

Daily Nebraskan

VOL. 96

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN SINCE 1901

NO. 60

Tuesday
November 19, 1996



No nuts here



ONE SQUIRREL'S search for winter food proved to be futile -- at least for a little while -- Monday afternoon as it went nut-gathering atop a fence near Memorial Stadium.

SCOTT BRUHN/DN

Snow doubles traffic accidents

By MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

Snow and freezing rain mean more accidents on Lincoln roadways, and more work for the city's police officers.

In fact, Lincoln drivers slam into each other twice as much on snowy days as clear ones, according to Lincoln Police Department records taken from snow days at the end of 1995 and early 1996.

Lincoln Police Sgt. Ann Heermann said officers know what snow means

to them.

"It's part of the job," she said. "They are prepared for it. They take out extra accident reports and they realize that's what they are going to do all day."

Records show a daily average of 25 to 35 accidents. On days that it snowed, the average jumped to 64.6 accidents.

On days of freezing rain, the average number of accidents was on the high side of the daily average range: 35 accidents versus the 25 to 35 accident average range.

Please see ACCIDENTS on 6

Man arrested after home damaged by fire

By CHAD LORENZ
Senior Reporter

Police arrested a Lincoln man on suspicion of arson Monday morning in connection with a fire that severely damaged the inside of his home.

Police arrested Virgil Moats Monday while the fire was still burning at his two-bedroom house at 844 Peach St.

Chief Deputy Dean Staberg said Moats went to a nearby laundromat and tried to get change for a pay phone to call firefighters. A woman at the laundromat stepped out of the laundromat, saw smoke coming from the house and called firefighters herself, Staberg said.

Fire investigator Bob Fiedler said Moats seemed to be "heavily medicated" on prescription medicine when fire authorities contacted him. Fiedler would not elaborate on Moats' medical condition.

Preliminary investigation showed suspicious circumstances behind the cause of the fire, he said.

"It appears it was intentionally set," Fiedler said.

The fire started in a mattress in a bedroom at the back of the house,

Fiedler said.

When firefighters arrived, they could see a column of dense smoke rising from the house from six blocks away, Staberg said. Smoke was pouring through the windows and from underneath the eaves of the house, Staberg said.

Firefighters attacked the blaze from the front of the house, while two others sprayed water from both sides to protect the adjacent houses, he said. Evergreen bushes along the east side of the house had already started to burn, he said.

While firefighters were inside, they heard a series of explosions and saw flames burst from the basement, Staberg said. The fire apparently had reached some rifle or shotgun ammunition in the basement, he said. No one was hurt.

Once the fire was under control, firefighters dumped pails of smoldering debris out the window where it was hosed down.

Fiedler estimated \$8,000 damage to the house itself and \$10,000 damage to its contents.

Moats shares the house with his brother, Roger Moats. Roger Moats had left Lincoln for Denver earlier Monday morning.

Travels open student's eyes to other cultures

By CHAD LORENZ
Senior Reporter

During her travels around the globe, Jen Thompson has learned that home is very far from the rest of the world.

The United States is so far from countries like Ecuador and India, even the American tourists can't truly see the people or the culture surrounding them.

America is so far and so detached from other nations, she said, its people couldn't possibly imagine the lives of foreigners.

Not until they see the world's people as Thompson has — face to face.

"We are American, and we see the world from the United States," Thompson said.

The 22-year-old Spanish major has been to 21 different countries on five continents, including popular destinations such as France, Germany and England. But she has also landed in not-so-touristy locales such as Vietnam, Cambodia and Russia.

Since age 10, Thompson has met and lived with people of several other races and cultures.

On her first expeditions with her family, her father would take them on the typical tourist routes through North America. They'd follow their schedule and visit the most popular attractions without interacting much with the people, she said.

Those early experiences were appropriate, she said, because she needed some sheltered

Please see THOMPSON on 6



DANIEL J. LUKERT/DN

JEN THOMPSON, a 22-year-old Spanish major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, has traveled to 21 different countries on five different continents.