

Bomb squad removes guns

OMAHA (AP) — The Omaha bomb squad was called out to help the Douglas County Sheriff's office serve an eviction notice on a gun collector Tuesday.

Police officials said the eviction notice involved removal of gun powder that was used for ammunition reloading by the resident of the west Omaha home. About 30 legally owned weapons also were found in the home.

Sheriff's Lt. Gary Hammer earlier said officers served a search warrant at the house located in a neighborhood just south of Boys Town.

Plant goes on strike

OMAHA (AP) — An Omaha can manufacturing plant is among 12 shut down nationwide by striking International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

The union strike began Friday at seven Crown Cork & Seal Co. plants. Also on strike are workers at five American National Can Co. plants.

The union represents 240 of 280 people employed at Omaha's Crown Cork plant, said Ron Randall, president of Lodge 31 of the machinists union. He said there had been no movement in contract talks and no talks are scheduled.

The union contract expired March 31.

McCook dean resigns

McCOOK (AP) — Dr. John Rucker has announced his resignation as McCook Community College dean of instruction.

Rucker said Tuesday that he was headed to Neosho, Mo., to be the dean of instruction at Crowder College, a two-year community college.

Rucker, who has been in McCook since January 1993, said his decision was not connected to the administrative restructuring of the Mid-Plains Area Community College, which oversees the McCook campus.

Rucker's letter of resignation should be considered by Mid-Plains board members at their May meeting. Rucker's last day is June 14.

City manager hired

McCOOK (AP) — McCook has found an Oregon man to be its new city manager.

Council members and Dan J. Dean came to terms Monday on a \$47,000 annual contract. Dean starts June 3.

Dean, 46, has been city manager of Sweet Home, Ore., for 4 1/2 years. He has 10 years of city administration experience. He served as the city administrator of Veneta, Ore., and the manager of Circuit Rider Town — a group of four northeast Colorado towns (Crook, Fleming, Iliff and Peetz).

The position came open when John Carter resigned last October after 6 1/2 years in McCook.

High graduation rate

WAYNE (AP) — Wayne State College has a higher percentage of students who finish their degrees in six years from the date of original enrollment than the nation's average for similar-sized schools.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities/Sallie Mac Retention Survey found Wayne State had a 47.1 percent retention rate, compared with a national average of 42.5 percent for four-year public schools with enrollment of fewer than 5,000 students.

The latest survey tracked new freshmen students who entered school in the fall of 1988.

Locals in quilt show

OMAHA (AP) — Nebraskans from Lincoln, Omaha and Ft. Calhoun are among finalists in the nation's largest, most prestigious quilt competition Thursday through Sunday in Paducah, Ky.

Shelly Burge of Lincoln, Regina Lupo of Omaha, Roma Seiker and friends of Omaha, and Terri Stephens of Ft. Calhoun are among those competing in the 12th annual American Quilter's Society Show and Contest.

They will put their works in competition with quilters from 42 states and seven foreign countries. Competition lists 13 amateur and professional categories with \$80,000 in cash awards.

Plan seeks to aid farmers

BEATRICE (AP) — A new "Whole Farm and Ranch Planning" concept may help producers manage their farms more efficiently.

The Whole Farm and Ranch Planning Program is being developed by federal, state and local agencies along with producers to make it easier to manage the many plans and requirements by government agencies.

Jim Gonsior, coordinator for the state program and resource conservationist with the Natural Resources

Conservation Service office in Schuyler, said the program was a voluntary effort by farmers and ranchers to address environmental and management concerns along with a volunteer effort by state and federal agencies to work to combine efforts.

Nebraska is one of six states in which the U.S. Department of Agriculture is testing the program. The others are Georgia, Idaho, Minnesota, New York and Pennsylvania.

Three areas in Nebraska were chosen for the pilot program — an area in western Nebraska near Scottsbluff, the Trumbull Basin in Adams County and the Big Indian Creek Watershed in Gage County.

Gonsior said the project was developed to combine different plans required by state and federal agencies into one plan for each farm.

The consolidation could lead to cost-share and technical assistance between the agencies, Gonsior said.

He said the success of the program depended on the farmers and ranchers.

"They are the best stewards of the land," Gonsior said.

Wally Valasek, district conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Beatrice, said the Big Indian Creek Watershed was too large of an area to work with so it was narrowed to the Sicily Creek Basin southwest of Beatrice. The area covers 27,000 acres with 81 farmers.

Sicily Creek Basin was chosen because it had a wide variety in types of farming used on the land, including irrigated and dryland farming, livestock, dairy and hogs.

Valasek said during the past 10 years, plans put an emphasis on conservation, especially on highly erodible ground. Farm plans are beginning to focus on a variety of concerns, however, including water quality, soil erosion, nutrients, pesticides and waste management.

The program will try to eliminate some of the paperwork farmers go through, Valasek said.

With the planting season coming up, there probably won't be enough time to get a plan for the program in place by next fall, he said.

Increasing traffic upsets residents

OMAHA (AP) — Improvements made along Nebraska Highway 31 to the popular Schramm Park State Recreation Area have some area residents protesting truck traffic and speeds on the former gravel road.

Residents along the highway south of Gretna are lobbying state officials for weight limits on trucks and speed limits on all vehicles. The residents say the once-scenic route in Sarpy County is turning into a major thoroughfare.

Although the speed limit along the highway has always been 55 mph, residents say only recently trucks and cars have begun moving at that pace.

Area residents would like the speed limit along the 11-mile stretch of highway lowered to 40 or 45 mph, similar to the 45 mph limit through the park area.

Residents are pleased with the paving but say truckers now are using Highway 31 as a shortcut between Nebraska Highway 50 and Interstate 80, Noordam said.

Kerrey, Exon back health reform bill

OMAHA (AP) — Nebraska's U.S. Senators on Tuesday praised a health insurance reform bill passed by the Senate, calling it an important first step.

The measure was approved on a 100-0 vote. It would ensure that workers who move from one job to another would not lose their health coverage.

It also would bar insurance companies from denying new enrollees coverage because of pre-existing medical conditions.

The House passed a health insurance bill last month, and both measures are headed for a conference committee.

"I do think it's a small step that will have a tremendous impact," said Sen. Bob Kerrey, who made health care reform the centerpiece of his 1992 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Sen. Jim Exon, D-Neb., said it wouldn't solve all of the problems with the health care system but was a good start.

Look, if you think a talking stuffed moose is pretty amazing, listen to this. I was hanging out with some of the boys the other evening. One of them just bought a new Macintosh. Evidently, Apple is offering incredibly low campus prices on Macintosh computers right now. So he pops in this CD-ROM. Man, you wouldn't believe what this thing could do. No wonder the Mac is one of the most advanced multimedia computers. We're talking sight, sound, full-motion video — the works. Gee, wish I could move like that.

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