

Cookie doesn't crumble

Nebraska sophomore guard Cookie Belcher says he's looking to step up his play to an all-conference level. **PAGE 7**

**Lil' Big Man**

Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials, a four-piece blues band from Chicago, will perform at the Zoo Bar tonight and Saturday. **PAGE 9**

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NOT QUITE IN THE CLEAR

Mostly cloudy, high 39. Cloudy tonight, low 28.

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Board passes King holiday

By BRAD DAVIS
Senior Reporter

UNL could celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday with a day off from classes as early as next year, the NU Calendar Committee said Thursday.

The committee, comprising two representatives from each University of Nebraska campus, recommended the university cancel classes on King's birthday — the third Monday in January.

James Griesen, UNL vice chancellor for student affairs, said the committee's decision reflected the opinions and desires of most UNL faculty members, students and staff.

"If this recommendation is put into effect, it is extremely important that we respond with meaningful educational and community service programs that will truly honor the memory of Dr. King," Griesen said.

NU Provost Lee Jones, who makes the final decision to cancel classes for systemwide holidays, said

he was pleased with the committee's recommendation.

"The cancellation of classes will allow for a much broader spectrum of activities during the entire day to honor Dr. King and the philosophy he espoused."

The university will implement the holiday by January 2000, although it could be implemented next year, he said.

To determine whether the university can enact the holiday next year, Jones said, NU Board of Regents guidelines require each of the four campuses to provide a plan detailing how it will make up for the day's missed classes.

NU Spokesman Joe Rowson said Jones would confer with the university chancellors and determine if the holiday can begin next year.

The NU Board of Regents must approve both break recommendations, but the board will not consider the proposals during their Feb. 28 meeting.

Proposal would end 'preferential' programs

By BRAD DAVIS
Senior Reporter

If it has the same effect as California's Proposition 209, a constitutional amendment proposed by Omaha Sen. Kate Witek could eliminate some affirmative action programs at UNL.

LR314CA, if advanced by the Legislature's Judiciary Committee, would ask Nebraska voters to prohibit government programs that "discriminate against or grant preferential treatment to" certain groups.

The bill would ban discriminating against or granting preferences to individuals based on race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin.

During the committee hearing on Feb. 13, when questioned why the bill didn't identify homosexuals as an official group, Witek said the bill reflected language in Proposition 209, which also did not include sexual orientation.

Witek said her Proposition 209-based proposal would not eliminate all affirmative action programs — only those that include discriminatory or preferential practices.

An educational program that would help "anyone that needed help" would remain unchanged under her legislation, she said.

Matt LeMieux, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union Nebraska, said he thought Witek's proposal was part of a national movement to abolish affirmative action programs.

At the University of California,

Berkeley, a public school where Proposition 209 was enacted, only one minority student was enrolled in the first-year law school class, he said.

"It would have a devastating effect on the educational atmosphere at the university," LeMieux said. "We'd be foolish to deny that part of the educational experience at a major university is being educated with a diverse student body."

But NU Law Professor Richard Duncan said discriminating and granting preferences to achieve diversity broke federal law.

"What a lot of people don't know," Duncan said, "is that many of the things the university already does — some of the scholarships designated for minorities only — almost certainly violates the U.S. Constitution."

The problem with race-based affirmative action is that the program assumes the minority group has been discriminated against, and that the majority group has done the discriminating, Duncan said.

"We often focus on the claims of one side," Duncan said, "but there are a whole bunch of silent victims out there — white males who can't apply for a position set aside for minorities or females."

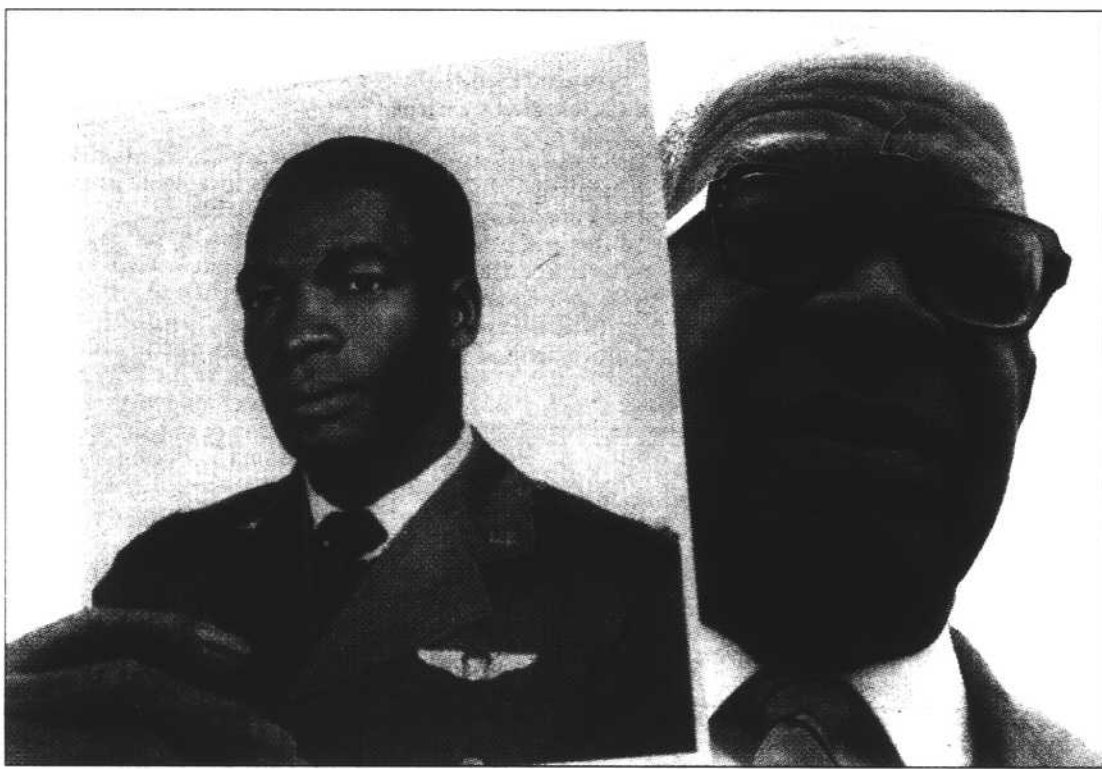
"(White males) sent their application in, and it got thrown in the waste basket because they were the wrong race or gender," Duncan said.

Witek agreed. When some say affirmative action creates a "level playing

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Working For Unity

The Black Leaders of UNL and Lincoln



LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN

LT. COL. PAUL ADAMS holds a picture taken of himself during his days spent as a fighter pilot for the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. Adams said he was the victim of racial prejudices even while he was fighting for his country.

Vet now fights with education

Editor's note: In honor of Black History Month, the Daily Nebraskan is printing profiles of prominent black leaders in Lincoln and at UNL. Today is the last in a five-part series.

By BRIAN CARLSON
Senior Reporter

When Lt. Col. Paul Adams returned from World War II in August, 1945, America's long-weary spirits had begun to lift. The Allied victory in Europe

“He has strong values for what's right, not just for black people, but for everybody.”

ANNIE SCOTT
Scott Middle School principal

had been secured. Two U.S. atomic bombs had devastated Japan, making victory in the Pacific imminent and shaping the course of world history for the rest of the century.

U.S. soldiers returned home to ticker-tape parades, and the United States celebrated the triumph of its ideals of liberty and

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Poet: 'Sail on' for unity's sake

By JOSH FUNK
Senior Reporter

The rhythmic pulse of bongo drums resonating through the Cornhusker Hotel's Grand Ballroom signaled the opening of the 21st annual Big 12 Conference on Black Student Government with a traditional African welcome.

After some welcoming remarks from organizers and poetry readings by local students, poet Nikki Giovanni, the conference's opening speaker, took stage.

UNL junior Lynn Bowers said Giovanni's writing transformed her.

"She made me want to hug myself inside out," Bowers said.

Giovanni used historical examples to advise student leaders on sex, school and perseverance.

"Sex is overblown," Giovanni said. "If it was that good you would not have to get drunk to do it."

Giovanni urged men and women to take responsibility for their own sex lives.

From sex Giovanni moved on to some stereotypes black col-

lege students face.

Many people believe that blacks have a free ride to school, but Giovanni cautioned students not to believe that.

"You are here because somebody black (in the past) dreamed you would be here," Giovanni said.

"You have a tremendous responsibility to those people."

Giovanni cited examples from black history from colonialism and slavery to show how black people had to work together to achieve everything they have

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