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INSIDE WEDNESDAY

SPORTS

■ NU takes 4-1 record into Creighton rivalry, Page 7

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

■ "White" to show at Rlepma Ross Theatre, Page 9

PAGE 2: Whitewater probe nets guilty plea

DECEMBER 7, 1994

Engineering dean asked to step down

By Jeff Zolony
and Angie Brunkow
Senior Editors

Engineering Dean Stan Liberty said he was surprised when he learned UNL administrators wanted him to step down from the college he has directed for 13 years.

"I think everyone is surprised when they discover that someone doesn't wish that they continue, even though their performance has no deficiencies in it," he said, "but that is their prerogative."

Liberty announced Tuesday he would step down on Jan. 1. In a letter to engineering

faculty and staff, he said that University of Nebraska-Lincoln officials wanted new leadership for the college.

The announcement came two days before NU President Dennis Smith is expected to announce his recommendation about a separate engineering college in Omaha.

Two members of the NU Board of Regents didn't find the announcement a surprise. One



Liberty

student regent said the timing wasn't coincidental.

"It's not a mistake this resignation came out a day before President Smith's decision," said Andrew Loudon, president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska.

Regent Robert Allen of Hastings said the decision was a result of administrative and interest-group pressure.

"President Dennis Smith is forcing our engineering dean to resign even though he has put our university's engineering school in the best condition it has ever been," Allen said.

See LIBERTY on 3

INSIDE

■ College of Engineering and Technology professors react to the announcement that Stan Liberty will step aside as dean on Jan. 1. See page 3.

■ Liberty came to UNL in 1981 as dean and professor of the engineering college. He served as interim vice chancellor for academic affairs from December 1990 to August 1992.

Snow, sleet cover Lincoln streets

By Chad Lorenz
Staff Reporter

Lincoln residents were forced to dig, scoop and brush more than four inches of snow and ice Tuesday, but forecasters said the relief begins today.

The snow that plagued more than half of the state Tuesday will diminish today, said Cathy Zapotocny of the National Weather Service. Today's high should be about 25 degrees with occasional winds, she said, with the low around 15 degrees tonight.

However Tuesday's mixture of sleet and snow didn't affect most students' daily routines.

Greg Beals, a freshman biology major, said he didn't mind the snow because his only class ended before the storm started.

"It's a nice change of pace," he said.

Lorri Denton, a senior accounting major, said the storm was cool since it was the first snowfall of the year, but she still wasn't eager to drive.

UNL landscape service workers began preparing to tackle the snow and ice at 5 a.m. Tuesday, and worked two eight-hour shifts.

Jay Schluckebier, assistant director for UNL landscape services, said 42 plow units removed snow on East and City campuses Tuesday.

Salt and sand was spread on all streets, arterials and bus routes through the night by Lincoln Public Works officials.

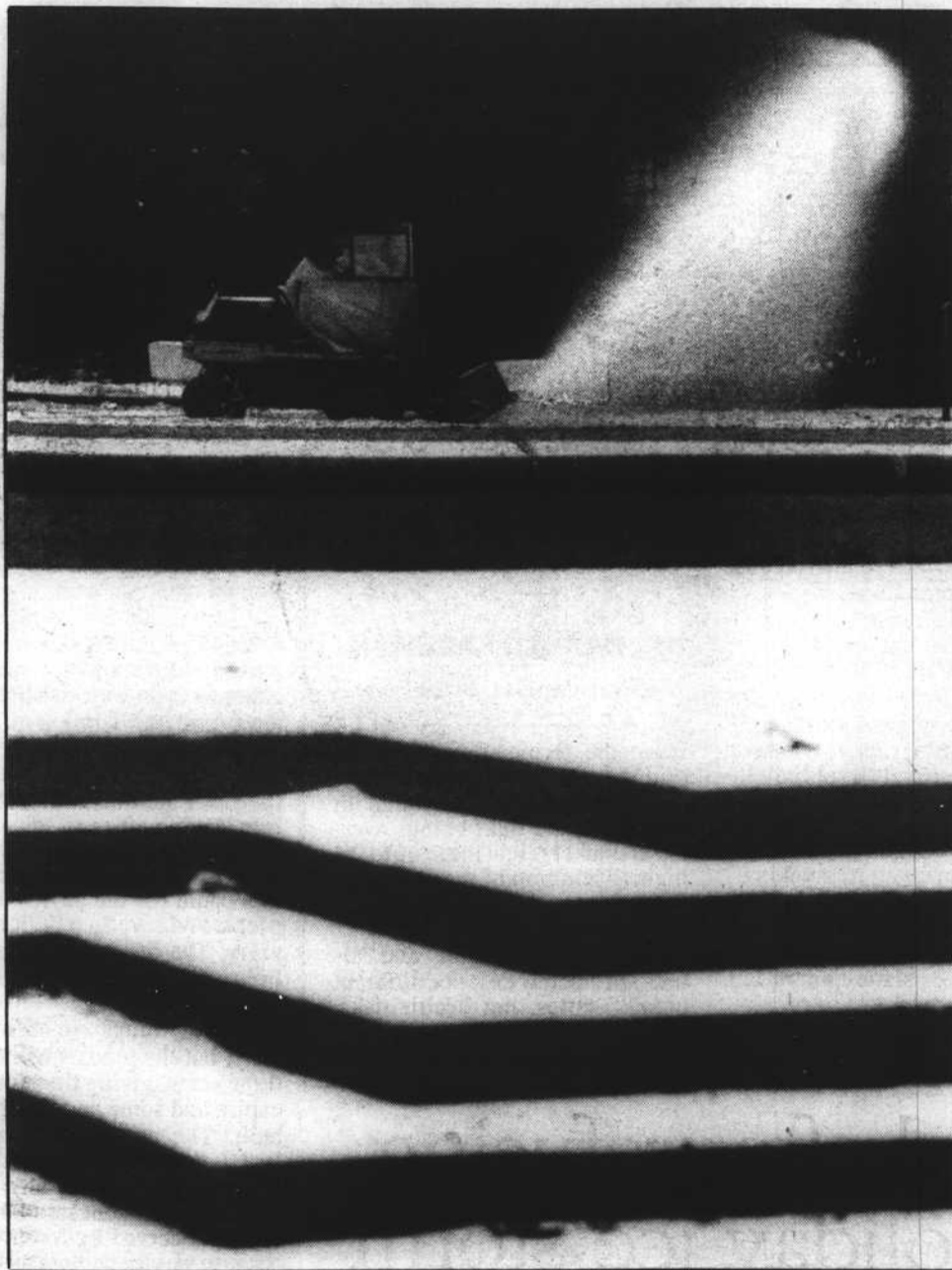
Six to eight inches of snow fell Tuesday near Grand Island. However, much of northern Nebraska and the western Panhandle escaped the nasty weather as the storm system moved south.

Few accidents and no fatalities were reported Tuesday to the Nebraska State Patrol.

Patrol Capt. Andy Lundy said people might have been prepared for slick weather because the state already had faced some wintry weather this season.

Deric Wild, a sophomore economics major, said the storm only affected his wait for the morning bus. He said he would stay overnight at his fraternity rather than return to his off-campus home.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Michelle Paulman/DN

Dennis Markowski of the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department removes snow and sleet from Centennial Mall and Q streets. About four inches of snow fell Tuesday in Lincoln.

Prosecutor to check legality of charges

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

The special prosecutor in the Francisco Renteria death will look into whether he has the authority to upgrade misdemeanor charges against two Lincoln police officers to manslaughter.

Bob Bartle said Tuesday that he would research whether he could change the misdemeanor charges issued by the grand jury last week.

"I will do what the law allows me to do," he said. "I will carry out my responsibilities."

The grand jury indicted Officers Luke Wilke and Stephen Schellpeper on charges of misdemeanor assault in the Oct. 1 death of Renteria.

Misdemeanor assault, punishable by a maximum sentence of one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine, involves intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing bodily injury.

Members of Lincoln's Hispanic community and the Intercultural Coalition started a petition Monday to change the indictments.

Manslaughter, defined as killing someone without malice or causing a death unintentionally while committing a crime, is punishable by a maximum of 20 years in prison and a \$1,000 fine.

Bartle said a letter from Carlos Monzon, the Renteria family attorney, prompted him to look into the issue.

"I've had a request made of me, and I will respond to the request," he said. Bartle said he has had no chance to research the question yet.

Ramon Noriega, a member of the Intercultural Coalition, said the charges should be raised from misdemeanor to felony because of the severity of the assault.

"A man is dead," Noriega said, "and nothing is going to bring him back."

Noriega said coalition members also wanted the grand jury to bring manslaughter charges against Police Chief Tom Casady and Fire Capt. Danny Wright, who were arraigned on other misdemeanor charges.

See INVESTIGATION on 3

Man's release scares his victim

Woman believed book was closed on sexual assault case

By DeDra Jansson
Senior Reporter

When Richard J. Barrett was convicted last month of first-degree attempted sexual assault, his victim, UNL sophomore Cheryl Gregg, thought she had closed the book on a yearlong nightmare.

"I was so happy," Gregg said. "I

was bouncing off the walls. It made me feel as though all the pain I've gone through may have actually done something. I've seen him for the last time. He's going to jail — closed book."

But that book reopened Tuesday when Barrett was released on \$3,000 bond from the Lincoln Correctional Center.

John Martin, a spokesman for the center, said Lancaster County District Judge Bernard McGinn stayed Barrett's one- to two-year sentence pending a decision by the Nebraska Court of Appeals.

"I am confused," Gregg said. "I

think it's stupid a criminal can get through the appeals process after being convicted."

Barrett's lawyer, Bob Creager, said Barrett was appealing his conviction, which includes the jail sentence.

Richard Scott, Barrett's former lawyer, said Barrett originally had been charged with first-degree sexual assault, which is a Class II felony.

As part of a bargain, Barrett plead no contest to first-degree attempted sexual assault, which is a class III felony, Scott said.

Creager said it could take three to six months before the court decided on the appeal.

Petition seeks removal of UNL police officer

By Paula Lavigne
Senior Reporter

Members of the Intercultural Coalition started work Monday on a petition that calls for the removal of the UNL police officer who first came into contact with Francisco Renteria.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Police Officer Charlotte Veskna, who was not charged in

the Oct. 1 death of Renteria, mistook him as a man violating a protection order. Renteria died after a scuffle with Lincoln and university police.

Ramon Noriega, a member of the coalition, said Veskna should be removed from her job because she started the incident.

"She started this whole thing,

See VESKRNA on 3