

Record setting

The Nebraska women's gymnastics team set a school-record team score of 196.625 in the Master's Classic on Sunday. PAGE 7

Strike two

"Empire Strikes Back," part two in the "Star Wars" trilogy, returned to the big screen Friday and was welcomed by millions nationwide. PAGE 9

February 24, 1997

SEE CLEARLY NOW

Decreasing clouds, high 30. Clear tonight, low 12.

Daily Nebraskan

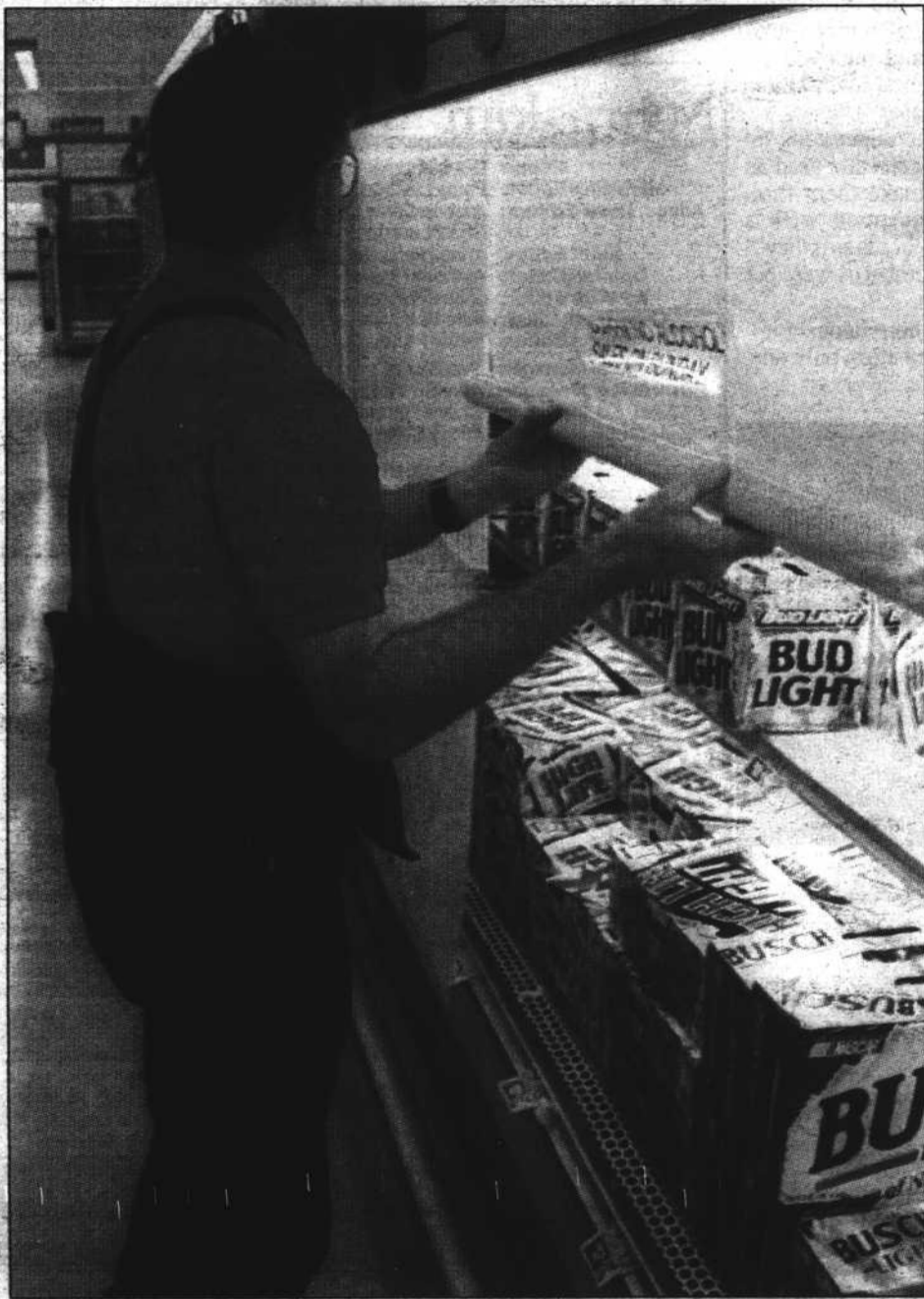
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BEER

FROM A PINT TO A KEG, THE BEVERAGE OF CHOICE



NIGHT MANAGER Tom Soukup closes the beer aisle at Super Kmart. Because of city ordinances commonly called "blue laws," stores within Lincoln city limits are not allowed to sell packaged liquor on Sundays.

LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN

No sales on Sunday mean blues

Editor's note: This is the first in a five-part series about beer: when to drink, where to drink and how to make your own. We promise, this won't give you a headache the next day.

BY MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

If the Saturday-night drinking binge didn't hit hard enough and you're still thirsting for a mug of beer with Sunday brunch, you'll be taking a Sunday drive to get it.

Selling beer in Lincoln stores on Sunday is illegal, and has been since 1957.

Under state law, no city is allowed to sell packaged liquor on Sundays, but Lincoln Assistant City Attorney Joel Pedersen said the law does allow cities to pass an ordinance that would allow packaged sales on Sundays.

Lincoln just hasn't done so, he said. Stores just outside the city limits and in other cities such as Omaha, Grand Island, Scottsbluff and Norfolk do allow some packaged alcoholic beverages to be sold on Sundays. Kearney and Fremont do not.

The state law Lincoln follows is the Liquor Control Act. It restricts the time and place of sale and the alcohol vendor.

Though popularly known as a "blue law," Pedersen said that nickname is a misnomer. Blue laws were mostly used in the Puritan northeast and aimed at stopping all business on Sundays because of religious reasons, he said.

Lincoln isn't all dry on Sundays.

In 1984, the Lincoln City Council passed an ordinance that allowed restaura-

Please see SUNDAY on 6

NU Regents vote to renovate buildings

Regents

BY ERIN GIBSON
Senior Reporter

Although one regent voiced minor disapproval, the NU Board of Regents Saturday approved six new projects in a \$95-million, 16-project plan for renovations on NU campuses.

Approved projects included Love Library South renovations at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and renovations on two other campuses. Three other projects, including renovations to Richards Hall, were approved last June.

Regent Drew Miller of Papillion suggested some renovation expenses to Love Library were unnecessary, and materials housed in the library could be stored in space-saving computers.

The university could save costly renovation dollars by improving virtual university efforts, he said. NU could then sell or demolish some buildings because all building space would not be needed if students could access courses and library holdings via computer, Miller said.

"I'm on the side of bytes, not bricks," Miller said. "I definitely don't want us expanding our library space."

James Van Horn, NU vice president for business and finance, said the 16 renovation projects would eliminate \$76 million of the university's about \$100-million deferred maintenance backlog.

Many NU structures are not in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and fire safety codes. There are dangerous problems in Love Library South, he said.

Van Horn showed slides of outdated electrical panels, tangled wires, water-stained asbestos ceilings, torn carpet and steep stairs inaccessible to wheelchairs to illustrate the maintenance problem.

Regent Don Blank of McCook said the backlog should be called, "ignored maintenance rather than deferred maintenance."

The university should be determined not to let such hazardous maintenance shortcomings

Please see REGENTS on 6

Violent-suspect policy creates tension for police

BY MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

From the ashes of the death of a Hispanic man in police custody more than two years ago, a new battle pitting Lincoln police and paramedics has risen over handling people who use extreme measures to resist arrest.

A violent encounter last week called into question an Emergency Medical Services Board decision made a day before regarding the transport of com-

bative suspects to jail. Without consensus of Rural-Metro Ambulance Services and the Lincoln Police Department on the recommendation, tensions erupted.

Lincoln Police were called Thursday to the Moose's Tooth, 4007 O St., on reports of a man who was speaking incoherently in the store.

When officers arrived, they found 25-year-old Enrique Mecillas, 140 E St., pacing back and forth with a screwdriver, a fire extinguisher and a Ouija board. He was speaking both Spanish

and English incoherently.

One of the employees reported the man took a stab at him with the screwdriver. Another employee had locked herself in the bathroom.

Mecillas resisted arrest, and it took six officers — two Lancaster County Sheriff deputies and four Lincoln police officers — to handcuff him.

Officers later found that Mecillas was involved in a stabbing incident outside his house earlier that day. He was arrested and jailed for felony first-degree assault, third-degree assault,

disturbing the peace, failure to comply with a lawful order and resisting arrest.

When the six officers finally subdued him and put him in a police cruiser, Mecillas started kicking a window. Officer Todd Groves then rolled the windows down to keep Mecillas from breaking them and hurting himself.

Mecillas, his feet and wrists in shackles, climbed out of the cruiser window. Officers then had to follow Lincoln Police Department policy and call Rural-Metro Ambulance Services.

Medical restraints

Police Chief Tom Casady said Friday the department's policy is to call an ambulance when a suspect is extremely combative toward officers. He said that after paramedics and officers strap a suspect to the gurney, the ambulance takes the person to jail under the watch of an officer and a paramedic.

Casady said calling ambulances for people who resist arrest became more

Please see TRANSPORT on 3