

... eligibility

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really scratching. We were eating once every two days, getting by on minimal sustenance.

"Another thing is we've had trouble getting our bills paid because we're so low on money. Our welfare officer—she was nice about it—told us that if we didn't get our bills paid the government could cut off our stamps. I don't understand the reasoning behind that at all," he said.

A UNL chemical engineering major, Lance Kocontes, agreed that getting food stamps is a hassle. But it's worth it, he said.

\$46 for \$112

Kocontes, his wife Deb and Daughter Alysha, have been using food stamps for 15 months. The stamps pay for about one-half of the Kocontes' food bill.

This month, Mrs. Kocontes said they paid \$46 for \$112 worth of groceries.

Kocontes said he isn't concerned what other people think because they are on welfare. Although they have not been treated rudely by anyone because of their economic status, Mrs. Kocontes said she heard of an instance from a friend where a grocery store clerk criticized a recipient.

The clerk made snide comments about the recipient because she had used food stamps to buy a cake mix, which the clerk considered a "luxury item," Mrs. Kocontes said.

The people in the welfare office seem "like they would rather not have students apply for food stamps," Kocontes said. The welfare office seems to think the students are only around for nine months and then disappear, he said.



Mr. and Mrs. Lance Kocontes in February paid \$46 for stamps that would buy \$112 of food items.

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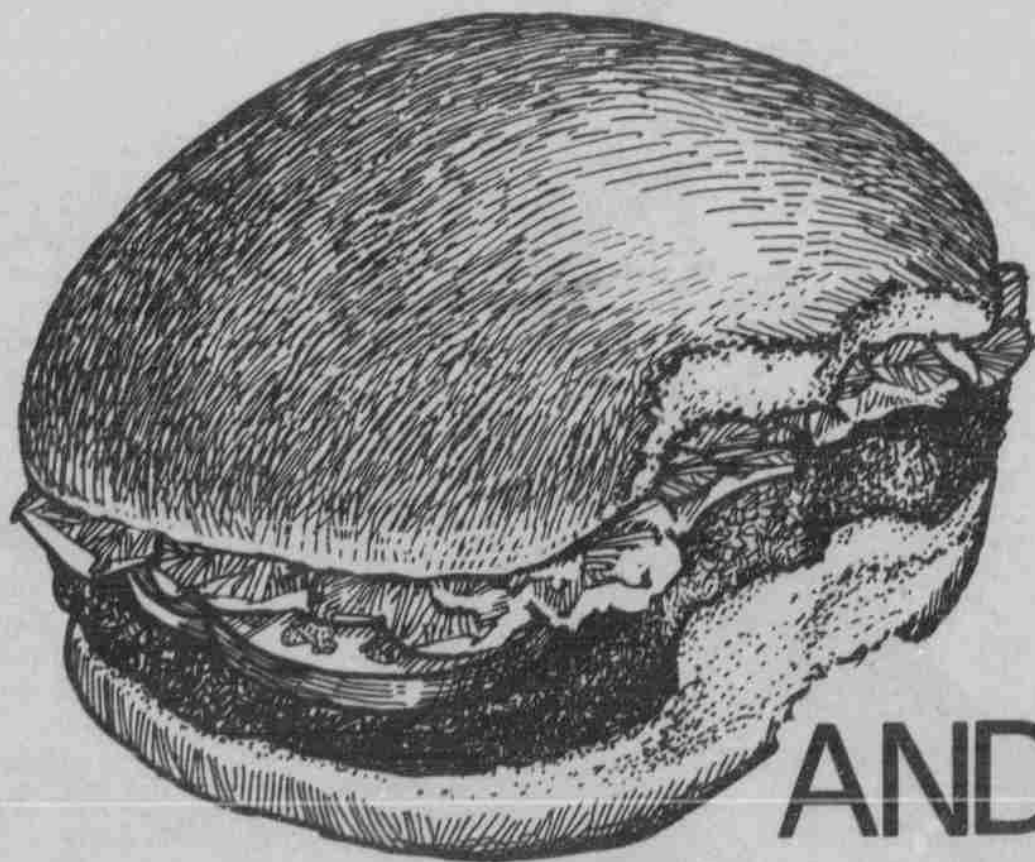
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