

Administrator exodus: 'For better opportunities'

By Rex Seline
Associate news editor

It has almost seemed during the past year that one could paraphrase the adage about Nebraska weather:

"If you don't like the NU administration, wait five minutes and another administrator will leave."

Depending on who one considers a high-ranking administrator, at least 14 high-ranking NU and UNL administrators have left since Duane Acker, former vice-chancellor of agriculture and natural resources, became president of Kansas State University in Manhattan on July 1, 1975.

The list of those departing has grown to include the NU president, two chancellors, one vice chancellor and four deans.

Some of those left behind have caustically speculated that people are bailing out, leaving a sinking ship or getting out while the getting is good.

Low pay, troubles

Some critics have blamed low pay, troubles between central administration and the campuses, and personal differences. They have said the number departing proves NU is a bad system and UNL is a poor institution.

NU President D.B. Varner, leaving Jan. 1 to become chairman and chief executive officer of the NU Foundation, disagrees. "I don't think there's any mass move-

ment," Varner told the Daily Nebraskan last week. "There's no evidence in every case that people are leaving because of specific problems."

Varner reaffirmed that in his case, seven years is long enough to serve as president.

"There is a fixed period when a person can do his most effective work in a position," he said.

'Matter of growth'

In every other case of an administrator leaving, Varner said he thought "it's been a matter of professional growth and financial reward. If you bring good people on board, you're going to lose good people."

"I'm not despairing" because the University is losing people, he said. "I regret to see good people go . . . but they have been independent decisions. There should be no problem in replacing the people gone, including the president, with people at least as good—and I think probably better—for the university in the long run."

He said there is no truth to the rumor that UNL's accreditation review, set for this year, has encouraged some to leave. Nor does he think problems with central administration have caused the attrition.

"Wherever there's a system like this there is always a problem," he said. "You have to expect this. It's just that it's so newsworthy in Nebraska. It gets too much visibility."

Ken Bader, UNL vice chancellor for student affairs, also said he thought problems with the central administration and the campuses had not caused any of the recent resignations.

"If it was a reason, it would have to be second or third level," he said. "Seeing it from the outside, sure (in dealing with the central administration established in 1968 and more formally organized within the past few years), there were frustrations. Some (of those leaving) might have been more susceptible to an opportunity to leave if they were particularly frustrated at a certain time," he said. "But it hasn't affected me."

Reasons true

But Bader emphasized "what has been said publicly is true." Professional advancement and financial reward are the reasons most people have left, he said.

Bader himself turned down the first offer from the American Soybean Association, preferring to stay at UNL.

He later accepted the second offer, which has been characterized as promising a substantial salary increase. Although Bader declined to say what his new position would pay, his current position pays \$36,750 a year.

But Bader said some of the problems encountered may have hastened others looking for or accepting other positions.

"I'm not implying there were any problems here," he said. "But if some had been happier here they might not have left, I suppose."

Happier, higher budgets

Ned Hedges, assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs, said some of the people leaving might have been happier if their departments had higher budgets, not necessarily higher salaries.

"In Ron Wright's case," Hedges said, "I suspect it would be more important to him to have an adequate budget more than extra dollars in his salary."

Wright, UNL business and finance manager is leaving Oct. 15 to become vice president for administration and finance at California State University at Stanford. He was out of town and unavailable for comment.

"The legislative budget cuts contributed to people not being happy," Hedges said. "It's a lot more fun to give out money than to cut it in places."

Hedges said the worst effect of turnover is that administrative changes bring different policies, goals and emphasis in an institution.

"Maybe universities don't want people to stay," he said, because turnover and changes in a university can be beneficial.

People are not leaving because the university is a bad place, he added, nor are they leaving UNL because of a new chancellor.

"The natural tendency is to stick around and rally behind them, (new chancellors)" he said. "The bringing in of a new chancellor, I believe, would tend to retard their leaving. In fact, Roy Young (coming as chancellor) probably made it a lot more difficult to leave."

Young replaced former chancellor James Zumberge, who left Oct. 1 to become president of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Tex.

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Regent admits his probation

By George Miller

Steven Shovers, University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) student body president and student regent, admitted Friday that he has been placed on disciplinary probation at UNO. However, he said this was a tactic by Ronald Beer, UNO vice chancellor for educational and student services, to remove him from office.

Shovers said he was placed under disciplinary probation Aug. 5, following an incident July 31, in which he said he was found looking through scholastic records which he was told were closed to him.

Shovers, a graduate student in the UNO Education Dept., said he wanted to look at his records in the department of Secondary Education, and that he was escorted into the department's office by a graduate assistant who told him the regular secretary was out to lunch.

He said he was not led to believe that the files were closed to him and said he had been charged with a "relatively minor violation of university regulations."

The administration charges that Shovers was found looking through a file cabinet that contained confidential material.

Shovers said he denied knowing about the charges Thursday to the Daily Nebraskan because he wanted to make sure that Beer had made public the fact that he was under disciplinary probation. He

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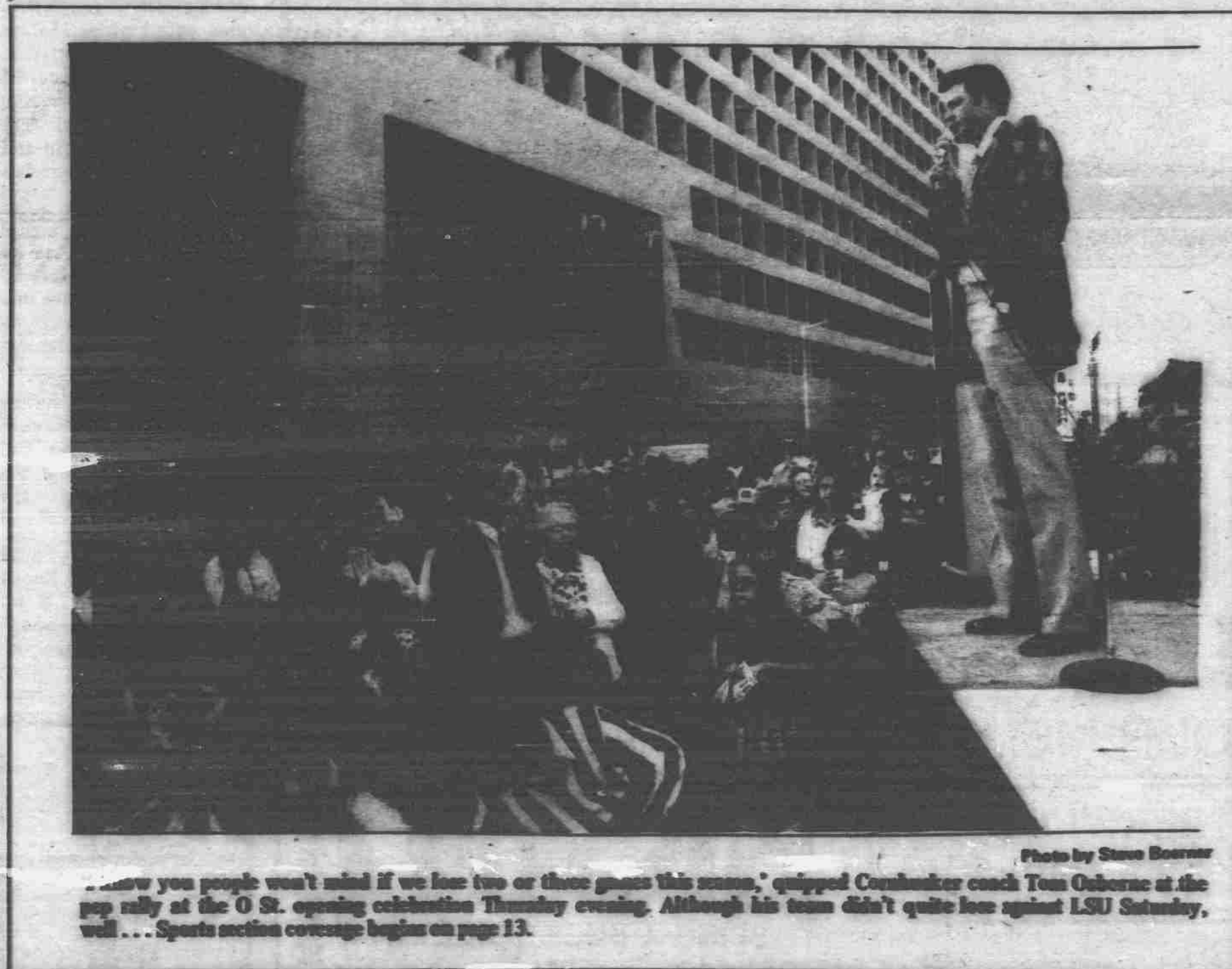


Photo by Steve Borman

"Now you people won't mind if we lose two or three games this season," quipped Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne at the pep rally at the O St. opening celebration Thursday evening. Although his team didn't quite lose against LSU Saturday, well . . . Sports action coverage begins on page 13.

UNL wants to spend budget exclusion

By E. K. Casaccio

Almost a million dollars in excess cash was not included in the NU Board of Regents 1977-78 budget request because UNL hopes to receive authorization to spend it this fiscal year, according to UNL Comptroller Robert Lovitt.

The excess cash, \$733,000, came largely from UNL tuition in the 1975-76 fiscal year, Lovitt said.

"It's our hope we may get the authority to spend it this year," Lovitt said. "If we don't, we're going to be in trouble."

The Nebraska Legislature authorized a cash fund ceiling of approximately \$10 million for the July 1975 through June 1976 fiscal year.

The cash fund ceiling is the maximum amount UNL can spend from tuition, related fees (drop and add) and grant over-

head, Lovitt said. Grant overhead money is money UNL receives from the federal government to administer grants.

The \$10 million is part of the approximately \$31 million instructional program budget.

pessimism from Legislature

"When we come up with more funds than the \$31 million," Lovitt said, "we have to go back to the Legislature to get permission to spend it."

Last spring, Gov. J. James Exon vetoed the request in LB972 to raise the cash ceilings to include the excess \$733,000.

Jon Oberg, principal analyst of State Budget Office said, "In the governor's estimation and the staff's estimation there was inadequate justification for the expenditure of these funds."

Enrollment based on Full Time Equiva-

lent Students (FTES), did not go up, Oberg said. FTES is the total number of graduate credit hours divided by 15 and the total number of graduate hours divided by 12.

"Your head count can be going up and FTES can be going down," he said.

FTES decrease

There was additional tuition money, he said, because the decrease in FTES was less than expected.

Lovitt said the money was needed because new sections had to be opened and graduate assistants needed to be hired to make up for the student increase.

"We have already cut into this year's expenditure ceiling to pay those bills," Lovitt said. "We're already in the hole."

Cash funds could be short again with a probable increase in enrollment this year causing expenditures to go up, he said.