

### LOBBYISTS from page 1

on his district, he might ask a lobby- volunteer to lobby for bills he believes ist for his or her opinion. In fact, he in. He lobbied pro-bono last year for a said, about half the time he talks to bill that would have repealed the death lobbyists, it's because he has approached them. Lobbyists can be experts on certain bills and constituents' opinions about the bills, he said.

During his first year in the Legislature, he had a much different attitude about lobbyists.

"I was told that lobbyists were all slimy," Pederson said. "There are a few arm-twisters, but more are educators."

Just meeting lobbyists and understanding what their job was really about changed his mind, he said.

Besides, he said, there's nobody in alistic views. the state of Nebraska who doesn't have a lobbyist.

On charges that lobbyists buy off legislators with little perks like free food, Pederson said the only reason the talking to the people of Nebraska, tryfood was around was they were talking about business during lunchtime. in government.

"If there's a meal, there's a bill to talk about," Pederson said.

## Living for the law

There are 290 lobbyists registered in Nebraska, and every day the Legislature is in session, about 30 of them sometimes more, sometimes lessmill around the Rotunda, peering through the glass wall that separates them from senators, waiting to get a few minutes to talk to senators about how a bill might affect their client.

a lot of time sending messages to senators through the red-coated guards of nary as a man-cater. the Legislature doors --- the sergeants-at-arms. The lobbyists are often seen escorting senators down long corridors oppositions to a certain bill, Chamof the Capitol, providing research on bers said, a lobbyist would try to "con-

and positive effects of a bill, Radcliffe bill that counts.

ness for two reasons: money and the

bills he lobbies for; he wants them to make a person feel obligated by dobut because he's getting paid by someone to push them.

"Nobody pays me to implement good public policy," he said. "If some-one has a financial interest in legislation, I expect to get paid."

And no one's hiring him because he is an expert on something the bill take favors from them." might deal with. When he was hired

people," he said. "It's up to the client to tell me what their interest in a bill is."

But occasionally, Radcliffe will penalty, he said.

Only about a dozen lobbyists are the "hired-gun, contract" lobbyists like Radcliffe. The rest are volunteers or But he hasn't always felt that way. they do it part time. This means corporations or groups that have more money to hire full time, professional lobbyists get better representation of their interests in the Legislature.

And although Radcliffe admits several groups are under-represented, lobbyist-inequity is all a part of the job. "Life isn't fair," he said.

Other lobbyists profess more ide-

Richard Lombardi took his first lobbying job for the Sierra Club in 1979 for \$1,000 a year.

He said he spends much of his time ing to motivate them to get involved

"The major thing I do is give hope that if you get involved in the legislative process, you can make a differ-ence. Lobbyists don't have power, people have power," Lombardi said. Radcliffe agrees.

The most effective lobbyist in the world is the constituent," he said. "It's the people at home."

#### **Shark-like solicitors?**

Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha suggested during a floor debate that Lobbyists are not allowed on the the official state lobbyist be named the floor of the Legislature, so they spend Carcharodon carcharias, or the great white shark, described in the dictio-

"They're voracious predators," Chambers said. If a senator has any constituents' possible views on a bill. sume" their arguments and get them And they do present both negative to vote for the bill.

Chambers said lobbyists alternately said. But it's the spin they put on a "bully," then "stroke" senators to get them to vote their way on a bill. But "You balance it in such a way that "stroking" doesn't always come in the the scales tip in your direction," he said. form of campaign contributions from Lobbyists seem to be into the busi- the lobbyists' principal, Chambers said.

"They might buy (senators) some sense of being involved in government. meat loaf or a chicken sandwich," Radcliffe is blunt about most of the Chambers said. "Sometimes you can ass not because he believes in them, ing them little favors even if they would never give a vote if you put money in their hand.'

Chambers said he didn't like to use lobbyists for information, but if they came to him, he would listen.

"I treat them like human beings, but I don't seek them out and I don't

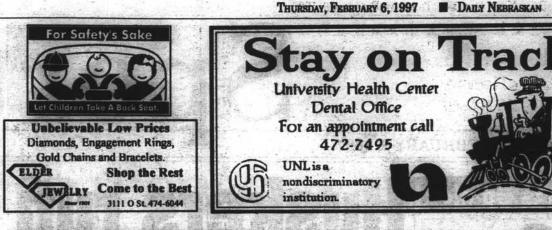
But Lombardi and Radcliffe don't by St. Elizabeth's Hospital, for in- agree with Chambers. They both feel

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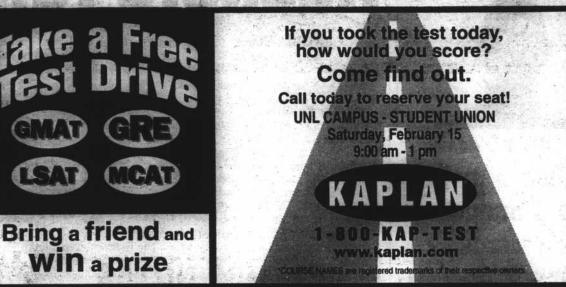
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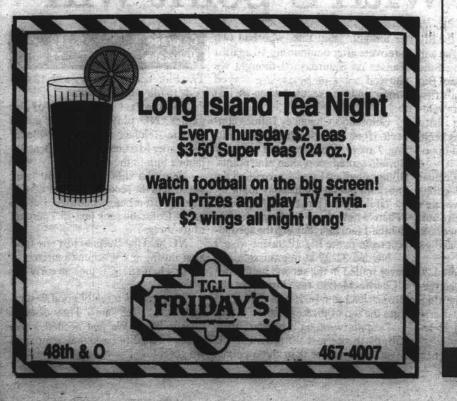
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e, it certainly wasn't because he they have a job to do, and believe it is had a medical degree, he said. a necessary occupation.

They didn't hire me because I knew As both Lombardi and Radcliffe a ... thing about surgery — they hired said: "Democracy is not a spectator me because I know how to talk to sport."



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