



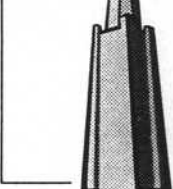
Travis Heying/DN

Sen. Dave Landis of Lincoln and his daughter, Melissa, share a lighthearted moment on the final day of the 1996 legislative session.

1996 Legislature calls it quits

By Ted Taylor
Senior Reporter

The neckties were a little brighter Thursday, the smiles were a little wider, and Lt. Gov. Kim Robak even let an infant on the floor of the Legislature.



Welcome to the last day of the 1996 Legislative session.

Senators finished the 60-day 1996 session at 2:42 p.m. Thursday afternoon, but not before lawmakers made a run to override some of the governor's vetoes. All attempts failed.

Speaker of the Legislature Ron Withem of Papillion said there were no major questions left unresolved as senators adjourned for the year. "There was very little that didn't get addressed," he said.

Withem said he also was pleased that almost all of the measures he called "major proposals" were not only addressed but passed.

Those proposals dealt with speeds limits, the budget, gambling, property taxes, the Conjunctive Water Act and the restructuring of the department of Social Services. Every bill but one, which dealt

"People are tired, and they want to go home."

SEN. ARDYCE BOHLKE
Hastings

with expanded gambling in the state, was passed and signed by the governor.

The property tax package, Withem said, was definitely the most important bill passed by the Legislature.

But Withem said he wasn't sure if his declaration of the major proposals sent them through any quicker.

He said he thought it had a psychological impact because legislators seemed to work harder when debate on the bills started.

"Their work ethic seemed to change," he said. "And I think they took them a little more seriously."

Hastings Sen. Ardyce Bohlke said she was amazed at the number of issues the Legislature addressed, and the number of bills it passed.

Bohlke said the "last day of sixth grade" atmosphere could be attributed to one thing.

"People are tired, and they want to go home," she said.

The short session, she said, made

the senators more willing to recognize that some bills had come to the end.

But Bohlke said the senators' jobs were not done. "They'll go home and reassess what didn't get done."

All bills that were not on final reading are indefinitely postponed and must be reintroduced next session. Bills at the end of the 90-day session can be carried over.

Gov. Ben Nelson addressed the Legislature shortly before it adjourned. He thanked the senators for following through on his January request to turn challenges into opportunities.

"Today, three months later, I'm here on behalf of all Nebraskans to thank you for doing just that," Nelson said. "If the father of the unicameral, George W. Norris, were standing up there in the balcony now, he would be proud of what you have been able to accomplish in what is called a short session."

But Nelson reminded senators that some challenges remained for the future, such as finding a way to give Nebraskans a tax cut, keeping a focus on crime and continuing a commitment to agriculture.

"We must continue our efforts to turn our state's brain drain into brain gain, by providing job opportunities for our best and brightest right here at home," he said.

disagreed on was the role of federal government in farm subsidies.

Hagel said the recently passed farm bill, which gives farmers more control over their crop yields and prices, would bring growth to the state's agriculture.

"This could be a golden age for farmers and ranchers if we pull government off their backs," Hagel said.

Stenberg said the farm bill helped farmers but had disadvantages.

"I think we need to maintain some ties between price levels and some support payment."

Stenberg said he would like to reopen the issue on the Senate floor if enough other Republicans would support changes.

Two outgoing senators honored by Legislature

By Ted Taylor and Erin Schulte
Senior Reporter and Staff Reporter

Four boys no older than 11 could be blamed for the Nebraska Legislature losing two state senators.

They are the sons of Sens. John Lindsay of Omaha and David Bernard-Stevens of North Platte. Both senators said they would resign after the session this year for a chance to spend more time with their boys and their wives.

And both were honored for their eight years of service to the state Thursday during the last day of the 1996 Legislative session.

Sen. Eric Chambers of Omaha, who often butted heads with Lindsay, stood before the body to present a plaque to his fellow Omahan.

Chambers said the Legislature would be poorer and the state would be lesser with Lindsay's absence.

Lindsay, 39, said he had carried a lot of titles in his life—senator, chairman, and at his Omaha law practice, counsel.

"But my favorite title has to be daddy," he said as looked toward his wife, Mary Beth, who sat under the South balcony.

"Now I get a chance to play a little t-ball with Johnny (5), and fly a kite with Patrick (3)," he said, nearly breaking into tears.

Before the final day of the session, Bernard-Stevens said it was a difficult decision to resign from his seat, but home and family called.

"It's a family thing when you're in the Legislature, and we decided we didn't have it left in us," he said. "I just asked myself, 'What are my real priorities?'"

Bernard-Stevens will go home to his wife, Janet, and two sons, David, 11, and Matthew, 5.

And Thursday, when Bernard-Stevens stood at the clerk's podium addressing his colleagues of nine years, he too nearly cried.

"There's a time when you say, 'It's time,' and you go to the higher priorities," he said.

Bernard-Stevens, the 1982 Nebraska Teacher of the Year, said he had no idea what he would do next, but he hoped it involved education.

"I would look toward the educational field—but I am not in any rush," the 1974 University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate said.

Appointed by the governor and then elected in 1988, 1990 and 1994, Bernard-Stevens also was named one of the nation's top four teachers in 1983.

Speaker of the Legislature Ron



"It's a family thing when you're in the Legislature, and we decided we didn't have it left in us."

Sen. David Bernard-Stevens of North Platte



"My favorite title has to be daddy."

Sen. John Lindsay of Omaha

Withem of Papillion presented Bernard-Stevens a plaque and called him a "strong defender of the state."

Lindsay, an Omaha native and Creighton University graduate, said he dreamed of becoming a state senator since he was a child. Before being elected in 1988 at the age of 29, he attended the College of Law at UNL, where he graduated in 1982.

"I took my law books to the balcony to study," he said, referring to the balcony looking over the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber. "I've truly lived my dream."

He planned on returning to Omaha and taking some time off before getting back into Lindsay and Lindsay, the law practice he and his brother operate.

"But right now," Lindsay said as they turned the lights off in the legislative chamber, "I'm going to a movie with my wife."

Forum

Continued from Page 1

performed them. Stenberg said the only exception he favored to an abortion ban would be to save the life of the mother.

On the issue of taxes, Stenberg pointed out that the taxes had become far too complicated and high. In 1948 Stenberg's parents paid 2 percent federal income tax, compared to today's 24 percent average tax rate.

Large-scale tax reform is overdue, Stenberg said.

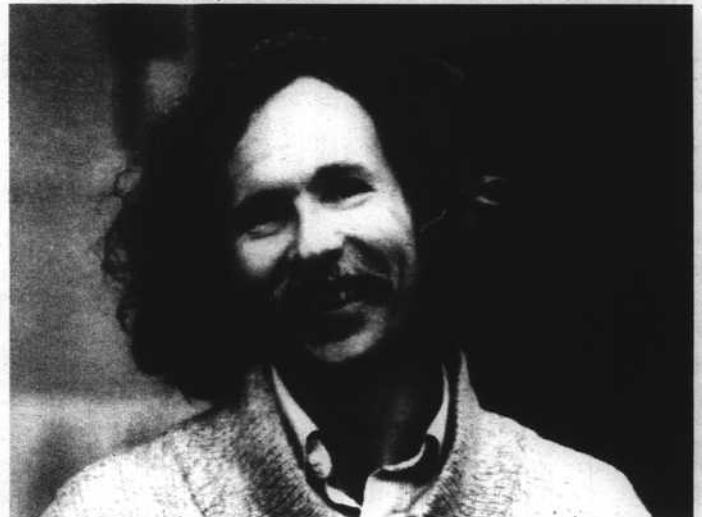
Again Hagel agreed and said a new tax plan should reward, not punish, people for saving and investing. The only issue Hagel and Stenberg

ABRAHAM LINCOLN LECTURE SERIES

Lectures by
Richard White

NATURE'S NATION
APRIL 22-24, 1996

Richard White is a professor of history at the University of Washington. He is the author of *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, which won the Albert J. Beveridge Award of the American Historical Association, the Rawley Prize presented by the Organization of American Historians, and the Francis Parkman Prize. His other works include *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A History of the American West*, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos*; and *The Organic Machine*.



- 22 APRIL 7:30 PM **Nature's Nation**
The Politics of an American Nature and the Nature of an American Politics in an American Canon
 - 23 APRIL 7:30 PM **Knowing Nature**
Work and Leisure in the Construction of an American Nature
 - 24 APRIL 7:30 PM **Disney's Land**
Walt Disney, Popular Culture, and American Nature
- All lectures will take place in the Steinhart Room, Lied Center*

All lectures will be free and open to the public. Sponsored by the University of Nebraska Press, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Great Plains Studies, the Departments of History, Sociology, Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, and Geography, and the Great Plains Art Collection.

**UNL Horticulture Club's
Spring Bedding
Plant Sale**

April 19th & 20th
7:30am to 4:30pm
Greenhouse East of Plant
Science Building

Featuring: Annuals, Perennials,
Vegetables, and Herbs
Questions Call: 472-2854