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Hoch, Exon debate records, deficit

By John Meissner
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U.S. Sen. J. James Exon, as his placards testified, would have people believe the first two letters of his last name stand for "experience." Republican candidate Nancy Hoch Wednesday used his name for some needed exposure, as challenger and incumbent squared off in the first of a series of planned debates.

The 60-minute contest, sponsored by the League of Women Voters and broadcast live over public television channels, featured alternating two-minute responses to questions posed by a panel of news media.

Hoch, the NU Board of Regents member and long shot Senate hopeful, aimed at Exon's record and his suggested programs for cutting the federal deficit, improving the status of agriculture and maintaining the federal Social Security and Medicaid programs.

With a visual aid, Exon produced a computer print-out listing his accomplishments. The print-out, when unfurled, started at the top of the podium and touched the floor.

"When you spend eight years as the governor and 5 1/2 years as a senator, you make a record for other people to shoot at. I'm not only proud of my record, I'd stand on it," Exon said, earning applause from the partisan crowd.

Hoch chided Exon for mentioning his previous career.



Joel Sartore/Daily Nebraskan

Senatorial candidate Nancy Hoch and incumbent J. James Exon participate in a debate Wednesday at the Nebraska State Fair.

"I would remind my opponent that he is not running for governor, he is running for senator," she said. Hoch contended that the bills Exon sponsored or co-sponsored were "not things of substance." Labeling the high federal deficit her No. 1 priority, Hoch said she supported a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. As far as specific cuts, Hoch called for the "courage to approach things individually," rather than cuts across the board. Exon countered that "no one in

Nebraska has made more specific proposals to cut spending than I have," but said spending must be frozen in all areas to reduce the deficit.

Hoch spoke repeatedly of the need for a strong voice in the U.S. Senate representing agriculture. Referring to a plan she unveiled Tuesday, Hoch said creating a position for a chief agricultural negotiator in the U.S. Department of Commerce would help get rid of unfair trade practices.

Exon said Hoch was not going

to solve the problem with criticism.

"Ask the Nebraska Corn Growers Association, ask the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association if I've been involved in agriculture," Exon said. "Cheap food policy is the ruination of American farmers."

Both candidates avoided controversy by relying on platitudes to explain stances on abortion, school prayer and U.S. involvement in Central America. Hoch dropped the only bombshell of

the afternoon in her closing statement, alleging that Exon, as the ranking minority member on the Strategic and Theatre Nuclear Forces subcommittee, had missed 75 percent of the meetings. Exon, ruffled, said the statement was inaccurate and told Hoch to call the chairman of the committee, Sen. John Warner of Virginia. Exon said she would find he was at the meetings regularly.

Hoch later offered that she said Exon didn't attend 75 percent of the subcommittee hearings.

French Salers champions spell cash for Kansas man

By Brad Kuhn
Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

Salers — pronounced "sellers" — Some people pronounce it "Sellers." Some argue the "y" is silent. Anyway, it's pronounced. George Werth spells it N-O-N-E-Y.

The 54-year-old cattle rancher from Quinter, Kan., walked into the Nebraska State Fair with nine head of fancy French cattle and walked away with eight champions and reserve champions. Earlier this summer he swept 14 banners at the Iowa State Fair. From here it's on to Hutchinson, Kan., and then to Kansas City, Mo. Not a bad year so far for his first year of showing Salers cattle.

The Salers, imported to North

America from France in 1874, is known for its small calves, high fertility, and lean meat. This is the first year the breed has been shown competitively in the United States. An average heifer will sell for as much as \$57,000.

Werth and his sons, Gary and Tim, once strictly Hereford men, took a liking to imports last year. Werth says that since last January, he's invested as much as \$1 million in his inventory of 500 head of Salers. He's already doubled his investment, and looks for an additional return of almost double the price of his prize winners. He says he recently sold a prize-winning heifer calf for \$20,000.

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Kerrey says amendment will not bring tax relief

By Kevin Dugan
Daily Nebraskan Staff Writer

During Gov. Bob Kerrey's weekly press conference Wednesday, the governor said he is not seriously considering a second special legislative session.

However, Kerrey said that arguing objectively and achieving a property tax reduction would be difficult to do in the regular session.

Property tax relief is politically difficult to accomplish, he said, and would be best dealt with in a special session.

The governor said he still is striving for a genuine decrease in property taxes statewide and not just an agricultural aid package.

The proposed agricultural land valuation amendment will not achieve property tax relief, Kerrey said. Relief would result from economic development, education, and water-agriculture development, he said.

When asked why he won't cut rural property taxes and promise a future urban tax cut, Kerrey said it is because democracy does not work that way.

Kerrey said he thinks a 25 percent property tax reduction is needed, but people are skeptical about achieving a \$220 million reduction without increasing sales tax and income tax.

The state should first decide how the reduction will occur, he

said, and then figure how to pay for it.

Property taxes need to be cut statewide, he said, but offsetting this reduction solely with an increase in general sales tax revenue is highly unlikely.

Kerrey also said teachers' salaries are too low. Nebraska should try to come up with a plan that would increase teacher salaries without interfering too much with local control, he said.

Ideally, this mechanism would allow a 10 to 15 percent increase in state aid to education and a 25 percent decrease in property taxes, Kerrey said. He said these problems should not be addressed separately in 1985-86.

Good harvest may cut crop prices

By Gene Gentrup

Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

A good harvest this fall may create the potential for steady to lower crop prices, an agricultural economist said Wednesday.

Leslie Sheffield, NU professor of agricultural economics, said that even though prospects for a good harvest remain high, crop producers may not fare as well as they had hoped.

"A better harvest only means there are more bushels to sell and at lower prices," he said.

While crop producers may suffer, livestock feeders will benefit from the lower prices and increase

their feed purchases, Sheffield said.

Sheffield said a good statewide harvest looks imminent, but portions of southeastern Nebraska haven't been very lucky.

"The dry weather in that area has taken its toll on corn and soybeans," he said.

John Furrer, agriculture extension specialist, agreed. He said areas west of York are in good shape, but eastern Nebraska could use some rain.

"Soybean pods are beginning to fill out," Furrer said, "and a good rain would give the plant a good, plump, large seed."

Last week's rains could mean a difference of three to four bushels an acre, he said.

The Nebraska Crop and Livestock Reporting Service said in its weekly report that more than two-thirds of the state's corn crop is in good or excellent condition. But only 3 to 4 percent of soybeans and sorghum were reported in excellent condition. Ninety-eight percent of irrigated corn was reported in good or excellent condition, while only 44 percent of dryland corn was reported as good or excellent. Weekend rains benefited dryland crops, the report said.

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