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## Property taxes rule discussion at meeting

By Erin Schulte  
Staff Reporter

Property taxes were on the menu Wednesday morning for the "Town and Gown" meeting, a traditional meeting of Lincoln business officials and UNL representatives.

Ed Jaksha, one of the founders of Nebraskans for Tax Relief, a grass roots organization and a panel member in the discussion, said the time for property tax relief was at hand. A petition for a constitutional amendment would try to achieve this, he said.

Jaksha said more than half of Nebraskans' earnings go toward some form of taxes. He said if that trend did not stop or reverse by the year 2010, 80 percent would be spent on taxes.

A constitutional amendment would be the best solution, Jaksha said, because it couldn't be changed by legislators, giving the public more say in

the decision.

Jaksha's petition is one of three now on November's ballot. Property tax relief is widely regarded as the top issue of the 1996 Nebraska legislative session.

Lynn Rex, executive director of the Nebraska League of Municipalities, countered Jaksha's argument, saying Nebraska "has a tax problem, but not a tax crisis."

Rex said property tax relief would make it a crisis.

Other taxes would be raised to make up for property tax cuts, and Nebraskans would end up paying more tax money than ever, Rex said.

Jaksha said that citizens needed to become more involved in legislative decisions.

"It's an unfair burden to legislators. Decisions have to be made by default," he said.

## Legislature examines bill for Omaha arena

By Erin Schulte  
Staff Reporter

Residents of the Omaha metropolitan area may gain new sports and entertainment facilities if a bill introduced by Sen. John Lindsay makes it through the Legislature.

LB1135 calls for the establishment of the Metropolitan Entertainment and Sports Authority, which would plan a procedure to build a performing arts and sports facility, possibly a dome.

Lindsay, of Omaha, said the bill would bring together residents of Douglas and Sarpy counties, which comprise most of the metropolitan area. About 850,000 residents live in the

Omaha area, he said, which constitutes the need for proper facilities.

Neither county alone could afford to build improved facilities, he said, but working together would benefit both counties and distribute the financial burden over a larger population.

The proposed facility would be paid for through annual taxes assessed by each county's board. The level would not exceed five cents per \$100 of taxable property.

Omaha may be missing out on large-scale sports and entertainment events, he said. And Lindsay warned that events now held in the area, such as the College World Series, could be moved somewhere else in the future if better facilities were not available.

## IRS allows millions to file income taxes by telephone

By Craig Wagner  
Staff Reporter

The April 15 rush to the mailbox may be a little less congested this year, thanks to a new tax return service recently announced by the IRS.

TeleFile, an electronic filing system, will enable an estimated 23 million Americans to process their income taxes by telephone.

"Filing taxes doesn't get any easier than this," said IRS Commissioner Margaret Milner Richardson.

According to a release from the IRS, to be eligible for TeleFile, a person must be single with no dependents and have earned a taxable income of less than \$50,000.

A person also must have filed a 1040EZ last year and still live at the same address.

Students who filed tax returns from their parents' homes last year will be eligible if their tax forms are still sent home, said Chris DeSimone, who was hired by the IRS to do public relations work.

The TeleFile packet cannot be requested, DeSimone said.

If the IRS believes requirements have been met, TeleFile information will be sent with regular tax forms.

*"Filing taxes doesn't get any easier than this."*

**MARGARET MILNER RICHARDSON**  
IRS commissioner

Inside the TeleFile packet will be an individual personal identification number, as well as a preliminary worksheet.

The PIN number will access the taxpayer's account and serve as identification for further questions, the release said. The worksheet helps assemble necessary data.

The TeleFile service can be reached by touch-tone telephone seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The call should last about 10 minutes.

The refund will be computed and announced. Refund checks should be received within three weeks. The deadline for filing tax returns is April 15.

"TeleFile will not only save taxpayers time and trouble, but will also make the IRS more efficient," Richardson said.

## Aid office to have info desk

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid will be sponsoring an information desk in the Nebraska Union during February.

Two financial aid office workers will be available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the first floor of the union on the following dates; Feb. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 21.

Questions about scholarships,

loans and financial aid will be answered.

Help also will be available for students wanting to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, as well as financial aid renewal forms and scholarship applications.

— Joshua Gillin

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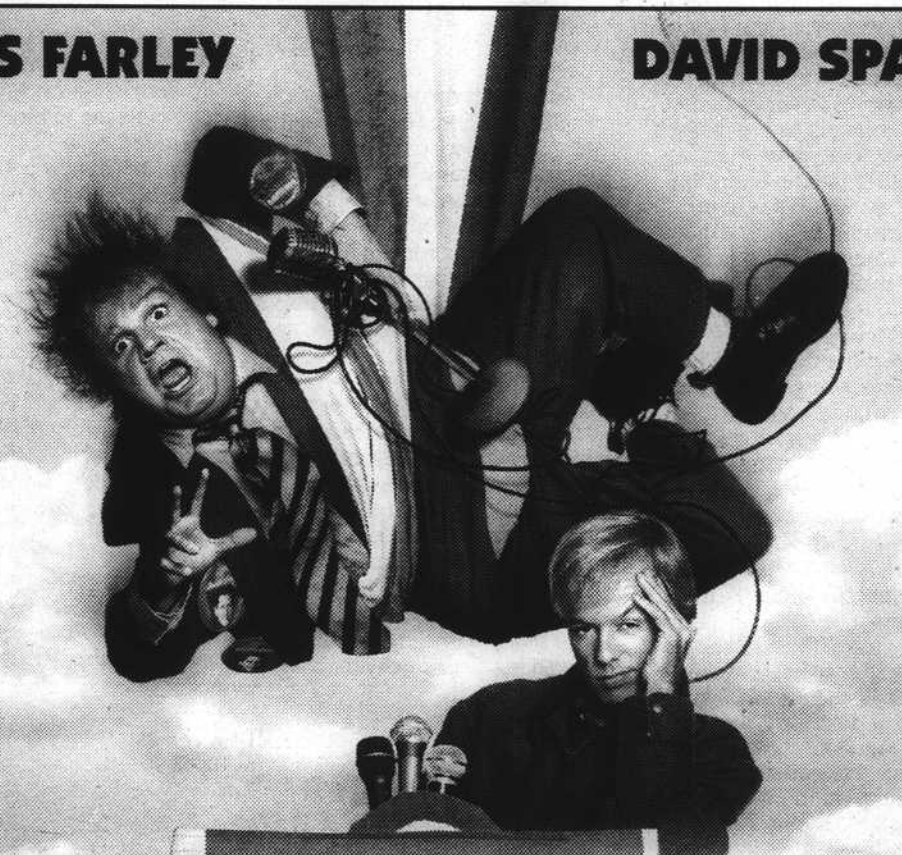
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