

Two Lincoln businesses respond to energy plea

Only two Lincoln stores have responded to the nationwide plea to conserve energy by shortening their business hours.

Hinky Dinky stores began closing two hours earlier last week. Jerry Roberts, assistant manager of Hinky Dinky at Van Dorn Plaza, said the stores went back to their usual closing time (9 p.m.) on Wednesday because the weather turned warm.

The decision was made for all Lincoln locations by the Hinky Dinky home office in Omaha. Roberts said he was unable to determine how much energy was saved in such a short time, but the Van Dorn store does not use much energy for heating because it has a heat recovery system, which feeds off the air compressor.

"We have not lost an exceptional amount of business because of the shortened hours," he said.

He said the store temperature during the day is 65 degrees and 55 to 60 degrees at night. Roberts said it is possible the Hinky Dinky stores will change back to shortened hours if the weather turns cold again.

Ben Simons also has cut its hours in an effort to save energy.

"We'll definitely continue this through February and possibly March," said Bill Bures, downtown store manager.

The new hours for the downtown store are 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every weekday. It is opening one hour later in the morning and will not be open Thursday evenings. The Gateway store hours are 12 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday and 10 to 9:00 p.m. other week nights.

"We're an employee stock holding company," Bures said. "This was the employees' decision."

Bures said because the downtown store's heating system is a by-product of the Lincoln Electric System, it was hard to measure the savings in energy. But he said there had been a "big reduction" in energy consumption at the Gateway store.

Bures said Ben Simons has suffered no loss in business since the new hours went into effect Thursday.

Ben Simons contacted other downtown merchants, he said, to investigate the possibility of a joint effort to cut back on energy usage. Among those contacted were repre-

sentatives from Miller & Paine, Hovland Swanson, Magees, Hospes and other music stores.

"We did not get a good response," Bures said. "The comment we ran into most often was 'the energy shortage doesn't affect us.' That's not the way we feel about it. Whatever we can save can be used by someone else."

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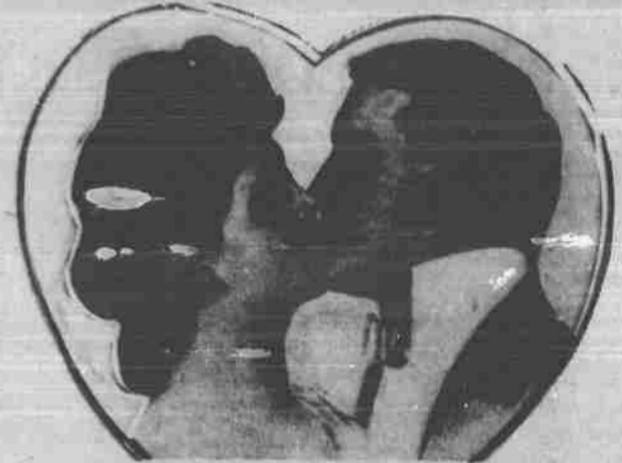
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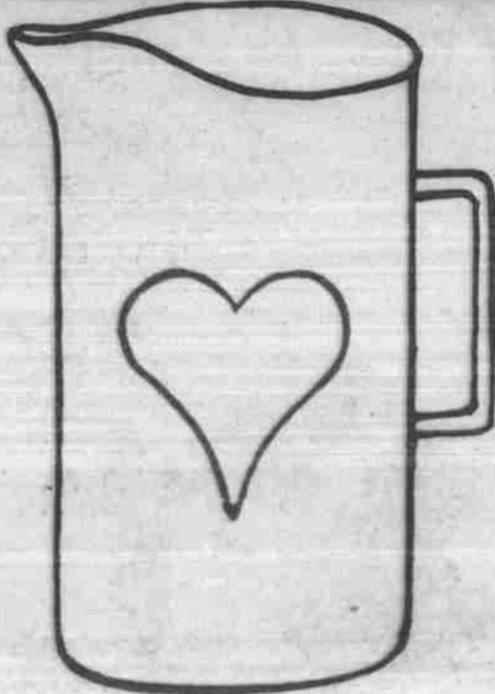
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The most romantic message, as judged by the Daily Nebraskan Cupid will allow its author to send a dozen red roses to anyone in Lincoln. Plus, the second and third prize winners will be awarded gifts for their loved ones also.

Fill out the form and bring or mail it to the Daily Nebraskan Office Room 34, Nebraska Union, before Friday, February 11th at 1:00 p.m. If you can't afford to run an ad, bring us your message anyway, you still can win. Daily Nebraskan staff members are not eligible. No purchase necessary.

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