Roy Bedichek, a writer and folklorist long associated with The University of Texas at Austin as director of the University Interscholastic League (UIL), died on May 21, 1959. He was 80.

Mr. Bedichek was born on June 27, 1878, in his grandfather's log cabin in Sangomon Valley, Illinois. The family moved to Eddy, Texas, as homesteaders in 1885, where he attended rural schools, including the Bedichek Academy founded by his father. He entered UT Austin in 1898 and met the noted folklorist John A. Lomax, who was the registrar and with whom he established a lifelong friendship. Mr. Bedichek received bachelor's and master's degrees from the University in 1903 and 1925, respectively.

Mr. Bedichek worked as a reporter in Fort Worth, and taught high school in Houston and San Angelo. He also served as city editor of the San Antonio Express. In 1917 Mr. Bedichek became athletic director for the UIL. He was promoted to director of the organization in 1922, remaining in that position until 1948. During his tenure he reshaped the UIL, using ideas gleaned from his family, his extensive understanding of classical literature, and his interest in nature. Mr. Bedichek's efforts ensured the organization's success.

As part of his UIL responsibilities, Mr. Bedichek visited schools throughout the state and began camping out because hotel accommodations were often unavailable. Camping out awakened his interest in wildlife, especially in birds. At the urging of J. Frank Dobie and Walter Prescott Webb, he took a leave of absence in 1946 to write Adventures with a Texas Naturalist (1947), his first book, in seclusion at Friday Mountain Ranch, southwest of Austin. Karánkaway Country (1950), his second book, was awarded the Carr P. Collins Award from the Texas Institute of Letters for the best Texas book of the year. He won the award a second time for his history of the UIL, Educational Competition: The Story of the University Interscholastic League of Texas (1956). A Sense of Smell (1960), his last book, was published posthumously.

In 1994 a sculpture portraying Roy Bedichek, with J. Frank Dobie and Walter Prescott Webb, was installed at Barton Springs Pool. The sculpture was created in recognition of Mr. Bedichek's advocacy for the preservation of Barton Springs. In 1998 a Texas Historical Marker honoring Roy Bedichek as a "Scholar, Naturalist, and UIL Director" was dedicated in Eddy, Texas, by the Eddy Cemetery Association.

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty