

Tiger split

The Nebraska women beat Missouri 84-46, but the NU men had their four-game win streak snapped with a 75-74 loss at Columbia. PAGE 9



Wide open

Lincoln band Wide will bring its punk-rock energy and slightly skewed sense of humor to Hangar 18, 1118 O St., tonight. PAGE 12

January 23, 1997

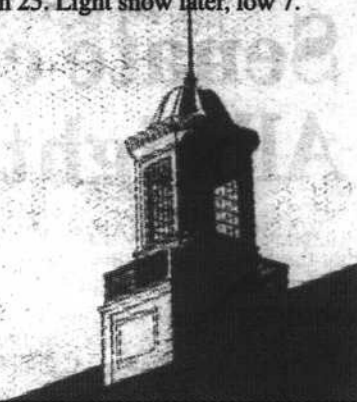
LONG JOHN SHIVER
Cloudy, high 25. Light snow later, low 7.

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Washington trial begins

Witness to Cole shooting testifies

By MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

Fighting words and gang speech sparked legal clashes the first day of the second-degree attempted murder trial of a former NU football player.

Attorneys in the case of Riley Washington, the former Husker wingback, got to their long-awaited opening statements just minutes after finishing more than seven hours of jury selection.

Prosecution witnesses, including a former gang member and witness to the alleged crime, also got under way Wednesday afternoon. The defense said Washington will testify when it presents its case.

An all-white, 7-man, 5-woman jury will hear Washington's case, in which he is accused of shooting Jermaine Cole on Aug. 2, 1995, outside the Kwik Shop at 27th and W streets.

Washington is charged with attempted second-degree murder — meaning he acted with malice, but without premeditation — and use of a fire-

“

We're going to introduce some witnesses, and they are not going to be some of the nicest people in the world.”

RONALD LAHNERS
special prosecutor

arm to commit a felony.

Much of Wednesday's legal wrangling was about gangs and gang speech.

Before the jury was allowed into court, Lancaster County District Court Judge Bernard McGinn granted a defense motion not allowing the prosecutor to make statements about — or introduce evidence of — any alleged involvement in gangs on the part of Washington.

McGinn, however, did allow Special Prosecutor Ronald Lahners to introduce evidence about other witnesses' gang affiliations.

Lahners' first witness was a former

gang member. Anthony Jackson, who changed his name to Israel Hawkins after the incident, said on the witness stand that he came to Cole's aid during a fight with three men, two of them former NU football players Abdul Muhammed and Willis Brown.

Hawkins said he was at the Kwik Shop in the early morning of Aug. 2, 1995, when he witnessed a verbal exchange between Cole and some of his friends, and Washington, Muhammed, Brown and another man he could not identify.

Please see TRIAL on 3

Central Administration blaze spares NU president's office

By MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

A fire that damaged a kitchenette in Varner Hall Wednesday night won't be enough to close the building for business today, university police said.

Varner Hall, 3835 Holdrege St., houses NU Central Administration, including the office of NU President Dennis Smith.

Cpl. Carl Oestman, who was the responding officer to the fire, said preliminary investigation into the blaze found that a coffee pot was left on an active electric-stove burner in a kitchenette on the west end of the first floor.

The fire, he said, was reported by a custodian working in the East Campus building around 7 p.m.

"I would commend her for notifying people so we could put it out before it caused real damage," Oestman said.

Damage from the fire was estimated to be \$20,000 to \$30,000.

There were smoke detectors in the hallway, but not in the kitchenette, Oestman said.

The smoke did not get thick enough in the hallway to set off the smoke alarms, he said.

The fire damaged the counter tops, carpet, walls, cabinets and ceiling tiles

in the kitchenette, Oestman said.

There was soot in the hallways around the fire-damaged kitchenette, and the walls would have to be cleaned and perhaps repainted, he said.

The president's office is on the northeast side of the building. However, Oestman said, the fire was contained in the kitchenette, which sits in a common area off a hallway on the west.

No damage was done to Smith's office, he said.

Oestman said university personnel would work in the building Wednesday night to try to get the area clean enough for business hours today.

Ideals motivate new legislators

By BRIAN CARLSON
Staff Reporter

A sense of awe, history and responsibility have greeted the six newest members of the Nebraska Legislature.

The six new senators of the 95th Legislature vary in age, career experience and legislative goals. But they express similar early impressions of the everyday business of the State Capitol.

Chris Peterson

Sen. Chris Peterson, 35th District

senator from Grand Island, said her early experiences had, at times, been overwhelming.



Peterson

County Leadership Training Program.

Legislature

"I'm in awe," she said. "You have such a sense of history around you, and it's very humbling. I felt like a little kid the first day."

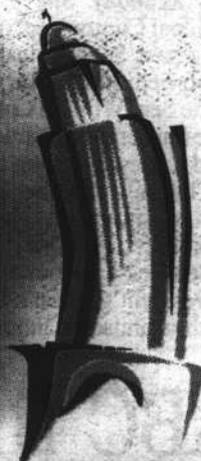
A former teacher, Peterson spent six years directing the Hall

A desire to provide her district with "more active representation" led to her bid for the Legislature.

In the short period of time since the November elections, Peterson said she has had a hard time acquiring sufficient information on all issues. But she said researching property tax, telecommunications and welfare issues had fascinated her.

Please see SENATORS on 8

Young Gun



JAY CALDERON/DN

27-YEAR-OLD Jon Bruning sacrificed a high-paying job as a lawyer to become a state senator.

Senator sacrifices wealth for influence

By BRIAN CARLSON
Staff Reporter

State Sen. Jon Bruning says government should make do with less, and he is offering his own experience as an example.

Bruning, the youngest member of the 1997 Nebraska Legislature at 27, gave up a lawyer's salary to successfully campaign last fall for Omaha's 3rd District seat. He will earn just \$12,000 this year, a substantial pay cut he accepted for the chance to have an impact on state government.

To further squeeze his finances,

Bruning and his wife, Deonne, are expecting a child in April — a girl, the couple recently learned following an ultrasound test.

Although Bruning admits his situation is "scary" at times, he said his sacrifices are worthwhile.

"I thought property taxes in Nebraska were too high, and we've got a lack of balance between the amount the state spends and the amount it taxes," he said. "I saw an opportunity to serve, and it's worth

Please see BRUNING on 8