

Ireland pleads guilty to Cockson's death

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But many of the 1,100 residents of Friend turned out to say goodbye to a class valedictorian, star athlete and someone people called a great person. Gamma Phi sisters loaded two charter buses for the funeral.

Many of the same faces filled the small courtroom Thursday as the judge explained to Ireland the ramifications of his plea. Friends and family of Ireland sat near Cockson's loved ones.

Prosecutors made the agreement after the Cockson family decided they did not want a trial.

"A week ago, the family voted unanimously not to go to trial," Bob Cockson said. "We're glad he pled."

During the hearing, Ireland remained composed though his wife and family started crying as they sat on the bench behind him.

"He just looked like a scared kid," said Jill Hicks, Laura Cockson's best friend since high school.

But some of Laura Cockson's friends thought he was too unemotional.

"This brought back a lot of emo-

tions," said junior Gamma Phi member Melanie Rogge after she finished drying her eyes.

At the Gamma Phi house, Laura Cockson is remembered fondly and reminders of her are everywhere for Sarah, who now lives there.

Sarah Cockson said she used to visit her sister all the time at the sorority house, and now she must face those memories daily.

"It has been very hard," Sarah Cockson said. "I see reminders of her all the time."

But the Cockson family does not condemn Ireland.

"If 20 years in prison would bring Laura back, I'd be all for it," Eva Cockson said. "But it is hard to wish the worst on him because it won't bring Laura back."

Laura's friends and family just want to have her back.

"If I had to serve 10 years in jail to get Laura back, I would," Hicks said. "But she's gone."

Lancaster County District Judge Karen Flowers ordered a pre-sentence investigation and set the sentencing hearing for 3:30 p.m. on Jan. 29.

Political incarceration theme of rights event

BY KIM SWEET
Staff writer

Though Human Rights Day strives to shine light on international human rights issues, one theme of this year's events on Saturday may come closer to home for some.

Political imprisonment is a topic relevant to Nebraska with the imprisonment of David Rice, who goes by Mondo We Langa, a prisoner who resides within the walls of the Nebraska State Penitentiary, said Mary Dickinson, organizer of the event.

"We always want to take the opportunity to educate people about our political prisoners," she said.

Rice was imprisoned in 1971 after he and Ed Pointdexter were accused of conspiring to kill an Omaha police officer.

The two are said to be victims of the FBI's COINTELPRO program, which tried to stop radical political organizations. Rice and Pointdexter were one-time members of the Black Panthers of Omaha.

Therefore, political imprisonment will be the theme of Saturday's workshop, keynote speaker and rally.

Other workshop topics include racism, gay, lesbian and transgendered rights, international women's and children's rights and human rights education.

The workshops will run from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and again at 2:45 p.m. at the Nebraska East Union.

At 1:30 p.m., Lennox S. Hinds, a professor of Law and Chairman of the Administration of Justice program at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N. J., will give the keynote speech.

Hinds has represented many "politically unpopular" clients, including Rice, according to promotional materials. He also has written and lectured around the world on the impact of racism on the criminal justice system, as well as on other human rights issues.

Matt Johnson, a UNL graduate student and organizer of the event, said the workshop presenters and keynote speakers are some of the most knowledgeable experts on human rights.

"The same people attending will be going to France next week," he said.

A rally for political prisoners will be today at 4:30 p.m. at the Nebraska State Penitentiary to kick off the weekend's events, Dickinson said.

The rally will feature Hinds and other guests. They include Susan Miller, professor of Native American History at UNL; Bobby Castillo from the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee; and

ASUN accepts declaration of 30 basic rights

BY IEVA AUGSTUMS
Staff writer

As an effort to recognize every human being's need to be guaranteed fundamental rights, ASUN passed a resolution Wednesday night accepting 30 basic, fundamental human rights.

Andy Schuerman, ASUN Human Rights Committee chairman, said the resolution allows the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska to show support for the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"It is important that we recognize the significance of the U.N. passing this document," Schuerman said. "We are bringing awareness to students on campus."

On Dec. 10, 1948, the United Nations passed the declaration guaranteeing human rights across the globe.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the document, which has served as a cornerstone in humanity's struggle to recognize, promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Some human rights the declaration protects include atrocities such as genocide, mercenaries, war and humanity crimes.

Schuerman said he hopes UNL will recognize the importance of the 30 fundamental human rights presented in the document and advocate them appropriately.

Herman Ferguson from Jericho Network for Political Prisoners and New African Liberation Front.

Students can meet at Newman Methodist Church on 23rd and R streets at 4 p.m. to get a ride.

The conference, which begins at 9 a.m. Saturday at the Nebraska East Union, is important for everyone, Johnson said.

"I hope the students of UNL, residents of Lincoln and citizens of Nebraska will take the opportunity to spread their horizons and enlighten themselves on the issues that have global consequences," he said.

Nebraskans send Gov. Nelson out in style

BY TODD ANDERSON
Senior staff writer

Friends and fans of Gov. Ben Nelson want to make sure he leaves office with a party akin to his eight years of leadership.

Nebraskans across the state are invited to join in celebrating Nelson's administration Sunday at 6 p.m. in Agriculture Hall at the State Fair Park.

Director of Administrative Services Karen Kilgarin, one of the party's organizers, said more than 400 people already have paid for the \$25 meal and show.

"The state's had a good eight years," she said. "We just thought we ought to send (Nelson) out in style."

Beginning at 6 p.m., a banquet dinner will be served, followed by presentations from several Nebraska personalities and entertainers.

U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey and former NU Football Coach Tom Osborne will speak to the crowd.

Gail Yanney, a Nebraska artist; Duane Acklie, a member of the state Highway Commission; and nationally recognized comedian Pat Hazel will also entertain the crowd.

Kilgarin said organizers of the tribute wanted to thank Nelson for his ser-

vice to the state.

"We just want a chance to salute the governor and what he's done for Nebraska," Kilgarin said.

The evening will be light-hearted and fun, she said.

While there will be tickets available at the door, Kilgarin said those interested should reserve places.

Ticket sales will cover the event's cost. Extra proceeds will be donated to the Nelson Institute, the governor's newly formed charity organization for education and economic development.

For more information, or to reserve tickets, contact Nebraskans Salute Nelson at (402) 423-2396.



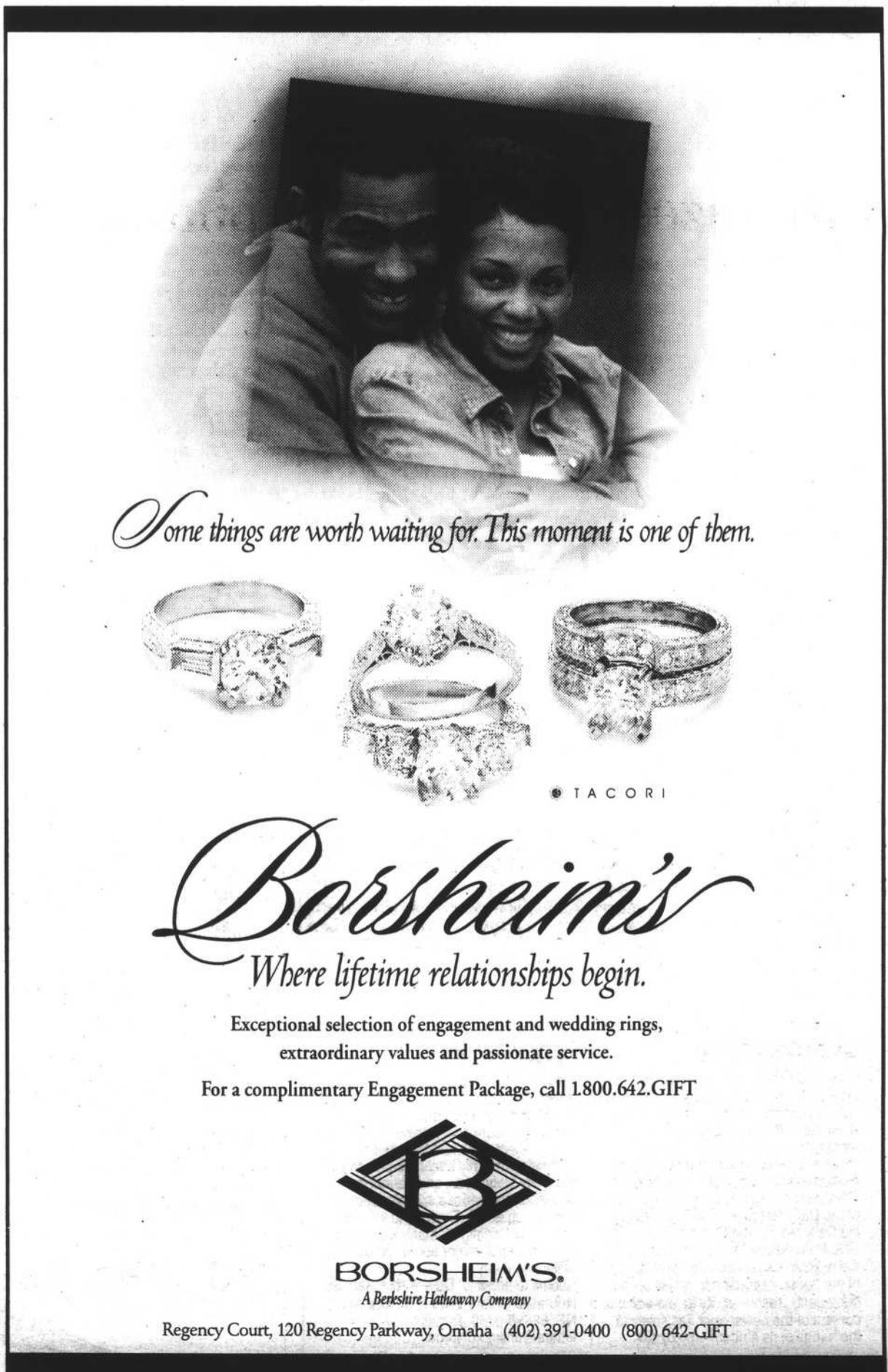
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