

# Exon opposes cutoff date

OMAHA — Democratic Sen. James Exon, a ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said Thursday he opposed setting a specific date when Congress would cut off funds for the military mission in Haiti.

Although he opposed sending troops to Haiti, Exon said: "The facts of the matter are that they are now there and therefore their security, their safety and their mission are important."

In a telephone conference call with Nebraska news media, Exon said setting such a date could affect the security of the 15,000 troops on the ground in Haiti.

"Their mission, right or wrong, could be put in jeopardy," he said.

That mission involves aircraft and crews from Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, Air Force officials said Thursday.

An unspecified number of RC-135 Rivet Joint electronic reconnaissance aircraft and EC-135 airborne com-

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**JAMES EXON**  
U.S. Senator

mand and control aircraft are supporting U.S. military efforts in the Caribbean nation. A spokesman for the 55th Wing declined to specify how many aircraft or crew members were involved.

"This type of mission is not new to the 55th Wing," said Brig. Gen. Thomas Keck, wing commander. "Almost anywhere there is a hot spot in the world, the 55th Wing will be close by."

Aircraft from the unit typically join airborne warning and control

system, or AWACS, aircraft as the first on the scene and the last to leave, Keck said.

The RC-135 is a military version of the Boeing 707 passenger aircraft, equipped with antennas and other sensors to gather electronic signals, which are analyzed and passed on to battlefield commanders.

The EC-135 were known as part of the "Looking Glass" mission to provide an airborne command post for senior military commanders to use to control nuclear weapons if ground posts were destroyed.

# Nelson recalls hometown days

McCOOK — When he was growing up in McCook, the biggest temptation was to drive over the border to Kansas where the drinking age was 18, Gov. Ben Nelson recalled in his hometown.



Nelson

As governor, Nelson recently told about 250 students at Central Elementary Grade School, he must deal with what he sees as the state's biggest problem: crime. Nelson said he was particularly concerned with the crimes committed by young people.

"Were you ever offered drugs in high school?" one student asked in a question-and-answer session with the governor at a student assembly.

"No, nobody ever offered me

drugs," replied Nelson, 53. The governor said that while he was no "straight arrow," drugs weren't a part of the culture when he attended school.

"Back then marijuana was known as hemp weed. The biggest temptation was to go to Cedar Bluffs, Kan., where the legal drinking age was 18," he said.

Fifth- and sixth-grade students also asked the governor questions on crime, taxes and abortion.

But the governor took a political sidestep when asked if McCook was his favorite town in Nebraska.

"McCook is my favorite hometown. As the governor, it's not fair to be partisan," he said.

Being Nebraska's governor sometimes feels like waking up in the morning and just wanting to pull the covers over your head and go back to sleep, Nelson said.

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**BEN NELSON**  
Governor of Nebraska

"But it's not like that very often. Only when the (state) Supreme Court is due for a big Friday decision," he said, referring to the court that has issued tax rulings complicating his first term.

# Powerball goes unplugged one hour before drawing

COLUMBUS — Powerball ticket sales were brisk in Columbus on Thursday after a 7-hour computer glitch sent many jackpot hopefuls stomping out of area convenience stores in frustration.

Computers at seven Columbus retailers who sell the tickets were out from 2 p.m. until 9 p.m. Wednesday — one hour before one of the drawings in the twice-weekly lottery.

"There shouldn't have been a number (drawn) at all because we didn't have a fair chance," said Randi Yates of Columbus. She said she and her husband, Roger, play Powerball twice a week. Not being able to play Wednesday was "the pits."

"We're just used to getting them," she said. "The people that came in (to Fast Mart) after we did, you could just see the disappointment in their faces when they couldn't get any, either."

Nobody cracked the \$14.8 million jackpot Wednesday, sending the prize to an estimated \$19 million for Saturday's drawing.

Nebraska Lottery public information officer Brian Rockey in Lincoln said downed telephone circuits affected Columbus and nearly 50 outlets across the state.

Retailers said machines were accepting tickets, but not printing a validation number or spewing players' receipts.

"People kept traveling back and forth from outlet to outlet," said JoAnn Kozak, manager of Cuzzin's Corner. "They were mad."

The story was the same at Fast Mart.

"And this was the day my numbers will probably come up," one lady told me before she stomped out of the store," said clerk Jane Svoboda. "It's only \$14 million and people are irate. What'll happen when the jackpot hits \$30 or \$50 million?"

A service man for G-Tech, the Rhode Island company that services the Powerball machines, also drew the wrath of potential Powerball players.

"It was terrible," Svoboda said. "The G-Tech guy was trying to work on the machine and couldn't find anything wrong. He just kept working and told me he couldn't believe how rude people were."

Svoboda said people in front of her counter were seven to eight deep through the evening, waiting to see if the machines would come back on line in time for the 10 p.m. drawing.

The downed machines also affected business in general.

"One guy had a carton of cigarettes and a drink in his hand when he asked for a ticket," Svoboda said. "When I couldn't give him a ticket, he left the stuff on the counter and walked out."

## Former principal sentenced

ALBION — A former Cedar Rapids High School principal was sentenced Thursday to one year in the county jail after being convicted of contributing to the delinquency of a minor through sexual misconduct.

Leonard Homan, 52, had pleaded no contest to the misdemeanor delinquency charge in May and he had pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of obtaining alcohol for a minor.

The pleas were the result of an agreement with prosecutors in which two counts of third-degree sexual assault of a minor and three additional counts of procuring alcohol were dropped.

Terms of six months for each conviction will be served one after the other, Boone County Judge Gary Hatfield said. Homan also will get two months credit for time served during a presentence evaluation, Hatfield said.

Homan had been a teacher and administrator at the high school for 27 years before leaving the post in December.

## Trial returned to Falls City

FALLS CITY — The trials for two men accused of murdering three people in a rural Humboldt farmhouse last New Year's Eve will be held in Falls City, a Richardson County district judge decided Thursday.

Judge Robert Finn had previously granted change of venue motions to hold the trials in Lincoln.

But during a hearing here, Finn said finding an available courtroom for trials that could last for weeks was a factor in his decision to move the cases back to Falls City.

John Lotter, 22, and Marvin Nissen, 21, each are charged with three counts of first-degree murder in the shooting deaths of Teena Brandon, Philip DeVine and Lisa Lambert on Dec. 31, 1993.

The two also are charged with kidnapping and raping Brandon, a woman who posed as a man, on Christmas Day, one week before the killings.

## Parvovirus strikes shelter

FREMONT — An animal shelter in this city closed after authorities were forced to euthanize 10 dogs that were diagnosed with a highly contagious disease.

Officials at the Dodge County Humane Society shelter do not expect to resume taking stray dogs in for about two weeks due to an outbreak of parvovirus, said shelter Director Diane Walker.

Parvovirus causes inflammation and deterioration of the lining in a dog's gastrointestinal.

Fremont veterinarian Dr. Mike Christensen of the Animal Clinic Downtown in Fremont has recommended the shelter be placed under quarantine.

Although dogs are not allowed, the shelter will continue to accept cats because the animals are immune to the disease.

Symptoms of a dog infected with parvovirus includes a lack of appetite, lethargy, high fever, diarrhea and vomiting, said Dr. Landon Lugar of the clinic.

**Daily Nebraskan**

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