



Shaun Sartin/DN

Chris Connelly, a sophomore criminal justice major, is a UNL parking service officer. Connelly said the hardest part of the job was dealing with abuse from irate motorists.

# Parking police stay 'cool' in heat

By Cindy Kimbrough  
Senior Reporter

Chris Connelly said patience probably would be the biggest requirement to be a UNL parking services officer, besides being a student with at least a 2.5 grade point average.

The hardest part of the job, which consists mainly of writing tickets, taking care of traffic and towing vehicles, was learning to deal with irate people and putting up with a lot of abuse, he said.

"All the officers have to have cool heads," he said, "because they can't yell back."

They have to take it and hope the people they tow or ticket don't get physical, he said. And so far, they've had no problems.

"Most people don't realize we are students," the 27-year-old criminal justice sophomore said. "Most think we are poor, stupid slob,

who couldn't get jobs anywhere else, so we just came to campus to pick on them."

It's no fun being the bad guy, he said, but when students park in the wrong spots or don't pay their tickets in the time allotted, there's not much an officer can do.

Connelly said he felt sorry for the students who had gotten towed. He's been towed twice himself.

"The fact that their car is leaving and they're not driving upsets them," he said.

The best excuse Connelly said he ever heard a person use to get out of a ticket was that the student was illiterate and out of state.

"I let that one go because I was laughing too hard to give him a ticket," he said.

Connelly, who was a parking services officer for the campus police last year, said he was now the field supervisor, looking after the 14

student officers and making sure they didn't get hurt.

He trains the officers how to use the auto-sight carriers to write up tickets, teaches the campus rules and regulations and talks about how to deal with people.

They are assigned parking districts and work 20-hour shifts, he said.

The officers come from a range of majors, from business to psychology, he said, but the majority are criminal justice majors, trying to get a little experience in their field.

Connelly said he planned to be a state patrol officer or a U.S. marshal, and wanted to get into something to build up a little experience.

And being a UNL parking services officer has worked out just perfectly, he said.

"I've gotten experience you just don't get anywhere else," he said.

# Guitarist

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The money he makes playing guitar also allows him to support other artistic endeavors, including photography. On a good night — usually on the weekends — he can make as much as \$100.

Although he plays year-round, Davis said he usually made more money in the summer.

"The summers are great. People are in a better mood, I'm in a better mood," he said.

When he began performing, he was occasionally ticketed for disturbing the peace or panhandling, but he said he had a good relationship with Lincoln police. Davis said he seldom received complaints from downtown merchants.

"The business people are very supportive of anything artistic,"

"And the police are pretty cool, too. I've gotten to know them, and since I'm out there every night, they've gotten to know me."

Davis said he had developed an especially good rapport with Lincoln's bicycle police.

From time to time, though, Davis has had problems with bar patrons. Once a woman pulled out a loaded gun and pointed it at him, he said.

"Drunk people are either looking to beat you up, or make you their best friend," he said.

Still, it's the late-night bar crowd that keeps the job from getting dull.

"I see or hear something interesting every night," he said,

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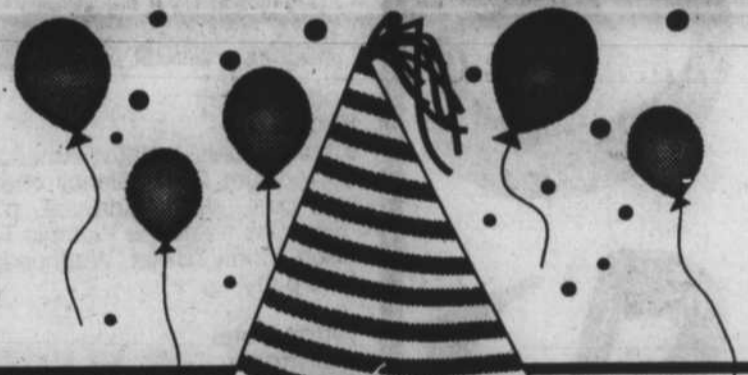
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