

# Daily Nebraskan

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inside **T**hursday

Sports

Karen Jennings returns to Nebraska, page 7

Arts & Entertainment

Country music star Doug Supernaw to appear in Lincoln, page 9

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## Piping hot



Jon Waller/DN

OSHA inspector Frank Winingham looks at sample dirt surrounding a broken steam pipe at the corner of 14th and R streets on Wednesday. The dirt being excavated was 110 degrees, said Dennis Willeford of General Excavating.

### Job safety concerns brought to attention in steam line reappear

By Brian Sharp  
Senior Reporter

An investigator looking into possible occupational safety violations inspected a construction site at UNL Wednesday.

If the contractor repairing a leaking steam line at 14th and R streets is guilty of violating safety codes, it could face up to \$7,000 in fines.

The steam drifting from area manholes and from the mounded construction zone is the result of a broken steam line that has been leaking since before Thanksgiving, said Gary Thalken, utilities manager at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

But it's not the broken line that may have Occupational Safety and Hazard Administration officials steamed. Instead, there's a question as to whether the contractor has created a dangerous working environment

in which to repair the leak.

Thalken said the 50-year-old steam line generated from the UNL power plant at 14th and Avery streets. It feeds the State Capitol, he said, along with the Union Insurance building, state office building and the governor's mansion. The steam is used to heat the buildings, he said.

Using infrared photography to determine where the "hot spot" was, contractors began work a couple of weeks ago to find and repair the leak, Thalken said.

Ben Bare, area OSHA director, said that in general, any hole more than 5-feet deep must have sloped or supported sides.

After receiving a complaint that the contractor, Shanahan Mechanical of Valparaiso, had not met those specifications, OSHA sent an investigator to the site Wednesday.

The investigator would not comment on his findings Wednesday afternoon and referred all questions back to Bare. The site contractor also refused comment. Steve Shanahan, vice president of the company, did not return phone calls.

The site did not have sloped or reinforced walls for at least part of Wednesday. Metal sheets had been brought in, but remained on a truck at 1 p.m.

Bare said results of the findings wouldn't be made public until the investigation was complete in about two weeks.

OSHA considers entrenchment violations "very serious," Bare said, and such violations could draw anything from an order to make necessary adjustments to a \$7,000 fine.

Thalken said UNL would not be responsible for any violations on the part of Shanahan because the contract states that it is the responsibility of the contractor to follow all rules and regulations.

Given no further delays, Thalken said he expected the pipe to be repaired within two weeks.

Thalken said he was told Monday that workers were within a few feet of finding the leak. But that leak might be under the bus shelter located on the corner, he said. If so, it would mean more permits and regulations would have to be worked through before proceeding, he said.

Another consideration that will have to be made when repairing the leak, he said, is that the steam will have to be shut off for about six hours, which means no heat will be available to the buildings the line feeds.

## Attorneys spar off in O.J. trial

By Linda Deutsch  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — O.J. Simpson's defense vowed Wednesday to prove him an "innocent man wrongly accused" of two murders and promised a parade of supportive witnesses.

Attorney Johnnie Cochran Jr., striking back after powerful prosecution statements about a trail of blood that could tie Simpson to the murders of ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, accused the district attorney's office of a "rush to judgment, an obsession to win at any cost and by any means necessary." He said there were "trails that led toward innocence and they were not pursued."

Simpson was off-camera to television audiences, however, because the judge barred the camera from spanning the courtroom after an alternate juror's face was accidentally shown Tuesday.

Stacking up evidence of reasonable doubt, Cochran told of two women who approached the defense team after police and prosecutors refused their information, and of one witness who reported seeing four men fleeing from the area of Nicole Simpson's home the night of the murders.

Cochran said the woman who reportedly

See O.J. on 3

## Bill aims to bring care to rural areas

By J. Christopher Hain  
Senior Reporter

Dawn Sanderson grew up in rural Nebraska taking care of sheep. Now she would like to do the same for people.

Sanderson, of Colon, is a junior occupational therapy student at Creighton University. She would like to return to rural Nebraska when she completes her program.

But she said the high cost of her education could lead her to give up her goal for the financial opportunity of a bigger city.

"There are so many incentives to stay in a bigger town," Sanderson said.

Bringing talented health care professionals, like Sanderson hopes to be, to rural towns is the aim of a bill sponsored by Sen. Merton "Cap" Dierks of Ewing.

LB373, which was introduced Wednesday to the Health and Human Services Committee, would add pharmacists, dentists, physical therapists and occupational therapists to a loan program established in 1991.

The program helps repay the loans of primary care doctors, mental health doctors and psychiatrists who agree to practice for three

See THERAPY on 3

## LETTUCE head serious about winning ASUN campaign

Editor's note: This is the first of a series of reports taking a look at parties campaigning for the ASUN presidency.

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Reporter

A new head of LETTUCE will lead his party in this year's ASUN presidential campaign.

Both Brian Fitzgerald, the LETTUCE presidential candidate, and

Matt Kissler, the party's second vice presidential candidate, know what it's like to be a part of the campaigns. Fitzgerald was last year's first vice-presidential candidate, and Kissler was the presidential candidate.

Last year, the LETTUCE party started as a write-in party, advocating the idea that green space should be used to graze animals and grow kohlrabi.

The party turned the only debate it was allowed to be part of into a circus,

complete with secret service agents and a foiled assassination attempt with a sausage.

During the party's concession, a member made a serious, standing proposal of marriage to the winning second vice president, Judy Rishel.

LETTUCE party members started their campaign to get 100 votes and a story in the Daily Nebraskan. Despite being a write-in party, they managed to notch 11 percent of the vote and take second place in the election.

But this year, the party added Andrew Smith as vice-presidential candidate and a platform with legitimate planks.

Party members insist they are serious about winning.

Well ... "The LETTUCE party is so strong this year we're liable to kick our own asses," Fitzgerald said. "We're turbo-charged."

In a dark corner of Cliff's Lounge, armed with Tijuana Smalls cigarettes

and the official drink of the LETTUCE party, vodka tonics, the three members of the party outlined last Saturday their run at the presidency.

Like last year, humor filled a political function. Kissler — whom some called "Jesus" last year because of his long hair, burlap cloak, sandals and beard — was dressed in brown polyester pants and a big yellow tie.

The Jimmi E. Cascade Founda-

See LETTUCE on 3