



Hold on

Despite a 15-point win over Colorado on Sunday, the Nebraska men's basketball team hopes to improve on its 24-turnover performance. PAGE 7



Basket case

Lincoln band Rascal Basket has new plans for the new year, and it will make those plans public in a concert tonight at Duffy's. PAGE 9

NO MERCY FROM MOTHER NATURE

Chance of light snow, high 13. Cloudy tonight, low 27.

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Speech pleases senators

By TODD ANDERSON
Assignment Reporter

General support and few surprises characterized legislators' reactions to Gov. Ben Nelson's final State of the State Address Monday afternoon.

After a positive report on quality of life in Nebraska, Nelson's speech outlined optimistic goals as part of his "Success 2000" plan, while reaffirming his continued role in the state.

Sen. Lavinia Crosby of Lincoln said Nelson's plan was a positive approach to a consistently changing state.

"We really have to find a new approach to everything," she said.

Most senators thought Nelson's proposals for improving health, education and technology were reasonable.

Sen. Joyce Videman of Goering said Nelson's goals were "very achievable" and she supported continued efforts to enhance partnerships between state and local governments.

She said she also supported making last year's temporary income tax reduction permanent.

That part of the provision is generally supported, Sen. Bob Wickersham of Harrison said.

Nelson's plan to reform property valuation to help reduce rising property taxes drew mixed reviews.

Wickersham said while he was uncomfortable with the provision to limit property valuation increases to 15 percent, he welcomed discussion about it.

When asked about how Nelson's speech would affect the governor's standing, Crosby said it would help enhance his positive image.

"I don't think he's finished with government," she said, noting Nelson's last year in office. "We'll see him later on."



MATT MILLER/DAILY NEBRASKAN

SEN. JERRY SCHMITT of Ord shakes hands with Gov. Ben Nelson after the State of the State Address Monday at the Capitol.

State of the State

MATT HANEY/DAILY NEBRASKAN

Nelson emphasizes state strengths

By BRIAN CARLSON
Senior Reporter

In his final State of the State Address Monday, Gov. Ben Nelson touted Nebraska's flourishing economy but challenged legislators to respond to the public's call for lower taxes.

Focusing on the positives during his afternoon speech in the legislative chambers, Nelson pointed to the state's low unemployment rate, its growth in population and number of jobs and its

expanded international markets.

"Despite the skeptics and the critics and those predicting bad times ahead, Nebraska is thriving," he said.

But as the good times roll, Nelson said taxpayers have a right to cash in on the state budget surplus the strong economy helped bring.

Government estimates of future revenue indicate last year's enactment of a two-year, 5-percent tax cut not only can be made permanent, but can be

Please see NELSON on 6

Money shortages close Theta Chi Fraternity

■ Theta Chi Fraternity is the fifth UNL house to close in the last four years.

By BRAD DAVIS
Senior Reporter

Bracing themselves as their fraternity prepares to close its doors for good, some members of UNL's Theta Chi Fraternity questioned whether the shutdown was part of a growing trend.

The fraternity, set to shut its doors on Jan. 31, is the fifth to close

at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the last four years.

Although other house closings were because of disciplinary reasons, members of Theta Chi said their small fraternity simply could not afford to meet financial obligations.

Joe Kopp, Theta Chi vice president-elect, said he was concerned that "small houses go away while big houses get bigger."

With open rush during the summer, bigger houses had more "manpower and financial backing," Kopp said.

"We had to rely on basic strength

good ideas and intentions," he said. "We always kind of felt it was more quality than quantity, but quality doesn't necessarily pay the bills."

Mike Murphy, Theta Chi president last semester, said the UNL chapter, along with its alumni corporation and the national headquarters, made the decision to close.

Murphy emphasized that the chapter worked together with the alumni and national headquarters and no animosity existed among the groups.

He said since the national headquarters makes membership decisions, nothing has been decided yet

about current members' status once the house closes.

He said although he was not bitter about the closing, he thought UNL's fraternity rush needed to be reexamined.

UNL Director of Greek Affairs Linda Schwartzkopf said declining fraternity membership was a national trend that was not unique to UNL.

"On a national level, you're seeing fraternities really de-emphasizing the social, and starting to make a recommitment to academics and community service — creating a place that really supports the mission of the university," she said.

She said any time an organization has a philosophical transition, membership may decrease, but it would also reverse once more people were aware of the redirection.

Kopp agreed.

"A lot of members of the greek system don't portray it in the most positive image," Kopp said. "They join a fraternity to meet girls or to party or to buy their friends rather than looking for leadership opportunities."

He said fraternities need to work to live down the "Animal House"

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