

Daily Nebraskan

August 30, 1988

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Vol. 88 No. 3

Businesses scurry to handle the surge of returning students

By David Holloway
Staff Reporter

Pizza boxes, long lines and late-night orders are signals for area businesses that college is underway.

Some local businesses have hired new personnel to handle the busy rush of new patrons from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Jerry Mullinix, manager of the Nebraska Bookstore, said the store has hired 20 extra people to handle the return of college students for the next two weeks.

First semester, Mullinix said, is the busiest time of the year for the store compared to second semester. Students do not buy as many books second semester, he said.

Mullinix said a majority of the items sold have been books. He said the store started to prepare for the rush last February by buying books and stocking up on clothes and other items.

Bill Bronson, manager of The Hitching Post and Wooden Nickel, said the store has been "swamped" with business.

Bronson said some of the business has to do with other schools opening around town, but attributed the majority of the increase to college students.

He said the surge in business lasts for a couple of weeks then tapers off until late fall and spring.

Bronson has not hired any new employees, but has hired returning student workers from last year.

Kevin Knudson, manager of Pontillo's Piz-

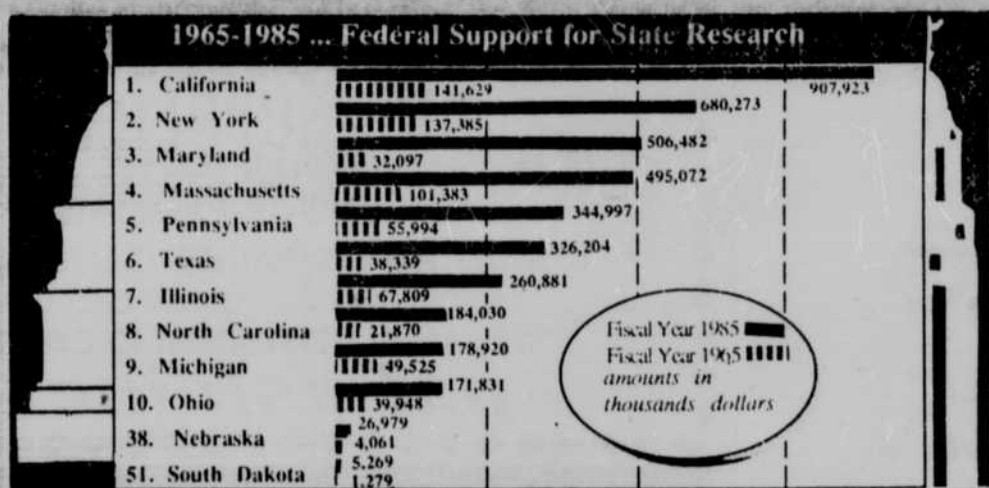
See BUSINESS on 6



Eric Gregory/Daily Nebraskan

See ya later

Driver Kurt Briley looks on as a Lincolnland Towing employee tows away an improperly parked car that made it impossible for Briley to get his truck out of the parking lot east of the Nebraska Union. The truck blocked traffic for about a half hour Monday.



Funds lower rating

By Mike Reilley
Senior Editor
and
David Holloway
Staff Reporter

Although the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's research program has slipped in national rankings because of a lack of increased funding, university officials say help is on the way.

During the last 20 years, UNL has dropped out of the top 100 nationally in federal funding for research programs, said Coby Simerly, associate director of UNL's Office of Sponsored Programs.

UNL's research program was ranked 70th in the nation in 1965, but had dropped out of the top 100 by 1985, according to a Congressional Research Service report released last April.

The congressional report ranks Nebraska 47th among states, tied with Kentucky in statistics measuring federal research and development money against a state's population. It also listed the state 37th overall in federal research support.

Vice Chancellor for Research John Yost said UNL's standing

isn't as bad as it looks. He said the university ranks between 60th and 65th nationally in a research competition index.

"The competition index is what we're most concerned with," he said. "Many colleges combine their medical school research with their figures, which we don't. If we did that, we would probably be in the top 50."

Bill Splinter, associate vice chancellor for research, said UNL received \$23 million in research grants last year. Splinter compared that to Colorado and Colorado State, which received \$60 million each in research grants.

UNL's research funding has remained steady while other colleges are increasing their federal grants, Simerly said. She said UNL always has had a respectable reputation for receiving external grants, but other colleges are getting more.

"The schools on the East and West coasts get a disproportionate share of the grants available through federal tax dollars," Simerly said. "It's a case where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer."

Splinter said the university is losing good professors because of low research grants.

Few universities can afford to support research funding with their own money, Splinter said. A typical lab for a professor in the chemistry department costs from \$250,000 to \$300,000. If the money is not there, the professors go elsewhere, he said.

Splinter said UNL faculty members requested a record \$99 million in grants for the upcoming year. He said the majority of the requests came from the engineering and science colleges.

"Nebraska needs to be involved in the research game," he said. "This is an agriculture state and new products can be developed all the time. Fortunately, our legislature and governor are aware of that and they are doing all they can to help."

Yost said UNL hasn't had the matching state funds in the past to compete for federal grants with other states.

UNL got a boost last year when the Nebraska Legislature approved Gov. Kay Orr's proposal to increase state-funding for UNL research, Yost said. The \$4 million research initiative program, which

See RESEARCH on 6

CBA asbestos debris removed last Saturday

By William Lauer
Staff Reporter

Debris from a fallen ceiling section of the College of Business Administration's auditorium was cleaned up last weekend, said Jerry Delhay, manager of University of Nebraska-Lincoln maintenance department.

The ceiling section fell after an underground steam tunnel ruptured last Wednesday night, sending steam through the walls and into the auditorium ceiling. A 2-by-3-foot ceiling section fell.

A test of the debris made by Earle Brown, director of Environmental Health and Safety at UNL, showed asbestos was contained in the material.

"Any time you have asbestos in that condition, it is hazardous," Brown said.

The auditorium was sealed off and classes relocated.

Cleanup of the auditorium was done by Energy Insulation Co. of Lincoln Saturday.

Although the test results are not yet available, Delhay expects them to be negative. If tests are negative, the auditorium will be reopened for classes shortly, Delhay said.

Brown said asbestos levels are monitored in buildings on the UNL campus, even though UNL has no policy for routine checks.

"We feel we are managing the asbestos that is present," Brown said.

The incident at CBA was unusual, he said.

"You can go through a building and find everything in apple pie order," Brown said. "If there is no damage to it (asbestos) whatsoever... there is no reason to remove it."

Brown said many buildings on campus contain asbestos. Buildings constructed before 1976, before asbestos was outlawed, probably contain asbestos. In some buildings it is limited to pipe insulation but in others it can be found throughout the building, he

said. "Just because it's (asbestos) in a building doesn't mean it's a hazard," Brown said. "We list it as a potential hazard. Fibers floating around in the air for people to breathe is what cause the hazard."

Brown said he has checked asbestos levels in many buildings on campus including the Administration building, Nebraska Hall and steam tunnels. There is no requirement for routine checks unless there is construction or renovation in a building, he said.

To test the asbestos levels, Brown samples 720 cubic liters of air from the building and has it analyzed by Hager Laboratories in Denver. Results of the test are usually known in 24 hours.

The Environmental Protection Agency has determined that asbestos fibers of 0.2 per cubic liter of air is hazardous.

Exposure to asbestos has reportedly caused lung cancer plus asbestosis and mesothelioma, which are lung infections.

Brown said he considers a level of 0.1 fibers per cubic liter in UNL buildings an "action level."

When readings are that high, "we try to do something about it," he said.

This can involve patching, repairing or total removal of the asbestos, Brown said.

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act enacted by the EPA requires management of asbestos in public and private schools grades K-12, but does not apply to public or institutional buildings.

Greg Crable, technical adviser for the asbestos section of the EPA Region 7 in Kansas City, said that because the asbestos was located in the ceiling, it's unlikely that the asbestos has been disturbed and is probably not dangerous.

"If the building is old and the material has received a lot of abuse," Crable said, "then it's likely to cause more problems."