

# Daily Nebraskan

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19°

WEATHER:

Today - Partly cloudy & colder. Northwest wind 10 to 20 mph.

Tonight - Cloudy & very cold, low near 0 to -5.

January 29, 1996



Matthew Waite/DN

Lincoln firefighters remove remnants of a house, at 850 N. 23rd St., that was destroyed late Saturday night. A fire was started by a candle lit because of trouble with a light fixture.

## Flames engulf house

### Man escapes injury in \$40,000 fire

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Editor

Fire destroyed a Lincoln man's home late Saturday night when he fell asleep after lighting a candle in his bathroom.

Firefighters were called to 850 N. 23rd St. shortly before 11:30 p.m. to find the house engulfed in flames.

Mike Kula, one of two men renting the house, was asleep inside when he was awakened by the fire. Kula was alone and not injured.

Acting Deputy Fire Chief Dennis Miller said Kula was having trouble with a bathroom light fixture and lit a candle. Miller said the fire started over the toilet and

quickly spread through the house.

"This thing had flames coming out of every window and door," he said, pointing to the house. "I don't know what woke him up, but he is one lucky man."

Miller said the house was a total loss, with \$30,000 damage to the structure and \$10,000 damage to the contents. The house was owned by Bill Alexander.

Freezing temperatures made ladders slick for firefighters, and coats were covered in ice. A bus was stationed behind the house to allow firefighters to warm up.

As firefighters battled the flames through the midnight hour, more than 30 residents from neighboring homes watched from driveways and porches.

Tracey Badley, a junior education major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, was in her apartment at 2244 Vine St. when she heard sirens. When she looked outside, she said, flames covered the front of the house.

"All I saw was orange," she said.

Badley joined dozens of people outside who came from parties inside the apartment building. She said she heard the windows breaking but was unsure if firefighters were breaking them or if it was caused by the fire.

Thick smoke started to blow toward the building, and she, along with others, went inside, Badley said.

Firefighters were cleaning up from the fire until after 2 a.m.

## Army deploys graduate as 'historian'

By Michaela Pieler  
Staff Reporter

Major Al Koenig is sure he's headed to Bosnia today, and he says it's the best thing that could happen to his career.

Koenig, who received his doctorate in history from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln last May, received a deployment order from the U.S. Army last Thursday.

The order said he would act as a historian. Although it did not specify a final destination, his route—from St. Paul, Minn., to Fort Benning, Ga., and then to Frankfurt, Germany—makes him sure he is going to Bosnia.

"That's just the standard way for U.S. troops to Bosnia," said Koenig, who was living at 818 S. 14th St.

He assumes that his duty will be to chronicle the peace-enforcement mission, which one of his former classmates did after the Gulf War.

"It's the best thing that could happen for my professional and my military career," he said.

Koenig, who is a writer, said he had been looking for a job since graduation. The job market for historians is not good, he said.

"Many historians would kill to get the chance to chronicle what's going

*"Whatever the Army wants me to do, I will do to my best ability."*

**MAJ. AL KOENIG**

Historian

on in Bosnia," he said.

After nearly four years of war, Muslims and Croats signed a peace contract in December that separated Bosnia into two separate ethnic regions.

To get ready for his trip, Koenig has started reading books on Croatian history. He also studied the Croatian language and read newspapers "religiously," he said.

"I prepare myself to do my best possible job for the Army," he said.

Koenig is a member of the Individual Ready Reserve. He joined the reserve in the late 1980s when he came to UNL to begin his graduate studies. He received his undergraduate degree from Mankato State University in Mankato, Minn.

But this will be his first military action, he said.

"Whatever the Army wants me to do," Koenig said, "I will do to my best ability."

Although he got an advanced warn-

ing in December, Koenig did not take it seriously.

"Nothing is certain until you get your order in hand," he said. "So far, I just assumed I didn't have to go."

The reaction of his family and friends varied, Koenig said. Some were excited because the deployment was a great career opportunity. Others were concerned about the area being rough, he said.

Koenig was a little troubled, too. "Only a fool wouldn't have some fear," he said.

But he joked that he had seen a lot of crime while living in one of Lincoln's worst areas.

"I guess there's not too much more war in Bosnia," he said.

According to his order, Koenig will be away from home for nine months. He said the idea of being in Bosnia at the time of rebuilding thrilled him as a historian.

"It's a chance to see history happening," he said.

## Gambling will hurt state, expert says

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Editor

Expanding gambling would only further burden taxpayers with more social service spending, not reduce taxes as some have said, an expert on gambling issues said Friday.

Robert Goodman, a former columnist for the Boston Globe and author of "The Luck Business," told Nebraska senators, senatorial staff and members of the media that gambling only made matters worse.

"When you fight fire with fire, you only get a bigger fire," he said.

Goodman's appearance was sponsored by Gambling with the Good Life, a grass roots organization opposing expanded gambling in Nebraska.

Gambling, a key issue in the 1996 session, will be at the forefront of this week's legislative debate as LR43CA, a constitutional amendment to expand gambling, hits the floor.

Gov. Ben Nelson has said he would veto any bill that expanded gambling. Nelson, however, cannot veto a constitutional amendment.

Supporters of expanded gambling have said that gambling in Nebraska will bring dollars spent in Iowa casinos back to Nebraska.

Goodman said that idea was flawed, however.

*"When you fight fire with fire, you only get a bigger fire."*

**ROBERT GOODMAN**

Author of "The Luck Business"

He said he was not anti-gambling—he gambles himself. But he said gambling was a moral decision to be made by an individual, not states.

Two years of research on states that introduced gambling showed several things, Goodman said. They include:

- Of the groups in the United States that were not supported by the gambling industry, none of them favored expanded gambling.

- Gambling did not lower taxes in any state. In fact, they went up.

- Social service spending increased after the introduction of gambling.

- In Minnesota, bankruptcy claims rose 20 percent after gambling was introduced.

Goodman said there were two types of gambling economies. They are: a tourist-based gambling economy like Nevada's and a convenience gambling

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## Nelson argues in favor of work camp punishment

By Ted Taylor  
Senior Reporter

Almost a year ago, Gov. Ben Nelson urged Nebraska lawmakers to consider a proposal for a military-style boot camp for non-violent criminals.

And after a year of tweaking and revamping the idea, he again testified before the Legislature's Judiciary Committee on Friday in support of a bill that would give judges the option to sentence first-time, non-violent offenders to prison work camps.

Nelson said the programs would give Nebraska judges another option—one, he said, "that provides for appropriate discipline, work and treatment programs for non-violent offenders."

Sen. John Lindsay of Omaha, who introduced LB1171 at the request of the governor, said the probation program would be beneficial.

"I think it will be effective," he said. "I think it will be cost effective, and I think it will have the support of the public."

But Lindsay called the commonly used term "boot camp" a misnomer.

"The emphasis of the camps is keeping inmates busy," he said, "rather than having the emphasis be on military-type components."

Nelson said Nebraska's prison overcrowding problem had reached a "crisis point," and the work camps would free up bed space for more serious and violent offenders.

"By making sure that offenders are housed in appropriate facilities, we use our limited resources and tax dollars more effectively," Nelson said.

Statistics show Nebraska prisons are 146 percent above capacity, said Harold Clarke, the director of the Nebraska Department of Corrections. That number could rise to 200 percent by the turn of the century.

**Harold Clarke, the director of the Nebraska Department of Corrections, said the 180-day work camps had six main goals.**

- Protecting the public by keeping qualified offenders under tight supervision while incarcerated and upon release.
- Reducing prison overcrowding by diverting offenders from institutions.
- Saving money by providing a shorter, cheaper intervention than prison.
- Holding the offender accountable by placing him/her in a highly regimented and disciplined environment.
- Rehabilitating offenders by teaching them self-discipline and good work habits, and by offering them counseling.
- Potentially reducing recidivism and deterring future crime.

Aaron Steckelberg/DN

Clarke said certain individuals might benefit from a period of short, intensive, regimented discipline.

"I think it is a viable alternative to incarceration," he said. "Not everyone needs to be locked up."

But if the offender committed serious violations, Clarke said, or refused to take part in the program, he or she would be resented.

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