

Officials: Prospects brighter for qualified teacher

By Betsy Miller

Teaching jobs in Lincoln elementary and secondary schools may be a little easier to come by if a teacher has specific qualifications and preferences, according to an official of UNL and the Lincoln Public Schools.

Lauren Holcombe, who has been with the personnel department of the Lincoln School System for 13 years, said that in the elementary schools, more jobs are open for teachers willing to work in the intermediary grades.

Intermediary grades are usually considered to be fourth, fifth and sixth grade, Holcombe said. He said the reason these grades have more job potential is that most elementary education teachers want to get jobs in the

lower grades.

"More students tend to want to work with the little people," he said.

Holcombe said opportunities at the kindergarten and lower primary level grades are "very tight" from the employees' point of view.

However, he said that employers seem to think there are fewer qualified candidates for teaching jobs than there were a few years ago.

In secondary schools, the subjects employees are able to teach are more important than the grades they are qualified to teach, according to Lee DeJonge, UNL director of teacher placement.

DeJonge said that for high school teachers, endorsements in different subjects are very important. An endorsement is a supplement to a major. For example, a teacher may get a major in secondary education with a math endorsement.

Currently, DeJonge said that most employers seem to have trouble finding teachers with science and trade-industry endorsements. Also teachers capable of teaching agriculture, special education, music, industrial arts, math, distributive education, speech pathology and Spanish are in demand, DeJonge said.

In fields such as math and science, it is usually tougher to find qualified teachers because people able to teach these subjects may get jobs in industry, Holcombe said.

The teacher shortage in math and science is not getting any better, while special education teachers appear to be increasing yearly, Holcombe said.

DeJonge noted that schools in Lincoln don't seem to have a big problem filling teaching spots. However, if students are willing to work in a small town, there are usually more job openings.

"Everybody likes to go toward the bright lights," he said.

Both Holcombe and DeJonge said Lincoln and the surrounding area have provided plenty of employment opportunities for UNL graduates.

UNL will be holding its annual Teacher Interview Fair March 19 and 20 in the Nebraska Union.

DeJonge said that more than 115 schools in Nebraska have indicated they will be sending representatives.

The schools conduct roughly 2,900 interviews during the fair to screen possible employees.

DeJonge said that more than 450 UNL teaching students will be interviewed during the fair.

Police report vandalism, arrest

University Police reported vandalism to a car parked near Abel Hall and reported the arrest of a student in connection with auto larceny.

Someone apparently used a beer bottle to crack a jeep's windshield in the Abel Hall fire lane at 860 N. Vine St., police said. The damage was estimated at \$250 and occurred between Wednesday night and Thursday morning.

Also Investigator Ron Lundy arrested a 20-year-old man from Abel Hall Wednesday in connection with the theft of a cassette and 8-track player from a car. The players were taken between March 4 and March 11 from a car parked in the Area 2 lot at 19th and T streets. The players were worth \$150.

Investigator Randy Kleager said the arrest may clear three separate cases of stolen tape players.

Sunday prayer time for Atlanta's children

The Nebraska Coalition of Black Women will be requesting a community-wide special prayer or moment of silent meditation for the 20 children who have been killed in Atlanta during the past two years.

"Prayer Sunday" will be in conjunction with a national rally scheduled in Atlanta on Sunday. It is hoped that the prayer, which is requested to be held during church services, will be viewed as a "gesture of support for the city and a show of concern for the families of the missing and murdered children," a coalition press release said.

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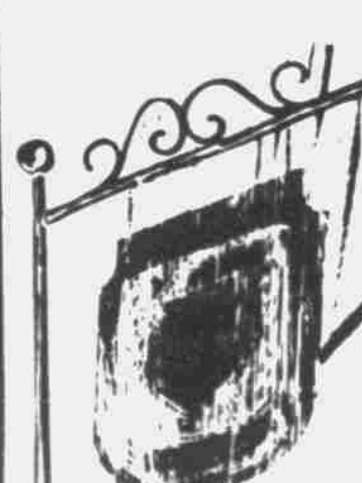
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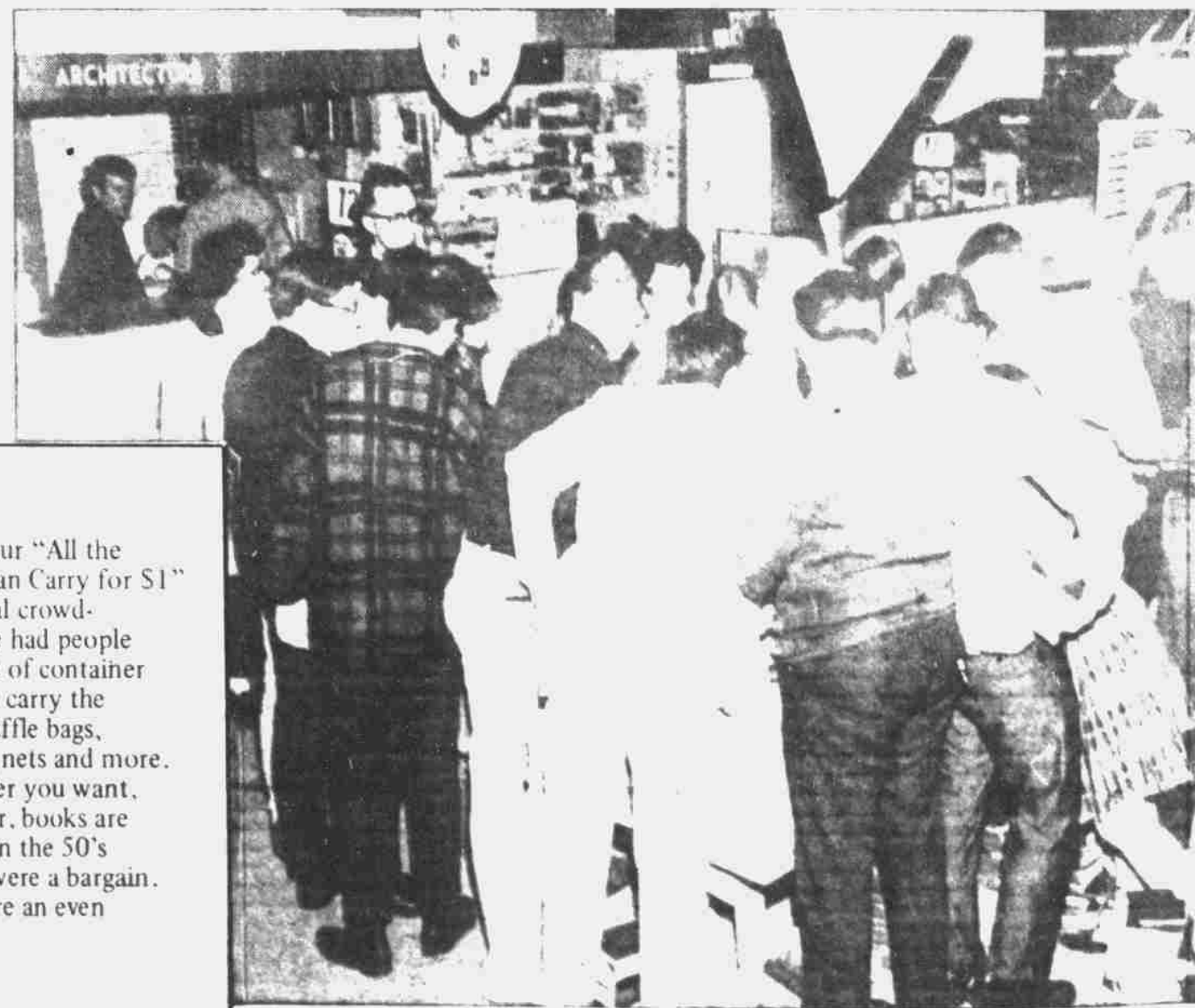
This project supported by Affiliated State Arts Agencies of the Upper Midwest, Iowa Arts Council, Minnesota State Arts Board, North Dakota Council on the Arts, South Dakota Arts Council, Wisconsin Arts Board, with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal Agency

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