

Drive continues

The NU Foundation is one-third of the way toward its minimum goal of \$25 million in a three-phase fund-raising drive.

Foundation president Harry Haynie said \$8.3 million has been raised since the fund drive began last spring. The campaign still is in its first phase, where gifts of \$50,000 or more are the primary target, Haynie said.

Phase two, scheduled to begin sometime second semester, will concentrate on gifts of \$5,000 to \$50,000, according to Haynie. The final phase is set aside to gather gifts of any amount from any donor, he said.

Haynie stressed that the foundation's fund drive is not committed to a rigid schedule, adding that gifts of any amount are accepted anytime.

"The active soliciting should be pretty well wrapped up in three years," Haynie said, although he speculated that some contributions to the \$25 million-minimum goal could last as long as 10 years.

The most recent contribution to the foundation has been a \$500,000 gift from the *Omaha World-Herald*.

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Lighting blamed in college fire

Providence, R.I.—A gooseneck lamp lighting a nativity scene may have sparked the fire that turned the top floor of a Providence College dormitory into an inferno, killing seven women, officials say.

Mayor Vincent Cianci said late Tuesday that investigators believed the fast-moving flames early that morning began near a small paper and cardboard manger scene set up in the fourth-floor corridor of Aquinas Hall, a women's dormitory.

Cianci and Lt. Bernard Gannon of the police department's arson squad said the corridor was adorned with paper Christmas decorations, which helped fuel the flames.

associated press datelines

The mayor, asked if the decorations violated fire regulations, said, "There are no violations anyone is being cited for now."

He said the 38-year-old brick dormitory was equipped with a system of fire alarms linked to the city fire department. The structure met all the fire safety requirements in effect at the time of its construction, he said. However, it lacked fire escapes and sprinklers, and officials were unable to determine whether any fire extinguishers were used.

Strike begins

Hundreds of farmers from Georgia to the Pacific Northwest kicked off a nationwide strike Wednesday, with their leaders vowing to shut down farm operations as long as it takes to get better prices.

Farmers demonstrated at supermarkets in Colorado and the Midwest. In Georgia, hundreds of rural merchants closed their doors in sympathy. Livestock auction houses closed in South Carolina. And in Texas, some farmers

blocked the delivery of goods from grocery warehouses.

Much of the protest Tuesday, in the form of tractor-cades, boycotts against grocery stores and grocery warehouse picketing, involved Midwestern and Pacific Northwest farmers—many of them grain producers, who are particularly upset with current prices.

But the strike was also felt through much of south Georgia, where a number of small cities were virtually shut down.

In the Texas Panhandle, angry farmers parked tractors in front of grocery warehouses, blocking delivery trucks. And an air hose for brakes on a tractor-trailer truck carrying hogs was cut when the driver stopped for a red light on Georgia 38 in Pierce County, the sheriff's office said. That damage was repaired.

Crash victims

A rural North Bend man and his wife died in a three-vehicle crash near Schuyler and a young Omaha man was killed in west Omaha early Wednesday, raising the Nebraska's 1977 traffic toll to 335, compared with 372 a year ago.

Colfax County Attorney Larry Karel said the victims of the accident four miles east of Schuyler were Leroy Saalfeld, 63, and his wife, Pearl. They were killed instantly when their car collided nearly head on with a vehicle driven by Don Dufek, 19, Schuyler.

Dufek was taken to Clarkson Hospital with multiple injuries while his passenger, Robert Saltys, 19, also of Schuyler, was taken to Bergan Mercy Hospital in Omaha.

Karel said a third vehicle involved in the accident was driven by Andrew Ulrich, 19, North Bend. Ulrich and a passenger in his pickup truck were not injured.

Karel said the vehicle driven by Dufek apparently sidwiped the Ulrich pickup and then collided nearly head on with the Saalfeld car. The accident happened on U.S. 30 about 12:15 a.m.

Release ordered

Omaha—Three U.S. District Court judges have ordered that portions of secret testimony concerning at least eight city or state officials be released to investigators who are looking into the possible involvement of government officials in illegal gambling operations.

In an unusual breach of grand jury procedures, Judges Warren Urbomb, Albert Schatz and Robert Denney ordered that portions of grand jury testimony be made available to city, state and bar association attorneys.

Attorney General Paul Douglas, Omaha City Attorney Herbert Fitle and the Nebraska State Bar Association are looking into the possible involvement of city and state officials in gambling operations.

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