

# Lincoln schools need social workers

Lincoln has a desperate need for a place where parents can learn the skills of parenthood, according to Kay Dutton, a social worker for the Lincoln Public Schools.

She said that while the public schools are not a social agency there is a need for more social workers within the school system.

Lincoln schools presently employ two social workers. Last year there were three.

"It is not possible with the size of our staff to follow up on every case," Dutton said.

Eldorf Heskett, the Lincoln Public School's student services director said everyone in the school system is overworked.

"Our social workers help families that have been identified as having difficulties which are handicapping the child in school," Heskett said.

The school social worker operates on a referral basis, he explained. They visit families with problems and direct them to the proper agency, he said.

Another duty of the social workers is managing the free lunch program, which last year provided meals for over 2,800 students. They also investigate causes of suspected child abuse, he said.

The school system employs six psychologists, who work closely with the two social workers, the

student services director said. Both the social workers and psychologists are paid on the same salary scale as teachers, he said.

Heskett said the social services are adequate for the school system's purposes.

"I think there is always a greater demand for the services than the services are able to provide," he said.

Cindy Fliescher, the other social worker, said the services are watered down. For many families, she said, it takes several visits to convince them they need the services of an agency. Many won't go and then the child suffers, she said.

# Wide-eyed consumers prefer night shopping

By Deb Gray

Silent. Everything's too silent for a grocery store's grand opening. Despite a calliope of pennants and man-sized banners, the store parking lot exudes an eerie stillness at 3 a.m. Like an arena anticipating some event. The Coliseum awaiting the Christians. Or the Big Top without the canvas.

At spastic intervals, shadows dribble through the murk, gliding, staggering, nodding or chattering. What people frequent grocery stores past the witching hour? The checker stood beneath a technicolor collage of balloons. He said the pre-dawn crowd was young, "mostly under 35 years of age."

Although he said they had "quite a few drunks," they had no rowdiness.

"Our biggest trouble is with shoplifters," he said.

The checker at another 24-hour grocery mentioned one regular late-night customer, "an elderly guy who always came in smelling like a garbage can."

"He'd spray air freshener over himself, then read the dirty books until we kicked him out," the checker said.

Two young men passed through, purchasing peanuts and Hostess Twinkies. The checker stifled a yawn.

"We smile a lot to stay awake," he said.

"When we're alone we yell and throw things at each other. Like loaded mouse traps."

The store's baker is wide awake. And he smiles a lot. A smile pre-dipped in silver cleanser.

The baker said he had suffered a concussion and a dry ice burn since his employment. One evening while running down the basement stairs, he hit his head on a steel beam.

Another time the electricity went out, he said.

"The ice cream began thawing and running all over the floor. We took all the ice cream out of the freezer upstairs to move downstairs," the baker said.

"After we had the ice cream out on the floor, we realized we didn't have any power, so the conveyor belt wouldn't work to put the ice cream in the freezer."

Using flashlights, the store's two other employes replaced the ice cream while the baker bought dry ice, he said.

"I crushed 700 pounds of dry ice with part of my car's rear axle," he said. "We sprinkled the ice in our freezers to refreeze the ice cream. I didn't get all of it off."

He displayed a scar on his forearm. But the baker said he enjoyed his work. He smiled that smile, shot from guns.

"Want to know how I stay awake?" he asked. "I have fun. Life's too short not to have a good time."

Then he waxed poetical. "If you want to know a place to come/Where you can laugh and have some fun," he began.

The checker groaned, but the baker continued.

"You can tell your kids when you're old and gray/The time you visited IGA."



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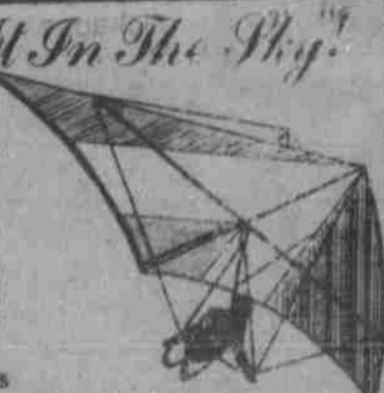
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