



SPORTS

The beat goes on

The Nebraska baseball team improved to 10-14 after sweeping a doubleheader from UNO. NU plays South Dakota today. **PAGE 7**



A & E

Rhyming and pickin'

Daily Nebraskan film critics Gerry Beltz and Bret Schulte take their guesses at who will win this year's Oscars. **PAGE 12**

THURSDAY

March 20, 1997

In The Clear

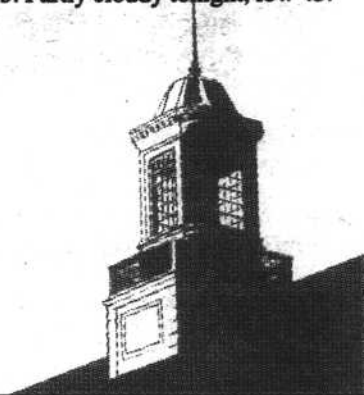
Sunny, high 75. Partly cloudy tonight, low 45.

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Wiccans hail first day of spring

By JIM GOODWIN
Staff Reporter

Birds do it. Bees do it. Many creatures welcome the arrival of spring.

But for Wiccans, the vernal equinox — the first day of spring — marks an importance beyond a mere change of season.

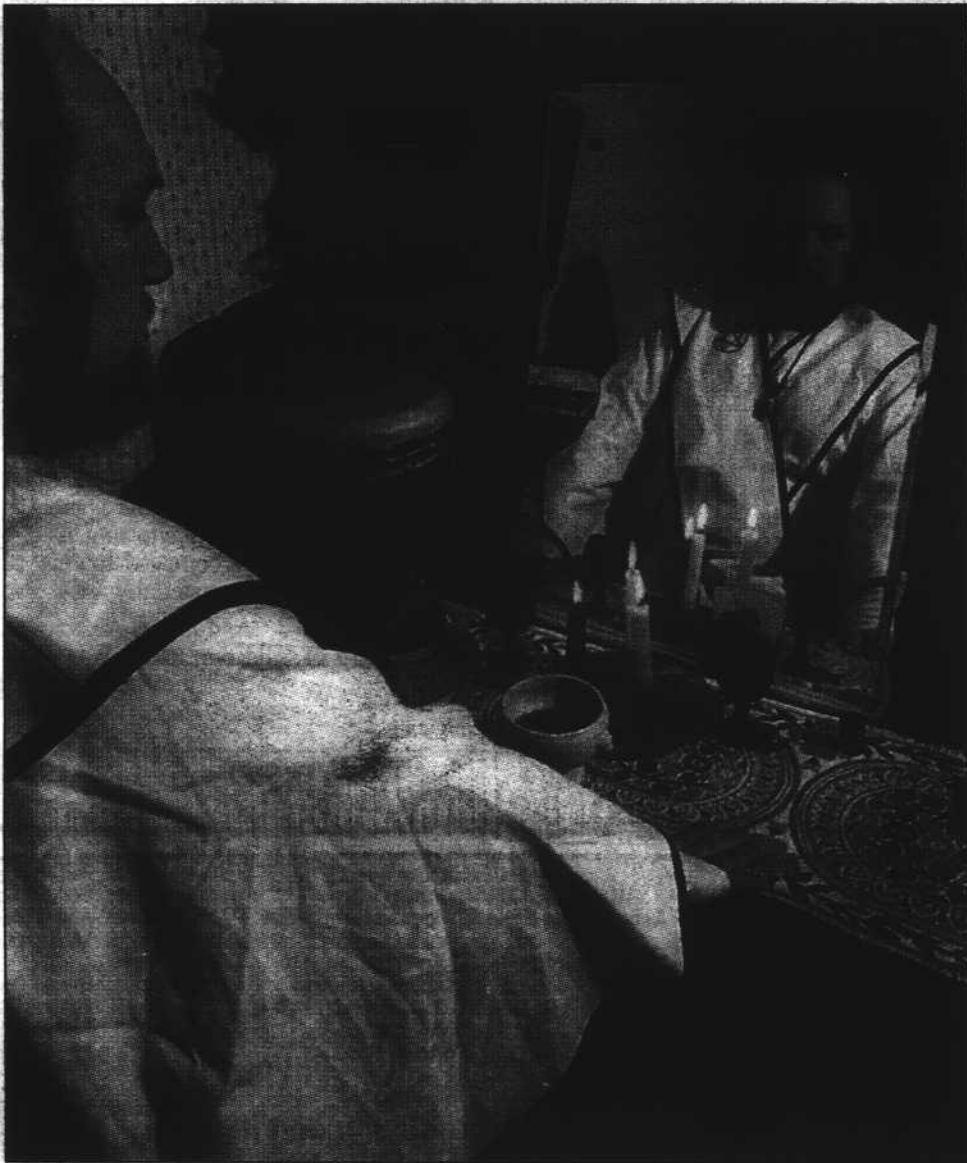
Jason Blodgett-McDeavitt, a steward and high priest of the Order of the Red Grail, said for most Wiccans, today is a holiday symbolized by a diversity of myths.

Most of these spring stories, which originated in the agrarian societies of antiquity, involve trips by deities into the underworld. They all honor earth's return from the dead, he said.

A springtime tale

Lincoln's Order of the Red Grail — an earth-based Wiccan church — celebrates a Greek version of one such myth, Blodgett-McDeavitt said: the story of Persephone.

The story centers on the return of the goddess Persephone from the underworld. An embodiment of compassion, she had been visiting with the unhappy souls of the dead since her descent there on the autumnal equinox in September.



DANIEL LUEDERT/DN

JASON BLODGETT-McDEAVITT, a UNL psychology graduate student and Wiccan, stands before an altar at his home. Blodgett-McDeavitt is a member and priest of the Order of the Red Grail.

Persephone's mother, Demeter, celebrated her daughter's return to the land of the living by allowing the plants of spring to grow.

"It's the beginning of the fertility of the earth again," said Cindy Blodgett-McDeavitt, high priestess of the order. "It's the beginning of the new growing season."

Jason Blodgett-McDeavitt said his church's use of the myth during the vernal equinox was symbolic of the Earth's

reawakening.

In reverence of spring's rebirth, the Order of the Red Grail uses the Greek version of the Persephone myth, rather than the more well-known Roman version, Jason Blodgett-McDeavitt said.

The Rev. Linda Harris of Lincoln's Chalice Circle, a group studying Wicca and other reli-

Please see **WICCA** on 6

Gay union legislation advances

Legislature

By ERIN SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

A bill that would outlaw same-sex marriages in Nebraska advanced to second-round debate Wednesday after two full days of discussion.

Sen. David Landis of Lincoln tried to make the bill more beneficial for gays and lesbians by offering an amendment that would prohibit job discrimination based solely on the basis of sexual orientation. Landis said the bill was an unnecessary attempt to pick on a weak minority.

"This is a fight that doesn't have to be fought," Landis said. "(The fight is) being picked against a weak minority to feed ... fear in the majority."

Landis said even though he didn't agree with banning same-sex marriages, he would vote for LB280 if his amendment was adopted because it would provide a right gays and lesbians currently don't have in Nebraska.

"This is more of a step forward than a step behind for gay people," Landis said. "I ask you to give something back for the slap in the face that you are doing."

Speaker Ron Withem said the amendment did not apply to the bill and struck it down. Landis asked for a house vote on the relevance of the amendment, but it was still voted down.

Sen. DiAnna Schimek of Lincoln supported Landis' amendment and said it made the bill more even-handed.

"This is the good life for whom?" Schimek asked. "For all of us, or for part of us?"

Only three senators — Landis, Ernie Chambers of Omaha and Don Wesely of Lincoln — voted not to advance the bill. Chambers promised to debate the bill for the full eight hours allowed during second-round debate.

As was the case Tuesday, much of debate time was taken by the minority in opposition to the bill. The bill will be heard at a later date.

UNMC, Clarkson merger backed by two NU regents

By ERIN GIBSON
Senior Reporter

Two members of the NU Board of Regents said Wednesday they would vote to approve a partnership between Clarkson Hospital and the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha.

Regents Robert Allen of Hastings and Drew Miller of Papillion both said they would support the proposal. Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo also said she was optimistic but could not guarantee she would vote yes until fully examining the proposal.

The regents have been asked to vote at their April 5 meeting on the partnership approved by the Clarkson board of directors Tuesday.

The new combined hospital could be called Medical Center Hospitals Corp. and would operate as a private nonprofit company. The partnership would end litigation over an agreement between UNMC and Clarkson reached in 1953.

Allen said the university system has spent more than \$300,000 in court costs trying to acquire Clarkson in the past few years. The merger was a good, sensible response to eliminate further litigation, he said.

"I think it's a marvelous step forward," Allen said. "To me, it looks like a very strong win situation for the city and the state of Nebraska."

When Columbia Health Care As-

Please see **UNMC** on 6

Speaker: Black women need change

By BRIAN CARLSON
Staff Reporter

While black women have progressed in the fight for equal opportunities, much of the change has been cosmetic rather than substantive, Patricia Hill Collins said Wednesday.

Collins, a professor of sociology and African-American Studies at the University of Cincinnati, told a UNL audience an increase in the number of black women in business and public life since the 1960s civil rights movements shows genuine progress.

But Collins said too often the domi-



RYAN SODERLIN/DN

PATRICIA HILL COLLINS speaks to students at the Wick Alumni Center Wednesday night after her speech about black women and politics of containment.

nant forces in corporate America use exclusionary tactics to ensure that discrimination doesn't end when black women are hired.

"Advances that have allowed black women to have the rights of formal citi-

zenship have often failed to be translated into substantive citizenship," she said.

Collins identified two types of con-

Please see **WOMEN** on 3