

Warrant evaders . . .

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"No shows" were most frequent for defendants in petty larceny and property destruction cases. For traffic arraignments in July 1981, 29 percent of failures to appear were city cases and 52 percent were state cases.

Gradwohl said the Lancaster County Attorney's Office has said it will start filing an additional charge of failure to appear on each case coming in on warrant. The maximum fine is \$500, and the maximum jail sentence is three months for the offense.

The city attorney's office has proposed a city ordinance similar to the county law, she said.

Gradwohl said the county's motor vehicle registration division has begun following state laws which check for outstanding warrants daily instead of cut monthly.

The statute prohibits motor vehicles from being registered when their owners have outstanding warrants.

She said the motor vehicle operator's license division has been encouraged to comply with state statutes prohibiting the licensing of a driver with an outstanding warrant.

Assistant Lincoln Police Chief Al Curtis said his officers serve several hundred warrants a month.

"By Oct. 15, we will have eight new recruits on duty and that will allow us to put more resources on the serving of warrants," Curtis said.

"We have no officers assigned exclusively to warrant duty," Curtis said. "Like any agency, when we do have a stop of any kind, we'll check for outstanding warrants."

Officers generate lists

The department has several public service officers who work on generating lists of multiple warrant offenders and distributing them to police officers, Curtis said.

"For the future, we will continue to concentrate on multiple offenders," he said.

For the Nebraska State Patrol, the lists come through the Nebraska Crime Information Service's computer checks. Maj. E.E. Morrissey of the state patrol, said troopers have used the computers for the last 3½ years.

The patrol plans to do more checking for outstanding warrants when issuing citations, he said.

If the person has an outstanding warrant, the trooper will hold him and return him to court to clear up the case.

Morrissey said the patrol apprehends 50 to 80 people a month on failure to appear charges. Failures to appear total 52 percent of the patrol's cases, he said.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Merle Hesser said the Lancaster County Sheriff's Department receives warrants from other counties and states to serve on people.

"We're using part of our patrol force to assist in serving these warrants," Hesser said. He said six deputies work in the warrant division.

Other agencies serve

Later Tuesday, UNL Police Director Gail Gade said university officers don't issue warrants, but help other agencies serve them.

Gade said UNL is a contributing factor to the problem. Of the 300-plus city citations campus police issued last year, about 30 to 40 percent of the people cited failed to appear in court, he said. City citations are traffic violations, such as careless driving and running a red light.

Gade said UNL police will push for the crackdown by doing whatever they can, including supporting new legislation.

Album covers burned . . .

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Rust said the vinyl would not burn properly and would emit poisonous fumes. The records were smashed with hammers and were to be taken to the Grand Island sanitary landfill, he said.

Tyler said the church decided to sponsor the rally after an anti-rock music seminar presented last week by ministers Dan and Steve Peters of St. Paul, Minn., at the Grand Island Senior High School. The rally drew nearly 750 people.

Rust said the Grand Island church has between 600 and 1,000 members, but attendance at the rally was sparse.

Only about 30 to 40 supporters attended, including a "gospel rock" youth band, "Pearl," sponsored by the church.

About 20 members of the television media attended and several newspaper reporters and photographers also were there.

The burning, which was to start about 7:45 p.m. started early at the urging of the television media.

The pile of record covers was doused with lighter fluid and set afire. Church members tossed album covers into the fire, shouting "Praise the Lord," "Hallelujah" and "Burn Kiss before they burn you" as some records were tossed in.

Beethoven burned

Some records which were burned included Barry Manilow, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Boz Scaggs, Neil Young, Billy Joel, Nazareth, Benny Goodman and a Beethoven album.

Ray Evans, who brought many of the albums, told the crowd that he was getting rid of his collection because he felt if Jesus came to his house, He would be uncomforta-

ble with the records there.

The crowd circled the fire and sang with the gospel rock band.

The singing was, however, nearly drowned out by the sound of rock music blaring from about 10 car loads of youths who came to protest the rally.

Don Stupencheck, a 16-year-old student at Grand Island Northwest, who was driving one of the cars, said he was against the rally.

"I think rock is all right," Stupencheck said. "If you don't want to listen to it you don't have to."

Dan Clifton, a 21-year-old Grand Island resident, said he doubted the rally would get any message across.

Time payments used

With time payments, if the defendant can't pay the day he is in court, he can sign a time payment.

"About 40 percent of the people who go on time payments fail to pay and we have to issue warrants for their arrest," Gradwohl said.

Changes in bonding laws allow people to be released on a smaller percentage of bond, she said.

Curtis said the growth in failures to appear reflects the cite and release practice in use since 1973. Before then, people went to jail and appeared in court the next morning when they were arrested for assault. Now, they are cited and released, and many never come to court, he said.

For people concerned about their outstanding warrants, the municipal court has a call-in number. After Oct. 1, people can call 471-7295 to check for warrants.

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Saturday, October 3rd

Where: At Open Harvest and at the park across the street (27th & Randolph)

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Photo by Mark Billingsley

Dennis Forst directs a stream of water on the album-fueled fire after Grand Island police determined the church group did not have a permit to burn and stopped the event. Said Forst: "I'm not doing this because I want to."