

# Cuca looks for better relations between students, senate

By Barb Richardson

Newly elected ASUN President Bud Cuca said one of his goals for his term will be to make "student government more accessible to students."

Cuca said in an interview Tuesday that he wants students to know the ASUN Senate exists for their use.

Accessibility to students is not just a goal of Cuca's. Cuca said during senate orientation Sunday the new senators ranked "improvement of relationships with the university community" as their first priority. The senators ranked increasing accountability as second in their concerns for the next year.

Cuca said the senate will be asking for more money for communications in their budget request that will come before the NU Board of Regents Saturday.

Cuca said he has been "brainstorming" with the new First Vice President Hubert Brown and the new Second Vice President Kim Weiland about ways to increase stu-

dent involvement in student government. He said they have also been discussing what they would like to accomplish next year.

Although Cuca is concerned with the coming year, he said, "my main priority now is being prepared for the regents' meeting on Saturday."

Cuca will defend the students' budget of Fund A and Fund B fees before the Regents, who will vote on the appropriations.

To prepare for the meeting, Cuca said he will meet with the groups receiving Fund A appropriations before the Saturday meeting. These groups include the *Daily Nebraskan*, University Program Council, ASUN and the Cultural Affairs Committee.

He said he is meeting with the different group representatives to get their justification for the money they need.

Past ASUN president Ken Marienau, Mike Gibson, former RHA president and the members of the Committee

for Fee Allocation have also helped in preparation for Saturday, Cuca said.

He said that he plans to talk with four or five of the regents before Saturday about the budget.

Cuca said hopefully, he will be able to get some "pre-conceived notions" in the regents' heads "so, they'll be favorable" to the budget requests.

It has been a smooth transition into office, Cuca said. "Kim and Hubert, being conscientious people about student government, are handling it well," he said.

Although he will be working with 24 SOAR senators this coming year, Cuca said he does and does not expect problems during his term.

"Most people are concerned about student government," Cuca said. Concerned senators will be able to work together for the students' benefit, he added.

Cuca said the next three weeks will be an indication of how people will work together next year.

"We've got to guard against stagnation and need to have innovative ideas," Cuca said.

Commenting on this year's senate, referred to by some as controversial, Cuca said he does not care if issues are controversial next year if they benefit the students.

"The Nestle resolution is opening a new realm—social issues," Cuca said. "I think we (the senate) should comment on issues that affect students and social issues do."

The senate passed a resolution April 11 supporting a universitywide boycott of Nestle products. The Nestle's company has been accused of selling baby formula to third world nations that's responsible for killing 10 million babies.

"I want to encourage students to the maximum to talk to senators," Cuca said. He added if any group, dorm floor or Greek house, wants to talk to someone from ASUN, someone will be there to talk with the group.

"Before you can get the respect of administrators, regents and everybody else, you need the respect of students," Cuca said.

# Professor testifies to Ellis absence

By Val Swinton

Prosecuting attorneys may have suffered a setback in their attempts to prove that former UNL student John R. Ellis was absent from class on the day Debra Forycki disappeared after leaving her apartment near downtown.

An attendance book kept by one of Ellis' professors was not admitted into evidence yesterday, although a ruling on the book by Judge William Blue probably will be made at a later date.

Maxine Trauernicht, a speech communication professor, took the witness stand yesterday to testify that according to her attendance book, Ellis was not in her class that day. Trauernicht had testified that her class in 1974 began about 12:30 p.m. and ended about 2 p.m. Earlier testimony revealed that Forycki was last seen leaving her apartment shortly before 11 a.m.

### Book dispute

As Lancaster County Attorney Ron Lahners asked Trauernicht what the attendance book revealed, defense attorney John Stevens Berry continually objected, saying Lahners had not laid a proper foundation for admitting the professor's remarks into evidence and Judge Blue sustained those objections.

Lahners asked Trauernicht if the attendance book was in about the same condition now as it was when she made entries into it in the fall of 1974, when Forycki disappeared.

"Yes," Dr. Trauernicht replied, "except that the dates have been put in."

She explained that she did not put dates above the attendance blocks in the book at the time she made the entries, but she was requested to compute the dates from the beginning of the school year in 1974 and put them in the book last September following Ellis' arrest. Defense attorneys said later they had not been aware that the dates had not been added last fall until Trauernicht's testimony.

### Attendance indicator

Lahners asked the professor if the attendance book indicated that Ellis was in class on Oct. 3, 1974, the date Forycki disappeared. As Berry again started to object, Trauernicht replied "no" and Berry withdrew the objection.

Following a hearing in front of the judge's bench, Trauernicht was allowed to step down from the witness stand without further testimony, although Lahners indicated she may be called back to testify at a later date.

A UNL forensic anthropologist, Kenneth McWilliams, also testified Thursday concerning the size of the opening

in the water wagon and the position of the body.

"It would have been very difficult to put the body into the position in which it was found, although it would be possible," he told the jury.

McWilliams said he based his opinion on the position of the skeleton, which he described as laying on its back, with one arm extended along the side of the body, the other arm bent towards the head with the hand near the skull. Both legs were extended. McWilliams described the skeleton as laying "in a normal sleeping position."

When Lahners had a chance to redirect examination of McWilliams, he told the witness, "Of course you're not saying what could have caused a person to crawl into that tank, like a gun pointed at them."

Berry then objected to the remark and moved for a mistrial. Following another conference in front of the judges bench, Judge Blue sustained the objection, but the trial continued.

McWilliams also testified that he had originally estimated the time of death at six months to three years from the time the skeleton was found, which meant Forycki would have died at least a year after her disappearance.

### Flesh-based estimate

He said he based that estimate on the amount of mummified flesh still found on the skeleton. McWilliams added though, that he later revised his estimate to six weeks to ten years. However, he told the jury that "it could be less or more. That's a very difficult thing to determine."

The anthropologist also said that in his opinion, grooves found in a wrist bone were not caused by a bullet wound, although under questioning by Lahners, he said he based his assumption on visual observation only.

A lead object purported to be a bullet was found near the area of the skeleton where the kidneys would have been, but McWilliams said there was no evidence of trauma in the bones in that part of the skeleton.

McWilliams also said small amounts of lead found in the groove in the wrist could have been caused by minerals in a piece of refrigerator tubing found under the hand, although again, under questioning by Lahners, he admitted he was not qualified to reach such a conclusion.

The UNL anthropologist also said there was no evidence of any clothing found in the water wagon, nor was there an jewelry, such as a wrist watch or rings. Also missing from the tank were any medicine bottles or weapons that may have been indicative of suicide.

McWilliams said he also obtained samples of hair, some laying on the floor of the water wagon while other strands were still attached to the skeleton.

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