

Party welcomes new students

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Big Red Welcome also included an assembly, campus tours and a Run-DMC concert.

Rick Grady, a New Student Enrollment guide who helped with the welcome, said bringing the event outside made it successful. "It created a high-energy atmosphere," he said.

The nice weather and live music seemed to attract more students than when Big Red Welcome was in the Devaney Center, he said.

He said he was glad the move outside didn't cause major problems.

"The logistics of something like this can get somewhat complicated," said Grady, a senior English and economics major.

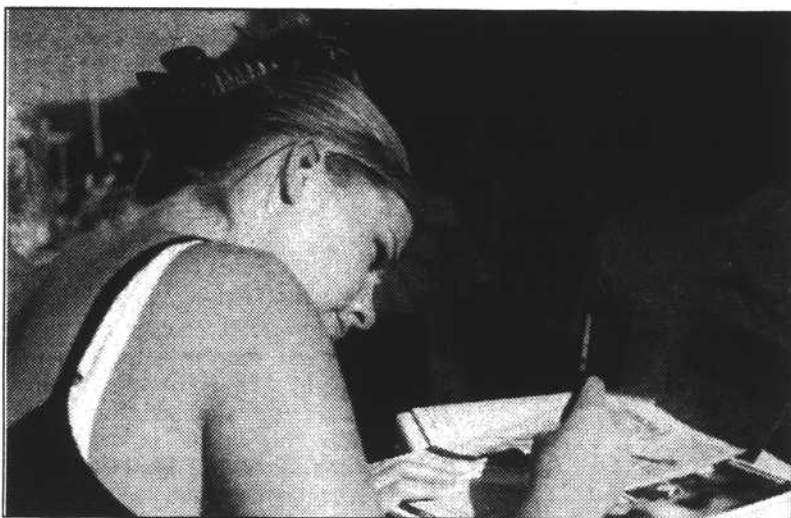
Businesses were cooperative, he said, because they did not demand a lot of accommodations, such as electric outlets or extra materials. United Rental also made the event easier for organizers by providing and unloading tables on R Street.

At the block party, most students needed a bag to hold all the fliers, coupons and giveaways they received, all of which were designed to welcome them to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"We think it's a great opportunity to have some semi-personal contact with students," said Janet Crawford of the University Health Center.

Representatives from other UNL organizations such as the Nebraska Union Board and the University Program Council set up information, giveaways and games at their booths to make themselves known to the students.

Student Involvement invited passers-by to pick a rubber duck out of its wading pool and win free dry-erase boards or water bottles, while Campus Recreation representatives handed out calendars to encourage students to use their services.



FRESHMAN KRISTY SKINNER of Lexington fills out a contest entry form in front of the Big Red Bus. The contest was run by the Lincoln Journal Star and applicants could possibly win a free microwave or refrigerator.

MICHAEL WARREN/DN

Athletic Department members handed out fliers about HuskerFury, a new student group for football fans that offers membership benefits such as priority seating, and organizes road trips and parties.

Other campus groups were represented at the party, from the Young Democrats and Chapter Summary Bible Study to the Afrikan People's Union and language clubs.

Sarah Posvar, a member of Young Democrats, said that many people at the party told her they were unaware that UNL had a Young Democrats club. Members of organizations said that their clubs or businesses would not be known by students if they were not at the party handing out information.

Campus organizations were not the only participants at Big Red Welcome. Lincoln businesses came to give away free products and prizes to students.

Leslie Day, coordinator of public relations, for Amigos, said that the restaurant teamed with Pepsi to offer the students free refreshments at the party because the businesses "feel it's worth it to give it away to get us known to new kids."

Russ's Market, a Lincoln supermarket chain, gave away coupons for free

groceries because they know it supplies a basic need for students, said Mary Knowles, assistant to the director of human resources for the B&R stores.

"You start school and you need food ... you have to eat. We wanted to offer something that the students can use," Knowles said.

Other businesses came to the party with that intention - to offer their services to students who may not know those businesses exist or how close they are to campus. Cellular One, Cycle Works, and Blockbuster Video were just a few of these businesses.

Independent businesses such as Zero Street Records and A Novel Idea used bookstore handed out fliers at the party to students who were unfamiliar with their shops.

Students who attended the party said that it opened their eyes to the services available to them. Sheila Tarnick, a UNL sophomore, said that she was enjoying the block party because "it gives you a chance to know what's offered at UNL."

Freshman Alicen Schulte agreed. She said the event gave her a good idea of what's available at UNL.

"I enjoyed it. They had a lot of information."

UNL leaders say new fee for technology is worth it

By JESSICA FARGEN
Staff Reporter

UNL students are paying the price this year for new computers and software in campus computer laboratories, but several UNL leaders say the new technology is something you cannot put a price on.

During the 1997-98 school year a \$2-a-credit-hour fee will be tacked on to student fees; it is expected to generate \$1.14 million. The fee will increase to \$4 during 1998-99 and will be capped at \$5 during 1999-2000.

The money will go to update labs by paying for additional computers, upgraded software and more staff help.

Kent Hendrickson, associate vice chancellor for information services at UNL, said the university was not keeping up with changing computer technology.

"Students were not getting enough exposure to new technology and more professors were requiring computer work other than just word processing," Hendrickson said.

Hendrickson has been working closely with student groups such as the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska and the Residence Hall Association.

Curt Ruwe, ASUN president, said Hendrickson met with students and asked them what their computer needs were. Hendrickson has done a good job of getting input from students, Ruwe said.

Goals student groups had were to have labs open longer hours, more staffing and software that was more uniform, Ruwe said.

"If you can find software in one lab, you should be able to find it in

another," Hendrickson said.

Ruwe said longer hours and more 24-hour labs are needed on campus to "target off-campus students" because they may not have a computer where they live, while residence hall and Greek students who live on campus do.

There is a 24-hour lab on east campus in Burr and Fedde Residence Halls and another 24-hour lab is scheduled to open soon on city campus in Lyman Hall. It is now open from 7 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Stephen Reichenbach, interim chairman of the computer science and engineering department, said there is a genuine need for an updated computer system, but said he has concerns about where the money is coming from.

"The university has two choices: diminish the quality of UNL or put the burden on the backs of students," Reichenbach said.

But the students don't seem to mind, Ruwe said.

Ruwe and Hendrickson agreed that most of the responses to the technology fee increase have been positive.

And Reichenbach agreed that students will "genuinely use these services," but he said he would rather see the Legislature raise taxes to pay for it.

If students do have concerns, Ruwe said, there is a technology fees board made up of three students, two ASUN senators and two students with computer expertise. The board will listen to ideas from students on how the money from the technology fee should be spent.

Ruwe said the positive response from students was not all that surprising because students realized that "something needed to happen."

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