

# Professor juggles work and motherhood

## Raising Carolina often a challenge

By Jill O'Brien  
Staff Reporter

Ann Pettus, an assistant professor and director of forensics at UNL, shares room 413 of Oldfather Hall with her seven-month-old daughter.

Named after South Carolina, her father's favorite state, Carolina Pettus accompanies her mother to work three days a week. After Carolina was born, Pettus said, she wanted to stay at home with her newborn for more than four weeks. But because the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has no maternity-leave policy, Pettus said she had to return to work after using up her sick leave.

Finding a nearby child-care facility was a problem, Pettus said. So she discussed her situation with William Seiler, chairman of the speech communication department. Because no policy prohibited faculty members from bringing their children to work, Seiler gave Pettus permission to bring Carolina.

Since then, Carolina has set up residency in her mother's office. But Carolina is no slouch; she takes her office job seriously.

Not only does she help her mother clear her desk of unwanted paperwork, she makes sure the shelves are stocked with standard baby items such as diapers, baby wipes, burp pads and an assortment of toys.

While Pettus advises students, Carolina either sleeps, stares watchfully from her playpen or jabbars in her mother's arms.

Carolina's presence in the office has created a special bond between students and teacher, Pettus said, as well as students and baby. When Pettus teaches class or attends meetings, one

of her five graduate students watches Carolina.

Pettus, who coaches UNL's forensics team, said team members also babysat Carolina.

The forensics team, nationally ranked in the top 10 for the past five years, sees Carolina as more than just a pretty face — she is the team mascot.

Carolina has a positive impact on the students who visit her in Pettus' office.

"It's wonderful to have Carolina up here," Dave Gear, a graduate student, said.

Pettus said Carolina was a bright spot in the day for many members of the staff and faculty, especially when the department was threatened by budget cuts. The chairman would come in to hug Carolina once a day, Pettus said.

Because of the interaction between people and Carolina, her daughter has turned into a people person, she said.

But bringing her child to work has created some problems for Pettus.

One frustration Pettus encounters is Carolina's crying, she said, which elicits an occasional complaint. When Carolina starts crying, she shuts the door and tries to quiet her. Students and staff members often step in to help lull Carolina to sleep, she said.

If it weren't for the understanding and support of the staff and students, Pettus said, she would have lost her sanity while trying to divide her time between job and baby.

Another frustration, she said, is not being able to accomplish all the work and research she would like to, especially with Carolina in the office.

Pettus said her husband babysat in the evening, allowing her to return to the university to work without dis-



Greg Bernhardt/DN

Ann Pettus, an assistant professor and director of forensics, says she brings her daughter Carolina to school three days a week because UNL does not offer maternity leave.

traction.

Pettus said she wanted to prove that she could be an efficient teacher, researcher and good mother. Despite the complications of bringing Carolina to work, Pettus said she hoped bringing her would influence UNL to develop maternity and paternity leave.

She recently attended a faculty meeting and hired a student to babysit

Carolina. When the meeting ran late and the student had to leave for class, Pettus said she brought Carolina along.

Carolina did not cry, but babbled and sat on Pettus' lap — she was a little distracting, Pettus said.

After the meeting, she said, the dean approached her and said, "By the way, we're now working on a maternity leave."

## Death

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that his statement was based on research surveys and characterizations in literature on death penalty methods.

Walter Friedlander, a physician, medical ethics specialist and professor emeritus of neurology at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, said there was no humane advantage to lethal injection over electrocution.

Electric shock to the brain, if correctly administered, could kill a prisoner instantly, Friedlander said, while lethal injection would involve finding a vein, inserting a needle, then waiting for the lethal injection to take effect.

The lengthy procedure would likely include shock, fright and the possibility of collapsed veins for the prisoner, Friedlander said.

Jean Eden of Nebraskans Against the Death Penalty testified that one Texas injection execution took 24 minutes from the time the chemicals began flowing. At one point, she said, the needle came out of the prisoner's arm, and chemicals sprayed around the execution room.

Many times, prison officials have trouble finding strong veins in prisoners who have been drug addicts, Eden said. One Texas prisoner had to help officials find a vein.

William Brown, a death penalty opponent, said he thought that since lethal injection was perceived as more humane than electrocution, judges might sentence more prisoners to death than they otherwise would have.

"I fear that there is an antiseptic feeling about lethal injection," Brown said.

## America

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buying their products," she said.

Sullivan also emphasized the need to send a message to other countries and domestic consumers.

"Made in Japan used to be a joke but it isn't funny anymore," she said.

Others present at the hearing voiced opposition to the LB1216 and said the bill only would make a bad situation worse.

Tom Beckers, a Nebraska beef exporter, said LB1216 would send a negative message to countries such as Japan.

He said Japan bought its beef from Australia because of the Japan-bashing that had been occurring lately.

"Putting a boundary around this state is not the solution," he said. "It would only hurt those of us who are trying to bring some of the foreign money back to Nebraska."

Beckers, others who testified and some committee members argued that the bill only would alienate other countries.

Sen. Edward Schrock of Elm Creek said other countries could pick up on the negative message LB1216 would send and retaliate.

Schrock said he doubted the bill would have much effect on any other country but could do a lot of damage to Nebraska.

The committee discussed the bill in executive session but took no action.

## State employees to host brown bag

From Staff Reports

Members of State Employees Achieving Racial and Cultural Harmony are sponsoring two brown bag luncheons in observance of Black History Month. Both luncheons are open to the public and will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Nebraska State Office Building.

Monday's luncheon will feature Dr. George Garrison, associate professor and chair of the Black Studies Department at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Garrison will speak on "The Archaeology, History and Religion of Ancient Africa" in lower level room A.

The luncheon on Feb. 28 will feature Bertha Calloway, director of the Great Plains Black Museum. Calloway will speak on "Black Women of the Great Plains" in lower level room F.

IT'S A SHORE THING!

A Tropical Trip May Await  
You At The Junior  
Fashion Headquarters  
for Spring Break!

College students! Make your first stop at Younkers for the hottest new fashions spring '92 has to offer. A special celebration with you in mind begins Spring Break on Saturday, February 22, in participating Junior departments with some of our newest spring styles on sale.

Stop in and be one of the first 50 students to fill out a Younkers Charge credit application and receive 10% off any\* single regular or sale price Junior item plus, a free Spring Break T-shirt! If you already have a Younkers Charge, show us your college I.D. and receive the same discount and T-shirt.

Plus, register for your chance to win our Spring Break trip for two to South Padre, Texas! Trip includes airfare and six nights lodging in a hotel. You must be 18 years or older to win. No purchase is necessary and you need not be present to win. Younkers associates and their immediate families are not eligible.

\*Excludes Guess & Value Price items.  
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