

—ASUN—

In runoff, senate picks new speaker

By Sara Salkeld
Staff writer

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska elected its speaker of the senate for the 2000-2001 term at its Wednesday meeting.

Arts and Sciences Sen. Jason Mashek was elected after a runoff with fellow Arts and Sciences Sen. Nathan Fuerst.

The other senators nominated at last week's meeting along with Mashek and Fuerst included Graduate Sen. Vicki Geiser and Arts and Sciences Sen. Urrvano Gamez.

Each nominee was given five minutes for a presentation, followed by five minutes for the senators to ask them questions. Then, without the nominees present, the senate had 30 minutes to discuss the candidates and cast a secret-ballot vote.

During the initial discussion, Mashek and Fuerst were the only nominees specifically mentioned by the senators.

Senators speaking on behalf of Mashek mentioned his professional persona as an asset.

"He has professionalism and

experience," said College of Business Sen. David Kavanaugh.

Kavanaugh said Mashek also balances old and new ideas.

"He has new ideas and brings new thoughts," Kavanaugh said. "He will bring a lot of new and original ideas while keeping the old ones intact."

Fuerst said even though he was the only nominee who had not served as an ASUN senator before, he had unofficial experience with ASUN.

Arts and Sciences Sen. Angela Clements spoke of Fuerst's devotion to his job and ASUN.

"He loves that office; he eats lunch in there every day," Clements said. "I know he plans to spend more than the required hour and a half a week in that office."

A candidate for speaker needs at least 51 percent of the votes to win.

No senator received this majority, so a run-off was held between Mashek and Fuerst. Mashek won by a simple majority.

"I won against a very good candidate," Mashek said.

"I look forward to working with the execs, and I am really looking forward to next year."

Bike theft rises in spring

By Michelle Starr
Staff writer

As the mercury starts to rise, so do the number of bicycles stolen on campus.

According to University Police records, 88 bicycles have been stolen over the last three years during the months of March, April, May and June.

At least one-third of the total bicycles stolen each year were stolen in the spring.

Bicycles are also vulnerable to theft in the fall, especially in September, according to 1997 and 1998 statistics.

University Police Assistant Chief Mylo Bushing said up-to-date information on 1999 and 2000 has not yet been compiled.

Andrew Wright, a sophomore architecture major, said his bicycle was stolen March 20 outside his room at Harper Residence Hall. His bike was locked up at the time it was stolen, he said.

"I love riding my bike," Wright said. "That's what I do. This was a \$1,000 bike, and I'm really upset that someone stole it."

Bushing said it is important to lock bikes up, and it can help to use two locks, one for the front tire and the other for the bicycle's body.

Wright, though he has a car, usually rode his bicycle to Architecture Hall and around town; he said having his bike stolen was an inconvenience.

He said he would have kept the bicycle in his room, but he didn't have the space.

Also, Wright said he only paid \$600 for the bicycle valued at \$1,000, but he had to pay a \$500 deductible to his insurance company.

So, he said, he would only get \$100, because when he bought the bicycle, it was on sale.

Bushing said as long as the bicycle is registered and is reported stolen, police can watch for it in pawn shops.

If the bicycle doesn't show up in the pawn shops, the bicycle probably has been sold or kept, Bushing said.

Wright did not know what the police were doing about his stolen bicycle, but he didn't think he would get it, or the money it cost, back.

"Pretty much, whoever stole my bike got away with it," Wright said.

Court upholds 1998 decision

■ By not allowing nuclear site construction, state could face lawsuits.

By Michelle Starr
Staff writer

A ruling by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals on Wednesday could leave Nebraska vulnerable to lawsuits for skirting around plans to build a radioactive waste storage site in the state.

The court said, because of a pact signed in 1986, Nebraska could be sued for not allowing the construction of a nuclear site in Boyd County.

Nebraska tried to argue that it would be protected against lawsuits under the 11th Amendment, which protects states' sovereign immunity from most lawsuits seeking money.

"Our objective remains one of raising legal defenses in an effort to limit the potential legal liability for Nebraska taxpayers," Assistant Attorney General Steve Grasz said

in a statement.

"For that purpose, we have employed expert, outside legal counsel to assist us in the defense of this lawsuit."

But, because of the agreement, the court did not agree that Nebraska was protected under the amendment.

Wednesday's decision upheld a U.S. District Court ruling on a 1998 case. Several utility companies and four members of the Central Interstate low-level Radioactive Waste Compact filed against Nebraska. No one from the plaintiff's side was available for comment.

Members of the group, who each signed an agreement in 1986, include Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Nebraska.

Through the agreement, the states said they would develop disposal facilities for low-level nuclear waste generated within their borders; three years later the group selected Nebraska for the waste site.

The District Court ruled that when Nebraska would not allow the commission to build a waste site through avoiding its construction with policies, tests and land licensing, it was not acting in good faith because the agreement was signed.

The opinion also implicated that the court thought Gov. Ben Nelson's administration was partly responsible for interfering in licensing of the proposed site.

The court said before Nelson became governor he promised Boyd County residents that "... it is not likely that there will be a nuclear dump in Boyd County or in Nebraska."

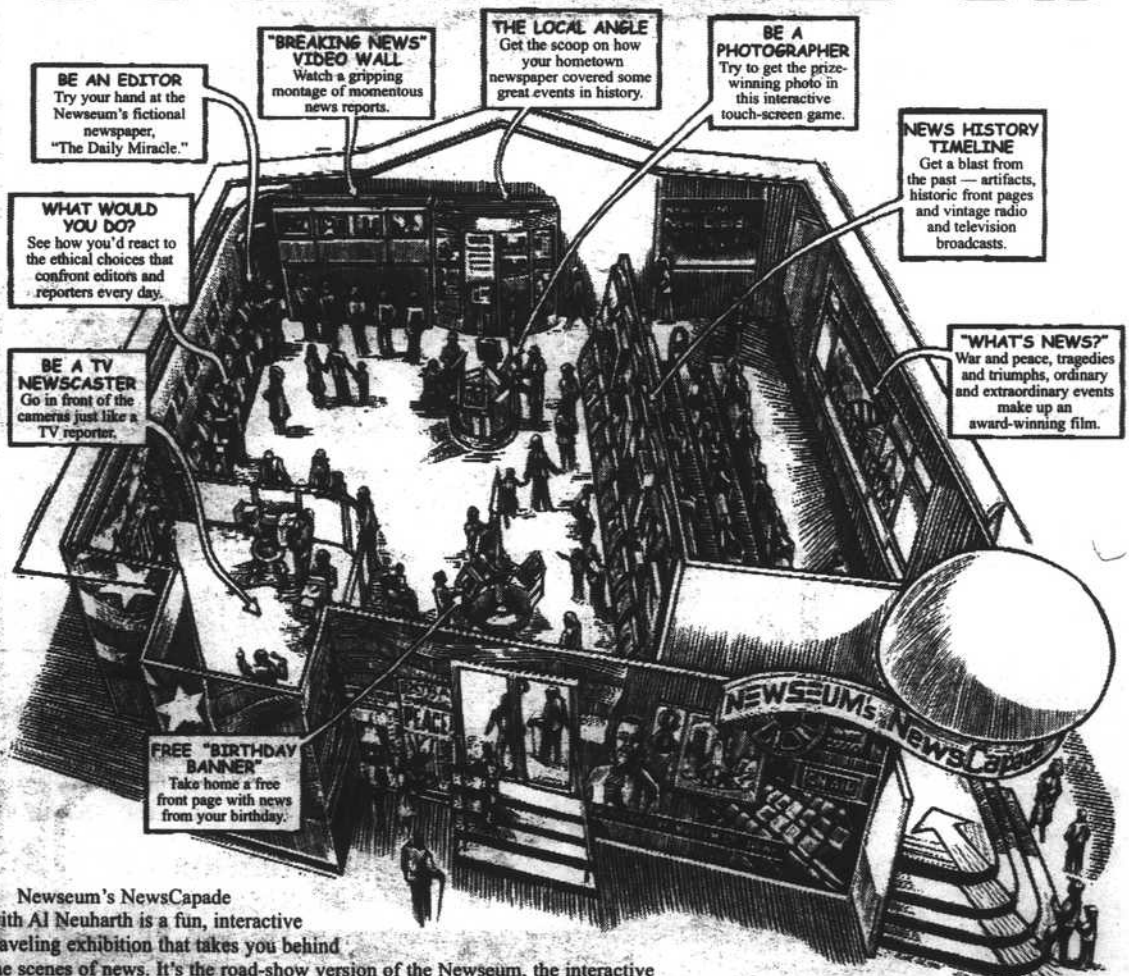
Grasz said the court's opinion showed that political factors tainted the licensing process during the Nelson administration.

"The Attorney General's office cannot undo what was done by the Nelson Administration or change the facts in this case."

Marcia Cady, Nelson's spokeswoman at his campaign office, said Nelson does not comment on pending litigation.

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