

'78 election

Gubernatorial candidates

Each of the candidates were asked two questions. The first question gubernatorial candidates answered is "What do you feel is the main issue of the campaign?" The second question asked is "What do you want to do about the University of Nebraska budget?"

The candidates for Nebraska representatives were asked what they feel the main issue of the campaign is. They also were asked how they feel about the national tax credit bill.

Election stories by
L. Kent Wolgamott

Robert Phares

Robert Phares, republican, 37, North Platte, president of an insurance agency, Kearney State College. Former mayor of North Platte.

Taxes are now the main issues of the Phares campaign, according to John Kingsbury, Phares' campaign manager. The emphasis on taxes represents a shift from agriculture as the most important issue—a shift primarily because of economic issue, Kingsbury said.

He said Phares has proposed limiting state taxes to increases in personal income.

Kingsbury said Phares basically is "pro education". He said Phares believes there is a need for greater coordination between the institutions of higher learning in Nebraska and a need to increase agricultural research.

Phares is concerned with quality in the classroom and feels the university administration may be a little "overweight," Kingsbury said.



Robert Hansen

Robert Hansen, a democratic candidate for governor, has said he does not expect to win and was not interviewed. Hansen, 44, is a businessman from Grand Island.

Richard Hendrik

Richard Hendrick, a republican candidate for governor, has said he does not expect to win and was not interviewed. Hendrick, 50, is a locomotive engineer from Waverly.

1st district

Bruce Hamilton

H. Bruce Hamilton, democrat, 35, Lincoln, attorney, University of Nebraska, Lancaster County Commissioner, delegate to 1972 and 1976 Democratic National Conventions, member of region 5 Human Services board, Southeast Nebraska Health Systems Agency.

"In the Democratic primary, the most important issue of all is which of the three candidates is electable and can succeed in November and, most important, which will be most effective in Congress.

"In the First District, the most important issue is the ill health of the agricultural economy together with inflation fueled by the government living beyond our means.

"I support the president in his call in the past for complete tax reform, so I would not favor adding mumbo-jumbo tax credits. People who don't need help would be receiving the credits. I would certainly oppose it at below college level as an erosion of the public education system."

Loran Schmit

Loran Schmit, republican, 48, Bellwood, farmer, businessman, helicopter pilot, University of Nebraska, state senator.

"The main issue is the same one we've been discussing for years, the state of the economy. Inflation is at a very high rate and is climbing, and will continue to climb given the policies of the Carter administration. The economy related to agriculture is a very vital issue.

"Generally, I've favored those (tuition tax credits). I'd have to look at the specific plan, but generally they are a good investment."

Vance Rogers

Vance Rogers, republican, 60, Lincoln, Hamline University. Attended Gustavus Adolphus College, Garrett Graduate School of Theology, Northwestern University, former president of Nebraska Wesleyan University.

"There is no doubt about it. It's related to money which is related to inflation which results in higher taxes. The primary concern in Nebraska is a fiscal concern, centered around the high property taxes everyone is paying. Most of the ingredients to a first class tax revolt are there.

"If there isn't some reduction, there will be a problem. I think there will be a tax revolution like in California. In California, the people are going to vote on a proposal to limit property taxes to one percent of market value. If it passes—and it is speculated it will—it's projected that two out of every three school teachers would be laid off.

"It would be catastrophic. We could have something like that if we don't start cutting back on local and state spending.

"I am a believer and supporter in quality education. I'm going to be supportive of the university program which emphasizes one, the classroom teacher and the learning process; two, research; and three, service.



Stan Juelfs

Stan Juelfs, republican, 49, Kimball, oil production and exploration, insurance banking, farm and ranch management. Attended Nebraska Wesleyan University.

"The major issue in the latter part of the campaign has been taxes. We have proposed a freeze on property taxes and have been the only candidate to do so. We have said there will be a taxpayers revolt if nothing is done, and you are starting to see this in the attempt to get the spending lid on the November ballot.

"Their (the university's) proposed budget of \$107 million makes up about 20 percent of the total state budget, making them the biggest consumer of state tax dollars. We have to think about efficiency and dollar-wise spending at the university. The governor does not have much control in this area because the State Supreme Court has ruled that the regents control the university spending. But the governor should work closely with the president of the university and the regents to get dollar-wise spending."



Gerald Whelan

Gerald T. Whelan, democrat, 52, Lincoln, lieutenant governor, University of Nebraska, Creighton University, University of Colorado. Former president of the state school board, Hastings city attorney.

"The candidate is the major issue in a campaign for executive office—something that is much different than a campaign for legislative office.

"His experience, character, training, what makes him up, what you can anticipate from him in dealing with the Legislature, administrative department head and in legislation. That is what distinguishes a good governor from a poor one.

"We are entering a period of readjustment for the university. They have had good years at the hands of the Legislature. They have received a budget increase of 300 percent of what it was when Exon took office. I'm not sure that rate of increase can continue, especially with the stabilizing student population.

"It would not be inappropriate to take a look at some of the teaching loads and need for extensive research in some departments. The teaching staff needs to be as productive as possible. Students have a right to demand high productivity."



Charles Thone

Charles Thone, 54, Lincoln, congressman, attorney, former Republican State Chairman, former member Nebraska Supreme Court Judicial Nomination Commission.

Thone feels the most important issue in Nebraska is agriculture, according to Dave Doytch, a Thone campaign aide.

Since two-thirds of Nebraska wheat, one half of Nebraska soybeans and one-third of feed grains are exported, Thone believes the key to aiding Nebraska's agricultural economy is increasing exports, according to Doytch.

As governor, Thone would personally lead sales teams to other nations to open up new markets for Nebraska products, Doytch said.

Thone favors the Areas of Excellence program at the university and would concentrate more on it, Doytch said.

Thone believes the university is the "first and last hope" for Nebraska, and although he intends to be a "watchdog" on the state budget he does not want to "sacrifice the university," Doytch said.



2nd district

John Cavanaugh

John J. Cavanaugh, democrat, 32, Omaha, congressman, attorney, Regis College, Creighton University, former Nebraska state senator.

Cavanaugh is emphasizing his public record in his reelection campaign, according to Tom Fogarty.

Cavanaugh is co-sponsor of a tuition tax credit bill in committee in the House of Representatives.

John McCourt

John C. McCourt, democrat, 53, Omaha, salesman, Omaha University. McCourt was unavailable for comment.

Hal Daub

Hal Daub, republican, 37, Omaha, vice president, general counsel for Standard Chemical Livestock Feed Company, Washington University, University of Nebraska, former Douglas County Republican Chairman.

"No doubt about it, it's inflation and the confusing leadership of Carter and the Democratic majority."

"I'm leaning toward the tax credit option. We all pay taxes and the tax deduction would only benefit the very wealthy. The credit itself is helpful enough to the family, but not enough to impact the separation of church and state and undermine our system of public education.

Sharon Toney

Sharon Toney, republican, 30, Omaha, homemaker, University of Nebraska-Omaha, former vice chairman Douglas County Young Republicans

Toney was unavailable for comment.

Allen O'Donnell

Allen O'Donnell, democrat, 46, Wayne, teacher, California State College, University of Southern California, former Democratic National Committeeman.

Within the district, it is the plight of the family farmer and nationally, it is inflation.

"I would definitely support tax credits for higher education — they are needed badly and will provide relief for the middle class."