



SPORTS

Ace In The Hole

NU sophomore Sarah Sasse led the Huskers to the top of the pack through the first day of competition at the Big 12 Preview. **PAGE 8**



A & E

Small City, Big Art

The Wagon Train Project, founded by Amy Lamphere, brings cutting-edge art into Lincoln and into our hearts. **PAGE 11**

TUESDAY

September 14, 1999

GRAY SKIES AHEAD

Mostly cloudy, high 67. Partly cloudy tonight, low 43.

Daily Nebraskan

VOL. 99

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN SINCE 1901

NO. 17

Homicide study moves toward start

By **MATTHEW BEERMANN**
Staff writer

Lawmakers may gain a new understanding of Nebraska's death penalty with a massive homicide study commissioned by the Legislature.

Members of the Nebraska Crime Commission met Monday to hammer out the details of the study, which will start in 2000.

When completed, it will be the first ever comprehensive survey of homicide cases in Nebraska.

The committee appointed to carry out this task includes Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey, Department of Corrections Director Harold Clark, as well as Phyllis Anstine and Steve Exon, both part of the 18-member Crime Commission.

The study will look at the demo-

graphics of those convicted of homicide and details of how the homicide cases were handled. The study outline should be finalized later this month, when it will be made available to the public and voted on by the full commission.

The commission will then contract with an outside individual or agency to gather and compile the data.

Allen Curtis, director of the commission, said he hoped a contractor would be chosen and data gathering started by Jan. 1, 2000.

Seeking balance

The study is the result of LB76 and its companion bill, LB76A, passed by the Legislature this spring.

The bills instructed the crime commission to study "the race, gender, religious preference and economic status of the defendant and victim; the charges

filed; the results of the trial; and the sentence imposed" in all homicide cases since 1973.

During the study, a moratorium on the death penalty would have been put into effect.

But Gov. Mike Johanns vetoed LB76 and its moratorium, along with the companion bill, LB76A, which appropriated \$160,000 for the study.

Senators unanimously overruled his veto on LB76A, the part that appropriated \$160,000 for the study.

This left the Crime Commission in an unusual position: They had been given the money to implement a bill that didn't pass.

After consulting with Attorney General Don Stenberg, the commission elected to go ahead with the study, Curtis said.

"We decided to use the original text of the bill as an outline, and then solicit

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Even if the results of the study point toward a disproportionality, they probably won't be statistically conclusive."

ALLEN CURTIS
director of the Nebraska Crime Commission

others' opinions on the scope of the study," said Curtis.

The committee held a pair of meetings this summer to garner public input. These meetings, held Aug. 3 in Omaha and Aug. 5 in North Platte, included senators, attorneys and citizens.

Gary Piccolo, president of the Nebraska Criminal Defense Attorney's Association, stressed the need for fair-

ness in the study.

"Justice is often displayed as a balance," Piccolo said at a hearing. "And so should be your study, a balanced study, one that considers both sides of the equation concerning the death penalty."

Professor Michael Radelet, chairman of the sociology department at the

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Sorority house stays, renovation plans grow

By **VERONICA DAEHN**
Staff writer

Sara Miley said her fellow Alpha Chi Omega Sorority sisters love their house just as much as she does.

And because of this, they all breathed a sigh of relief this summer after finding out they won't have to give up the house.

Because of the master plan the University of Nebraska-Lincoln released a year ago, Alpha Chi Omega's house was to be destroyed to make way for a pedestrian-friendly grassy mall.

Miley, Alpha Chi Omega president, said the university decided to let the sorority keep its house.

"We love our house," she said. "There is an aesthetic feeling of having an old house on greek row."

The grassy mall was to extend from Memorial Stadium to the Beadle Center, cutting off traffic at 14th, 16th and 17th streets.

Alpha Chi Omega, located at the corner of 16th and Vine streets, was in the way of the proposed mall, as was the vacated Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity house.

Miley, a junior exercise science major, said sorority members were shocked when the university told them of the plans to move their house.

"It was hard for us to be prepared to handle questions (the next day)," she said. "We were just as clueless as everyone else."

Sorority members were frustrated with the decision to destroy the house, Miley said, and were upset because they thought there was nothing they could do about it.

At the time, members were unaware that the plan still needed approval from the NU Board of Regents.

Members and alumni decided to see what their options were.

A task force was formed, and a lawyer was hired.

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LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN

ROSEMARY BLUM recently took the position of director of Student Judicial Affairs, dealing with students who have broken the student code of conduct. Blum said: "It's not like I'm just out here to be a hard-nosed enforcer of policy."

Director of judicial affairs praised

By **ERIC RINEER**
Staff writer

Just four months after becoming the new boss of Student Judicial Affairs, Rosemary Blum is already collecting high praise from her colleagues.

"She's very supporting, understanding and encouraging," said Tonda Humphress, assistant director of Student Judicial Affairs.

"Rosemary seems to work well with everybody."

Blum, who took over as director in May, replaced Charles Green, who now serves as student ombudsman in the office of Student Affairs.

Blum was previously the ombudswoman. Humphress, and others, say Blum has adjusted well to the new position.

Chuck van Rossum, special assistant to the vice chancellor for student affairs, said Blum

was an excellent choice for the position.

Van Rossum said he's known Blum for about eight years and has seen her progress tremendously.

His relationship with Blum has grown stronger since the two met at Southern Illinois University in 1991, he said.

Then a graduate student, Blum worked

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