

# Daily Nebraskan

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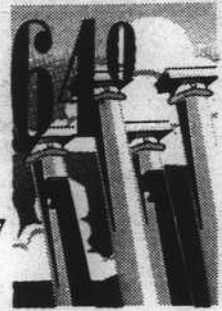
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March 17-19, 1995

## 'This is like coming home'



The Associated Press

Retiring Penn State President Joab Thomas stands with his successor, UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier, on Thursday in Hershey, Pa., after the Penn State Board of Trustees elected Spanier to the position.

### Another Spanier would suit Regents

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Reporter

Regent Chairwoman Nancy O'Brien said Thursday she expected to attract stellar candidates to replace outgoing Chancellor Graham Spanier.

O'Brien said the challenge to continue

Spanier's legacy would attract big names in higher education.

NU President Dennis Smith said in a release he would appoint a search committee within the next 30 days. He also said he would appoint an interim chancellor, who would start in August and continue until a permanent replacement was found. Spanier starts his new job Sept. 1.

O'Brien said it would be improper for the Board of Regents to give input on what it would like to see in a replacement for Spanier. She said the decision was up to the president.

Regent Don Blank of McCook, who was chairman of the regents when Spanier was hired, said he didn't want to see much change with a new chancellor.

"I'd be excited if we had another Graham Spanier," he said.

Blank said the board might hold a mini-assessment of UNL's needs with the president, students and faculty.

Regent Chuck Hassebrook of Walthill, said he had a lot to learn about the search process. The committee must "overturn every stone" to find the top candidate, he said.

### UNL chancellor named president of Penn State

By J. Christopher Hain  
Senior Reporter

In recent months, Chancellor Graham Spanier had become a wanted man in the national academic arena.

Spanier said he didn't seek the offers to lead various institutions, including the University of Washington and Penn State University, but they came anyway.

One offer, he said, stood above all others — the chance to govern Pennsylvania State University. The chance to return to the 23-campus system where he began his administrative career. The chance to return home.

But Penn State might not have gotten its man had Spanier accepted a job as president of the University of Washington in Seattle.

After the UW offer, Penn State sped up its selection process because it did not want Spanier to be lured away. Herb Howe, associate to the UNL chancellor, told the Daily Nebraskan Thursday.

Spanier said several universities had approached him with potential job offers. But he said he never applied for any of them.

"I never applied for a position like this here or anywhere else," he said during a press conference in Hershey, Pa.

Spanier was unanimously confirmed by the Board of Trustees Thursday as the Penn State president during a special meeting. Spanier, 46, will succeed Joab Thomas on Sept. 1.

Spanier, who has been the UNL chancellor since 1991, said the opportunity to lead one of the nation's most distinguished universities was "a dream come true."

Spanier worked at Penn State from 1973 to 1982 in the College of Human Development. He said he grew up professionally in University Park, Pa.

"For us, this is like coming home," Spanier said.

Sandra Spanier, the chancellor's wife, earned her master's and doctorate's degrees at Penn State. Since 1982, they have worked together at three universities, including UNL, where she is an associate professor of En-

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### Irish student enjoys U.S. but misses her homeland

By Paula Lavigne  
Senior Reporter

With a nation of people wearing green and pretending to be Irish on St. Patrick's Day, it's hard to find a real four-leaf clover in the bunch.

But when Nuala Kennedy's Irish eyes are smiling, they're not lying.

Kennedy, an international business major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is a native of Dumfalk-Newry in County Down, Ireland.

She came to UNL from Scotland's Edinburg University and has a job lined up in France after graduation. Kennedy already has traveled around western Europe and America's West Coast.

Pictures of American pop icon James Dean plaster her walls, and Pringles cans line her shelf. A thick book sits on the shelf.

"It's my James Joyce book," she said, smiling. "I'd never live without it."

When she arrived in Nebraska last semester, Kennedy made her first discovery — American football. She got a taste of Husker mania when she went to the UCLA game in September.

"It lasted so long. I was amazed they were

taking a break for commercials," she said. "I didn't understand that at all.

"I just knew they had to get the ball from one end of the field to the other," she said.

There's no sport like American football in Ireland, but Ireland's football is the same as American soccer.

Kennedy, who works at the Campus Recreation Center, always wondered why people were frustrated when she handed them soccer balls when they asked for footballs.

Even though she didn't understand American football, Kennedy caught national championship fever. During the Orange Bowl, she said, she was at a bar in Seattle, and the people in the bar were cheering for "the other team."

"I didn't even know who they were playing, but I thought I might as well support Nebraska," she said. "Then they started winning, and I thought, 'Yeah, that's OK!'"

Although Kennedy says she loves Lincoln, she notices the differences from Ireland.

"Everyone wears the same clothes. They're

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### Journalists reflect the irony of witnessing death penalty

By Brian Sharp  
Senior Reporter

Unimaginable.

Horrific.

Surreal.

The words only begin to explain what witnesses saw inside Nebraska's State Penitentiary on Sept. 2, 1994. While a crowd outside celebrated and cheered, Harold Lamont Otey became the first person executed by the state in 35 years.

And on Wednesday, Nebraska is scheduled to carry out its second execution in six months.

Robert E. Williams has been sentenced to die in Nebraska's electric chair shortly after midnight March 22. Williams, 57, was convicted for the 1977 Lincoln murders of Catherine Brooks and Patricia McGarry. Williams also was convicted of raping Brooks.

Media witnesses for both executions talked to the Daily Nebraskan this week about the story that all said was the most difficult of their careers.

Ed Howard, a correspondent with The Associated Press, witnessed Otey's execution. He is also one of five media witnesses named for Williams' scheduled execution.

"I have been a reporter for 28 years," Howard said. "I have seen a lot of death and a lot of dying. But it goes without saying that one does not forget the sight of watching another person die."

"There is occasionally a little voice that says 'I don't know how many of these I have left in me.' I don't know if I have another of these left in me."

Leslie Boellstorff, a reporter with the Omaha World-Herald, said she knew what to expect when she arrived at the prison that night. But what she remembers most isn't the execution, she said; it was the waiting.

Two minutes lapsed after the curtain to the death chamber was opened — revealing a man who was masked and strapped into a wooden

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