

WEATHER: Monday, morning clouds and drizzle east. High in the upper 30s. Monday night, cloudy with a low in the upper 20s west to mid-30s east. Tuesday, partly cloudy with a high in the mid-40s to around 50.

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Lawsuits could result from unpaid loans

Students have had cars, televisions, other items repossessed

By Randy Lyons
Staff Reporter

Students who default on their student loans and continually ignore collection attempts by their lender and the Department of Education may find themselves facing a lawsuit from the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The lawsuits are a result of the U.S. Justice Department's new emphasis on collecting defaulted loans, said Christopher Hagen, U.S. attorney and head of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Des Moines, Iowa.

Collecting money is left up to the federal government after the lender is unable to collect the balance of the loan. At that point, it's sold to the Department of Education, which initially guarantees that the loan will be paid back to the lender, he said.

"We're trying to get all students' debts in a judgment status," Hagen said.

The federal government sues for the amount of the promissory note signed by the student when the loan was taken out, he said, and attempts to get a judgment from the federal

court on that amount.

Once judgment is rendered against the student, the government has several collection options, Hagen said.

He said the student can be set up on a payment plan, but if the student still refuses to pay, a lien may be placed against real estate the student owns. Hagen said if this action is taken and the student attempts to sell the real estate, the government will receive its money from the sale of the property first.

Other options available to the government are garnisheeing wages and income tax refunds.

The government may work with employers and have a partial amount of the student's earnings taken and paid toward the debt, Hagen said. Also, income tax refunds sent back to the student will have the name of the district Internal Revenue Service official, he said, and the amount of the payment garnisheered goes to the government when the check is cashed.

Hagen said that if the situation can't be handled with these measures, the student will be called in for a "debtor's examination."

In a debtor's examination, the student must report his possessions under oath. If the student has many luxury items, they could be confiscated and sold to repay the debt, Hagen said.

He said that under most state laws, a person's house or only car may not be taken. But a second car, a videocassette recorder, a color television or a Rolex watch can be confiscated, Hagen said.

"We try to work it out, though," he said, "and set up a payment plan."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas R. Semisch said 75 percent of the civil actions his Omaha office takes concern student loan defaults.

Semisch said his office handled 212 cases as soon as the new program began in 1986 and has handled considerably more since then. At this time, he said, he's getting a couple about every other week.

Each case is looked at on an individual basis and the individual student's financial status is taken into account, and there is an attempt to set up payments, he said. Semisch said that if the

student doesn't respond, the other methods are taken.

He said garnisheeing bank accounts and wages are the two biggest tools his office uses and that confiscation is not used often.

Semisch said a suit is filed against the student as soon as the case comes to his office, without contacting the student.

"I don't screw around and don't send notices saying I'm going to file," Semisch said. "I just bring action in the U.S. District Court."

He said that since all other collection notices have been ignored, another one doesn't make much difference because it will probably be ignored as well.

After the judgment has been made by the court, the student has 10 days to contact the U.S. Attorney's Office to set up payments.

The new program has been effective, Semisch said.

"It gets their attention when there's a U.S. marshal at the door with a writ of execution," he said.

See **LOANS** on 3

ASUN lobbyist preparing to push senators for more faculty pay

By Lee Rood
Senior Reporter

When he was young, Shawn Ilg wanted to be president.

Ilg has revised his goals slightly since becoming a junior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln studying finance, economics and law.

Now, Ilg said, he wants to be a wealthy businessman, Nebraska governor — and then president.

Ilg said he has his hands full preparing to be the only registered lobbyist for the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska's Government Liaison Committee when the Nebraska Legislature convenes in January.

Ilg said he has been working 10 to 20 hours a week organizing and working for the lobbying group. In January, Ilg said he will probably work 20 to 30 hours a week fighting for the university.

His future aside, Ilg said his biggest job will be getting money from the Legislature for faculty salaries.

Like many regents, administrators and student-government senators, Ilg has made faculty salary increases his main objective, and he remains optimistic that the money can be found.

"I do believe there will be a significant increase in faculty pay," Ilg said.

Financial aid, student debts and the

possibility of a student regent vote are other things Ilg said he is considering lobbying for in January.

Ilg was chosen to be student lobbyist by Andy Pollock, ASUN president.

Pollock said he chose Ilg over four other applicants because he knows legislative procedures and processes well and has good experience.

Last summer, Ilg worked as an intern for Rep. Hal Daub in Washington, D.C. Before that, he interned for state Sen. Roger Wehrbein of Plattsmouth.

From those experiences, Ilg said, he learned to be patient because legislation and government take time.

Ilg said he also learned to know all the facts and to prepare himself.

"You have to cover all your bases," he said, "... and always listen to both sides of every issue."

Whether he is working as a student lobbyist, governor or president, Ilg said, he believes he can make a difference because he has always had a great interest in politics and he is dedicated to Nebraska.

Ilg said the difference between him and the 324 other registered lobbyists facing the Legislature in January is that he is an unpaid student representing other students.

That should make senators take him seriously, he said.

Yearbook may be back

By Gretchen Boehr
Staff Reporter

A handful of University of Nebraska-Lincoln students are organizing, campaigning and trying to get financial support for restarting the university yearbook.

Last week, nine members of the Cornhusker Yearbook committee met to discuss strategies for reviving the all-university yearbook, discontinued in 1972.

The publicity committee started its student awareness campaign Monday night with announcements to 30 Greek houses.

The committee will meet Jan. 13 to make plans to reach the residence hall governments about the yearbook. They will also set the agenda for a three-hour retreat scheduled for Jan. 17.

"We have a lot of ideas, but we don't know how to get to them," said Patrick Wyatt, a junior education major.

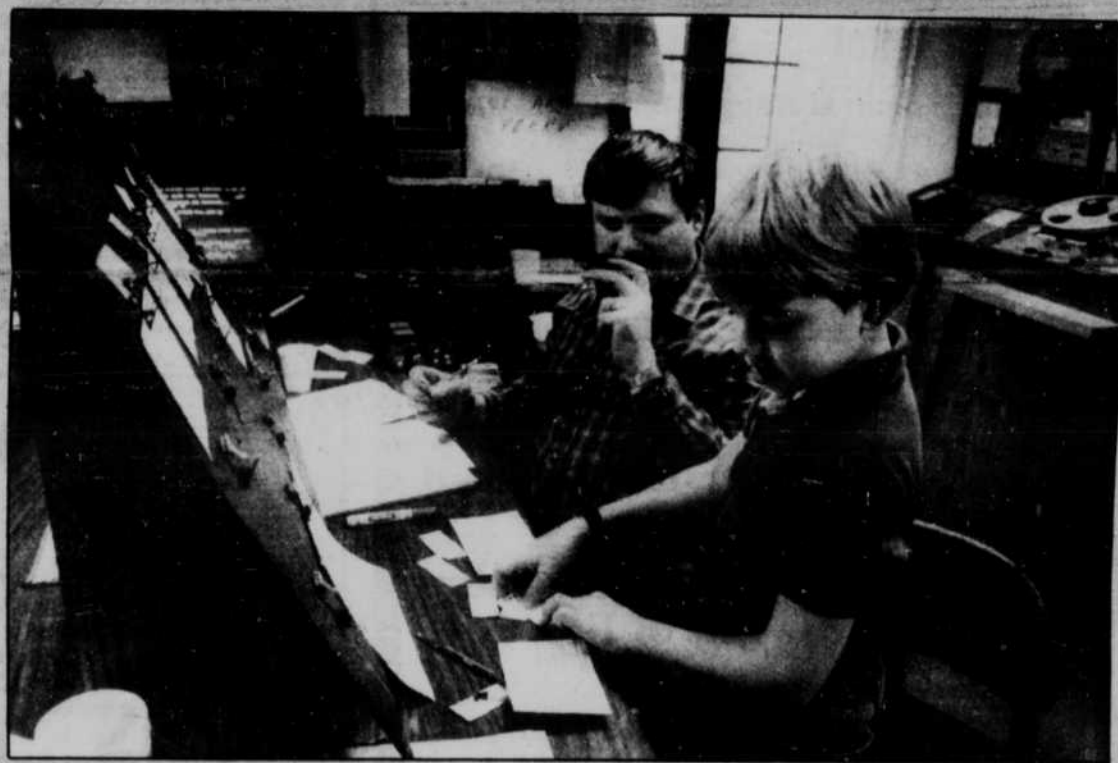
The committee elected a new chairman, Beth Schafer, a sophomore news-editorial major.

On Wednesday, three members of the committee will meet with James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs.

A publicity blitz is scheduled for the first two weeks of the spring semester.

This campaign will entail setting up information booths in both campus unions. Students also plan to hand out yearbook posters, flyers and stickers although the group doesn't have financing for the publicity campaign yet.

See **YEARBOOK** on 3



Radio North Pole

Top: Paige Hoffart, 12, and Roy Burgess, 3045 S. 44th St., radio volunteers in cars to pick up toys pledged to KLIN's 19th Annual Toy-A-Thon. Both are members of Lincoln's Amateur Radio Club, which co-sponsored the event Sunday with the Salvation Army. About 40 cars made 120 runs for toys. Bottom: Lindsey Severs, 2133 Heather Lane, pulls a switch and gives Santa Claus (Harland Johnson, 6224 Huntington St.) toys for KLIN's Toy-A-Thon. The telethon benefits less-advantaged children at Christmas. Charlie Michaels, KLIN's station manager, said fewer runs were made this year than last, but cash contributions and the number of toys picked up before Sunday increased.

Dotti Krist/Daily Nebraskan