

# 'You're as young as the crowd you run with'—Old Bill

By Kim Hachiya

If you've frequented the Brass Rail, the Waterhole or Sweep Left anytime within the last four years, chances are you've encountered him.

A hunched-over old man who always wears white. A shock of wild, white hair. No teeth, and eyes which peer out from behind glasses that magnify them to about twice normal size.

They call him the "Bread Man," the "Milk Man" or just "Old Bill."

But his real name is Bill Olmstead and this 69-year-old man is the spry breakfast

and lunch cook at the Delta Upsilon fraternity. He just hangs out at college "beer joints" to stay young.

"Being around young people kind of keeps me young," Olmstead said. "You know the old saying, you're as young as the crowd you run with."

And Olmstead is young for a man who's been in the kitchen for 56 years.

He started his culinary career at the age of 13 as a baker's apprentice in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. By the time he was 16, Olmstead was in charge of the 10-man bread shift at the old Standard Bakery in Cedar Rapids.

He almost quit baking once. When he was 21, Olmstead caught his hand in a bread mixer. His curled right hand still displays a scar across the palm.

"It took 14 months to heal. The doctor said I'd never be able to straighten it out," Olmstead said. "The only way I can straighten the fingers is by force."

Olmstead came to Lincoln in the mid 1950s because he heard they needed bakers. He had just quit working at the Tip Top Bakery four years ago when he saw an ad for a fraternity cook in the newspaper.

"I'd known several of the boys before

then from beer joints and taverns," he said. "I seemingly like college bars."

"I guess I kind of like the bartenders. I have fun with them. Just this last Saturday I got my I.D. card checked by some numb-nut at the Brass Rail. Couldn't help but pass though," he added.

Olmstead has been married for 21 years and says he has "two kids that I know about. But I don't go down the street slapping kids for fear I'll slap one of my own," he said a laugh.

Although he has only a 10th grade education, he said he reads books and newspapers and watches television. He said he figures he is a self-educated man.

"I heard a professor say on the radio once that even if a man hadn't gone to college, that by age 30 or 33 he would have the same experience and education as a man with two years of college. I would have a four year college education by this time."

Olmstead is a big Cornhusker fan, partly because of his association with the DUs.

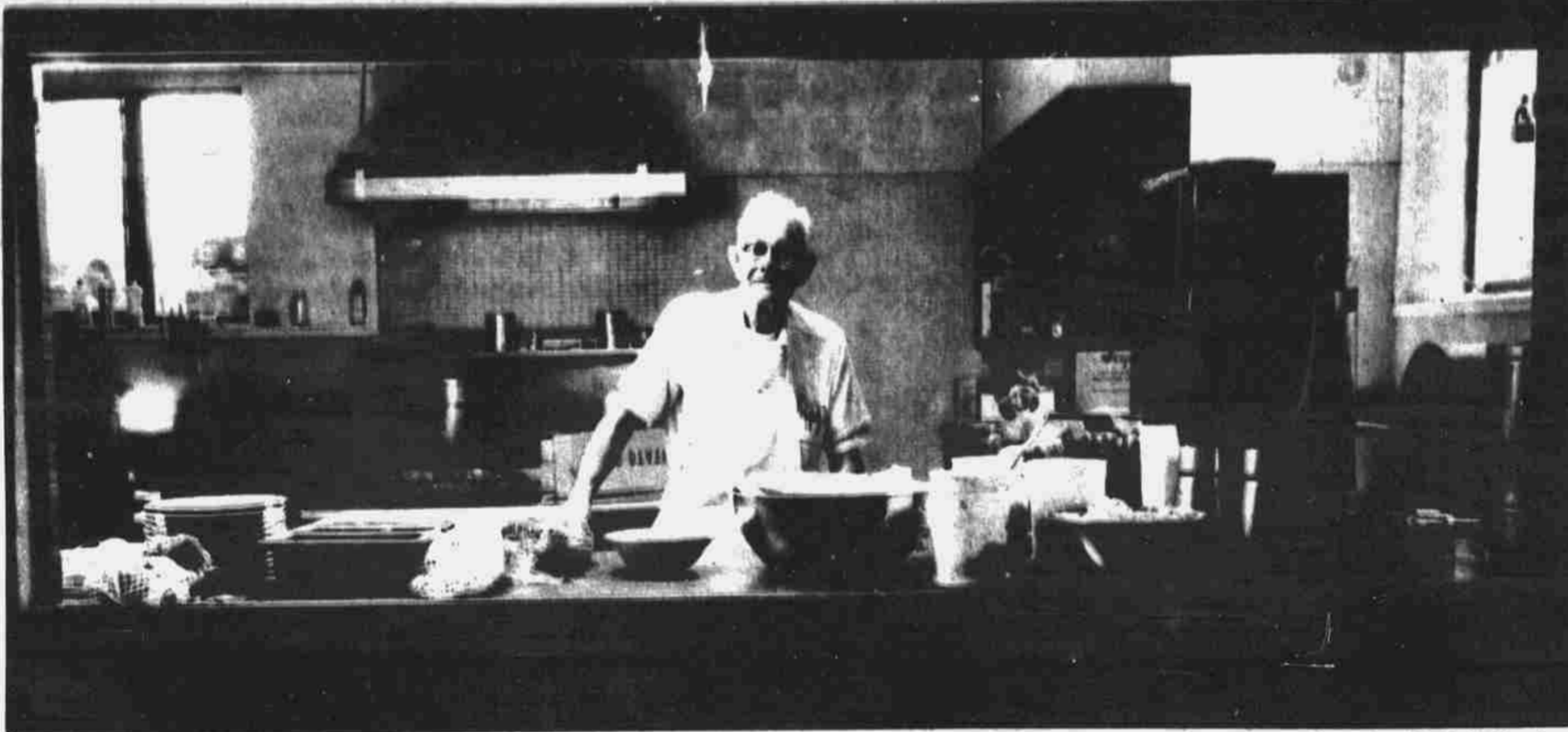
"The offered to take me to a game about four years ago, and I been going ever since. I try and sit in their house block, but sometimes I sit in the seat I'm supposed to and move at halftime," he said.

Olmstead says he supposes that someday he'll retire, but he said he's too active to just sit around. He has no secrets for a long life; he's been smoking since he was four years old.

"First thing I smoked was a big old cigar. Some bigger kid forced me and my brother to smoke it in the park."

"Smoking has injured my health, I have emphysema. I can get down to four or five cigarettes, but I can't cut it out completely," he said.

"I guess a 65-year-old habit dies hard."



Old Bill . . . in one of his many elements.

Photo by Mark Billingsley

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## Survey pinpoints alcohol as major youth problem

By Patti Gallagher

According to a survey taken by the Youth Service System of Lincoln and Lancaster County, the use of alcohol is the most common problem of youth in the area.

"A common high use of alcohol was found in all age groups," said Sally Heald, planner for YSS.

The Youth Needs Assessment Survey was conducted by the YSS "to discover unmet needs of youth in the Lincoln and Lancaster county," Heald said. The 965 youth were polled in April 1979 and the data released Thursday at a press conference.

The 100-question survey covered five major areas of concern, ranging from educational satisfaction to social relationships, and was distributed in all Lincoln Public School junior and senior highs, two private schools and four consolidated county schools.

Although the use of alcohol was the major problem uncovered, Heald noted that the percentages correlated only to the surveyed students, and these percentages are not meant to represent the entire youth population of Lincoln.

THE FIRST surveyed area of concern was education. An 81.1 percent majority polled said they "enjoyed school." The students said they felt their schools were supportive of their educational desires, and served as a social center for them, Heald said. The majority of the students who enjoy school plan to pursue higher education.

Most students indicated they wanted to work or had a job. The majority of the unemployed felt jobs were available but could not hold one until they reached the age sixteen because of federal and state restrictions. The majority tended to use parents and friends as resources for finding employment, according to Heald.

Lincoln youth rated recreational facilities as "good" and county youth rated them as "fair." When asked what their recreation desires included, both groups specified swimming pools as the top choice. Recreation centers and lighted tennis courts ranked second on the list.

In social relationship problems (any-thing non-academic such as, personal and family problems) a 83.3 percent majority would seek help from parents and family

when troubled. Sixty-one percent said they would seek help from a specialized agency. However, when asked to name an agency the majority did not.

HEALD SAID this lack of knowledge of available agencies pointed to the fact that many would not know where to go in a personal crisis. Only 13.7 percent have run away from home, and most enjoy the company of their families.

Alcohol use out-ranked the use of marijuana and hard drugs. The trend of alcohol use showed a definite correlation between parent use and youth use, Heald said. In the all-schools composite, of the 78.1 percent of parents who used alcohol, 67.8 percent of their children did. The use of marijuana was 35 percent, use of hard drugs was 10 percent. Fifty-nine percent of the composite were against the legalization of marijuana.

According to Heald the "youth of Lincoln are a good bunch of kids with a lot to offer the community." She said generally the hurdles youth have to overcome include a place to go to meet with their friends, coping with life in general and peer group pressure.

Heald also said that she didn't see any one area covered in the survey as the major problem of Lincoln youth, but more a series of small ones that need solving.

## Sessions held

Sessions in assertiveness time and committee management and program evaluations are being offered by the Association of College Union International Region II Conference, at the East Campus Union, until Saturday.

Some 180 to 200 delegates are here from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Nebraska. East Union program consultant Martin Wood believes around 140 of the delegates are students, with the remaining figure representing the number of attending union staff people.

The theme of this year's conference, "Imagination," involves the use of creative resources and thinking for positive action, said Wood. The purpose of the conference is to help stimulate development on two levels—in the area of actual programs and in the personal skills of the planners.



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