

# Roskens' firing, Bush's visit brought attention to UNL

By Ryan Steeves  
Senior Editor

The firing of one president and a visit from another brought tension and attention to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus this summer.

On July 31, the NU Board of Regents voted 7 to 1 to remove NU President Ronald Roskens after a closed, four-hour meeting.

The regents said they struck a deal with Roskens in which he agreed to step down without explanation. John Payne of Kearney was the only regent to vote against the agreement.

Roskens will receive about \$250,000 in salary and benefits until his contract expires in 1991. In Roskens' absence, UNL Chancellor Martin Massengale will act as interim president.

Regents have said the terms of the mutual agreement prohibit them from explaining Roskens' dismissal. Their secrecy has generated criticism

from state legislators and other officials.

Daniel Meyer, who was a legislative aide to former state Sen. John DeCamp, has threatened to sue the regents if they don't disclose their reasons for firing Roskens.

Meyer, who now sells insurance for R.L. Rimel and Associates of Lincoln, said he thinks the regents violated Nebraska open meetings laws when they went into closed session to discuss Roskens' performance.

State Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly scolded the regents for not disclosing their problems with Roskens.

"Apparently, the regents are so unsure of their reasons that they are



Roskens

afraid to say them," Warner said.

Warner said firing Roskens was a "serious mistake."

"He has done an exceptional job," Warner said. "The university has the finest budget they've ever had."

Sen. Ron Withem of Papillion, one of the most outspoken critics of the board's actions, said the regents have an obligation to inform the public about their decision to oust Roskens.

In a letter sent in early August, Withem asked Regent Chairman Nancy Hoch to outline the reasons for Roskens' dismissal.

"I am concerned that an elected body would choose to redirect approximately \$250,000 without providing an explanation..." Withem wrote.

Warner and Withem have said legislators should reconsider the way regents get their jobs. Both have said they support having the governor appoint regents. Currently, regents are elected.

Regent Don Blank of McCook said the regents will conduct a nationwide search for a new president. He said that should Massengale choose to apply, he would not have an advantage.

Some regents have said they for-

mally will study the structure of the NU Central Administration. Some officials have questioned whether NU even needs a central administration.

In other summer action:

## Bush visits

President Bush spoke at the Bob Devaney Sports Center July 13.

Thousands of Nebraskans jammed into the sports center as Bush toured his clean-air proposals, which he announced the day before his Lincoln visit.

He also toured the center for engine technology on East Campus, where UNL professors demonstrated the effects of alternative fuels.

U.S. Sen. J. James Exon, D-Neb., said he was disappointed that Bush didn't announce tax breaks for retailers who use ethyl tertiary butyl ether. ETBE is an ethanol-based fuel, which is produced from grain.

In a letter to Bush, Exon encouraged the president to announce a ETBE tax credit during his Lincoln visit.

The federal government has extended 60-cent-per-gallon tax credits to producers who sell other types of alternative fuels, giving them a marketing advantage over ETBE manufacturers.

Gov. Kay Orr said the tax breaks for ETBE would give farmers another place to sell grain.

Consideration of an ETBE tax credit is still pending in Congress.

## Official resigns

UNL's director of information resigned at the regents' meeting June 23.

Bob Bruce said the newly created director of public relations position at UNL made his job obsolete. For the new post, the regents appointed Michael Mulnix, former director of public affairs for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in Washington, D.C.

Bruce said he was disappointed when UNL officials created the new post.

"When I came here seven years ago, I came with the understanding that I was to be the chief director of public relations," Bruce said. "And when another person was recommended for the job, it just rubbed me the wrong way and staying at the university seemed pointless."

Herbert Howe, interim associate to the chancellor, said the two positions can co-exist. But Mulnix said he

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# Involvement is needed, Hill says

By Jana Pedersen  
Senior Reporter

Getting more students involved in student government is the most important goal for the leaders of this year's Association of Students of the University of Nebraska.

"Student apathy has always been a problem in the 1980s," ASUN President Bryan Hill said.

To promote involvement, Hill said, ASUN will have a student complaint hot line this fall that students can call to alert ASUN leaders to problems.

Hill said he hopes to initiate television coverage of ASUN meetings.

Devi Bohling, ASUN first vice president, said one key to combatting student apathy is getting residence hall students more involved through groups like the Residence Liaison Committee.

The committee, composed of three representatives from each resi-

dence hall and one from each sorority and fraternity, was created last year to improve relations among all living units, she said.

Bohling said she will expand the committee's role this year by coordinating sponsorship of campus activities.

Another way to get residence hall students more involved is through improvement of senator-constituent meetings, Bohling said.

An open forum discussion of important topics on campus also could attract student involvement, she said.

Bohling said the open forum would allow ASUN to select knowledgeable panel members to answer students' questions on campus issues.

ASUN second vice president Jon Bruning said encouraging more involvement from students who are not part of the fraternity and sorority systems will be a high priority this year.

Bruning is a member of the ap-

pointments board, which appoints positions on several ASUN committees. He said about 70 percent of last year's applicants were from fraternities and sororities.

"I'd like to get an equal proportion of dorm residents to apply in the future," he said.

Bruning said he particularly wants to encourage involvement from minorities on campus.

The best way to do that, he said, is through personal contacts with minority groups and residence hall organizations.

Bruning said he hopes the appointments board can fill the remaining committee positions with members of groups who are under-represented in student government.

All available positions will be extensively publicized, he said, to encourage everyone to apply.

Bohling said that in addition to

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## Some financial aid is still available

wards of the court and those with legal dependents other than a spouse. Married students and graduate or professional students who won't be claimed as tax exemptions on their parents' returns also are independent students.

Beacon said he can't increase dependent students' aid because of federal regulations.

Although most grants and scholarships have been committed, it is not too late for students to receive aid for this academic year, Beacon said.

He said money resulting from cancellations possibly will be redistributed for second semester based on the date of the original application.

Beacon said students used to have to fill out another form to be eligible for the second-semester aid, but that was "unnecessary work on the part of the student," he said. This plan is still in the discussion stages, he said.

Most private donors will send the award to OSFA to guarantee that the student uses the money for school, he said.

UNL departments also offer scholarships. Students should check in the dean's office to find information on scholarship availability and how to apply for the awards. The departments usually award through OSFA, Beacon said.

In all, the office deals with about 1,600 scholarships, and awarded almost \$4.5 million during the 1988-89 school year in scholarships alone. OSFA also awarded \$32.5 million in financial aid, Beacon said. This year, he said, the office will award about \$35 million, about \$4 million of that in scholarships.