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WEATHER:

Today - Mostly Sunny and hot. Southwest wind 10 to 20 mph.

Tonight - 20% chance of thunderstorm. Low 60 to 65.

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HIGH ON HER HORSE



Jon Waller/DN

Debby Walentine of Fort Calhoun hands her daughter Meghan a hat while she mounts her horse in preparation for State Fair competition.

Byrne's contract upsets regents

By Matt Woody
Senior Reporter

Former UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier's decision last spring to renew Athletic Director Bill Byrne's contract and not tell anyone doesn't jibe with an NU Board of Regents policy about reporting university employment changes, a regent said.



In late 1994, the board decided to assume less control over employment contracts and hiring, giving more authority to top university administrators, Chairwoman Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said Tuesday night. In return, the board asked to be notified of such decisions, she said.

According to the policy, O'Brien said, the board is to be notified every three months of major university employment decisions. The Board often is informed each month, she said, or in special cases, it is notified immediately.

Spanier and Byrne closed the deal in early March, Byrne said, but news of the contract extension got out to the public only in the last few days.

Byrne said his two-year extension contains a rollover clause, which means another year will automatically be added to the contract each year.

O'Brien said she learned about Byrne's renewal about 10 days ago, about five months after the deal was made.

Upon learning that the contract extension was signed in March and not in July as she had previously believed, O'Brien said, "That's even more troublesome."

As chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln at the time, Graham Spanier could renew Byrne's contract on his own authority, without seeking approval from the central NU administration.

Regent Robert Allen of Hastings agreed with O'Brien that the board should have been notified of the deci-

sion.

"I guess technically he could do this without telling us about it. ... It would have been better if he had talked to us about it."

Spanier, now president of Pennsylvania State University, declined comment Tuesday night, saying he was no longer involved with UNL.

UNL Interim Chancellor Joan Leitzel, who took over for Spanier on July 24, said Spanier's handling of Byrne's contract was by the book.

"It followed the university's personnel procedures to the letter," Leitzel said.

Although she didn't know about Spanier's move at the time, Leitzel said she learned of it in July while preparing to assume UNL's top post.

The extension of Byrne's contract was discussed in executive session at Saturday's Board of Regents meeting.

O'Brien emphasized she wasn't questioning whether Byrne deserved to have his contract extended, but she was taking issue with the way it was handled.

"I don't think it should have been a secret, and I don't think anything about it was secretive in nature," she said, "but it looks suspicious in retrospect."

However, Allen disagrees with Spanier's decision. He said heavy criticism of Byrne — some of which he feels was justified — warranted a review of the position.

"I wouldn't agree with what he (Spanier) gave him," Allen said. "I think Bill's got himself in some problems here, especially with the Chris Peterson situation."

Peterson was an Associate Athletic Director at UNL, until last week, when he was named a consultant at the NU Foundation.

Speculation had surrounded Peterson's future in the athletic department for months. Peterson's office underwent an audit in February, which proved Peterson had done nothing illegal.

But Allen said Byrne and Peterson just didn't get along, and that tension was at least partly responsible for Peterson's departure.

New dean to change engineering direction

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

A new dean wants to plunge the engineering college back into debate.

It is a new debate, which goes beyond the separate engineering college controversy and branches into national issues.

James Hendrix has been engineering dean for fewer than two weeks, but he says he is ready to take the college out of its controversial rhetoric involving area business leaders and put it back into the hands of higher education.

Earlier this year, NU President Dennis Smith rejected a proposal, after much debate, to build a separate engineering college in Omaha.

Hendrix replaced former Dean Stan Liberty, who was forced to resign amid

the controversy.

And though he still has to look at his stationery to find his office address, Hendrix said he had a full box of business cards on his desk and was ready to go.

"What we must deal with is worrying about engineering issues in higher education," he said. "It's not localized to the state of Nebraska."

Hendrix said the engineering college had to respond to the national debate and a changing field.

The models of education are changing with time, he said. Several years ago, education focused on teaching. After the space age began, education switched to research. Then about seven years ago, he said, it went back to teaching.

"Before most universities can respond, you have another model," he said. "We have to figure out how we can respond — even if we can respond."

The college has to change from a

See HENDRIX on 8

Triple-room rebate spells relief

By Angie Schendt
Staff Reporter

University of Nebraska-Lincoln students who found themselves stuck in temporary residence hall rooms will get some relief — financial relief, that is.

UNL Housing is offering rebates to compensate the third person in triple rooms and people living in lounges, Housing Director Doug Zatechka said.

The "third person" in a residence hall room is the one assigned to that room last.

As of Sept. 15, students still in temporary housing will receive a \$35 rebate for each month, including the first month they stayed in their temporary assignments, Zatechka said.

The rebate is valid until the students have the chance to move to permanent rooms.

Because only 40 people did not show up for their residence hall assignments, the temporary housing may become permanent, he said. That's why rebates are being offered.

"It is a good idea, if the people are stuck in the rooms for a long period of

"It is a good idea, if the people are stuck in the rooms for a long period of time."

ROSE RYAN

Freshman computer engineering major

time," said Rose Ryan, a freshman computer engineering major. Ryan is the third person in her temporary triple room.

The number of no-shows in the residence halls is about the same as last year, Zatechka said.

Thirteen women and 27 men didn't show up to their residence hall assignments this year, Zatechka said.

Originally, UNL Housing planned to make people move out of temporary rooms when permanent rooms became available, Zatechka said.

"Now we are not going to force them to move out," he said.

The increased number of first-year students right out of high school also has affected the housing situation for transfer students, Zatechka said.

After a certain date this summer, housing did not accept housing applications from transfer students.

Many of those transfer students who wanted campus housing but missed the deadline received a spot in university-owned apartments on Vine Street. About 54 non-freshmen live in the apartments, Zatechka said.

Sophomore transfer student Megin Schutte, an elementary education major, got her housing application in late.

Before she got her current room in Pound Hall, Schutte said, she was told about the Vine Street apartments.

"Then they told me that it was all booked up, too," Schutte said.