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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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| Monday | |
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| WEATHER: | INDEX |
| Monday, partly sunny, high 55 to 60, south winds from 5 to 15 miles per hour. Monday night, partly cloudy, low in the low- to mid-30s. Tuesday, partly sunny, high in the low-60s. | News Digest 2 Editorial 4 Arts & Entertainment 7 Sports 9 Classifieds 11 |

Jury hears fourth day of testimony Students, faculty testify on Visser's performance

By Victoria Ayotte
Senior Editor
and Jerry Guenther
Senior Reporter

Students and other faculty members Friday portrayed Mary Jane Visser as a caring, helpful adviser who went "the extra mile."

In the fourth day of the U.S. District Court trial, James Griesen, University of Nebraska-Lincoln vice chancellor for student affairs, gave a different version of her work performance.

Griesen said Friday that the university was not employing Visser to conduct a "witch hunt" by accessing records to show irregularities in the athletic department.

Griesen, Donald Gregory, director of general studies, and the NU Board of Regents are named in a lawsuit filed by Visser in which she says her employment with UNL was terminated because she uncovered irregularities in the athletic department. UNL officials say she was fired for poor job performance.

UNL student Stan Smith said Visser took him from the brink of a breakdown to solid ground.

"I had no one to really help me," Smith said of other advisers, "I had no cooperation... If I'd had a gun, I'd have been gone."

Smith said he needed tutors, but was unable to afford them. His two roommates, student athletes, didn't have to pay for their tutors, he said.

Financial and academic difficulty led him to Visser's office. Smith said

when he went to see Visser, she got out his file, computed his grade point average, and "made sure" he understood what he needed to do to stay in school.

"You don't find very many people like her," Smith said. "It was more on a personal level when she helped me. She really took the extra mile."

"I went back again and she wasn't there."

William O'Hanlon, a student in his 70s who wanted to come back to college and get a degree from UNL, also testified that Visser took extraordinary measures to help.

O'Hanlon said he was upset when an adviser told him he shouldn't attend UNL. He then came to Visser.

"She calmed me down and convinced me I should stay," O'Hanlon

said. "She got me straightened out and into school."

When O'Hanlon and Visser were discussing which classes to take, O'Hanlon said he had already taken the necessary math courses when he was a World War II pilot and was trained at a Canadian university.

O'Hanlon said his math background did not show on Visser's computer, so she wrote to the university for a transcript of the classes. That university wrote back with the records, which fulfilled his math requirement for UNL.

Other advisers after Visser left, O'Hanlon said, did not help him as much as Visser.

Associate Dean of Agriculture Earl Ellington and former Associate Dean of Engineering Alfred Witte said they had worked with Visser and

found her to be ethical and professional.

Griesen contended that Visser's main duty while working for the division of general studies was to advise students, not conduct investigations.

Griesen said Visser told him in a March 16, 1988, meeting that she was conducting a personal investigation into student athletes' academic performances because she was preparing a report for him.

Griesen said he never requested the report and told her not to pursue it.

After that discussion with Visser, Griesen said, general studies employees complained of other alleged disruptions Visser was causing.

Griesen said he again met with Visser on May 16, 1988, to discuss a

See **VISSER** on 2

Chinese student enjoys English literature

By Lisa Twiestmeyer
Staff Reporter

Xiaofei Tian is one of those people who isn't easily satisfied.

An insatiable desire for learning has led her to accomplish more than many people could dream to in a lifetime. With three poetry anthologies and 200 poems and essays published in China, she also has mastered the English language and begun work on her graduate degree in American literature.

'Sometimes I don't feel any advantage to my age.'

—Xiaofei

Not too bad, for someone who celebrated her 18th birthday a week ago.

Xiaofei, a graduate student in English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, says even though she knows she's young, she still becomes impatient and wants to accomplish more.

"Sometimes I don't feel any advantage to my age," she says in perfect English. "People say, 'You're still young. You're just 18.' But sometimes I feel anxious. There are still many things I don't know."

Inspired by parents who were both educators, Xiaofei says, her desire to learn began when she was a little girl growing up in Tianjin, near Beijing.

She began to read and write when she was about four or five, she says, and at 6, her father began

teaching her to recite classical Chinese poetry.

Soon she began imitating the poetry herself, and wrote her first poem at 6 1/2 years. By 1980, she had won the national prize in an international children's poetry competition. By 1981, she published her first anthology, "The Poetry of Green Leaves."

Xiaofei says her talents allowed her to experience what she calls a "not very systematic" education. She began school in second grade and entered middle school after third grade. But before middle school, she quit for a year to study at home.

"I loved to study," the petite, bubbly young woman says. "I said by self-studying, I can learn more." So instead of going to school that year, she began translating English books to Chinese at home.

In 1981, she began high school at age 9. But in 1984, she quit again, this time traveling through China with her father and improving her command of the English language at home.

"In elementary school... my scores in English classes were very, very poor," she says with a laugh. "I really only began making progress in 1984."

The next year, a reporter for China Youth Daily did a story on her and her poetry, which caught the eye of the professors at Beijing University. They invited her to come to the university for interviews, and by age 13, she was enrolled as a student in English literature.

Her decision to study English literature rather than Chinese puzzled many people. But, she says, she developed a love for English literature as a child and



Xiaofei Tian, a graduate student from China, takes a break from her studies in Sellack Hall Sunday. Tian just turned 18 years old Oct. 30.

was not satisfied to only read translations in Chinese.

"Translation is not enough," she says. "I don't think it can fully express the beauty of the original language. It's too bad we lose the music of the language because of the translation."

Her love of English literature intensified in Beijing, she says, and as she approached graduation last May, she realized she needed to study in a country it originated from.

See **XIAOFEI** on 6

Author condemns censorship issue as deprivation

By Eve Nations
Staff Reporter

Banning books in schools deprives students of the chance to prepare themselves for a world full of "pressures and moral ambiguities," novelist Jerzy Kosinski told a panel at Doane College in Crete Saturday.

Kosinski, whose book "Being There" survived a recent banning attempt by a group of Crete parents, said he objects to censorship as an issue, not just the censorship of his book.

"A book enriches your mind," he said. "People collect and value them like they are rare coins. Don't go to the library and start removing books. Find out what some of the other books are saying. Get references."

Reading books, Kosinski said, helps students with the development of their imaginations.

"Kids will have to grow and support themselves intellectually," he said. "Reading fiction is not just reading, it also demands imagination, concentration and immobilization. It requires an attention span of longer than 30 seconds, which is the average commercial."

A group of Crete parents recently tried to ban "Being There" from the curriculum at the public schools because they objected to descriptions of heterosexual and homosexual acts in chapter five.

Kosinski said the chapter is thought-provoking for students. They should be able to read and think about such realities and, in turn, be better prepared for encounters in their own lives, he said.

Leonard Johnson, a panelist from the Grace Bible Institute in Omaha,

See **CENSOR** on 6

Veteran to bike cross-country, raise funds

By Diane Brayton
Staff Reporter

University of Nebraska-Lincoln education professor will achieve a long-time goal while raising money and awareness for the International Korean War Memorial when he rides across the United States in 1990.

Gordon Greene, a 58-year-old Korean War veteran, decided about a year ago to do something to raise money for the memorial being built in San Pedro, Calif. The United Nations is building the memorial to recognize men and women from the 22 allied nations who died in the Korean War.

So he picked an event that would take his

message across the country -- a bicycle ride. Not just any bike ride, but a cross-country trek covering 50 miles a day.

Greene has invited veterans from all countries who sent troops to Korea to ride with him in "The 38th Parallel Revisited." The ride will run along the 38th parallel in the United States, the same line that divides North and South Korea.

Following this route, he will travel from Washington, D.C., to the site of the memorial in San Pedro, crossing 16 states on the way. It will take about two months to cover the 2,400 miles, he said.

The bikers will escort a scaled-down version of the International Korean War Memorial

so people along the way can see it. The memorial consists of 12 fighting figures in a Korean winter combat scene.

Along the route, the bikers and their support vehicles will visit four military bases, one for each branch of the service, Greene said.

While publicizing the memorial, Greene said he wants to raise awareness about "the Forgotten War."

"Up to this point, things we have done haven't got much attention," he said. "People still don't care."

Although Greene said he will not begin to publicize the event until January, he has contacted the state highway patrols in each state the route crosses. He also has contacted the

American Radio Relay League Inc., an organization of amateur radio operators, to ask for its cooperation with communications.

Greene, with the help of the International Korean War Memorial Committee, has gained the sponsorship of Mack Trucks Inc.

Greene said the maximum number of bicycle riders he gets is 25.

"I doubt if we get over five," he said.

So far, Greene has enlisted one other Korean veteran from California to ride with him across the country. He said he thinks other vets will join the ride across certain states.

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