

Daily **Nebraskan**  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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## Think big, Lincoln

*Commission should lure Olympic Festival*

Think big.

That's what the proposed Sports Industry Commission needs to do if it's approved today by the Lincoln City Council. The commission, recommended by a task force formed by Mayor Bill Harris last October, is expected to face little, if any, opposition from the city council.

If approved, the 13-member committee would try to attract more sporting events to the Lincoln area, thus promoting economic activity.

The commission has outlined several minor goals, such as improving existing sports facilities and improving administrative procedures in organizing events.

While these are noble goals, the commission needs to focus on attracting a big event if it really wants to increase economic activity in the area.

The commission needs to do what a similar group did seven years ago in Raleigh, N.C. It needs to promote the area as a possible site for the U.S. Olympic Festival.

In 1981, a group of sports enthusiasts in Raleigh organized a non-profit organization in an attempt to lure the festival to the area. The two-week festival happens every summer except the Olympic year and features competition in 34 sports.

The group, which later named itself North Carolina Amateur Sports, stressed the resources of the Triangle area (Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill) to the U.S. Olympic Committee, which awards the festival sites.

The main selling point was the area's three major colleges -- North Carolina, Duke and North Carolina State -- that could house a majority of the sports. Other gymnasiums, fields and country clubs in the area also offered to play host to events.

It took several years of hard work by the commission, but the Olympic Committee eventually took the bait and awarded the 1987 festival to North Carolina.

Raleigh made it a success, too. The games drew several big-name athletes such as diver Greg Louganis and basketball player J.R. Reid.

For two weeks in late July 1987, Raleigh was the sports capital of the United States.

And that meant big bucks for area businesses. Ken Smith, the committee's executive director, said the Olympic Festival brought an estimated \$35 million to the Triangle area.

It has paid off in other ways, too. Since the festival, the amateur sports commission has lured several events to the Raleigh area: Olympic boxing and Tae Kwon Do regional trials; USA-Cuba volleyball exhibition; USA-Taiwan baseball exhibition; Canoe and kayak national championships; and Zone diving championships.

The U.S. Olympic Committee traditionally awards the festival to medium-sized cities that are capable of hosting large events, Smith said. Past festivals have been in Baton Rouge, La., Houston and Syracuse, N.Y.

The 1989 festival will be in Oklahoma City. Minneapolis gets the 1990 games and Los Angeles will be the site of the 1991 festival.

And there's no reason why Lincoln couldn't be a contender for the 1993 festival.

"The national governing bodies are looking for places to organize these things," Smith said. "Everyone was amazed at the huge crowds we had here. I can't see why Lincoln couldn't try the same thing we did."

Although it doesn't have three major colleges like the Triangle area, Lincoln does offer a variety of venues for Olympic events: Pershing Auditorium (boxing, ice skating and ice hockey), Holmes Lake (kayak, canoe racing), Seacrest Field (soccer, field hockey) and Woods Park (diving, tennis).

Events such as volleyball and handball could be played in one of several gymnasiums or sports clubs in the area.

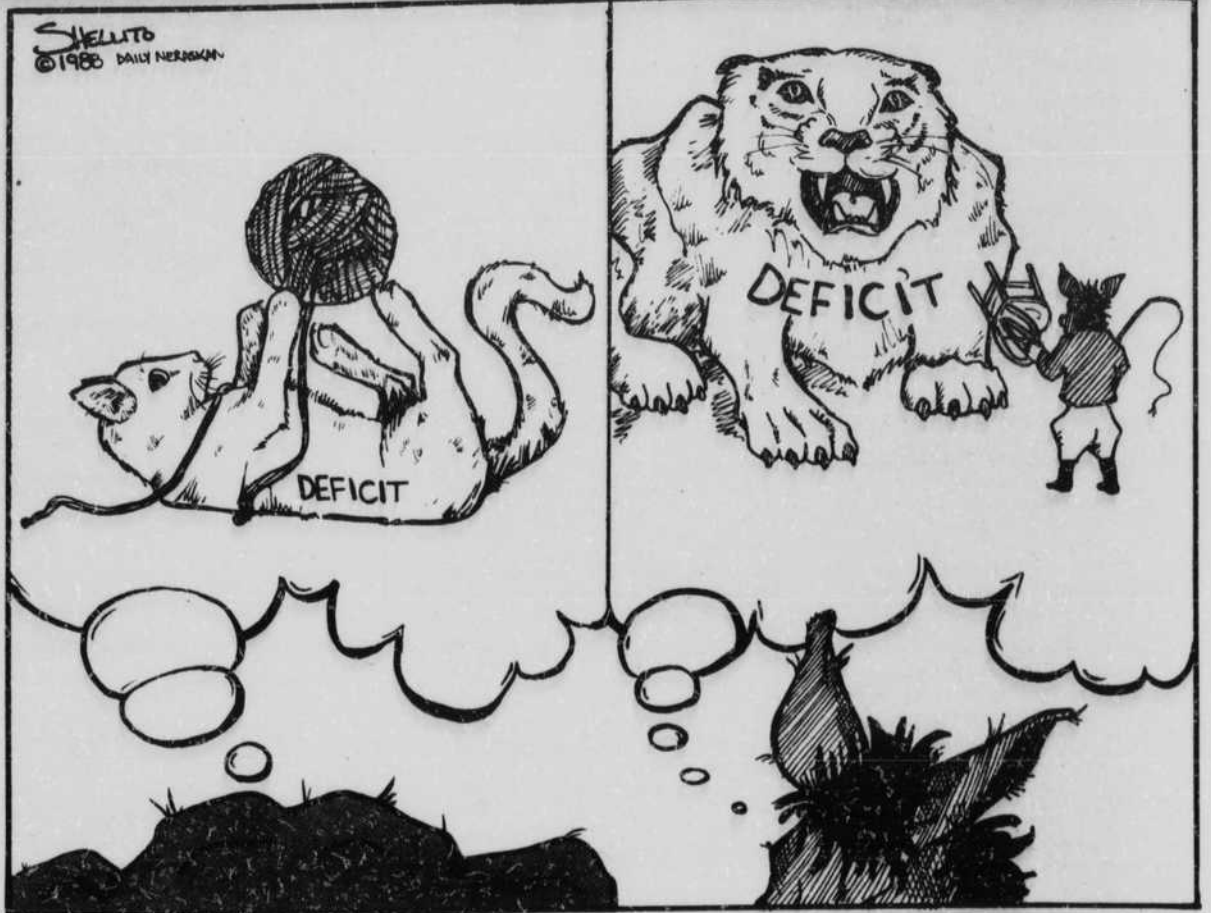
Many events could be on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

Back Beltzer Field and the Nebraska Softball Complex (baseball, softball) are possible sites as well as the Bob Devaney Sports Center (basketball, wrestling, gymnastics, swimming and several other sports).

Lincoln has shown it can handle national-caliber sports events. The NCAA Men's Gymnastics Championships have been here three of the last four years. Other events include the Big Eight indoor and outdoor track and field championships, the Junior Olympics and the national roller-skating championships.

The Olympic Festival could lure even more events to Lincoln, just as it did in Raleigh. All Lincoln needs is a motivated group of sports enthusiasts who aren't afraid to take a few risks.

If Lincoln's Sports Industry Commission wants to be successful, it needs to take aim at a major goal right from the start. And the 1993 U.S. Olympic Festival would be a lucrative target.



## Policy inflicts pain on Indians

*Practice of digging up dead people without prior consent is wrong*

Imagine what it would be like if someone stole the bodies of your dead grandparents from their graves.

Imagine yourself politely asking someone to give the remains back so they could be buried properly.

Imagine being told the remains have become government property.

It seems impossible that this can happen to someone, but it's exactly what's happening to the Pawnee Indians.

The Nebraska State Historical Society has the remains of nearly 200 Pawnee Indians and the artifacts that were buried with the bodies. The remains were discovered by land owners and anthropologists.

Members of the Pawnee's Oklahoma tribe have asked the society to return the remains of their ancestors so they can give them a proper burial in accordance with their religious beliefs.

Members of the Nebraska Indian community want legislation passed to stop this from ever happening again.

It should be easy for the society to respond to the Indian community's requests: Start with an apology for taking the remains, return the remains and goods as soon as possible and promise to never do it again.

But the issue has become controversial because of the collection's scientific value. Representatives from the Smithsonian Institution have said scientists are rapidly discovering new ways to research the remains. Smithsonian officials say Nebraska's collection of Indian remains could answer a multitude of mysteries surrounding the history of the Indian people.

Neither the historical society nor the Smithsonian, however, has told the Indians how long the collection will be kept before, if it is ever, returned.

The patient Indians, who have refrained from suing, continue to suffer another injustice while the

Nebraska State Historical Society's all-white executive directors put themselves in charge of the fate of Indian dead.

Reba Whiteshirt, executive director of the Nebraska Indian Commission, told commission members Friday that the fight for Indian burial rights has been one of the most emotional, insulting experiences of her life.

Whiteshirt worked on a com-



Lee Rood

mittee of representatives from the commission, the historical society and lawyers to come up with a suitable bill for the Legislature that would solve, once and for all, the question of burial rights in Nebraska.

The committee had been working for months and finally came out with a suitable third draft, only to find out that the historical society had been working on one of its own.

The society never informed the Nebraska Indian Commission, according to Whiteshirt, that they had been working on their bill and they hadn't asked for Indian input. According to Whiteshirt, the society even failed to inform its representative on the committee.

After an emotionally charged meeting with Indian representative and lawyers, society members, professors and Smithsonian anthropologists, the historical society's executive board tabled any action on the issue until members have time to gather additional information.

Meanwhile, time has been running out to write a bill before the Nebraska Legislature starts its session.

The historical society has had

years to study the Pawnee remains. The Pawnee collection makes up only 20 percent of the historical society's collection. One of the most fundamental of Pawnee religious beliefs is proper burial rights.

Not one Indian sits on the society's executive board. Yet, if you look through the society's museum, or its promotional materials, much of the society's claim to fame has been derived from the Indian culture.

As one Indian commission member said Friday, "They've built themselves a reputation on our remains... and we can't even get anyone on the board. It makes me embarrassed to come from this state."

Whiteshirt said the society's work "in complete isolation and disregard" is a slap in the face to the Indians.

"It's just outrageous, it seems so clear," she said. "It's a question of equal dignity."

But after witnessing the determination of Indian representatives, it's clear that the issue will be resolved. Whiteshirt has said she will dedicate the rest of her life to the burial-rights issue.

While the collection may offer fame and prestige to the society, members cannot deny the pain and suffering they've caused the Indian community. Someday they will have to accept their moral obligation to return the remains and admit that the practice of digging up dead people without prior consent is wrong.

Harrison Fields, a member of the Pawnee tribe, said Saturday that when the Indians retrieve the remains they will take them to a Indian burial site in Oklahoma -- to bury them 25-foot deep and cover the graves with cement so no one can dig them up again.

Just imagine it.

Rood is a senior news-editorial journalism major and a DN editorial columnist.

### editorial

Signed staff editorials represent the official policy of the fall 1988 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Curt Wagner, editor; Mike Reilley, editorial page editor; Diana Johnson, manag-

ing editor; Lee Rood, associate news editor; Andy Pollock, columnist; Bob Nelson, wire page editor; and Craig Heckman, columnist.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL

Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

### letter

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeli-

ness and space available. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether ma-

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.