

# Panhellenic Association announces rush changes

By Joi Patterson

Changes in the UNL sorority rush schedule and a proposed change in academic eligibility for participation in rush have been announced by the Panhellenic Association.

According to Sharon Ash, program assistant of Greek Affairs, changes have been made in the rush orientation process and the first day of rush. A proposed change in eligibility for rush will be voted on by houses this week.

Instead of having one orientation for all the women going through rush, women will be divided alphabetically into three groups. Having one huge orientation was intimidating, Ash said.

"It was uncomfortable, it looked like a scary mob of girls walking in, it was impersonal, the acoustics were bad and the lighting awful," she said.

By dividing the women into three sections and having the orientation in a smaller room, hopefully the women will feel more comfortable and free to ask questions, she said.

The sorority orientation will be Aug. 17, the same day the rushees can move into residence halls.

Suzy Waring, Panhellenic president, said that the same day the rushees will attend a 20-minute open house at each sorority. Traditionally, UNL's sorority rushees attended the one orientation, and visited only eight sorority houses.

Waring said women ought to be able to see every house.

Rushees will be divided into groups and assigned to a rush counselor, a Panhellenic delegate. The delegate will escort her group to each house the first day for the open houses.

### More organized

"The counselors will be able to keep things more organized," Waring said. "Also this way, the girls won't have to find the houses themselves."

"Hopefully this program will help to eliminate stereotypes of houses," Waring said. There had been some discussion that 20 minutes would not be long enough to acquaint women with the houses, Waring said, but it was decided that it is up to each house to make the time worthwhile.

"We feel this is the right thing to do," Waring said. "The issue had been debated for quite a while." In addition to the rush counselor guides, a booklet containing pictures of all of the houses may be printed so women can recognize the houses they have been to, Waring said.

The rush schedule program has been voted on and approved, Waring said. A proposal is now being voted on and results will be published later.

The proposal states that incoming freshmen must meet specific requirements to participate in formal or open rush. The requirements state women must have graduated in the upper 50 percent of their high school class or have an ACT composite score of at least 21. Additionally, they must have filled out and returned a Panhellenic application form and paid a registration fee by the required date.

Students already in college must meet the registration requirement and have completed 12 credit hours with a 2.2 grade point average.

### Eliminate disappointment

Ash said the program will help to eliminate the disappointment for women who are not accepted in a sorority because of poor academic records.

"It's not fair to lead someone on," she said, because most houses are looking for good grades. If led on, Ash said, women will get a negative attitude about the whole Greek system.

According to statistics from the Panhellenic office, in 1980-81, 112 of the 124 women who went through rush and did not pledge were ranked in the bottom half of their graduating classes.

In 1981-82, the number of women not pledged was

219, with 162 in the bottom half.

These statistics show that most women in the lower half of their classes do not pledge to a house, Ash said.

Waring said this program will lessen disappointments in the long run.

"Even if a girl cannot participate in rush first semester, she can get her GPA up and go through open rush," she said.

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## Annexation . . .

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The Panhandlers now seem to be crying secession for the third time, and with more seriousness than before.

One reason the Panhandle wants to secede to Wyoming is the severance taxes placed on the oil pumped from Nebraska oil wells, Nichol said.

Jirdon said Panhandle residents feel they are not adequately represented in the Nebraska Legislature.

"We are a minority group," he said. "The people out here have to travel 450 miles to Lincoln . . . we don't have a voice in the Legislature."

Nearly all of the oil wells in Nebraska are in the Panhandle, he said.

The revenue from severance taxes, however, has been spread all over the state, Nichol said, and little has been done to prevent the taxes from increasing.

Another reason for the proposed annexation is the Panhandle's representation in and isolation from the state capital.

Eleven counties in Western Nebraska are represented in the Legislature by three of the 49 senators.

Comparing his district to those of Sen. Sam Cullan of Hemingford and Sen. Robert Clark of Sidney, Nichol said he has the most urban constituents coming from Scottsbluff and Gering with a population one-tenth the size of Lincoln. Nichol said it is difficult for Western Nebraska districts to get representation in Lincoln because their populations are small and they are so far away from the capital.

But before Nichol approves annexation, he wants to have a look at the pros and cons of joining Wyoming.

A potential problem that could develop if the Panhandle is able to secede would be the payment for schools, state buildings and roads built in the past by Nebraska taxes. Should they be given to the Panhandle because 95,000 people do not want to be part of the state anymore? This is one of the questions that must be answered, Nichol said.

Another potential problem with the annexation is the possible loss of a water contract for water running from Colorado and Wyoming into the North Platte and eventually into the Missouri River, Nichol said.

Parts of the Panhandle depend on irrigation, and a break in the contract could mean a serious loss to Western Nebraska, he said.

The annexation process did not end Feb. 10 when the Wyoming Legislature rejected a proposal to annex the Panhandle.

"This is their short session and they are dealing with only money matters," Nichol said.

He said Gov. Ed Herschler of Wyoming favors the annexation.

Before the Panhandle can secede to Wyoming, a two-thirds vote is needed in the Nebraska and Wyoming legislatures and in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, Nichol said.

## Citizens serious . . .

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Cheyenne, Wyoming's capital, and the University of Wyoming, at Laramie, are less than 100 miles from the Scottsbluff area.

Jirdon, who owns property in Nebraska and Wyoming, said real estate taxes in Nebraska are three times as high as in Wyoming.

Max Hensley, superintendent of schools in Kimball, said the Wyoming Legislature works with educators better than the Nebraska Legislature does, and includes them as a "willing and able" part of the government.

Hensley, who favors secession, said he had seen one of the principals in a Kimball elementary school wearing a button that said "Kimball, Wyoming."

Ed Norden, manager of radio station KIMB-1260 in Kimball, said many Panhandle residents feel ignored by the rest of the state.

"They (eastern Nebraskans) think there's nothing out there west of Grand Island," Norden said. "It's irritating to be put into that kind of classification."

Norden said he did not object to secession, but questioned the Panhandle's ability to bring it about.

"I wouldn't mind being a Wyoming Cowboy," he said. "But I question the reality of whether it will really happen."

Norden said representation in the Legislature by population as it is done in the Unicameral presents a problem for the sparsely-populated Panhandle.

"Maybe we can get equal representation in Wyoming," he said.

Christine Francis, an aide to Cheyenne, Wyo., Mayor Don Erickson, said most eastern Wyoming residents also favor the secession of the Panhandle.

"I haven't heard any opposition, ever," Francis said. "The people I have seen think it's a really good idea."

Francis said the Panhandle area would be an asset to Wyoming because of its population, industries and agriculture.

"Nebraska would be on the losing end if the Panhandle secedes," she said. "It wouldn't be as if Wyoming was taking on a bunch of poor people."

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