



SPORTS

Lavytating

High jumper Shane Lavy leads an NU Track and Field team into the 25th Husker Invitational this weekend. **PAGE 7**



A & E

'Evil' re-incarnate

"Touch of Evil" the long-mourned Orson Welles film butchered by Universal Studios, comes to Lincoln in a re-edited and purer form. **PAGE 9**

FRIDAY

February 5, 1999

BLOWING HOT AND COLD

Cloudy and windy, high 47. Misty tonight, low 28.

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On the road



ROBERT AGUIRRE, a University of Nebraska graduate student, enjoys an afternoon bicycle ride Thursday afternoon on the Billy Wolff bike trail near 56th and Van Dorn Streets.

SCOTT McCLURG/DN

Nebraska battles Y2K bug

■ Administrators working on the computer program don't predict any major problems in 2000.

BY BRIAN CARLSON
Staff writer

In 330 days, the world will cease to wonder what the Year 2000 computer glitch will entail and begin to experience it.

Some predict Y2K will be catastrophic. Others haven't given it more than a passing thought.

But leaders of Nebraska's efforts to confront the problem said the work done in the past few years should ensure any problems arising from Y2K are limited to minor inconveniences.

"My personal observation is that I do not feel we're going to have an end-of-the-world type of experience out of this," said Steve Henderson, who has led the state's efforts to confront Y2K since 1994.

"I feel confident we will be compliant on Jan. 1, 2000."

Henderson, a deputy administrator in the Department of Administrative Services, said the

LINDA SALAC
Health and Human Services administrator

task most directly related to the problem — changing date mechanisms on the state's central computer systems and DAS mainframe computer systems — was completed in December.

"Hopefully, the work we have done will at least limit problems to minor things rather than major disruptions," he said.

The primary tasks for 1999, he said, are ensuring Y2K compliance among personal computers and computer-operated systems outside the DAS and preparing for any eventualities that may have been overlooked.

For his early warning about the possible problems caused by Y2K, Henderson was named one of 1998's top 11 public officials of the year by Governing magazine. The magazine dubbed him "the Paul Revere of Y2K in Nebraska."

Henderson's efforts to confront Y2K began in 1994, when he first warned state government about the Year 2000 problem.

Because so many computer systems' date mechanisms used only two digits, these computers at the turn of the century would read "2000" as "1900," possibly causing system malfunctioning.

Many state services and operations — from utilities to social services — rely heavily on computer systems, and Henderson warned that the problems caused by Y2K could be widespread. An early appraisal found the problem could cost the state \$28.9 million.

"That got a lot of people's attention," Henderson said.

Under Henderson's leadership, the state got to work. Then-Gov. Ben Nelson created, by executive

Pizza party to raise money for scholarship fund

BY DANE STICKNEY
Staff writer

Last March, UNL student Laura Cockson was killed in a car accident by a drunken driver.

Now the Innocents Society and the Chancellor's Leadership Class have teamed up to keep Cockson's memory alive while stressing the dangers of alcohol.

The two groups are having a pizza party on Sunday from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Nebraska Union. The proceeds will be donated to the Laura Cockson Memorial Scholarship. Innocents Society member Chris Linder said.

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska will award the scholarship to a student who exhibits leadership in alcohol education, she said.

Linder said the event is quite personal to those involved.

"A couple of us in Innocents were good friends with Laura," she said. "This is kind of near and dear to us, and it is something that all of us feel very strongly about."

Because the Innocents Society consists strictly of seniors and CLC comprises freshmen and sophomores, the event provides a unique experience, Linder said.

"It is kind of a mentor relationship," she said. "We planned the whole thing from publicity to sponsors as a team."

Restaurants are donating the pizza, senior biology major Laura Lessley said. Lincoln businesses will also donate door prizes.

Tickets for the event can be purchased at the door from any CLC or Innocents Society member or at either the Nebraska Union or the Nebraska East Union. Booths at the unions will be open today from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$3 in advance and \$4 at the door.

Bills propose ease in homeowners' tax

BY BRIAN CARLSON
Staff writer

Nebraska should broaden its homestead exemption so that property taxes for elderly, low-income and disabled citizens are more affordable, the state's governor and several legislators said Thursday.

The Legislature's Revenue Committee held hearings on six bills offering various plans to allow more citizens to qualify for homestead exemptions and ease the tax burden for those who qualify.

Homestead exemptions lessen the property tax burden for citizens who are less able to pay because of age, low income or disability.

"Too many retired citizens are burdened with property taxes that use up their disposable income," said Gov. Mike Johanns.

LB745, sponsored by Sen. Ron Raikes of Lincoln at Johanns' request, would allow more Nebraskans to qualify for homestead exemptions and, increase the value of the exemptions.

The bill would allow those who qualify to claim a larger exemption, and allow owners of more expensive property to claim exemptions.

The bill's primary objective, Johanns said, is to allow more elderly, low-income and disabled citizens to stay in their homes. Although the bill would cost the state some \$8 million, it could cut state costs for care facilities, he said.

Legislature



"Too many retired citizens are burdened with property taxes that use up their disposable income."

GOV. MIKE JOHANNS

Erdice Yearley of the Nebraska chapter of the American Association of Retired People said LB745 would provide much-needed relief for elderly homeowners.

For example, she said, sometimes buying houses while still working, people take years to pay for them. Then, once their homes are paid for, they may face the double shock of a freeze in income when they retire and increased property taxes because of rapidly rising property valuations. "We do not provide enough protection for seniors with modest incomes in areas where valuations are increasing fast," she said. "The possibility of being taxed out of their homes is very real."

Johanns said he would consider other

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