

# Elections

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university has been through round after round of cuts, and you have to wonder what more can be done without some serious damage."

But Van Valkenburg said there was much to be done.

UNL's administration is overstaffed, he said, and sometimes overpaid.

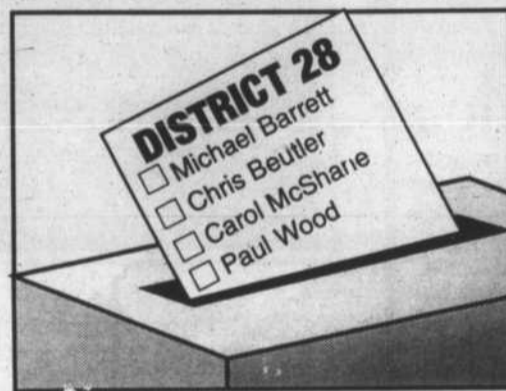
"Layers and layers of administrators are inappropriate," he said.

It doesn't stop there, Van Valkenburg said. "What we've allowed to go on approaches total fiscal irresponsibility. When you have the president of the university making about as much as the president of the United States, something doesn't make sense."

Wesely said that throughout his term in office, his intentions always had conflicted with the realities of governing.

And in that conflict, his intentions usually lost.

"We've been trying to stop bad things from happening rather than trying to make good things happen," Wesely said. "The problem again ... will be to head off budget cuts instead of proactively trying to enhance the university."



Candidates' perceptions of the university vary greatly in the highly contested 28th legislative district.

With four candidates in the running, UNL has ranked from "stronger than ever" to needing an overhaul.

Sen. Chris Beutler said he had seen the university through some hard times, but this wasn't one of them.

"I think that the University of Nebraska, in general, is stronger than ever," he said. "And despite some fairly moderate years financially, I think the support of the university out of the Legislature has been good."

Paul Wood disagreed, saying UNL was head-

ing in the wrong direction.

The way to turn that around, he said, was to start at the top.

"UNL is just as top-heavy as can be," he said. "If I ran a business the way the University of Nebraska (does) ... I would be broke."

But Michael Barrett said while he agreed some things needed to be cut, the Legislature needed to be cautious.

"A lot of politicians, when they have a problem with budgets ... tend to want to cut everything."

Barrett said he was not familiar enough with the workings of UNL to judge what should or should not be done.

Carol McShane, the fourth candidate from the 28th district, said a lot of UNL's problems could be solved simply by re-budgeting and making programs more cost-effective.

As for UNL's need for maintenance funds, McShane said that was not the Legislature's problem.

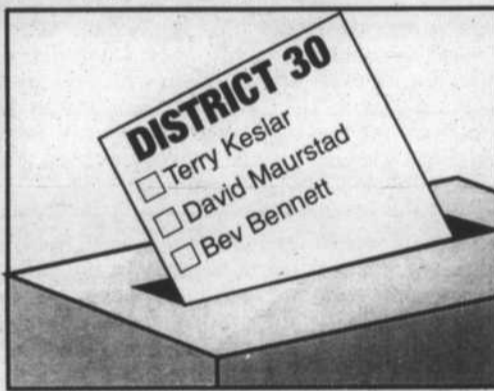
"I don't have a whole lot of sympathy with the maintenance problem," McShane said. "That's just sloppy budgeting."

"If you have any sense of budgets, you budget every year for the day you have to start patching your roof."

If cuts need to be made, Wood said, they should be aimed at cutting the number of administrators.

Those savings, he said, could then be passed on to students.

"The students are getting it in the fanny," Wood said. "We have enough money in the state to underwrite education. We shouldn't have to pay for education in this state. I'm for abolishing tuition altogether."



With the departure of Sen. Dennis Byars, the 30th district is the only one without an incumbent.

All three candidates in the district describe themselves as education-oriented and have similar views of UNL's direction in the coming

years.

For David Maurstad, that means maintaining UNL without diminishing its role in Nebraska by making further budget cuts.

But that will be difficult, he said, because the state will be starting its budget session next fall with a \$100 million shortfall.

"The upcoming budget is going to be a very difficult situation," Maurstad said. "We will have to re-prioritize where we want to allocate our resources."

"When we do that, the university system will have to be a high priority."

Bev Bennett said when it came to budgets, neither legislators nor university officials were presenting an accurate picture.

"The state legislators are coming to the people saying 'the federal government is making us do it,' and that's a cop-out," Bennett said.

The university, on the other hand, complains it needs more funding, he said, while considering projects it can't afford.

Bennett used engineering as an example.

"We have an engineering college, and we don't need another one," she said. "I think they (NU) will be speaking out of both sides of their mouth."

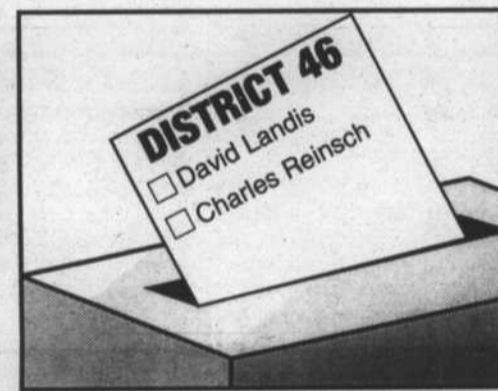
Candidate Terry Keslar said she thought the Legislature still could trim fat from the university budget.

"I really feel that we do have a lot of waste in the administration (of the university)," she said. "We duplicate a lot of research programs."

"But I think the university is as strong or stronger than its ever been."

Either way, when the Legislature hands the university the final budget this year, Keslar said voters needed to take into account that where there were reductions, there also were expansions.

Voters often forget the improvements that are budgeted into the final university budget each biennium, she said.



If UNL thought a budget cut two years ago was bad, Sen. David Landis said the university better be prepared.

"In the event there isn't a change in the tax posture (of Nebraska), we are looking at a cut several magnitudes of that two years ago," Landis said.

"It could be a very hard year for the university."

Landis said UNL was in a vulnerable position, given that the Legislature would be starting out with a sizable deficit.

Candidate Charles Reinsch said if budget cuts were needed, campuses should be prioritized with UNL's needs coming first.

One of those needs should be building a new College of Law, Reinsch said.

"The Lincoln area ... has plenty of doctors," he said. "There are two or three for every illness."

"But there aren't very many attorneys. The university should stress that and try and turn out two or three times the number of attorneys they are now. Quit turning out so many medical students and doctors."

Reinsch said he realized that getting the money for such a program would be difficult, especially under next year's budget.

When it comes to maintenance, Reinsch said buildings were in good shape on both UNL campuses, with the exception of a couple of buildings on East Campus.

Reinsch said he was in favor of raising faculty salaries, because that was the only way UNL would maintain its current position.

Five years ago, the last time professors' salaries were raised, Landis said he was at the forefront on the legislation to do so.

Now, with NU President Dennis Smith taking charge of the budget, any raises will be in his hands, Landis said.

"The university has sacrificed a great deal in the last few years," Landis said.

By all indications, it may continue to do so, he said.

Whoever is elected, Mulnix said, it is important they have a stance in favor of higher education.

If a recently completed 30-community survey of Nebraska residents is any indication, Mulnix said, that should hold true.

A preliminary look at the surveys shows that Nebraskans think UNL is doing a good job, Mulnix said. And so far, there haven't been any complaints about inefficiency, like in past years, he said.

"I think the word is out that we've taken our share of cuts," he said.

He said he only hoped that had gotten through to the Legislature.

# Centrum building finds owner in non-profit energy company

By Patty Wewel  
Staff Reporter

The uncertainty surrounding the Centrum Plaza has ended with its purchase by a non-profit energy company, an official announced Friday at a press conference.

H. Steve Wacker, executive director of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska, which purchased the building, said the company would relocate its offices to the Centrum Plaza. The remaining space would be leased to retail stores and offices, he said.

Brad Korell, president of the National Bank of Commerce, which is financing the purchase, said the city was fortunate MEAN decided to make the purchase.

"It is an example of cooperate responsibility and leadership at its best," Korell said.

The Centrum, located at 11th and O streets, and most of downtown Lincoln have been losing retail tenants to other areas of the city.

"For the last seven years there has been a cloud of uncertainty over the building," Korell said.

Wacker said the Centrum Plaza was located

conveniently across the street from Lincoln Electric Supply, a company that MEAN works with. Also, Wacker said, the building was big enough for company expansion.

Brad Smith, chairman of MEAN, said by relocating, the company could lower its operating costs, thus benefiting members of the communities it served. The company supplies electricity to about 50 Nebraska communities.

Wacker said MEAN would immediately begin improving the Centrum. Improvements will include lighting, general clean-up, maintenance and remodeling.

The company would announce a new name for the building later.

Wacker said he hoped to make the Centrum "a viable hub of downtown like it was suppose to be."

This goal can be achieved, he said, with the new office and retail space, as well as the skywalk that runs from the building.

Mayor Mike Johanns said MEAN's purchase of the building was another step toward downtown revitalization.

"A sound, secure downtown equates a sound, secure community," Johanns said.

# Smith urges teachers to be adaptable

By Julie Sobczyk  
Staff Reporter

Today's educators need to communicate with students and be open to new technology, NU President Dennis Smith said during a speech Friday.

Smith was the featured speaker at the University of Nebraska Awards Ceremony. This was Smith's first opportunity to address the entire NU community.

Smith spoke to recipients of the Outstanding Research and Creative Activity Award and the Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Award.

The universitywide Departmental Teaching Award also was presented. Past recipients of these awards also were honored at the ceremony.

In his address, Smith focused on the relationship between faculty and students.

"Education is a shared experience," Smith said. "It has been said that education is like a

conversation. When one party isn't listening, they will miss something important."

Accepting changes in technology will add to effective teaching, Smith said.

"Technological discovery serves our society better," he said. "It makes our world safer through discovery."

Smith said the 1990s was an information age filled with new ideas and possibilities. He said teachers needed to have the willingness to change that students had.

Educators should not be afraid of trying new teaching ideas, Smith said.

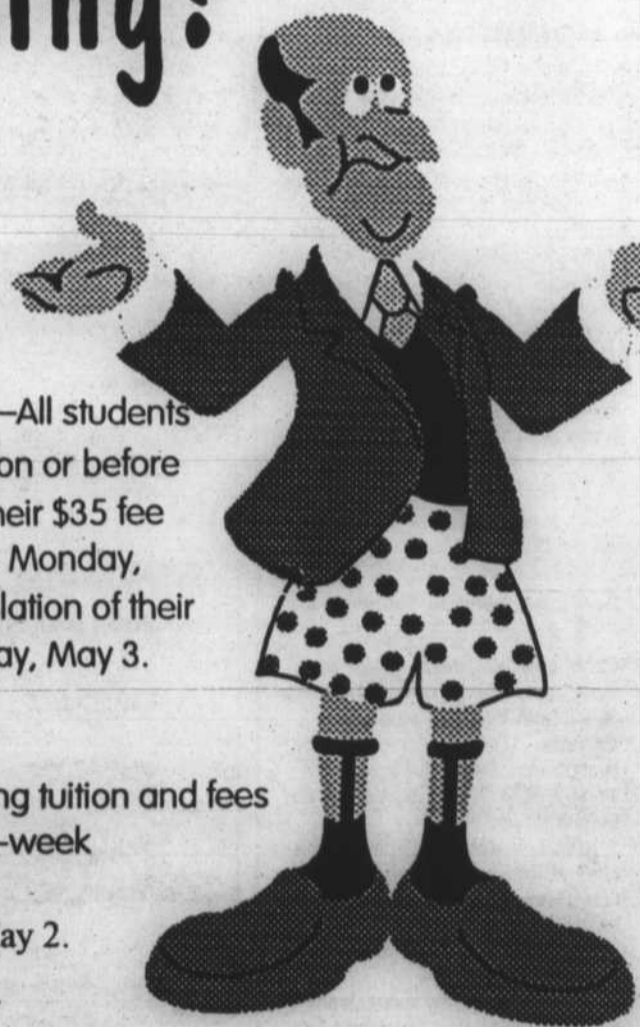
"To enter the future means engaging in an exchange with a moving and changing environment," he said.

"Test your creative excellence. Show your value as teachers," Smith said. "You are the ones who will lead into the next era."

Smith was confident of professors' abilities to change.

"I think we're in good hands. You represent the best."

# Did You Forget Anything?



**Just a reminder**—All students who early registered on or before April 11 must turn in their \$35 fee payment by 4:00 p.m. Monday, May 2 to avoid cancellation of their registration on Tuesday, May 3.

The deadline for paying tuition and fees for the 3-week and 8-week Summer Sessions is 4:00 p.m. Monday, May 2.