

# Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Monday

## WEATHER

Today, becoming cloudy with a 20 percent chance of precipitation, south winds 10-25 miles per hour, high 50-55. Tonight, cloudy and colder with a 30 percent chance of snow, low 20-25. Tuesday, still colder, 30 percent chance of snow, high in the mid to upper 30s.

## INDEX

News Digest ..... 2  
Editorial ..... 4  
Sports ..... 7  
Arts & Entertainment ..... 10  
Classifieds ..... 15

## Presidential negotiations near close

By Pat Dinslage  
Staff Reporter

Contract negotiations between University of Nebraska President-elect Martin Massengale and NU Regents Chairman Don Blank should be finished by the middle of this week, Blank said.

Blank of McCook was authorized by the board at a special meeting Tuesday to negotiate contract terms with NU Interim President and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Massengale.

"I don't foresee any problems with the contract," Blank said Sunday, although Massengale has not indicated whether he will accept the presidency.

Massengale said that "talks are progressing along normal lines of expectations." Massengale said he prefers to keep the details of the negotiations private until he and Blank have decided on the contract.

He said he will decide whether to accept the position when a contract is final. Many factors

See **CONTRACT** on 6

## Senators say search affected NU public image

By Pat Dinslage  
Staff Reporter

Littering the battlefield of the University of Nebraska's search for a president are the university's public image and the trust of the Nebraska Legislature, some members of the Education and Appropriations committees said.

Sen. Roger Wehrbein of Plattsmouth said the "furor" surrounding the search is unfortunate. The regents handled the search badly, he said.

"It's unfortunate that (Interim NU President Martin) Massengale has been made a whipping boy," he said. "I don't know why they didn't submit Massengale (as a candidate) in the first place."

Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly said he believes that the board's selection of Massengale "completed a plot begun two years ago... to put Martin in" as NU president from the

See **SENATORS** on 6



David Fahleson/Daily Nebraskan

Jack Dunn, coordinator of Ralph Mueller Planetarium, with a swirling galaxy of stars and gases projected onto the dome of the planetarium.

## Laser shows wed showbiz, science

*Planetarium coordinator wants to educate, entertain audience*

By David Dalton  
Staff Reporter

He seemed almost to apologize for the way he was dressed.

"OK, I'm wearing a suit today," said the coordinator of Ralph Mueller Planetarium. "That's because I was meeting with a class."

On other occasions, Jack Dunn leaves his dress clothes tucked away in the closet. When he's running one of the planetarium's laser shows, he tends to be more relaxed.

"I want to fit in with

the atmosphere," Dunn said. "I feel it's important that you really understand the audiences."

It's important, he said, because a little showbiz helps to make science accessible.

"We're not trying to be elitists or separatists or anything like that," he said.

And most of all, they're not trying to be dull.

He said he hopes audiences will leave the planetarium knowing more than when they came, but he also wants them to enjoy what they watch.

"You have to have a good story to tell them, good information and a good soundtrack," he said.

The process can be complicated, he said, and can add up to long hours at the planetar-

ium.

His office is a tiny space partitioned off from the planetarium theater. The desk it contains is barely large enough to hold a telephone and a few sheets of paper.

But most of his work does not go on in there.

Most of it goes on in the planetarium control room among equipment that might have been torn off the bridge of the 1960s starship Enterprise of Star Trek fame. Here he produces four planetarium shows a year and, at times, one laser light show a week.

But, despite the workload, Dunn is not reclusive.

"People tell me I was vaccinated with a

See **DUNN** on 7

## Regents' reactions differ over education coordination

By Michael Ho  
Staff Reporter

### Main points of the Widmayer report:

#### Governance

The new coordinating commission should have statewide reach. Its duties should include reviewing budgets and role and mission statements.

An advisory panel of 13 to 15 members should be established. This panel would consist of students, faculty members, legislators and other citizens.

#### NU campuses

"Teaching must again become the business of the education business.... Teaching ability must be the essential criterion in hiring, promotion and tenure." The report suggests that UNL in particular has let research dilute its commitment to quality teaching.

#### UNL

Should reduce the number of programs it offers and increase its admission standards.

#### UNK

Should not expect major funding changes. But, some new master's degree programs should be allowed.

#### UNO

Should be allowed to offer limited doctoral programs and build campus housing.

Source: Widmayer and Associates

Amie DeFrain/The Daily Nebraskan

A recent call for stronger statewide coordination of higher education has provoked mixed reactions from University of Nebraska regents.

Don Blank, chairman of the NU Board of Regents, said the role of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, as suggested by a Chicago consulting firm, appears to go "well beyond" a true coordinating commission's powers.

But Rosemary Skrupa, an NU regent from Omaha, said her initial impression of the report was "basically favorable."

"I have no concerns about it at this time," she said, calling the report balanced and fair.

However, both cautioned that their knowledge of the report came mainly from newspaper accounts and not from a first-hand reading of the report.

The final report, presented to a legislative study team Tuesday, suggests that the coordinating commission should have the power to implement a statewide plan, partly to re-

duce internal competition among campuses.

The report also recommends that the commission have the power to review budgets.

"My understanding," Blank said, "was that they would be concerned only in the area of role and mission."

When he met with state senators during the drafting of legislation which led to Amendment 4, Blank said, that was the intent.

An interim report issued in November 1989 led to Amendment 4, which was approved by voters Nov. 6. It strengthened the existing Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education to give it the power of budget submission and program review.

The consulting firm Widmayer and Associates was hired by the Nebraska Legislature to perform a study of higher education. The study was ordered by LB247, the bill which also will bring Kearney State College into the NU system next July.

Carl Trender, one of three Widmayer consultants who presented the report, said Tuesday that a strong commission would help bring Ne-

braska's higher education system together. The current collection of colleges, he said, is "a non-system."

Blank countered that the proposals aren't in the spirit of Amendment 4. Nebraska voters approved a coordinating commission, he said, not a "superboard."

Skrupa said fears of an omnipotent board are premature.

"That remains to be seen," she said. "That hasn't been defined by the Legislature."

State senators have done a good job in the past of considering regents' concerns, she said.

Phil Gosch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln student regent, predicted legislative success for the report.

"Widmayer takes a stronger view of coordination" than regents and legislators, he said. "With the climate of higher education in the state right now, my initial feeling is that there will be considerable support for this."

Proposals for the commission were foremost on the regents' minds, but the report also contained recommended role and mission statements for each

See **WIDMAYER** on 6