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SPORTS
Springing into life
 Nebraska's offense, sluggish all spring, explodes during the annual Red-White game Saturday at Memorial Stadium.
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Monday
 83/54
 Today, there will be a chance of thunderstorms.

Candidates talk taxes, crime in final debate

By Matthew Waite
 Senior Reporter

Two statements were consistent throughout a debate Sunday among four Republican gubernatorial candidates: Taxes are too high, and the rise in crime needs to stop.

Alan Jacobsen of Lincoln, Gene Spence of Omaha, Ralph Knobel of Fairbury and John DeCamp of Clatonia squared off at the KOLN/KGIN television studio in Lincoln. The event was the candidates' third and final debate before the May 10 primary election.

Each gubernatorial hopeful had different ideas on how to lower crime rates and decrease taxes. They agreed that state spending and tax rates needed to be cut, but they disagreed on how those cuts should come about.

Knobel proposed a constitutionally mandated, fixed personal property tax rate, which he said critics had called "scary." He said what was really scary was having a government which wasn't responsive to the people.

Knobel said that under his plan, politicians and lobbyists would be forced to listen to the people.

"I think everybody is taxed too much," he said. "The taxpayers in this state are very frustrated."

Also, he said, Nebraska must get a hold on Medicaid and welfare spending.

"The bottom line is we're spending too much money," he said. "We need to get a reign on spending on every level."

DeCamp said it was time for the candidates and Nebraskans to face reality — Nebraska has too many local government employees, he said.

Decreasing the number of local government employees decreases state spending, DeCamp said. He said Nebraska needed to reduce the number of teachers it had by 5,000 to 7,000 during the next three to four years.

DeCamp said the other candidates were just talking about tax relief.

"Promises are like pregnancies — easy to conceive but hard to deliver," he said.

However, Spence said, Nebraskans still cared about their schools and keeping local control. He said there was no easy way out in deciding tax issues.

"There is no magic solution in government," he said. "There's just leadership."

In agreement, Jacobsen said the solution did not involve eliminating Nebraska's teachers, but it involved getting excess spending under control.

See **DEBATE** on 6



The Nebraska men's gymnastics team celebrates its NCAA championship victory Saturday in the Bob Devaney Sports Center by hoisting its championship trophies. See stories on Page 7.
 William Lauer/DN

Judge withdraws from Sidney hearing

By Kara G. Morrison
 Senior Reporter

Lancaster County District Judge Donald Endacott will still decide Roger Bjorklund's sentence, but another judge will preside over a hearing to decide whether a new trial will be held, Endacott ruled Friday.

Endacott overruled the defense attorneys' motion asking that he have no further contact with the case, but he said Lancaster County District Judge Paul Merritt would preside over the new trial hearing in Sidney on May 5 and 6.

In a March 21 motion for a new trial, Bjorklund's attorneys said Endacott had had improper contact with members of the jury. Endacott has said he prayed with jurors before the trial and hugged one or more jury members after the verdict was returned.

Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty against Bjorklund, who was convicted by a jury in November of murdering University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman Candice Harms.

Endacott will sentence Bjorklund on May 23.

Endacott dismissed the new trial motion last month, but Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey asked that the motion be reconsidered to clear up the improper contact issue.

Lacey has said prosecutors want to interview jury members about the matter to eliminate questions of impartiality in the event of an appeal.

In a motion filed last Thursday, Chief Deputy Public Defender Scott Helvie said Endacott was a potential witness in a new trial hearing and asked that the judge disqualify himself from further proceedings.

Friday, Helvie said Nebraska law clearly stated that a judge could not preside over cases in which the judge was a witness.

Helvie said Bjorklund would be denied due process if Endacott did not fully disqualify himself, because the defendant would be prohibited from calling the judge as a witness.

In his ruling, Endacott said he would not testify at the Sidney hearing. Endacott said his testimony was not relevant, because jury mem-

bers' impartiality, not his own, was in question.

"The dispute is whether the jurors were prejudiced. That's the issue," the judge said. "I have no knowledge whatsoever of that."

Deputy County Attorney John Colborn said that although prosecutors agreed the judge was not a necessary witness for the new trial hearing, they asked "out of an abundance of caution," that Endacott disqualify himself from the new trial hearing but retain the duty of sentencing.

"There is absolutely no question of this courts' impartiality," Colborn said.

Colborn said prosecutors submitted 25 cases in which judges disqualified themselves from limited proceedings. Helvie argued the cases cited were mostly bankruptcy and other civil cases, not first-degree murder cases, and were not applicable to Bjorklund's case.

"It is our position that a limited recusal (disqualification) is not permitted (in capital cases)," Helvie said.

See **ENDACOTT** on 3

Former president leaves ambivalent legacy

Richard M. Nixon, 1913-1994

- Jan. 9, 1913: Born in Yorba Linda, Calif., son of Francis and Hannah Nixon.
- 1942-1945: Serves in Navy during World War II.
- 1946: Elected to first of two terms in House of Representatives.
- 1950: Elected to U.S. Senate.
- 1952: Elected vice president as running mate to Dwight D. Eisenhower.
- 1956: Re-elected as vice president.
- 1960: Narrowly loses presidency to John F. Kennedy.
- 1962: Loses California governor's race; bitterly tells reporters "you won't have Nixon to kick around any more."
- 1968: Elected president over Democrat Hubert Humphrey and independent George Wallace.
- Jan. 20 1969: Sworn in as 37th president of the United States.
- February 1972: Makes historic first trip to Communist China.
- May 1972: Summit with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow.
- June 17, 1972: Break-in at Democratic headquarters at the Watergate complex.
- November 1972: Re-elected in landslide over George McGovern.
- Oct. 20, 1973: "Saturday Night Massacre," in which Attorney General Elliot Richardson resigned, Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox was fired.
- July 24, 1974: Supreme Court rules that Nixon must surrender tapes secretly recorded at the White House.
- Aug. 9, 1974: Resigns as president in culmination of Watergate scandal.
- Sept. 8, 1974: Receives unconditional pardon from successor Gerald R. Ford.
- April 18, 1994: Suffers a stroke, and later slips into a deep coma.
- April 22, 1994: Dies in a New York hospital at age 81.



By Jeremy Fitzpatrick
 Editor

The strong emotions Richard Nixon sparked in his critics and supporters while he was alive are still evident after his death.

Two University of Nebraska-Lincoln political science professors and a former U.S. senator from Nebraska all painted different pictures of the legacy of a man whose career is known to most UNL students only through history books.

Nixon, 81, died from a stroke late Friday in New York City. He will be buried Wednesday in California. President Clinton has declared the day a national day of mourning.

Carl Curtis, a former Republican senator from Nebraska, said people should remember the 37th president for his significant accomplishments in foreign policy.

"I think they should remember him as one of the great presidents of all time," Curtis said. "He was the master of foreign policy."

"Watergate is kept in the news by critics that will not let it die, but it was

blown clear out of proportion."

Curtis first met Nixon in 1946, when both were serving in the House of Representatives. The two became friends, and Curtis was one of a group of Republican senators who was with Nixon the night before he resigned from the presidency amid pressure of impeachment.

Curtis said Nixon made mistakes in handling Watergate, but the president was victimized by people who used the controversy for political gain.

"I have never known who the mastermind behind the whole maneuver was," he said. "But there was definitely a movement to get President Nixon."

Nixon should also be remembered for the strength of his character, Curtis said.

"He never got bitter. He did not drown himself in liquor or do away with himself. He went to work, worked his way back and came back as a world leader," Curtis said.

Bill Avery, a political science professor at UNL, said Nixon won great successes in foreign policy. But he said history would always remember

Nixon as the only president to resign from the office.

"Even his death is a rehashing of Watergate," he said. "In death he cannot even escape a review of the crimes of Watergate."

Avery said he disagreed with those who believed there was a conspiracy against Nixon involving Watergate.

"Those people now who like to say he was hounded out of office don't remember what happened in Watergate," he said. "Watergate was a very serious assault on the Constitution by the president and the president's staff."

Avery said people who tried to diminish the importance of Watergate were doing a disservice to young people who didn't experience the events that forced Nixon to resign.

"The facts are facts. And it's not partisan," he said. "And I would say that if 25 years from now historians pretty much overlook Watergate, I would be very surprised."

Robert Sittig, a political science professor at UNL, agreed that

See **NIXON** on 6