necessarily have to be against the lid to be in the group.

"We want to be an informational organization," Klein said. "Our goal is to get the word out."

Russell said the group is independent of UNL student government. But, she said, ASUN is supportive of Students Against the Lid's efforts.

"We are carrying this issue on our backs now," Russell said. "We must organize. We must educate. We must get out and vote against it."

Students Against the Lid will meet again Thursday at 5 p.m. in the Nebraska Union.

Steven Ambrose details lives of Lewis and Clark

By ADAM KLINKER
Staff writer

Lively storytelling made for a memorable history lesson Thursday evening as world-renowned historian and author Stephen Ambrose talked to attendants of the Governor's Lecture in the Humanities at Kimball Recital Hall.

Ambrose, author of "Undaunted Courage" about the Lewis and Clark expedition of the early 19th century, spoke in conjunction with the Nebraska Humanities Council, which was celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Introduced by Gov. Ben Nelson, Ambrose lectured on the legendary journey of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark over the previously uncharted terrain of the Missouri River Valley and Louisiana Purchase.

Ambrose thanked the Nebraska Humanities Council for its support of research and arts.

"Your support for the humanities is God's work," he said. "Bless you for it."

Ambrose then led the audience on a verbally guided history of the expedition from its beginning in 1804 to its end in 1806 and the events in the years following.

"I envy Meriwether Lewis for so many things," Ambrose said. "I envy him for his great adventure and everything that went into it. But what I envy (him) for the most is his friendship with William Clark."

Ambrose spoke about not only the

trials and exploits of Lewis and Clark, but also the friendship shared between the two captains of the voyage.

"They had developed a trust in each other that was complete," Ambrose said. "Modern people just didn't do what they did."

Ambrose regaled the audience with many interesting sidelights of the voyage.

He included a few stories about mishaps, running out of food and making it back to St. Louis, the beginning and terminal point of the voyage, with only gunpowder, ammunition, paper and ink.

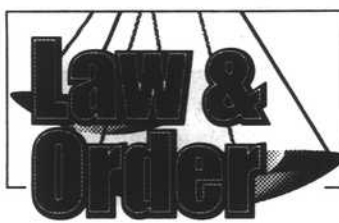
For much of the last leg of the voyage, the two captains and their remaining 29 (only one man died in the unit) enlisted men sustained themselves with dog meat, among other things.

"I was very impressed," said sophomore speech pathology major Laura Beukenhorst. "He really knows how to tell a story and make it applicable to our time."

After speaking for just over an hour, Ambrose entertained many questions about not only his research with the Lewis and Clark expedition, but his well known work in military history.

In concluding the lecture, Ambrose again spoke of the indomitable ties of friendship between Lewis and Clark and the importance of friendships in our lives.

"For Lewis and Clark, (friendship) was an ecstasy and a critical factor in their success."



Traffic stop ends in arrest

A routine traffic stop led police to a wanted man and a sawed-off shotgun Wednesday morning.

When Lincoln police stopped the man around 9:45 a.m. for speeding, they found he had an outstanding warrant, Sgt. Ann Heermann said.

After arresting the 30-year-old, police searched the car and found a sawed-off shotgun in the back.

The gun's barrel and the stock had been sawed off, and there was a shell loaded into the chamber.

He was charged with speeding, carrying a concealed weapon and his previous warrant.

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