

Daily Nebraskan

Wednesday, January 19, 1999

dailyneb.com

Vol 99, Issue 83

Something Fishy

Japanese photos make their first
Midwestern appearance in Omaha
this weekend. A&E, PAGE 9

DN Issues

Is Martin Luther King Jr.
Day being celebrated the
right way?

OPINION, PAGE 5

Johanns halves regents' request

■ Board had asked for \$8 million to cover rising employee health care costs.

By Jill Zeman

Staff writer

The university is feeling the effects of a tight state budget this year.

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents requested \$8 million from the state for employee health care costs, but Gov. Mike Johanns agreed to meet them just halfway.

Johanns recommended in his initiatives and budget adjustments report to allocate \$4 million. Johanns said the money would be split between fiscal years 1999-00 and 2000-01.

The recommendation would go to the appropriations committee and would have to be approved by the Legislature.

NU employee health care costs have skyrocketed recently, so it was necessary for the regents to request \$8 million, said Regent Don Blank of McCook.

The money requested by the regents was to help with employee health care costs in the future, said Regent Drew Miller of Papillion.

"We're not out of funds yet, but we want to build for the future so we're not in a position where we don't have any money," Miller said.

Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said she was disheartened when she heard Johanns was requesting only half of what the university needed for rising health care costs.

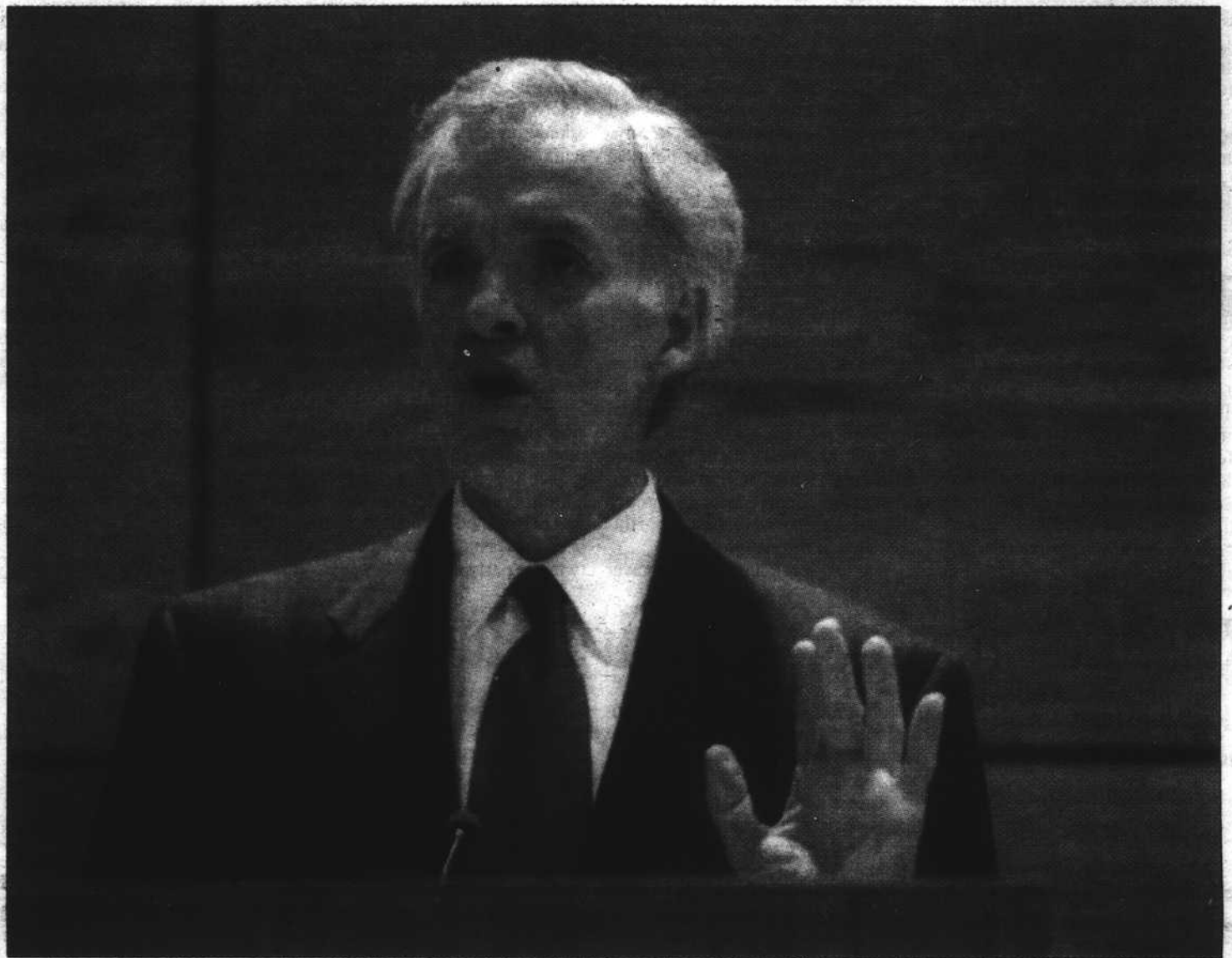
She said the state was facing the same problem as the university.

"I'm disappointed that the governor wasn't more understanding of this," O'Brien said.

O'Brien said she anticipated the university would still ask the Legislature for the full \$8 million. The Legislature will decide what to allocate, but Johanns does have the power to veto the senators' decision.

Last year the university received the largest increase in budget allocations in eight

Please see **REGENTS** on 3



Mike Warren/DN

SEN. BOB KERREY joined a panel of speakers in the auditorium of the Nebraska Union to discuss the dangers of nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War era. Kerrey said an accidental launch of foreign nuclear weapons was possible.

Kerrey warns about nuclear weapons

By Cara Pesek

Staff writer

U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey, along with three members of the Committee on Nuclear Policy, spoke to university students Tuesday at the Nebraska Union.

Their mission: to inform students about the dangers of nuclear weapons.

A new program called Jumpstart brought the panelists to the university, said Patrice McMahon, assistant professor of political science.

The discussion was a test case for the program, which aims to

inform U.S. citizens about nuclear danger and to motivate them to do something about it, McMahon said.

In front of a nearly full auditorium, panel members told students nuclear weapons are the greatest danger facing the United States.

"The biggest threat continues to be Russian nuclear forces," said Jesse James, executive director of the U.S. Committee on Nuclear Policy. James said the sooner the United States and Russia can work out problems regarding nuclear weapons, the better.

Another problem facing the United States, James said, is that

"The biggest threat continues to be Russian nuclear forces."

Jesse James

executive director of the U.S. Committee on Nuclear Policy

few Americans realize nuclear weapons are a threat at all.

According to the panel members, the threat is not of a deliberate missile launch but rather of an accidental or terrorist attack.

John Steinbruner, director of the Center for International Security Studies, explained how an accidental launch is possible.

"The (Russian) government doesn't have enough financial base to do much of anything," Steinbruner said. Still, it feels obligated to keep between 2,000 and 2,500 nuclear missiles ready to fire at all times.

Russia doesn't have the

Please see **KERREY** on 3

Legislative bill to pay for needed Sheldon renovations

"The focus on the condition of the art collection is important. There's a lot of talk about us being the jewel of the state."

Dan Siedell

Sheldon curator, interim director

By Veronica Daehn

Staff writer

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery is not just for students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

It's a treasure that Lincoln and Nebraska residents benefit from as well, Sen. LaVon Crosby of Lincoln said.

Because of the museum's influence, Crosby introduced a bill that would give about \$3.6 million to the gallery for renovations.

"The Sheldon building is important to preserve," Crosby said. "The whole state shares in its ownership and pride."

The money would be used to improve the Sheldon's heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems.

Dan Siedell, Sheldon curator and interim

director, said the ventilation system was installed in 1963 when the building opened, and renovations to the building were long overdue.

"We're to the point now where the system needs to be renovated to make this a 21st century museum," Siedell said.

Because of the old system, it is difficult to control temperature and humidity. Artwork is sensitive to heat and can be damaged if the conditions are not under control.

Crosby realized this and wanted to help the gallery keep its collection in good shape.

"I'm very hopeful people will see the point (of the bill)," she said. "Comparatively, it's not a lot of money."

Siedell said he is hopeful the bill passes, too.

"The focus on the condition of the art collection is important," Siedell said. "There's a lot of talk about us being the jewel of the state."

"There's a lot of pride taken in the gallery, and this project bears on the preservation of it."

Crosby's Legislative Aide C.K. Duryea said the money would be given to the Sheldon to use for the fiscal year 2000-01, which runs from July 1-June 30, 2001.

The bill may go to the appropriations committee by the end of January.

Although Siedell said he doesn't want to think about the bill not passing, the renovations will still have to happen.

"We'll have to find a way to do it," he said. "The crisis situation doesn't just go away."

About 100,000 people visit the Sheldon each year. Admission is free, and the gallery is open to the public.

"The service we provide to the university community," Siedell said. "It's not just the university's art museum - it's the community's and the state's collection."