

Editorial

Better UNL computer facilities needed

University officials recently heard the first rumblings of protest about a problem that has been escalating for some time at UNL.

The problem is of computers, or more so, the lack of computers, and last week, frustrated students and faculty members openly expressed their discontent with a problem that shows no signs of being corrected soon.

Throughout the week, a small group of students and professors staged a sit-in in the Chancellor Martin Massengale's office to protest the lack of time available for academic use of the university's computer network. In addition, the computer science department released a waiting list, showing the names of more than 300 students who are unable to take required computer courses because of overcrowding.

These cries of discontent were just the first of many that university officials will be hearing in the years ahead. The problem seems clear: the present com-

puter system is inadequate for all the university's needs. The aging system simply cannot handle all the educational and academic demands currently being made on it and the number of demands will continue to grow as more employers require some form of computer training from college graduates.

Officials must agree on some type of plan for updating and improving the current computer facilities, and the NU Board of Regents announced Saturday that it will request \$2 million from the Legislature for that purpose. But it seems unlikely that the Legislature would approve that request when faced with a weak economy and a rising budget deficit.

This is not a problem unique to UNL. In fact, just about every school in the nation is faced with some type of computer financial crunch. As a solution, some schools, like Clarkson College in Potsdam, N.Y., and Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pa., have made it possible for students to purchase a micro-

computer during a period of time.

Lincoln's own Union College has developed another solution. On Friday, Union College President Dean Hubbard announced that the college will be purchasing 500 additional computer terminals for student use. This makes Union College the first school in the nation offering students a computer to use at no major cost. The new terminals will be paid for with private gifts and money earned by the sale of computer time to other firms.

Union College officials deserve applause for their far-sighted efforts and realization of the essential need for computers in academic areas. But it also must be kept in mind that the college's enrollment is only about 1,000 students, and that such a plan would be difficult to carry out at UNL where the enrollment is more than 20,000 students.

Two weeks ago, during his inaugural address, Gov. Bob Kerrey told Nebraskans that this state must move into the Technological Age. America is moving away

from the days of blue-collar industries and is swinging toward a nation of service industries. To compete, Nebraska needs to be a part of this shift, he said. The state's businesses and industries need to implement the new technologies if they are to be successful in the future.

But this new technology will need people who are educated in its possibilities and uses, and businesses will expect college graduates to have this experience upon graduation. Yet, while many of these firms expect schools to provide such training, these same businesses seem unwilling to aid in providing part of the cost of this training. It seems impossible for the Legislature to extend the already stretched-too-tight educational dollar to pay for the needed additional computer facilities. While the state government should be responsible for providing part of the money needed for computers, private businesses and individuals must make their contribution as well.

John G. Goecke

Bill introduction week omits Big Red, Valley Speak issues

This is the time when the Nebraska State Legislature gets interesting. As lovers look forward to Valentines, trees to Arbor Day and alcoholics to New Year's Eve, legislators and observers alike anxiously await the January ritual known as Bill Introduction Week. It has been an exceptionally busy celebration this year,



Mike Frost

with 900 or so requests reaching the State Bill Drafter's Office, the Omaha World-Herald reports. Such intriguing measures as ones raising the drinking age to 21, establishing a state lottery and turning financial control of UNL over to the Legislature have been proposed.

However, even with all this action, many issues that desperately cry out for attention have once again been ignored. Hopefully, it is not too late for these issues to be brought up for legislative consideration.

Among potential bills are:

The Big Red Limitation Act: A measure by which the ownership of more than three items of "Go Big Red" memorabilia per person would be prohibited. True, the

world is presently experiencing a Go Big Red Glut (actually, that has been the case for the last 12 years). But shortages can always occur, so we must act now to preserve our natural Big Red resources. In the interest of human dignity, Go Big Red toilet seat covers will be exempt from the law.

NU Abolition Act: In conjunction with Sen. Kilgarin's proposal, this bill, nicknamed the University Schmuniversity Act, would just get rid of the entire NU system once and for all. Of course, there would most likely be some problem in finding something to do with 22,000 ex-students, but eventually they would wander over to Taco Inn, and education would finally be in the hands of private industry, where it belongs. The UNL campus could then be sold to a capable, private educational institution, specifically, the Lincoln College of Hair Design.

The Non-Partisan Legislature Act: A bill that would definitely put an end to the partisanship that has plagued our non-partisan legislature for years. Only Republicans would be eligible for office under the new bill. Surprisingly, a survey on the potential bill indicates it would pass 32-16, with one absentee.

Valley Speak Provisions: Perhaps the most controversial measure this bill calls for using Valley Girl lingo a misdemeanor, and establishing a new slang language,



Platte Valley Girl talk. Included would be such phrases as "Grody to the bushel," "Gag me with a silo" and "Irrigate your face." Again, the bill stands little chance of passage. One of its key opponents, Sen. Robert Clark of Sidney said of the measure, "Oooh, grody to the max" "Yeah, Bob," added colleague Howard Peterson of Grand Island, "gag my committee with a spoon."

Faith Christian School Compromise: This measure, regarding Rev. Everett

Silven's Faith Christian School, still would require the institution to be licensed by the state. However, it would be allowed to incorporate the Bible into everyday school subjects. For example, mathematics word problems: "If you had one savior and the atheists had none, how many saviors would you have altogether?"

Ironically, atheists and Nebraskans have something in common this legislative session. Neither group has a prayer.

ASUN, alumni can ease summer job scene

Considering current reductions in educational financial aid, Don Aripoli, director of the UNL office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, will tell you that now, more than ever, students are expected to find gainful summer employment to



Becky Stingley

offset the costs of a college education. Yet the job market is tighter than today's generation has ever seen it, even in Nebraska.

Look in the want ads of the Lincoln Journal or the Omaha World-Herald. The jobs are just not there for the offering — not for students, not for anyone. More remotely, employers are hesitant to hire students when unemployed parents and elderly persons are looking for jobs. Since many students are without dependents,

the job search becomes even more frustrating.

University alumni are annually asked to donate resources to the University Foundation or Alumni Association. Assuming that even University of Nebraska alumni are suffering the pinches of the economic times, it hardly seems fair to ask them to hand over more money to their alma mater. However, asking them to assist in locating and creating summer jobs for present university students is not asking for more dollars.

University alumni are located throughout the country with the largest numbers here in the Midwest. Every department's graduates are listed. Therefore, almost every conceivable area of the job market is represented in a listing of alumni. The possibilities for student employment are overwhelming. With effective organization, adequate participation and a legitimate attempt at cooperation, it is possible that summer employment may be more intellectually stimulating and imaginatively gratifying than distributing hamburgers at McDonalds.

ASUN, an organization supplied with student fee financing, is a body which claims to provide valuable services to the student community. In recent times, they have been criticized for not fulfilling their obligation to student body members. Here is an opportunity for them to be recognized as the service organization they have the potential to be, as well as to improve their overall campus credibility rating. Furthermore, there exists a Student Alumni Association designed to serve as a liaison between students and alumni.

We need to create a system in which students' employment needs could be fulfilled and alumni could be provided with short-term skilled employees simultaneously.

Let's say we have student applicants present their abilities, accomplishments, and aims in the form of a basic application, a statement of personal goals, three or four letters of reference, and copies of any special papers or projects which indicate skill or expertise.

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