

Mayor speaks on Constitution

By Adam T. Branting
Staff Reporter

The U.S. Constitution requires Americans to stay informed about the government so the best decisions can be made for the future, Lincoln Mayor Bill Harris told a crowd of about 30 at the County-City Building Thursday.

"It has changed our history and will shape our future," Harris said. "Its lasting nature gives us our flexibility."

In conjunction with other celebrations around the nation, Harris and

University of Nebraska-Lincoln political-science professor A.B. Winter gave the presentation celebrating the bicentennial of the signing of the Constitution.

Winter said the founding fathers were asked to simply amend the Articles of Confederation, but found them "too ambiguous."

He said the Constitution has not only been changed by amendments, but by "custom and usage," meaning that presidents, Congress and the

Supreme Court all have their hand in writing the "unwritten constitution." In the early development of political parties, Winter said, many of the founding fathers opposed their use.

"Washington was vigorously opposed, saying that they were a seditious element," said Winter.

At the end of the ceremony, the official Constitution commemorative flag was raised in front of the County-City Building, designating Lincoln as a bicentennial community.

Shorts

City police plan 'extensive' security

Lincoln Police will provide "fairly extensive" security for the FarmAid III celebrities this weekend, said Lincoln Police Chief Dean Lightner.

Lightner said about 20 celebrities have requested escorts to the concert.

Most stars will arrive at the Omaha airport and then drive to Lincoln in limousines or vans, Lightner said. Lincoln Police will meet the stars on

the outskirts of Lincoln and escort them into the city, or transfer them to police vehicles.

Lincoln Police will also provide security at the Haymarket Harvest Festival and the FarmAid concert, Lightner said.

Businessman gives UNL \$100,000 gift

Uses of a \$100,000 gift given to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln by Omaha businessman Willy Theisen

will be announced Saturday at the benefit concert.

Theisen offered the gift to UNL when negotiations between the university and FarmAid officials broke down in June.

In earlier statements Theisen reported that he and UNL Chancellor Martin Massengale had narrowed the potential uses to a scholarship fund or developing a program through the College of Business Administration to offer franchising courses.

Prairies celebrated

By Michael Hooper
Senior Editor

Nine-Mile Prairie—once a part of the endless sea of tall grass that shaped Nebraska culture during the 1800s—will part its grass Sunday for a festival celebrating Prairie Appreciation Week.

Located on West Fletcher Road, about two miles off Route 34, the 230-acre prairie is one of a few patches of tall grass that have never been plowed, said Kathleen Keeler, associate professor of biological sciences at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Sunday's festival, which runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., will include exhibits, music, muzzleloaders, blacksmiths, woodcarvers and readings of Nebraska author Willa Cather's work.

This is the fifth consecutive year a festival has been scheduled to celebrate Prairie Appreciation Week, said an organizer, Ernest Rousek, a member of the Washiska Audubon Society, which is sponsoring the event.

The festival also includes exhibits of the natural history of Nebraska's tall-grass prairies, walking tours and buggy and wagon rides on the prairie.

The prairie's grass—now as high as six feet in places—includes big blue stem, Indian and

little blue stem grasses. Pocket gophers, coyotes, deer, badgers, owls and hawks live on or near the prairie. Their presence can be seen in the gopher holes, nests and deer beds in the tall grass.

John Janovy Jr., UNL professor of biological sciences, said the most unique aspect of Nine-Mile Prairie is that it has never been plowed.

"This means it's a symbol of the way prairies were before agriculture moved in," Janovy said. "It's an important symbol that reminds us that we in this region are inexplicitly tied to the prairie ecosystem."

Nine-Mile Prairie was preserved in 1982 after an act of the Nebraska Legislature that allowed its previous owner, the Lincoln Municipal Airport, to sell it to the University of Nebraska at a reduced price, Rousek said. The NU Foundation purchased the land for \$600 an acre, Rousek said.

Interest in the prairie began in the 1920s, Rousek said, when the late UNL Professor John E. Weaver and his students studied plant ecology there. Weaver conducted field trips on the prairie,

In the early '50s, however, Nine-Mile Prairie was shut off

from the university because the federal government took over the land and had the Strategic Air Command build bunkers and store bombs there, Rousek said.

In 1968, the airport authority bought the land as surplus government property, Rousek said.

Environmentalists and biologists continued to study the prairie, but many of them, like Rousek, wanted the area preserved. Between 1920 and 1979, more than 500 acres of surrounding virgin prairie was transformed into cultivated land, Rousek said.

Rousek said the Washiska Audubon Society leased the land in 1979 for \$4,600 a year, which was raised by cutting the hay on the land.

After a long struggle and both legislative and university approval, the prairie was purchased for \$138,000, Rousek said.

Research continues on the prairie, home to about 395 kinds of plants, Keeler said. Also, more than 80 kinds of birds have been spotted there. Keeler said the 300 or more insects there are most prevalent as adults this time of year.

Tickets for Sunday's festival are \$1 in advance and \$1.50 at the gate. Children under 12 will be admitted free.

Residences 'batten down hatches'

By Lee Rood
Staff Reporter

University of Nebraska-Lincoln residence halls, fraternities and sororities will be secured all weekend to prevent trouble from any of the thousands of visitors expected in Lincoln this weekend for the FarmAid III concert.

Douglas Zatechka, director of university housing, said the halls will be locked Friday at 5:45 p.m. until Sunday morning after the concert. Residents will be allowed to enter only if

they have their room keys with them.

Entrance will be restricted to residents and their registered guests, Zatechka said.

Extra staff and security personnel will be provided to make sure everything runs smoothly, he said.

Rick Gestring, Interfraternity Council president, said IFC recommended that fraternities lock their doors, monitor whom they let in this weekend and make sure all guests enter with a house member.

Council members also advised fraternities to have no parties or social

functions this weekend because members will most likely be participating in FarmAid, Gestring said. The precaution could prevent strangers from entering the houses, he said.

Doreen Davis, president of the Panhellenic Association, said members suggested that UNL sororities set up rotation monitor systems at their doors to prevent strangers from entering houses.

Zatechka also suggested that all students lock their doors this weekend. An unlocked door "is just inviting trouble," he said.

Hispanic heritage at Haymarket

By Joeth Zucco
Staff Reporter

Although Mexican Independence day was Wednesday, Mexican-American students will celebrate their culture Saturday during the Lincoln Hispanic Center's Heritage Festival at the Haymarket Heritage Festival.

Dan Paez, public relations official at the Culture Center, said members of the Mexican American Student Association are volunteering at the festival.

Mexico won its independence Sept. 16, 1810, at the hands of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, known to his people as the "Father of Mexican

Independence," Paez said.

Ana Gonzales of the Hispanic Center said Hispanic Heritage Week, Sept. 14 to 21, was proclaimed by former Mayor Roland Luedtke last year. Other countries celebrating their independence are Chile, Brazil, Guatemala and Costa Rica.

This is the Haymarket Heritage Festival's first year. The center hopes to make it an annual event.

Events include singing, dancing, poetry readings, displays and information booths.

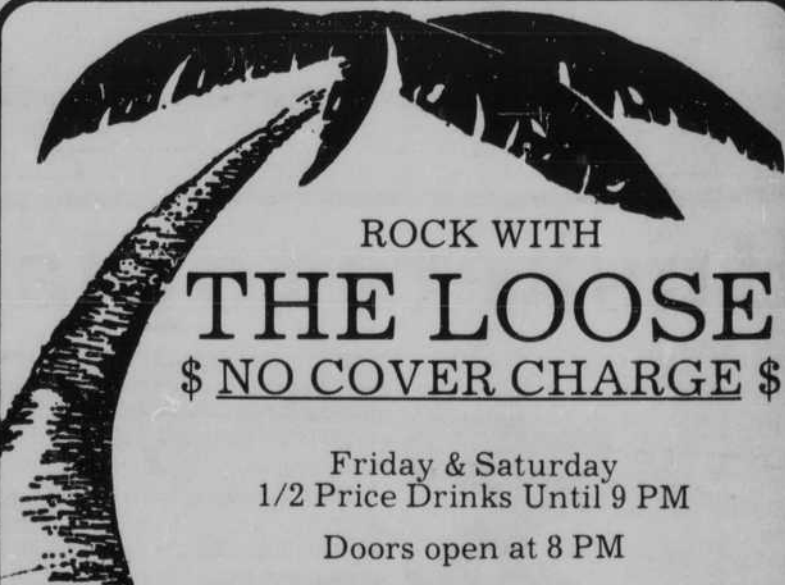
Food from Argentina, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico and Spain will be served.

Other countries that will be represented include Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala and Venezuela.

A mariachi band, America of Jesus Diaz, originally from Mexico, will perform from noon to 6 p.m.

A presentation of the Patriot Queen, a traditional event, will begin with a parade of the contestants, who have been chosen to represent every community.

The festival will be on Eighth Street between O and Q streets from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The displays will start at 10 a.m., and the bands and food will start at noon.




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