

Don Nelson named chief of staff, will bring education, experience

By John Meissner

W. Don Nelson, administrator for two of Nebraska's past three governors, recently was named chief of staff by Gov. Bob Kerrey.

Nelson, who served under Govs. Norbert Tiemann and J. James Exon in the State Office of Planning and Programming (now the Policy Research Office), replaces William Hoppner as Gov. Kerrey's adviser. Hoppner said in 1982 he would serve only two years.

In a written statement, Kerrey said, "Don Nelson brings a wealth of education and experience to the job, and I am extremely pleased that he has agreed to accept this responsibility."

The governor and Nelson have yet to define the specifics of this responsibility.

"The actual job will develop as part of the interpersonal relationship," Nelson said. "I have no clear-cut role — it will be a balance of administrative and advising duties."

One thing it will not be, according to Nelson, is an "Edgar Bergen-Charlie McCarthy act." Nelson said he and the governor will continually exchange points of view and explore all policy options available.

Nelson presently is Wyoming Gov. Ed Herschler's administrative assistant. Although fulfilling approximately the same role, the title is different because the governments are different, according to Nelson.

The Wyoming government is physically and socially different from its Nebraska counterpart, Nelson said. The Wyoming gubernatorial staff is smaller, so the governor is really his own chief of staff. Nelson said he will have to adapt to different issues — Nebraska has no coal and little oil or gas, while in Wyoming, agriculture issues do not weigh as heavily. Along with his duties as Chief of Staff, Nelson will

work part-time in the Community Resource and Research Center of the College of Architecture at UNL. Again, details have not been worked out, but Nelson said there were a number of things he and the faculty had been interested in before he moved to Wyoming.

Nelson commented on the identical quality possessed by Exon, Herschler and Kerrey. "All three have a common thread. They're transparent — what you see is what you get. They tell you exactly what they feel."

Nelson said Exon and Herschler "could almost be brothers." He compared the men's similar backgrounds — growing up during the depression and World War II — and personalities, saying when discussing policy, they could be both charming and cantankerous in the space of ten minutes.

Kerrey is the product of a different generation, Nelson said, one of the reasons he was attracted to the job. "Gov. Kerrey grew up in the same generation I did. It will be interesting to see how this translates."

"My only commitment is to do a good job for the governor," he said. On all occasions, he has offered his resignation at the end of a governor's term "so the governor is not tied down."

Until he received news of the appointment, Nelson was planning to find a job in the private sector at the end of Herschler's term. Eventually, he said, he will make the leap back to the private sector, although he has learned "never to say never" regarding political matters.

Nelson, 40, spent 18 years of his life in Florida and received his law degree from Florida State, but he considers the Midwest home.

"My sister married a man from Hastings and lives in Kansas," Nelson said. "I felt like I almost grew up in Salina."

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March of Dimes walkers raise bucks

The Cornhusker chapter of the March of Dimes held its 14th WalkAmerica Saturday, drawing more than 500 participants.

March of Dimes executive director Tanna Kinnaman said about \$22,000 was raised by about 500 walkers. She said \$140 of that was raised by the team of UNL's Delta Sigma

Phi fraternity.

Former Nebraska quarterback Turner Gill was celebrity host at WalkAmerica. He walked to the first checkpoint Saturday morning and encouraged other walkers, said Denise Glissman, promotion chairwoman.

Glissman said March of Dimes officials were pleased with the walk's efficiency and with the 28 teams that walked.

Executive director Kinnaman said other major fund raising events also take place in Lincoln.

In January, Lincoln

families go from house to house collecting money in the "Mothers' March," which raised \$18,000 last year, Kinnaman said.

The March of Dimes Telethon will be June 30 and July 1. Kinnaman said the telethon raised \$5,000 last year and she said she hopes for \$10,000 this year. Omaha's WOWT, and Hastings' KHAK KHAF, will telecast the telethon. Kinnaman said local businesses and companies are raising money in pre-telethon events. If they raise a certain amount of money, they will appear on the telethon, she said.

The "Reading Olympics"

takes place at area elementary schools in the winter. Kinnaman said children raise money for every book they read. Last year the "Reading Olympics" raised \$5,000, she said.

The March of Dimes also has smaller activities continuously going on to raise funds in Lincoln, Kinnaman said.

Funds raised go back into the community to fight birth defects, Kinnaman said. The March of Dimes funds grants requested by people interested or involved with birth defects.



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