

Professor, fuel expert Scheller dies of cancer

By ERIN SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

UNL Professor William A. Scheller, a world-renowned expert on ethanol-based fuels, died last Saturday only a month after he found out he had cancer. He was 67.

Since 1971, when Scheller coined the term "gasohol," the chemical engineering professor had been considered an expert in his field, said his son, William Scheller II.

Scheller served as a technical adviser to the Agricultural Products Industrial Utilization Committee of the Nebraska Legislature in the '70s. The committee is now the ethanol board.

He also designed and conducted Nebraska's 2 million mile road test of gasohol, which laid the groundwork for worldwide studies of alcohol and oxygenated fuels.

"It really has had a worldwide impact," the younger Scheller said.

Luckily for students, Scheller brought all his real-world experience back to the classroom.

"He brought a lot of things into this department, including all of his experience working with the industry," the younger Scheller said.

Those who knew him said he gave a lot of himself to his students. No matter how many phone calls he had to take during the day, and no matter how much time he devoted to his duties as interim chairman of the chemical engineering department, he always had time for students.

Ali Sezer, a master's candidate at UNL who worked for the last year as Scheller's graduate assistant, said his interest in students' lives was not just about tests and term papers.

Sezer, an international student from Turkey, said Scheller always was in-

terested in Sezer's culture.

"In our meetings, he would ask me a lot of questions about daily life, the beliefs of my people," he said, "and I think that was wonderful."

"He was a very international person."

Sezer said his professor even brought in old maps of central Asia to show Sezer where Turks originated, and Sezer said he was amazed to learn something new about his homeland from an American.

Scheller admired his student so much that he asked Sezer to be a pallbearer at his funeral — as a representative of all his international students, Sezer said.

Looking over old student projects his father had assigned, Scheller said he saw that all of his assignments were very practical.

Sezer agreed.

"He had a deep engineering knowledge and a practical way of solving problems in engineering," Sezer said.

Scheller, a native of Milwaukee, received his bachelor's and doctorate degrees from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.

Zohair Ismail, a doctoral student, called Scheller a few weeks before his death, and the professor said he would be back to the lab soon.

"He was full of hope that he would come back next semester, but that's God's will, I think," Ismail said.

His persistence to get back to work exemplified what his son said about him: He was the living model of the Marine Corps motto, *semper fidelis*, or "always faithful."

"If he told you he would do it," the younger Scheller said, "he would do it."

Scheller is survived by his wife, Emily; his son; and a daughter, Katherine.

Supporters rally to help injured UNL cheerleader

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Jill Johnson, a senior fine arts major and teammate, said Jensen would be happy to see her friends gather together to support her.

The warmhearted, festive mood at the Royal Grove was one she would like, Johnson said.

"She'd get a kick out of this," she said.

Liam Bruno, a freshman Yell Squad member, said coping with Jensen's injury made the team pull together. The team's first performances after the accident were difficult because everyone's mind was on Jensen.

Since the accident, Bruno said that the squad members have completed

successful single backflips — the same move Jensen was attempting at the time of her injury. He said it was a simple, common maneuver.

"I've done it so many times it's hard to think that something so simple could turn tragic," he said.

Even members of the football team Jensen cheers for showed up at the event.

Kris Brown, sophomore kicker for Nebraska, said the team wanted to show its support because the players recognized the tragedy of Jensen's injury.

"It's something to let her know people are thinking about her, that people really care."

Jensen's condition upgraded

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does not need to investigate the incident or mandate any change in Yell Squad procedures, she said.

The cheerleading program's safety practices are usually enough to prevent serious injuries, Larsen said.

"Those were in place. Those were working," she said. "It was an accident."

Head Athletic Trainer Jerry Weber said the last time a student-athlete suffered a neck injury was in spring of 1993, when football player Willis Brown suffered a fractured vertebra.

Weber said Willis's injury, like Jensen's, was an accident and that the

university was not to blame. Even with the safety policies, he said, the accident was not preventable.

Though players and coaches follow safety practices, they can't prevent every injury, Weber said, and student-athletes realize the risk of participating in sports.

The Athletic Department officials would review those policies if they determined the university could have prevented an injury, Weber said.

Larsen said that in Jensen's case, the Athletic Department reviewed accounts of the incident and determined no one was at fault.

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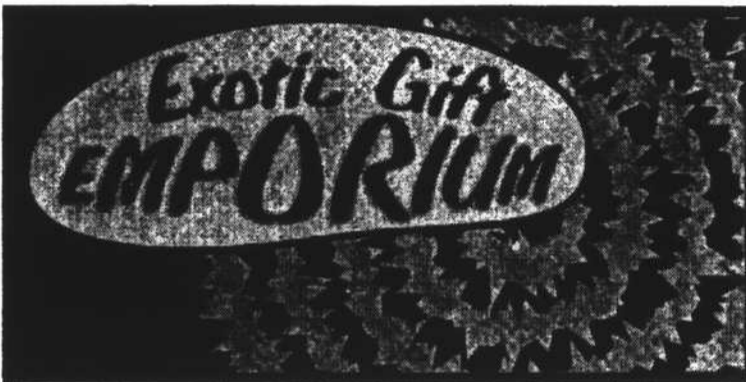
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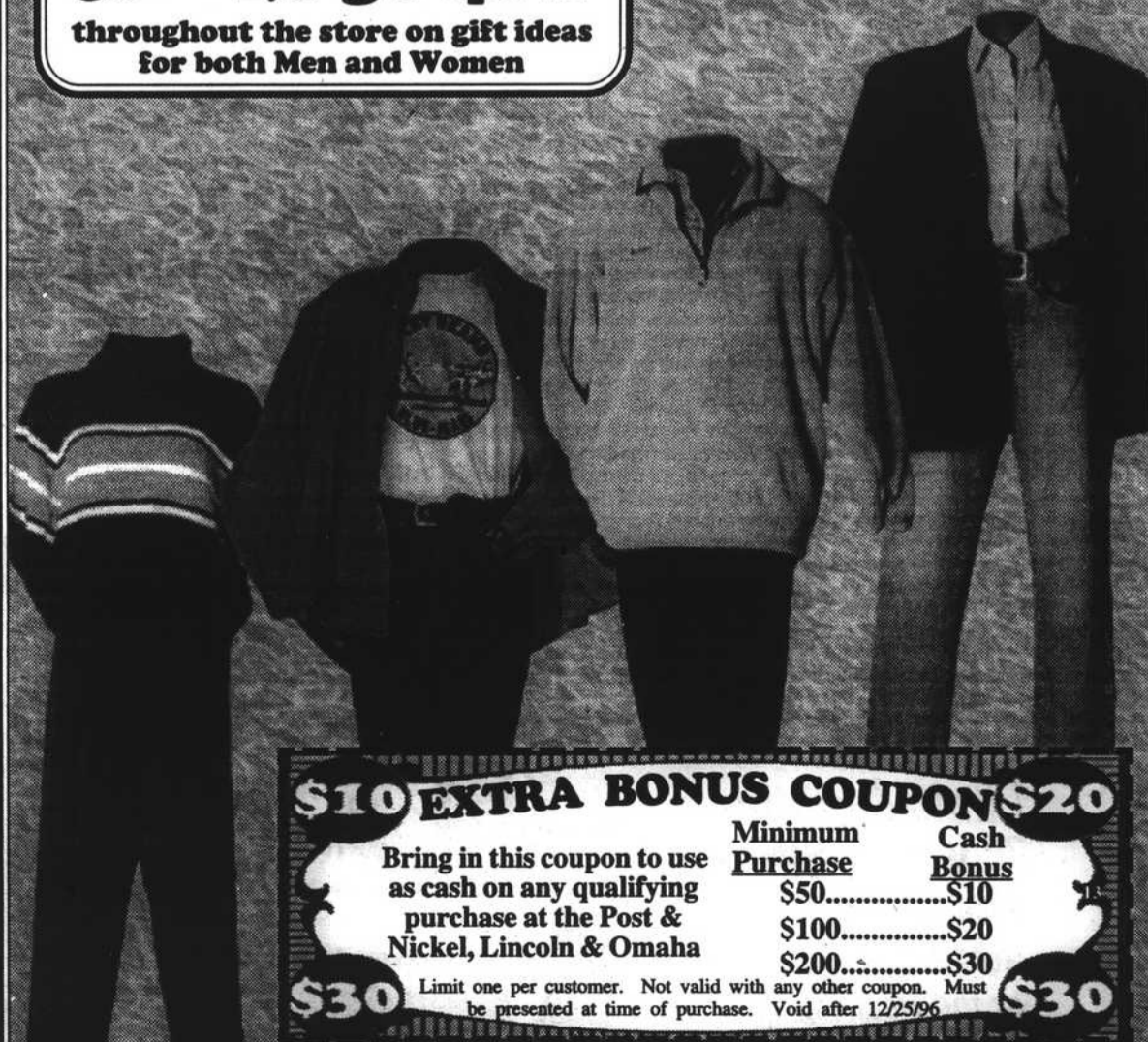


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