



SPORTS

Fore score

Nebraska golfer Hanne Nyquist led the Cornhuskers in the first two rounds of the Chip-N-Club Invitational. PAGE 9



A & E

A little mousey

Although it's a small, intimate lounge off the downtown strip, Mouse's Library really spikes the punch. PAGE 12

TUESDAY

September 9, 1997

GROOVIN' TO THE 70s

Partly cloudy, high 77. Clear tonight, low 50.

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City Council drops law, hears pleas

Public debates sale of hospital

BY MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

City Council

It started just after 7 p.m. Monday. It started with the mayor. Four hours later, a public hearing on a hospital sale ended, and a vote was scheduled for next week.

The Lincoln City Council, haggard and worn, scheduled the vote on a proposed sale of Lincoln General Hospital to Bryan Memorial Hospital for its meeting in a week. Bryan has offered the city \$42 million for the public hospital.

The council started the hearing just after the meeting started at 6:30 p.m. and people didn't stop testifying until just short of 11 p.m. More than 50 people testified in pro, con, pro, con order.

Council members divided the room, with the pro side on the east, the con on the west and themselves in between.

The pro side was stacked with Lincoln General employees — the con was testimony by

rote, with dozens of people repeating oppositions word for word and offering legions of amendments to the proposed sale.

Mayor Mike Johanns, who started the hearing, said the proposed sale was the best option for Lincoln's future.

The agreement would turn Lincoln General over to Bryan, but the city would retain some access to governing boards. The city would also retain a right to buy the hospital back should Bryan decide to sell.

The proposal started four years ago when the Lincoln General Hospital board began looking at options for the future. Over the years, the board narrowed the choices down to a sale to Bryan or St. Elizabeth Community Health Center.

Other considerations had been Columbia

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City lifts Sunday off-sale liquor ban

BY MATTHEW WAITE
Senior Reporter

City Council

With little fanfare and less debate, an exhausted City Council unanimously passed an ordinance allowing off-sale Sunday liquor sales.

After listening to more than four hours of debate Monday night on the proposed sale of Lincoln General Hospital, council members plowed through the remainder of the agenda.

Just minutes before midnight — the meeting started at 6:30 p.m. — council chairwoman Linda Wilson asked whether there was any debate on the ordinance, which would allow all sales from noon to 1 a.m. Sundays. A look left, a look right, and Wilson saw there was none.

With a short laugh, Wilson said the only words of debate heard since one person testified at a public hearing.

"We need to do this," she said. "The courts have ruled."

Councilman Jerry Shoecraft was the only council member not to vote. Shoecraft left the meeting

early. Shoecraft owns Shoe's Bar, 813 Q St.

The ordinance now goes to Mayor Mike Johanns for approval. Johanns asked the City Council to introduce the ordinance after a judge struck down Lincoln's no Sunday off-sale law.

Lancaster County Court Judge Earl Witthoff declared Lincoln's law banning off-sale Sunday alcohol sales unconstitutional Aug. 21.

On Aug. 22, Witthoff stayed his decision until Sept. 24. If the City Council did not act before the stay expired, Lincoln would be dry on Sundays.

The Liquor Control Act, a Nebraska state law, does not allow alcohol to be sold on Sundays. However, a provision of the law allows individual communities to permit sales in their boundaries.

Lincoln banned all alcohol sales in 1957, but in 1984, the City Council passed an ordinance that permitted restaurants and bars to sell alcohol by the glass.

Christensen commits to '98 governor's race

■ The congressman says he's been considering a run for six months.

BY BRIAN CARLSON
Assignment Reporter

In a decision that took even state Republican Party officials by surprise, U.S. Rep. Jon Christensen announced Monday that he will run for governor of Nebraska in 1998.

The Republican representative of the 2nd Congressional District in Omaha told The Associated Press he had been considering a gubernatorial run for the past six months.

Christensen said he moved closer to his decision following the recent announcement of U.S. Rep. Doug Bereuter, a Republican from the state's 1st District, not to run for governor.

Christensen did not return Daily Nebraskan phone calls Monday. His press secretary, Mindi King, confirmed that Christensen was in the race, but said the congressman did not want to make a highly publicized announcement at this time.

King said Christensen would begin campaigning in earnest after the congressional recess in November.

Christensen became the third Republican candidate to announce his candidacy in the governor's race. State Auditor John Breslow and Lincoln Mayor Mike Johanns have already filed for the May primary.

Before Christensen's Monday decision, neither the congressman

nor other Republicans had hinted at the possibility of Christensen's candidacy.

In his statement announcing he would not run for governor, Bereuter had mentioned three possible candidates: State Treasurer Dave Heineman, Beatrice state Sen. Dave Maurstad and Secretary of State Scott Moore.

Bereuter did not, however, mention Christensen.

Andy Abboud, executive director of the Nebraska Republican Party, said he learned of Christensen's decision Sunday night.

He said he was surprised by the decision because the party had considered Christensen a probable candidate for the U.S. Senate race in 2000.

The possibility of a gubernatorial run for Christensen hadn't been discussed much, Abboud said.

"We're glad because we have another quality candidate for governor," he said. "We now have three outstanding candidates, and that shows the strength and vibrancy of our party."

Abboud noted that the Republican field now includes candidates with experience at the local, state and national levels of government.

Asked if he was concerned the May primaries could become too hotly contested for the party's good, Abboud said the purpose of the primaries is to foster debate and discussion of ideas.

"The one thing that unites all the candidates is the goal of putting a Republican in the governor's mansion," he said.



MATT MILLER/DN
KEN SIEMEK AND DEB COLLINS have been married for five years and have worked together at Channel 10/11 for 10 years. The weatherman and co-anchorwoman are expecting their first child in November.

Jobs combine TV, love

BY TED TAYLOR
Assignment Reporter

Here comes the bride ... with today's top stories.

Here comes the groom ... with your five-day forecast.

While some people have a problem with even dating a co-worker, two pairs of local TV personalities have gone one step farther — they got married.

And just about 6:15 p.m. and

10:15 p.m. weekdays when Lincoln's KOLN/KGIN Channel 10/11 co-anchorwoman Deb Collins and Omaha's KETV Channel 7 co-anchorwoman Julie Cornell "turn to weather" with Ken Siemek and Bill Randby, they are, in effect, introducing thousands of viewers to their husbands.

Both Collins and Siemek and Cornell and Randby were married in 1992, but the stories of their relationships and the road to the altar are as different as a high and low

pressure system.

"This was not a love-at-first-sight sort of thing," said Siemek, 38, KOLN's chief weather forecaster. "We were friends for a year or two and then probably started golfing with mutual friends. Then we dated for probably a year. We started really slow."

Their relationship stayed slow for a while, said Collins, 38, who

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