

# University garners donation

## Family planning to bestow money from estate sale

By Susie Arth  
Staff Reporter

The 52-room D.J. Witherspoon property, valued at more than \$1 million, will be placed on the market within a month, and all proceeds will go into an endowment for university projects, an official said.

Terry Fairfield, president of the University of Nebraska Foundation, said the Witherspoons donated their estate to the foundation in 1981, but were not ready to put the house up for

sale at that time.

Fairfield said he found out in January that the Witherspoons planned to move.

"It recently became a convenient time for them to move out," he said.

He said the property would be listed for sale by N.P. Dodge Co. of Omaha, but he was unsure what its market price would be. He said his staff would meet with realtors to determine an asking price.

The property, located at 9909 Fieldcrest Drive in Omaha, was valued at \$1,275,300 for tax purposes in 1985, according to the Douglas County Assessor's Office.

The 18,741-square-foot estate sits on 4.7 acres of land and has indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a two-

lane bowling alley, a tennis court, eight bedrooms, nine full bathrooms and seven half-bathrooms.

Fairfield said the proceeds from the sale of the estate would go into an endowment fund in the name of D.J. Witherspoon and would be used for "unrestricted" university projects.

Witherspoon is the retired founder of Pamida Inc., a chain of discount stores.

Fairfield said Witherspoon was not a University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate, and that he had worked little with him before the donation.

"This gift is just a great help," he said. "It is wonderful of the Witherspoons to do this."



Watchful eyes

A UNL student passes by one of many snowmen found on campus Tuesday.

Staci McKee/DN

## Collective

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Most collectives have operated either in a hostile environment or in a situation where the group must deal with a hierarchical structure, he said.

That situation could apply to the recent controversy surrounding the Women's Resource Center Collective, Benford said, which was formed by a group of UNL students in the 1970s.

University administrators recently dissolved the WRC Advisory Board and said a collective could not be the center's governing body.

In the case of the WRC Collective, Benford said, the members of a decentralized organization were attempting to operate within a centralized environment where decisions were traditionally made from the top down.

Another problem is the lack of knowledge most Americans, including some collective members, have of this consensus-rules form of organization.

"Many collectives find that they have members who do not understand consensus decision-making," he said. "They are not necessarily well-informed or committed to the principles of decentralization."

These problems can lead to abuse of the consensus process, Benford said, and sometimes members will block decision-making.

Abuse of the process can cause problems because in a collective system, no decision can be made until all members agree, he said.

"We do not learn about this form of organization because all of our institutions are based on a hierarchical structure," he said. "Our families, churches, schools and workplaces are ruled by majority, from the top down."

Given the lack of experience most people have with collective decision-making, Benford said, the continued existence of the WRC Collective is a credit to the group's members.

"The women's collective has been in an environment that is hostile to their form of organization," he said. "I think that says something positive about these women and their commit-

ment to alternative forms of decision-making."

Helen Moore, a professor of sociology and women's studies at UNL, said there were several advantages to the collective system of organization.

"The power is shared by all members, not just the majority or the elite few," she said. "Decisions are made by a consensus and the process is based on trust, so members can't intimidate someone into agreeing."

However, Moore said, the collective process also has its disadvantages.

For one, she said, the system is time-consuming, and decisions cannot be made quickly because members must agree.

And if the process does not work well, Moore said, poorly executed activities or decisions can lead to a lack of action by the group.

"The collective can become vulnerable to outside forces," she said. "It does not fit well into a bureaucratic system because outsiders, such as the media or members of the bureaucracy, always want to know who's in charge."

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11:45 a.m. — Hit-and-run accident, City of Lincoln, \$400.

12:09 p.m. — Male arrested for trespassing, Smith Residence Hall.

2:38 p.m. — Bike stolen, Nebraska Union, \$290.

8:34 p.m. — Person with dislocated hip, Lee and Helene Sapp Recreation Center.

9:06 p.m. — Arson, Cather Residence Hall, \$50.

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