

# Economy, budget are regents' major concerns

By Dennis Onnen

The economy appears to be the major problem facing not only the nation, but the University of Nebraska Board of Regents as well. All six regents interviewed agreed the budget would be the board's major issue this semester.

Regent Edward Schwartzkopf of Lincoln explained the dilemma confronting the board. He said it is faced with a plea from Gov. J. J. Exon to hold spending, while rising costs make that increasingly difficult.

"We need to go to the people of Nebraska and ask them, 'What kind of institution do you really want?'" Schwartzkopf said. "If we're not properly funded, we can't move the institution ahead to excellence."

### "Education pays"

He said he thought most Nebraskans agreed with him that "education does pay" and would be willing to shoulder the financial burden. If a building is needed, Schwartzkopf said, it should be built now rather than later when costs have increased.

Regent Robert Raun of Minden is worried not only about Exon, but about the Legislature as well, as possible budget opponents.

"Our budget request is going to be very difficult to

push through the Legislature," he said.

Regent Kermit Hansen of Omaha said he is seeking "fair and equitable salaries for all employees" in the new budget.

### Teaching quality a concern

Schwartzkopf said he is concerned with the quality of the teaching staff. He said college deans he has talked to do not mind losing faculty members to Big 10 or Ivy League schools, but are upset when professors are lost to schools such as Tulsa and Louisville.

Those regents interviewed said they don't expect the alcohol on campus question to come up again this semester, although some said it would come up eventually.

"Once a year is enough," Raun said.

Jim Sherrets, UNO student government president, is one of three students who were granted nonvoting seats on the board as a result of Constitutional Amendment One which received voter approval in November. He said the student members will have an impact in two ways.

### Students more informed

"Students will be informed as to what's going on, and the regents will know the students' viewpoint," he said.

He cited as an example the regents' last meeting during which larger classes were discussed. The students were able to voice their objections from firsthand experience, he said.

"They're going to relate the problems of the individual campuses," Regent Kermit Wagner of Schuyler said of the student regents. "They've had a definite impact so far."

Regent Robert Koefoot of Grand Island said the students have been well-received and have done a "superb" job, but that it remains to be seen how much impact they will have. "Their impact will be their presence," he said.

### Improved image

Hansen said the image of board members might be improved in students minds by student representation. "Maybe they'll find we're not a bunch of old fogies," he said.

Schwartzkopf said he opposes the way in which student representatives are selected. The heads of student government at UNO, UNL and the Medical Center sit on the board, but he said he is already familiar with their views. He suggested elections specifically for student regent, with the possibility of multiple representatives from each campus.

## Regents to consider raising room rates

By John Kalkowski

In the wake of increased operating costs, UNL may be forced to raise room and board rates in residence halls by 13% next year, according to Richard Armstrong, director of housing.

Following a cost study in November and early December by the Office of University Housing, a proposal to raise the rates about 64 cents per day from \$4.86 this year to approximately \$5.50 next year was presented to the NU Board of Regents, Armstrong said. The regents will consider the proposed increase at their Jan. 18 meeting.

To meet the rising costs of food, utilities, repairs and wages, he said, residence hall rates would increase from \$1095 to \$1235, based on an anticipated average occupancy rate of 86%.

For example, Armstrong said, food prices rose 15% this year and wages 10%. He added that he expects similar increases next year.

### Economy measures taken

During the past two years, residence halls have implemented economy measures which have reduced costs an average of \$115.37 per student occupant. According to Armstrong, if these measures had not been taken, the annual rate could have been raised an additional \$125 next year.

By having employees pay for their meals, the residence halls saved \$50,000 last year, he said. Added items in the snack bars also have increased revenue, he said.

The cafeterias have switched from butter to margarine and from a top-grade orange juice to a step-lower grade, he said.

### Quality not sacrificed

"While we have made significant efforts to cut costs, we have not sacrificed the overall quality of food or service to students," Armstrong said. "At the same time, rising costs of food, utilities, repairs and salaries make the rate increase necessary next year to maintain the quality of food and service."

"Initially we expect some resistance to the increase," Armstrong said. However, Armstrong said there will be no drop in the number of students living in residence halls.

"When the students compare the costs of on- and off-campus housing, they will find no gain by moving off campus," he said.

"The students sign one-year contracts with the Office of University Housing," he said, "and that contract protects them from inflation they might face in off-campus living during that year."

Unlike residence halls at some similar institutions, all operating costs and funds used to pay original construction bonds are financed by room and board rates paid by the students. Armstrong said no tax funds are involved.

### Tax support debated

According to Armstrong, residence halls at many schools technically receive no tax support, but in fact do.

Residence halls at UNL received free snow removal in the past, but Armstrong said the Office of Housing has received notice that it must start paying for the removal.

While many institutions buy water at reduced rates, Armstrong said UNL must pay the normal city rates.

"The subject of tax support for residence halls, especially for utilities, has been tossed about," he said, "but there has been no active consideration and we feel UNL residence halls must pay their own way."

## Classes start despite weather

By Lynn Roberts

The sun shone on Lincoln during most of UNL's winter break, but heavy snows arrived just in time to greet students returning for classes.

According to Bob Van Neste, of the Office of Public Information, classes will begin as scheduled, but students should not take unnecessary steps to return to campus. However, if the students are unable to return, they should contact their instructors when they do return, he said.

General registration will continue on Monday, Van Neste said.

Last Saturday's NU Board of Regents meeting was postponed to 10 a.m. this Saturday at the Regents Hall, because of the weather.

Blizzards struck Lincoln and eastern Nebraska Friday, forcing UNL to shut down almost everything.

Nothing, of course, could stop determined students from registering, and general registration lines kept moving until the regular 4 p.m. Friday deadline.

Low temperatures, winds averaging 35 miles per hour and eight inches of snow caused most Lincoln businesses to close early Friday. Only a few were open Saturday morning.

### Cars, mail stopped

Thousands of abandoned cars blocked major

streets in Omaha and Lincoln, forcing snowplows to carve narrower than usual paths.

The old postman's famous motto, "Neither rain nor snow..." seemed to be forgotten. Mail deliveries were a rare thing in this part of the state Saturday.

For those traveling on Interstate 80 and other highways back to Lincoln, the trip bordered on the impossible. Even 24 hours after the storm hit, many highways, including I-80, were still blocked.

The weekend's blizzard was almost the only blemish on Lincoln's weather picture, which mostly was made up of clear skies and warm temperatures.

Before Friday, two inches of snow had fallen on Dec. 26-27. Four more inches fell Jan. 2.

### Sun hot at Sugar Bowl

But for those students spending their time following the Cornhuskers to New Orleans, Lincoln's sun didn't compare to the sun in the Creole land.

Sugar Bowl fans were sunning in temperatures in the 70s while fans in Lincoln put on their coats to meet Nebraska's "warm" 20 degrees.

The sun is expected to be heating up Nebraskans by Wednesday when, forecasters predict, a warming trend will begin.

