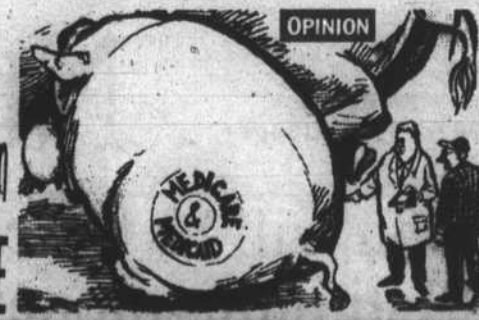
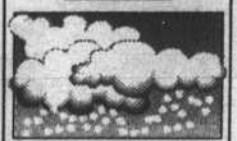


Shellito on
MEDICARE

OPINION

TUESDAY



15/0

Cloudy and cold with continued chance of snow. Wednesday, bitterly cold so bundle up.



Staci McKee/DN

Raising a racquet

Dan Lehman of Lincoln watches Mike Epperson return a serve during a game of racquetball at the Sapp Recreation Center Monday morning. Epperson is a former UNL gymnast.

Campus debit cards possible by next fall

By Matt Woody
Staff Reporter

Imagine you just ordered a cheeseburger and fries at the Burger King in the Nebraska Union when you noticed your wallet was empty.

Got your HuskerCard? No problem.

Although currently no such card exists, it may not be long before students could make purchases with their own university-managed debit card, a UNL official said.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs James Griesen said possibly as soon as next fall, students would be able to open and use a debit account through their student ID card.

Griesen said a debit card's function was very similar to a credit card's, but the way it works was much different.

A debit card is pre-paid; purchases are deducted from the account's balance, as opposed to a credit card where the buyer accumulates a tab and pays later.

Griesen said when the current photo ID card system was being developed in 1987 and 1988, he and others studied the possibility of a debit or credit card system. The decision was made not to offer either.

Griesen said he was happy with the ID system, because one card would be all students needed for campuswide use. However, he said, a debit card would be a plus for students.

"I could see it as a major convenience," Griesen said.

Andy Epstein, a freshman at Vanderbilt University, where the Commodore Card is as good as gold, said the card was very handy.

The Commodore Card is accepted all over campus, he said, and students don't hold back because they've already paid.

Epstein said prices at campus stores were often higher than off campus, but students didn't care because the stores took the card.

Mazzio's, a local pizza eatery, and Dairy Queen have sites on campus and "make a killing," he said.

"Students will go there and they don't have to worry about it, because it's on the card," Epstein said.

At Florida State University, the Seminole Access Card acts universally on campus, said Bob Basham, operations director of the Seminole Access Center at Florida State University.

The card, instituted last fall, has many functions, including ID card, library card, debit account card and dormitory passkey, he said.

"This is taking everything we've got and combining it into one card, so that's all students

UNL observes National Condom Week

By Jeffrey Robb
Staff Reporter

A week traditionally celebrated by Valentine's Day hugs and kisses and Presidents Day mattress sales has also been dubbed National Condom Week.

The Condom Resource Center in Oakland, Calif., has named Feb. 14 to 21 National Condom Week in an effort to educate people on the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

A campus effort has been coordinated by the University Health Center's community health education department to reach students with the Condom Resource Center's message.

"There are estimates that one of every five college students has or will have a sexually transmitted disease. It is also estimated that a campus the size of UNL has between 50 to 75 students who are HIV positive," said Pat Tetreault, the university's sexual education

— "Education is one of the best methods to encourage sexual health and responsibility."

— Tetreault
UNL sexual education coordinator

coordinator.

In addition, she said 80 percent of college students were estimated to be sexually active, and the majority didn't protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases when engaged in sex.

These statistics worry the Condom Resource Center. Since 1978, the center has tried to coordinate a national effort to educate people on condoms and other sexual options. National Condom Week is an additional focus of those

efforts.

Tetreault said these numbers were especially pertinent to college students, so efforts were focused on them.

"I think it's needed because of the high incidence of sexually transmitted diseases in our culture," she said. "Sexually transmitted diseases are most prevalent among individuals under the age of 25, described as a large portion

See CONDOM on 3

See DEBIT on 3

Depression disorders treatable, officials say

Stress, sleeping problems during winter intensified by natural light deficiency

By Doug Kouma
Staff Reporter

People who have been feeling a bit glum lately may be suffering from something more serious than a case of spring fever.

A condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is caused by a lack of natural light, can strengthen the severity of afflictions like stress, depression and sleep disorders, said John Breckenridge, a counselor at the University Health Center.

The disorder typically begins with the onset of winter and can last throughout the season. Symptoms include stress, depression, increased appetite and sleeping problems.

Extended periods of cloudy, damp days can make the condition even more severe, Breckenridge said.

Throughout history, he said, people who have lived in northern climates often experience "cabin fever" at this time of year. Now, science is finding that there may be validity to the condition.

But distinguishing SAD from other condi-

tions that cause stress and depression can be difficult, he said.

"If these symptoms only take place during the short daylight hours, you begin to know that this may be SAD," Breckenridge said.

Research on the topic is ongoing, and many of the causes of the disorder still are unknown.

"I'm unaware at the moment that they've really tracked down specifically what can happen," Breckenridge said.

He said other problems, such as stress, could trigger the onset of SAD.

Depending on its severity, the disorder can interfere with students' studies, he said.

"Any kind of depression is a serious impediment in that you can't study efficiently and effectively," Breckenridge said.

People who think they may be suffering from SAD should try to treat the disorder as well as the individual problems, such as stress or depression.

Breckenridge said mild cases of SAD could be cured with something as simple as a "walk at lunch time when the sun is shining."

But he said only broad-spectrum light — the same kind as natural sunlight — would help alleviate the symptoms. Fluorescent light does not contain all the necessary wavelengths.

See SAD on 3

People suffering long-term lack of energy, motivation help with professor's study

By Kathryn Borman
Staff Reporter

People who have felt depressed and low in energy for an extended period of time may be eligible for some relief as well as help a UNL professor's research.

Debra Hope, an assistant professor of psychology, works at the UNL Psychological Consultation Center studying a type of long-term depression.

The condition, called dysthymia by the American Psychological Association, may include a lack of energy or motivation, irritability and a pessimistic outlook, Hope said.

Dysthymia differs from major depression, she said, which is usually more severe. Major depression can include feelings of worthlessness or suicide and is generally limited to periodic episodes, with returns to normalcy in between.

"A dysthymic never reaches major depression but never gets back to normal," Hope said.

Dysthymia appears to onlookers as "a personality style," she said.

Researchers believe dysthymia affects victims throughout their lives. It severely affects one in 10 women and one in 20 men in the United States.

Some dysthymics link their depression to a single event, such as the death of a loved one or a move to a new environment, Hope said. Others say they've been depressed as long as they can remember.

Researchers are unsure whether an event such as starting a new job or getting married may coax dysthymics out of their depressed state, Hope said.

"But people who've had it for many years are not likely to move on without treatment," she said.

The psychology study provides 12 weekly sessions of group therapy in exchange for the subject's participation.

Hope said she thought the group treatment was a positive method for dysthymics.

"A whole lot of the positive experiences we have with other people (in life) is from group interaction," Hope said.

"Dysthymics seem to have a real disruption in that interaction."

Through group treatment, participants will receive the support of people in a similar situation.

See DEPRESSION on 3