

Blown out

The Nebraska basketball team lost its third-straight game, losing 77-67 against No. 11 Iowa State last night. PAGE 7



On the good side

Local legend Sideshow has been a player in the Lincoln music scene for more than 10 years, and it will be doing it out again Friday night. PAGE 9

January 30, 1997

FIT AND 40

Sunny, high 40. Partly cloudy tonight, low 25.

Daily Nebraskan

VOL. 96

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN SINCE 1901

NO. 90



Heated debate



John Enevoldsen, president of the firefighters' union, led the way for an increase in firefighters' pay. RYAN SODERLIN/DN

Firefighters may get higher pay

BY PAMELA STORM
Staff Reporter

or risking their lives and saving others, Lincoln firefighters think they deserve more from the city.

But for the daily risk they take and important work they do, their starting wages are less than those of an employee at Amigos.

That could change because of an agreement made last Friday. The Commission of Industrial Relations, a Nebraska commission used as an impartial third party, announced its decision that the fire department deserves a wage increase.

Currently, the minimum wage for Lincoln firefighters is \$6.12 per hour. The CIR recommended a minimum \$9.36-per-hour wage.

The decision has not been quick or easy, though. The local firefighters' union No. 644 has been in contract negotiations with the Lincoln City Council and Mayor Mike Johanns for almost two years.

Such prolonged bargaining came at a price to both the union and Lincoln. The city spent \$200,000 for outside counsel. The city has a number of attorneys on a payroll staff, but used only one of them as co-counsel.

The commission's decision does not mean that

the negotiations are over, though. The city still has to appeal or agree with the decision.

Relative rates

The bottom line of the contract argued which U.S. cities should be surveyed to compare wages and benefits to the Lincoln Fire Department.

Capt. Mike Spadt, vice president of local firefighter union No. 644, said the efforts the union exerted to assure that the peer cities they found were truly comparable.

A survey was sent to about 50 cities in a specific area. Of those, about 12 were examined, Spadt said.

He said the union believes its research has established comparable cities by visiting and focusing on size, firefighter training, Emergency Medical Systems, public help and reaction time.

Firefighter Union President John Enevoldsen said he also thought the new cities agreed upon by the Commission of Industrial Relations were comparable. The seven cities are Minneapolis; Peoria, Ill.; Davenport, Cedar Rapids and Des Moines, Iowa; Sioux Falls, S.D.; and Topeka, Kan.

Lincoln's minimum firefighter wage of \$6.12 per hour, was the lowest by \$2.25; Topeka's fire department pays \$8.37. The highest was \$10.23 per hour in Davenport.

The cities previously used for comparison, such as Springfield, Mo., were no longer comparable, Enevoldsen said. Springfield, unlike Lincoln, has no Emergency Medical Service.

Other cities used in previous years included Des Moines and Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Omaha; Topeka and Wichita, Kan.

The CIR decided two years ago on the seven new cities. However, the city council didn't agree with two of their choices — Peoria, Ill., and Minneapolis.

While Lincoln has been growing on pace to be a metropolitan city, Spadt said the department hasn't grown past 250 members.

In a larger city, overall destructive losses tend to be higher, Spadt said. A fire department that stays the same size requires sacrifices be made, he said. Cutting expenses instead of finding more money would reduce the quality of public protection, he said, and could hurt citizen trust.

Keeping the faith

Firefighters had been anxious to reach a settlement, Enevoldsen said, but negotiations have caused some disruption of the work force.

Spadt said the disruptions have not affected their service yet — firefighters have

Please see UNION on 6

Shooting suspect to testify

BY MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

Riley Washington told the judge overseeing his case Wednesday that he would testify in his defense and will appear today in court.

Lancaster County District Court Judge Bernard McGinn asked Washington if he understood he did not have to testify.

"Yes, I do," Washington said.

Washington, a former Husker football player, will answer to charges of second-degree attempted murder and use of a firearm to commit a felony. He was accused of those crimes after Jermaine Cole was shot Aug. 2, 1995, outside the Kwik Shop on 27th and W streets.

The former wingback's testimony will come in the third day of the defense's case. Defense attorneys spent Wednesday introducing witnesses who were with Washington the night of the shooting.

One of those witnesses was Willis Brown, who lived with Washington for part of the summer of 1995. Brown said he and Washington were as close as brothers.

The night of the shooting, Brown and Washington were at Mum's Liquor across the street from the Kwik Shop. Brown said the two walked

Please see TRIAL on 6

Professor studies effects of violence

BY LORI ROBISON
Staff Reporter

A husband has the right to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb, according to a once widely accepted ordinance of Puritan Colonial America.

But Cynthia Willis-Esqueda, an assistant professor of psychology and Native American studies at UNL, said Wednesday that examining such laws can provide insights on misconceptions about domestic violence.

Willis-Esqueda was the featured lecturer during the latest Paul A. Olson seminar, "The Impact of Race and Victim Resistance on Domestic Violence Perceptions."

Even though many unjust laws have been wiped off the books, she said, the pervasive attitudes behind the logic that once viewed wife-beating as a method for domestic bliss is still alive and well in the United States.

Willis-Esqueda's lecture focused on two studies she conducted involving the effect of various stereotypes on the conviction and sentencing of domestic violence offenders in America.

The first study focused on the effects of race,

Please see VIOLENCE on 3