



SPORTS

Full-court pressure

Despite a 4-3 win over Colorado this weekend, Nebraska's men's tennis team still has a long and difficult road to the NCAA Tournament. **PAGE 9**



A & E

Plains people

The Center for Great Plains Study has organized an impressive festival and symposium of artists and lecturers to celebrate the plains culture. **PAGE 12**

MONDAY

April 5, 1999

DARK DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

Cloudy and windy, high 55. Cloudy tonight, low 40.

Daily Nebraskan

VOL. 98

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN SINCE 1901

NO. 131

Early morning fire destroys Lincoln church

“
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MAURICE CHAMPION-GARTE
church rector

By JOSH FUNK
Senior staff writer

An early-morning fire destroyed a Lincoln church on Easter Sunday, forcing the congregation to relocate.

No injuries were reported in the fire that leveled St. David's Episcopal Church, 88th and Holdrege streets, and caused \$700,000 damage, Southeast Lincoln Fire Chief Steve Phillips said.

Fire teams were called to the church at 6:23 a.m., and by 7 a.m. word had started to spread to parishioners.

“This is definitely not how I planned to spend Easter,” Church Rector Maurice

Champion-Garthe said.

After hearing of the fire from a parishioner and the sheriff, Champion-Garthe went to the church to help in any way he could.

As he drove in, Champion-Garthe said the flames were visible from 84th and Adams streets over the hill.

Sunday night fire inspectors had not determined the cause of the fire which started in the attic of the church and spread quickly.

The church burned until 9 a.m. when firefighters declared the blaze under control.

Only a remnant of the offices and classrooms on the west end remain stand-

ing.

Champion-Garthe said the most difficult part of losing the building was the “labor of love” his congregation invested in finishing the building itself.

The handmade communion rail and custom-made kneelers for the pews may be lost, but the people are still there.

“The building can be replaced,” said Champion-Garthe in a voice made raspy by a day filled with thick clouds of smoke and long talks with parishioners. “But the labor of love is gone.”

After word spread, at least eight area churches offered the congregation a place to worship both for Easter and long-term.

Champion-Garthe said church leaders

called the 100-member congregation and arranged to hold services Sunday evening at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 60th and A streets.

The events of the day inspired a new sermon, Champion-Garthe said.

“I scrapped what I had written for the morning and went straight from the heart,” Champion-Garthe said.

The church must now work together to rebuild, but Champion-Garthe said the most important element is already in place — the people, because they are the church.

“Today is Easter and as Christ has risen, so will we,” Champion-Garthe said. “The important thing is we have the people.”

U.S. agrees to send in troops, gun ships

■ Pending NATO approval, 2,000 ground troops and 24 Apache helicopters will be sent to Albania, escalating the conflict.

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a risk-laden escalation of the American military commitment, the United States has agreed to send 24 Apache helicopter gun ships and 2,000 troops to Albania, giving NATO the ability to directly attack Serb troops and tanks in Yugoslavia, the Clinton administration said Sunday.

To protect the Apaches, U.S. troops will man 18 Multiple Launch Rocket Systems deployed to Albania as well with short- and medium-range missiles that can take out Yugoslav air defenses throughout Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians are under continued attack. Some 14 Bradley Fighting Vehicles, military police and intelligence officers are included.

Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said deploying the Apaches and rocket launchers was “a logical expansion” of the nearly two-week-old NATO airstrikes to halt Yugoslav Slobodan Milosevic's military drive against Kosovars in the Serbian province.

NATO leaders meeting Monday must approve using the weapons, followed by President Clinton. The Pentagon said it could take up to 10 days to deploy the Apaches from their base at Illesheim, Germany, because many U.S. military cargo planes also are being used for humanitarian aid.

“It's to give us the type of tank-killing capability that the bad weather has denied us,” Bacon said. “It will give us the capability to get up close and personal to the Milosevic armor, (to) units in Kosovo, and to do a more effective job at eliminating or neutralizing the forces on the ground.”

He acknowledged the increasing risk to U.S. forces.

“Obviously, close-in engagement is by definition riskier than more distant engagement. But the army is trained to cope with that,” he said.

Amid the growing refugee crisis in the

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UNL JUNIOR JUSTIN DARLING hangs on to a bucking bull out of the chute at the 41st annual UNL College Rodeo at the Saunders County Fairgrounds on Saturday in Wahoo.

RYAN SODERLIN/DN

rodeo rodeo

STORY BY **SARAH BAKER**

PHOTOS BY **MATT MILLER AND RYAN SODERLIN**

The dimly lit, dust-filled air was almost enough to make you choke, but not quite. The sandy, dirty ground and metal and wooden bleachers played background for an intimate crowd of about 200, and the smell wasn't one most people would seek out.

Although most of the crowd was probably there for the excitement-charged atmosphere, the fans' experiences could never compete with that of the riders themselves — experiences that encompass emotions of pain, disappointment and, at best, satisfaction.

The 41st annual UNL College Rodeo, which took place Friday and Saturday at the Saunders County Fairgrounds in Wahoo, rounded up cowgirls and cowboys from the Midwest.

It was UNL junior Justin Darling's final college rodeo at UNL.

“The bulls were excellent,” said Darling, a bull rider and criminal justice major. “This weekend was cool because the

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