

Daily Nebraskan

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Off-campus booze patrol funded by NU Directions

BY JILL ZEMAN

For many UNL partygoers, the sight of blazing blue uniforms, shiny badges and flashing blue and red lights can seem disastrous.

But cops on the prowl for a rowdy party aren't always that obvious.

Undercover police officers permeate many of Lincoln's out-of-hand parties, and now, some of the officers' overtime wages are being paid by NU Directions.

The group, aimed at lowering high-risk drinking among

UNL students, is allocating \$10,000 to the Lincoln Police Department, said Linda Major, NU Directions project coordinator.

The money for the party patrol is taken from a \$700,000 grant NU Directions received from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Half of the \$10,000 will go to party enforcement, and the other half will be used to check whether establishments in Lincoln are serving alcohol to minors, she said.

Major said she thought the

decision would not be popular with students.

"It's definitely not our primary strategy," she said. "It's just a small percentage of the money."

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs James Griesen emphasized that the group's support of the Lincoln Police is just a small aspect of NU Directions' overall goal to reduce high-risk drinking.

"We don't want to worry about every student who gets an MIP or public urination ticket," Griesen said.

"We want to watch students who are preying on underage students to make their money from alcohol sales," he said.

Griesen also said when the university applied for the grant, it specifically said money would be used for law enforcement to target wild parties.

Schools that receive Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grants utilize them in many different ways, said program spokeswoman Lisa Erk.

For example, the University of Iowa in Iowa City uses a portion of its grant money for law

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Linda Major
NU Directions coordinator

enforcement, she said.

"If there are a number of out of control parties, then (paying officers overtime) could be an appropriate use of funds," Erk said.

Both Griesen and Major said an important goal of NU Directions is to respect the per-

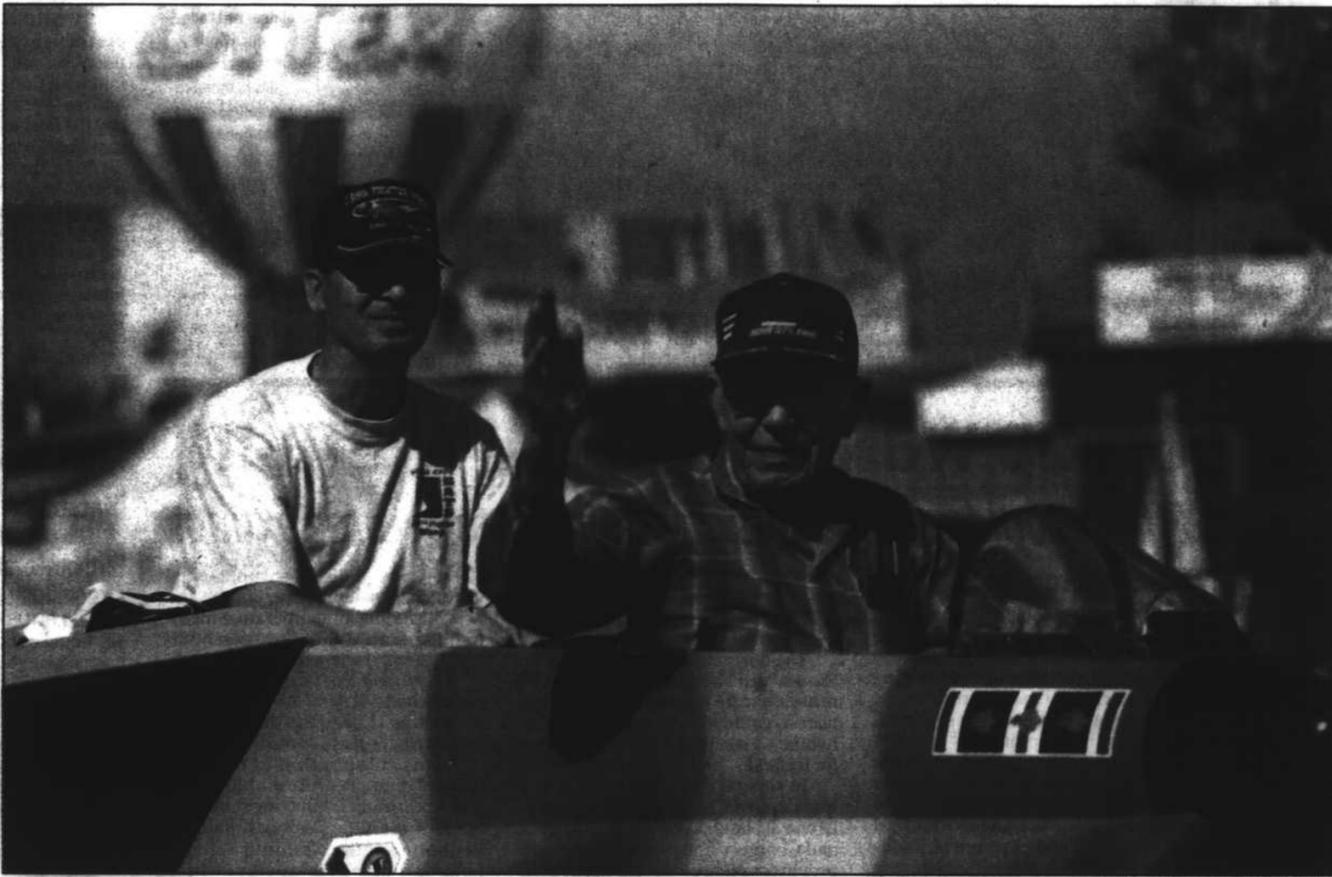
manent occupants of neighborhoods inhabited by students.

"This is certainly not about spoiling people's fun, and it's not about prohibition," Major said.

"We just want to reduce the stress on the neighborhoods."

Please see BOOZE on 3

High-flying Master Sgt. Larry Blair of the 185th Fighter Wing from Sioux City, Iowa (left) shows Joe Floral, 87, of Fort Calhoun around the Nebraska State Fair grounds in a A-7 airplane model car on Wednesday afternoon. Floral rode in a parade with Blair in the A-7 earlier in the day while he was waiting to see his grandson play in the Fort Calhoun High School Marching Band. "He's got to be the oldest participant in the fair so far this year," Blair said.



Nate Wagner/DN

State Fair is sweaty, sticky fun

BY GEORGE GREEN

The sun was so hot that it turned the asphalt roads into sticky strips of slime, which stuck to standing shoes.

The simmering temperatures at the Nebraska State Fair, though, did not bother 87-year-old Joe Floral.

Floral, of Fort Calhoun, is a fair expert. He has been to at least 20 fairs.

Wednesday's fair found Floral buzzing around the grounds waving at bystanders in a motorized, miniature airplane.

The novice pilot came to the fair with his daughter, Anita Kusek, to watch his grandson,

Jim, perform with the Fort Calhoun High School Marching Band.

"I wanted to go this year, because I might not make it back next year," Floral said.

Floral's broad smile shone through his aged face as he rested under the shade of a tree watching his grandson march by beating a snare drum.

Kusek said that her grandfather told her that he would go to the fair alone if she did not want to attend.

"He really loves coming to these things," she said.

When Kusek and Floral entered the fair grounds, Master Sgt. Larry Blair asked Floral if he would like to participate in a

small parade.

Even though he wasn't a kid, Blair chose Floral to ride around in the miniature plane because he seemed like a nice man and he wore an army veterans cap, Blair said.

"I bet he is the oldest person in these parades," Blair said.

Blair, a member of the 185th Fighter Wing in the Iowa Air National Guard, provided free rides to children in his model A-7, F-16 and F-4 airplanes.

The airplanes were the size of small cars and used a miniature engine to propel them around on three wheels.

The 185th Fighter Wing also



Nate Wagner/DN

Sweating in the sun, Tumbleweed and Bobo the clown brave the heat and the sparse crowd Wednesday afternoon at the Nebraska State Fair. Tumbleweed said he has been working fairs such as Nebraska's for the past 14 years. When asked what his job description was, he said, "I help people dunk Bobo, the mouthy clown."

Please see FAIR on 3

Officers may be in stands on game day

BY MARGARET BEHM

Students heading to the Nebraska and San Jose State game might want to think twice before bringing in a booze-filled bottle of Mountain Dew.

Bill Manning, assistant chief of the University Police, confirmed that there may be undercover officers inside or outside the stadium on game day Saturday.

"We do use plain-clothes officers as need dictates," he said. "There are games we may not have any, and there are games where we'll have multiple."

Undercover officers are used for a variety of reasons at the games, Manning said.

For example, at last year's game against Texas A&M, an undercover officer arrested Roger "Doc" Baskerville, a superinten-

dent of schools from Washington, Kan., who also worked as a ticket taker. He let ticketless people into games for cash.

The biggest problem officers covering the games have to face is responding to medical problems, but alcohol is still a problem, Manning said.

"Over the years, we've taken a number of students to detox because of overindulgence of alcohol," he said.

Butch Hug, director of events for the athletic department, said that drinking is not limited to the student section.

"I would not say it's a major problem," he said. "It happens in the student section, but it happens in other sections as well."

Alcohol is not permitted anywhere inside the stadium, Hug said.

"Any alcohol that is brought

in is smuggled in," he said. "No one is authorized to have it."

If students are caught with alcohol, they can receive citations from the police, such as minor in possession. Students can also face sanctions from the university, Manning said.

"Anyone we eject from the stadium, for whatever reason, we do confiscate their ticket," he said. "And we turn their seat number into the athletic department and the student's name into judicial affairs."

Tonda Humphress, assistant to the director for Student Judicial Affairs, said there are a variety of consequences a student could receive.

If Student Judicial Affairs receives a report of an alcohol violation from the University Police, it is a violation of the student code of conduct.

STADIUM REMINDERS

Though Memorial Stadium has no major changes for the year, stadium staff are stressing several reminders to ensure an orderly game day, which include:

- Gates open 90 minutes before kickoff
- Stadium Drive is closed on game days
- No smoking or drinking alcohol in the stadium
- Video cameras, glass, cans, large coolers, backpacks and umbrellas are prohibited
- Parking lots are reserved for Booster Club members
- All four lanes of I-80 will be open in the Lincoln area
- A Big Red Express will shuttle fans to and from various sites for \$2; for information, phone 476-1234

Source: Athletic Department

Melanie Falk/DN

All of the plans thus far are subject to changes from the environmental study and public comments, Dixon said.

Many of those cars are driven by commuters who live in one city and work in the other.

"From our standpoint, the increased traffic from Lincoln will help us," said Dennis Wilson, economic development director for Omaha Mayor Hal Daub.

Businesses considering a move to the area often consider Lincoln and Omaha as one metro area, Charles Lamphear, director of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Bureau of Business Research, said earlier this month.

This widening of the corridor between the two cities may help narrow the gap between them.

"If you have a great transportation network, businesses will be attracted to that," Wilson said.

The construction will widen the Interstate from the Highway 370 interchange outside Omaha to 56th Street in Lincoln. A separate project, which has already started, will widen the road from Omaha to Highway 370.

In addition to the traffic flow,

Please see INTERSTATE on 3

State plan to widen I-80 OK'd

BY JOSH FUNK

The most heavily used road in Nebraska will be getting wider, and business leaders in Lincoln and Omaha are looking forward to the benefits of better transportation.

The increasing volume of vehicles traversing Interstate 80 between the state's two largest cities prompted state officials to approve an extra lane in each direction.

"Essentially, Omaha and Lincoln are growing together more every year," said Vicki Krecek, vice president of communications for the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. "This will certainly be an advantage for both cities."

In 1960, an average of 5,000 cars drove between the cities each day. Today there are 34,000 cars on the same road, and that number is expected to double by 2020, said Eric Dixon, interstate design unit leader for the Nebraska Department of Roads.

Construction on the 44-mile stretch of road could begin as soon as the fall of 2002, and the project is expected to take eight to ten years to complete, Dixon said.

Lincoln officials said the avenue between the two cities is a must.

"There are times of the day when traffic is heavy, and it feels like a rush hour," said Mark Bowen, chief of staff for Lincoln Mayor Don Wesley.

The project is still in the preliminary stages, but the cost is estimated at \$300 million. Those costs are expected to increase by the time the project starts.

The design study for the project is expected to be complete within the next two to three months, Dixon said. Then an environmental impact study will be done.

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