

Sexual harassment suit lingers

Plaintiff's claims, attorney's fees at heart of dispute

By Brian Sharp
Senior Reporter

It was more than sexual harassments — it was retaliation.

That's how the lawyer for JoAnn McGaughey described the working environment her client endured at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It was an environment, she said, that was supposed to improve after McGaughey filed a complaint with the university's affirmative action office.

But it only got worse, she said.

McGaughey filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in August 1993 alleging civil rights violations. UNL officials settled last December for \$32,000 and offered McGaughey a new job with a \$44,550 salary.

McGaughey's lawyer, Elaine Wagoner, asked the court to award attorney fees and costs of more than \$46,000. UNL promised \$26,000. U.S. District Court Judge Richard Kopf ruled Wednesday that reasonable attorney fees were \$15,800.

McGaughey's lawsuit alleged sexual discrimination. She had worked as manager of business and technology since October 1986 in what was the UNL computer shop before it was merged with the Computer Resource Center.

Wagoner described her client's positions as "high responsibility, high profile" — overseeing the university computer system and technicians. McGaughey also was on national and regional advisory boards for IBM computers.

It was after officials denied her attendance at one of the regional meetings in early 1990 that she went to the affirmative action office, Wagoner said.

McGaughey said the office launched an investigation, but would not comment on the findings. Her lawsuit alleges the action is what prompted officials to eliminate her managerial position and transfer her to a lower position with CRC.

But the incident involving the advisory meeting wasn't the first time McGaughey said she experienced discrimination. McGaughey said she wasn't comfortable talking about ev-

erything that happened, but said working conditions only got worse after her reassignment.

In fact, McGaughey said, she wasn't told what her job duties were for almost three years.

Wagoner said actions against McGaughey included unequal pay and relegating her to coordinating a news letter and a few other projects. McGaughey also put up with verbal statements and actions that would constitute sexual harassment, she said.

"There was an aspect of harassment," Wagoner said. "But harassment in a retaliatory manner more than the traditional sexual harassment."

Doug Gale, CRC director, would not comment on the matter Thursday night and referred all questions to NU legal counsel.

John Wiltse, NU associate general counsel, said the issue had been resolved, and he was pleased with the judge's ruling.

Wagoner said she was considering appealing Kopf's decision on attorney's fees. She wouldn't comment on whether McGaughey would have to make up the nearly \$30,000 difference if the ruling remained final.

Shooting incident brings restaurant owner to court

From Staff Reports

A Lincoln restaurant owner charged with shooting a patron in the face will be arraigned on charges including attempted second-degree murder Wednesday.

Terrance Ruppert, owner of Grandpa's Ribs and Special Sauce, 2630 Orchard St., is scheduled for arraignment in Lancaster County District Court on one attempted murder charge and one count of use of a weapon to commit a felony.

Ruppert, 35, allegedly shot Jason Daniels in the face Jan. 25 with a .380 semi-automatic pistol. The shooting occurred after a scuffle broke out among several other patrons at the club.

Ruppert has been released on a \$75,000 property bond. In a document filed with the District Court, Ruppert lists \$91,000 in property as collateral. Included in the list is the restaurant, valued at \$23,600, and his \$50,000 home.

The restaurant is now listed as being for sale.

Lawsuit

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teaching and performing his research if reasonable accommodations to his schedule and obligations would have been made.

John Wiltse, NU associate general counsel, said he didn't think Radecki had made any attempt to bring his condition to the attention of administrators.

Radecki refused comment Thursday night. His lawyer, Hunter Campbell of Grand Island, did not return Daily Nebraskan phone calls.

Among other things, Radecki alleges ethnic slurs were made related to his Polish ancestry, raises were recalled, he was left out of department matters, his course proposals were repeatedly denied and he was routinely awarded less money than other

professors to purchase computer equipment.

Radecki alleges that Peters and Keller denied his reappointment even after faculty supported it.

Radecki asked the court for judgments of \$1 million against each defendant on each count along with his attorney fees.

David Buntain, a lawyer representing UNL, said the defendants denied all charges and maintained they did nothing wrong. The \$18 million amount was a figure that would be adjusted if the case got to trial, he said.

There also was the question of whether Radecki could recover damages from individuals or only their employers — in this case UNL, he said.

"Right now, it appears he's just trying to get a judgement against whoever he can," Buntain said.

Budget

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crease" they voted in two years ago, including higher levies on wealthy Social Security recipients, he said.

Dole said Republicans soon would propose a five-year plan to put the budget on a path toward balance by 2002, without raising taxes or touching Social Security.

Daschle said Democrats would gladly join in the deficit-cutting effort, but added, "It's the Republicans who are in the leadership here ... We want to see what they've got."

The impact was enormous on deficit-cutting efforts. With Social Security's trust-fund surplus excluded from deficit calculations, Republicans must find more than \$500 billion in additional cuts if they are to balance the budget over seven years.

Ferguson

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has centered on 16th- and 17th-century feminism, slave women of the Caribbean and their influences on the anti-slavery movement in England.

Having been raised in Scotland and with her interest in feminism, her focus on the women of the Caribbean was a logical step for her research projects, Ferguson said.

"It was what I cared about — issues of gender, race and class," she said.

Her research into the women slave writers of the Caribbean produced the first known writings of a colonial slave woman — Mary Prince.

The book that Ferguson wrote about

Prince, which just finished its fourth press run, was made into a movie by the BBC. Another anthology that Ferguson put together is now widely used in women's studies curriculums across the nation.

She said that from the time she was the founding chairwoman of the UNL Women's Studies department in 1976, she had maintained one ultimate goal in her research: Bring it back to students.

"It always mattered to me that what I was studying could come back to the classroom," she said. "I like research to be active and circulating, not the providence of a scholarly few."

"The more widely circulating my research is, the more I like it."

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