

Festival stresses importance of family

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as a part of a festival in Lincoln's Haymarket, he said. The festival has been held inside for the past three years. This year, the festival was held in Agriculture Hall in State Fair Park.

Since moving inside, Sorenson said, the festival's number of vendors has increased from 20 to 55.

"We're building on it each year," said Paul Ramirez, festival director and Hispanic Center volunteer.

Festival entertainment included the dance troupe Zapatos Alegres (Happy Feet), which consisted of His-

panic dancers ages 12-20, and Tres Picos, three flamenco guitarists.

DeLana Ramirez has danced with Zapatos Alegres for seven years. Their style of dance is called folklore dance, the Pius X High School senior said, and it comes from places such as the Mexican states Veracruz and Jalisco.

"If you go to California or Mexico, you'll see (this culture) all the time," Ramirez said, "but here not too many people get a chance."

The food at the festival was another popular attraction. More than 10 booths were selling Mexican, Chilean,

Philippine and American food.

But the real emphasis of the festival kept coming back to family—and children.

Children are important," Sorenson said. A primary theme of Hispanic culture is family, he said.

The object of the festival is to provide a place for Hispanic people to have fun, to reach out to the community in terms of educating them about the Hispanic culture and to have "an atmosphere where Hispanic children can be instilled with their Hispanic heritage and be proud of it," he said.

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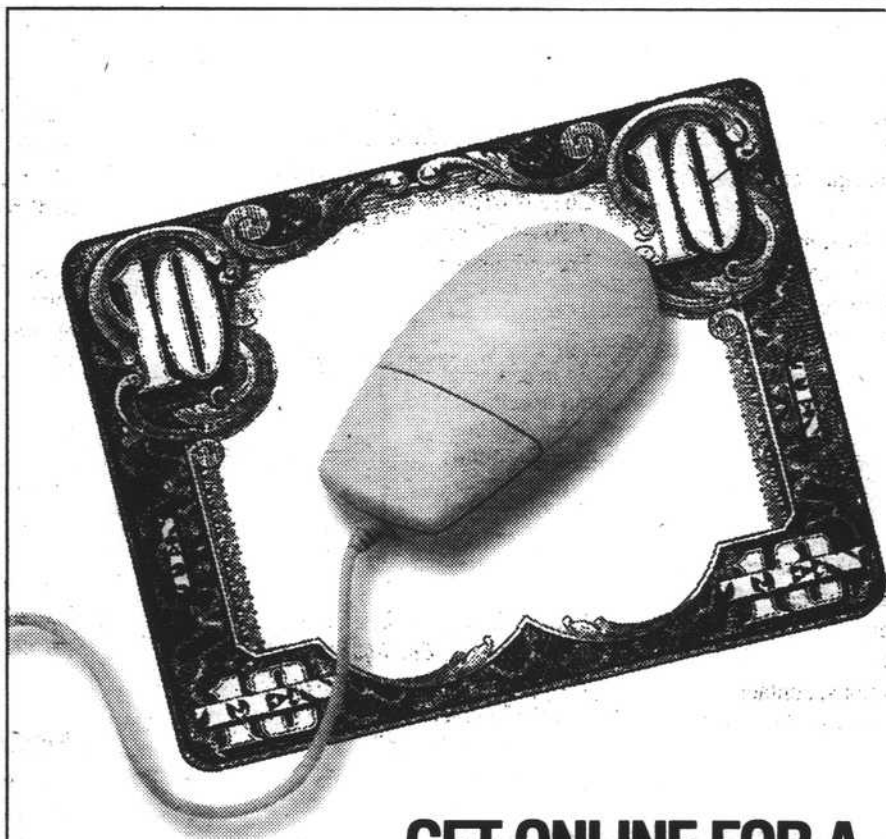
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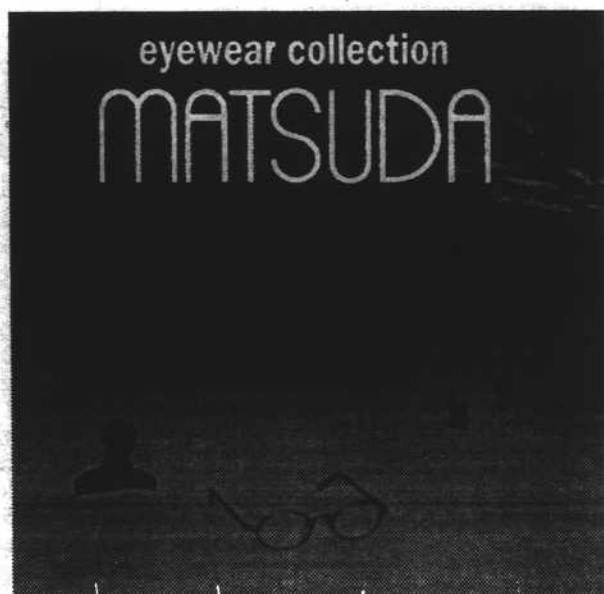
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