

**Daily  
Nebraskan**

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## Massengate?

*Regent's conspiracy theories have to end*

**T**he real conspiracy surrounding the University of Nebraska presidential search finally has surfaced. Only, it happened two years ago.

NU Regent Robert Allen of Hastings has come out with another reason why the Board of Regents made a mistake by voting to hire Martin Massengale as president. Massengale violated regents policy by advising Allen during the 1988 campaign for regent, he said.

Massengate.

There's one problem, though. Allen made the phone calls that allegedly were for advice, according to Joe Rowson, NU director of public affairs. And neither party knew they were in violation of the regents' policy at the time.

The policy says, "No administrative officer of the University of Nebraska shall be asked to participate or shall participate, directly or indirectly, in the campaigns for election of members of the Board of Regents."

Allen called Massengale during the '88 campaign for some advice concerning the needs of the university, Rowson said.

Now Allen says the phone conversations could be construed as participation in a political campaign. That may be stretching the regents policy.

Allen has prided himself on how careful he was. He even taped conversations with Massengale because he didn't want to miss any of the details.

If Allen was such a stickler for detail, he should have known the policy during the campaign.

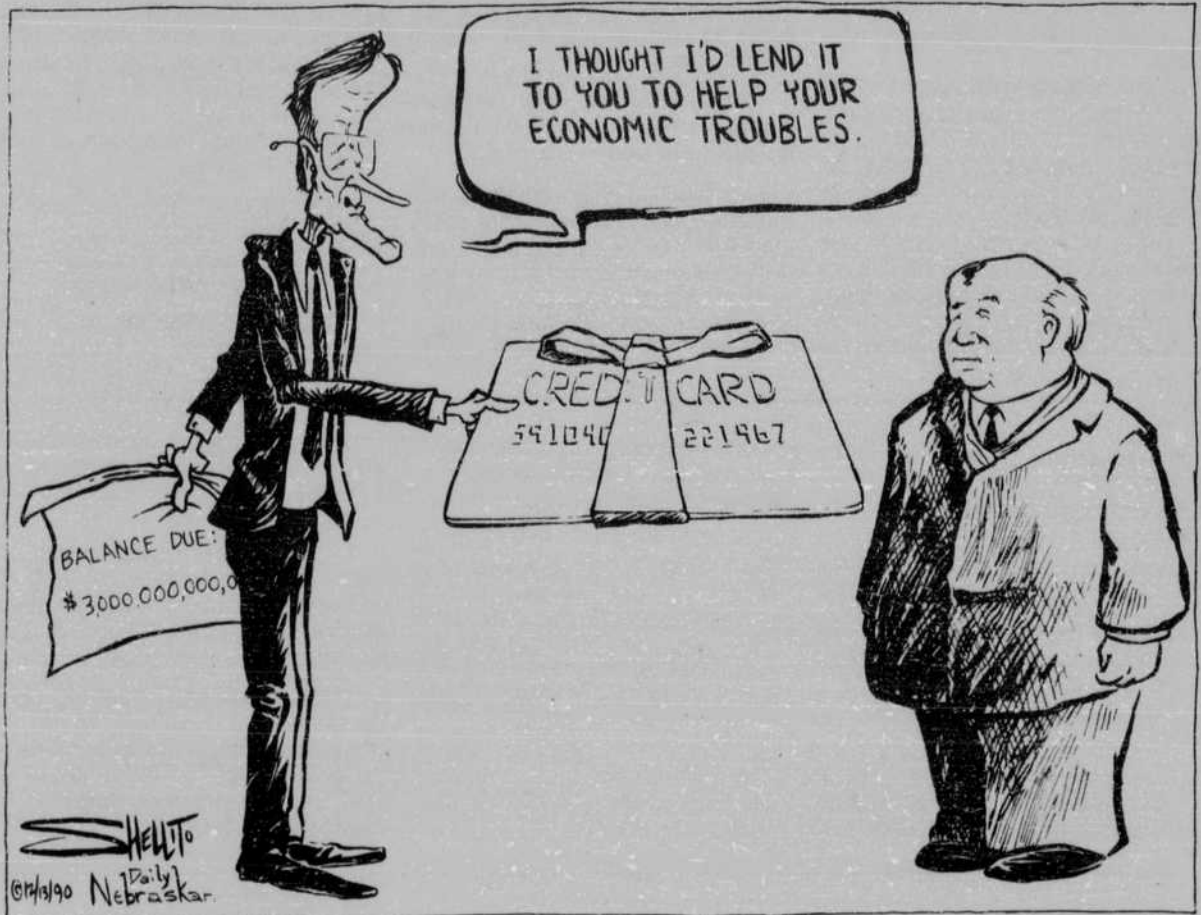
It's funny that the alleged violations didn't surface until after Massengale was selected as president. Allen was one of three regents who voted against Massengale's selection. If he wanted to make a fuss about supposed infractions of the rules, he could have done so before Nov. 20, when the regents voted for Massengale. Bringing up the issue after the election sounds like sour grapes.

Allen admitted he might have been equally responsible for the alleged violations. After all, according to Rowson, Allen made the calls. And yet, it is Massengale's credibility as president that Allen seems to be calling into question.

Allen was elected two years ago, when he and Massengale were friends. The vote for NU president was almost a month ago. It's time to quit dwelling on the issue. What's done is done.

Old business should have been taken care of before Massengale's election. With another legislative session just around the corner, Allen should join the rest of the regents in looking to the future, not the past.

— Lisa Donovan  
and Eric Pfanner  
for the Daily Nebraskan



## Accidents can change outlooks

*Just taking time out to think can change a lifelong perspective*

**I** had reserved all day Monday to work on my broadcasting project. I had interviews set up all over campus and I was really focused.

After that, I was going to cram for my other classes just like all the rest of us procrastinators. I had set aside this time to be my own — I wasn't thinking about anything else.

When I came home from studying I checked my phone messages and heard my stepmother's voice. She said my dad had been hurt fixing the garage door and that he had been home from work for several days.

"I'm just calling to let you know," she said.

I didn't call back right away. I'm not heartless, but the phone company took away my long distance service for not paying my phone bill.

Anyway, it was Dead Week and I had to read at least three books.

I read about a young man named Sherm who ran away from home because his mother wouldn't let him play sports. I made it to the part where Sherm was helping his brother on a farm when I started thinking back to my own family.

When I was 8 years old, my mom, dad, little brother and I moved from a farm in north-central Nebraska to what I thought was a metropolis — Hastings.

It had a shopping mall, video games, a McDonald's and even public swimming pools.

My dad got a job driving a semi-truck for a company in Hastings. For a while his loads took him to New York City about every week. That left little time for him to spend with his young family.

He wasn't always around to go to my soccer games or to see my school plays or musicals. He also wasn't there when my brother and I got sick and had to go to the doctor.

Where was he?

He was putting miles on his truck so he could put food on the table. He was getting two hours of sleep a night,

none on others, so he could get to his destination back home to see us.

I was at an impressionable age. What my friends thought mattered to me like nothing else. They thought a big rig was cool, so I took advantage of that. My dad found time to give my class a ride in his truck. For a while, I was popular.

But popularity changes about as



**Robert  
Richardson**

often as the direction of the wind, and I didn't remain on top for long. My friend Jeremy was the top grade schooler after his mom bought him a Nerf football.

As I got older, I saw negative stereotypes for truck drivers emerge from television and movies. Truck drivers drove over cars and eluded the cops. They took drugs, had extramarital affairs with hookers in truck stops and some even killed people. Truck driving wasn't as cool as it used to be. When my friends asked, "What does your dad do?" I avoided the question as long as possible.

My other friends had fathers who were bankers and pharmacists and business guys who were always home and made lots of money.

My family wasn't poor, but when I got something it was for a good reason. I needed it, or I cried until I got it.

Up until the time I was settled in high school I harbored some negative feelings about my dad for one reason or another. He wasn't home often and when he was, he was tired.

My thoughts changed when my dad asked me to go trucking with him last summer. He had asked me to go in the past but I either had a job or some other excuse as to why I couldn't

go. But when he asked me this time it seemed special, and I accepted without question.

We got up at 5 a.m. and left the house at 5:30. We loaded cattle three times and unloaded twice. We drove in Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri. We drove over the speed limit and talked on the C.B. and we stopped at a truck stop to get some sodas because the coffee got kind of old.

I watched my dad closely all day. When he drove he kept his eyes on the road. He moved swiftly and steadily through all 12 gears. But for the first time I saw lines in my dad's face. He looked tired. He had been driving a truck for at least 12 years and it showed. All the time he had been driving, I never told him I was proud of him for always keeping a job and always putting food on the table. He always has worked hard for his family and because he wasn't always home he received little thanks for the support he provided.

One thing my dad has always done is trusted me.

As we drove down the interstate in Iowa, my dad pulled over to the side of the road and asked me if I wanted to try driving.

"Dad, are you sure I can do this?" "I know you can if you want to," he said.

I didn't drive far that day, but just enough to really appreciate how much my father has done for me and the rest of my family. All of a sudden my dad was more important than Sherm, broadcasting or Dead Week.

I did get ahold of him the next day. He was happy to hear from me and anxious to know how difficult my finals were going to be.

I picked up my book and began to concentrate. Before I fell asleep, Sherm was playing baseball and had just hit a home run in the bottom of the ninth to win the game.

Richardson is a junior broadcasting and English major, a Daily Nebraskan columnist and Arts and Entertainment reporter.

## opinion READER

### Capital punishment system inadequate but gets results

Chuck Green (column, DN, Dec. 11), I appreciate the somewhat graphic description of what happens when the electric chair is used. It makes me feel good to hear that the few sickos who have been executed have suffered the same way their innocent victims did.

So an execution costs more than life in prison — big deal! I would be more than happy to spend a few extra bucks of my money to ensure that a creep like John Joubert will never be able to brutally murder another little boy again.

You do make one good point, Chuck.

Capital punishment, as it exists now, does appear to obstruct justice. Justice would be the killer suffering

the same fate as his victim. This apparent obstruction, however, is the fault of the defendants and their liberal, do-gooder attorneys. There should be some sort of limit on the number of appeals these criminals are entitled to. If five different juries feel certain that a man is guilty, it seems kind of pointless to try for a sixth.

Perhaps you are right, Mr. Green. Maybe the death penalty is not a deterrent. But it sure as hell prevents that one person from committing any more vicious crimes. You don't hear about Ted Bundy killing women anymore, do you?

Andrew Meyer  
"The Silly Junior"  
pre-med

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Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Readers also are welcome to sub-

mit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Letters should be typewritten.

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