

Police say man beaten, robbed

■ An empty wallet was taken from a man sleeping outside, police say.

By JAKE BLEED
Senior staff writer

A 28-year-old man sleeping under an overpass outside Lincoln was attacked, beaten and robbed of an empty wallet by two men early Thursday morning, officer Katherine Finnell said. James Dunn was asleep near the intersection of Highway 77 and West O Street when three men pinned him to the ground, Finnell said. A fourth then hit Dunn seven to nine times on his head and demanded the 28-year-old's wallet she said. Dunn gave up the wallet,

which contained no cash, she said.

The four attackers left, and Dunn walked to a nearby phone and called police, Finnell said.

Dunn told police he'd recognized the voice of one of his attackers as that of a young man he'd talked to earlier in the day, Finnell said.

A police dog was used to track the attackers to the edge of a mobile home park in the 2300 block of West O Street, Finnell said.

Earlier in the same night, Lincoln police officer John Walsh had stopped four suspicious-looking young men walking along West O Street and, after a brief conversation, wrote down the men's names and addresses.

Three of the men lived in the same mobile home park the police dog led the officers to, Finnell said.

Police visited two mobile homes

and were able to recover Dunn's wallet in one, Finnell said.

Police arrested two men in the attack: Alan McCready, 17, and Isaias Ventura, 21, on suspicion of robbery. The pair lived in separate mobile homes inside the same park. Two other men, ages 24 and 25, who were apparently not directly involved in the attack, were not arrested.

Police did not know the motive for the attack. Dunn's alleged interaction with the men earlier in the day did not apparently inspire the robbery, Finnell said.

Paramedics took Dunn to BryanLGH West, where emergency room staff used seven staples to bind Dunn's injuries, Finnell said.

A BryanLGH representative said Dunn was treated and released early Thursday morning.

State leaders say teachers need an increase in wages

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tains or ski resorts near Omaha," she said. "That hasn't changed."

What had changed, Garnett said, was that other states, especially Southern states, had begun to offer higher wages than Omaha could offer.

Although members of the education committee, other senators and Gov. Mike Johanns agree state teacher salaries need a boost, no specific plan has emerged to address the issue.

Johanns emphasized the problem during a Wednesday press conference.

He said the state had already committed to cover losses sustained by local school districts when a property tax reform takes effect. The added

cost to the state will be between \$40 million and \$60 million, he said.

Johanns said if the state were to give all teachers a raise of even \$1,000 per year, the additional education money from state coffers would be about \$83 million.

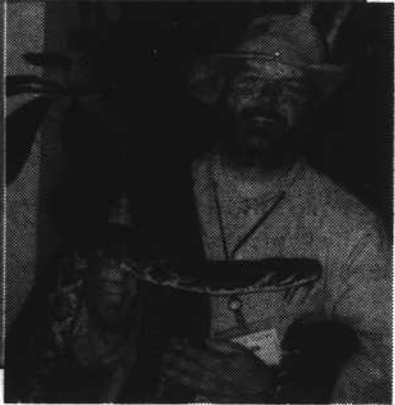
For James Griess, executive director of NSEA, the \$1,000 increase is not nearly enough.

"I'd like to see (Nebraska teacher salaries) go to fifth in the nation," Griess said in testimony Thursday. He said Nebraska teachers had demonstrated they deserved the raise.

He said Nebraska should at least raise salaries to the national average.

"We don't have to do this all in one year, but we need to start in that direction," he said.

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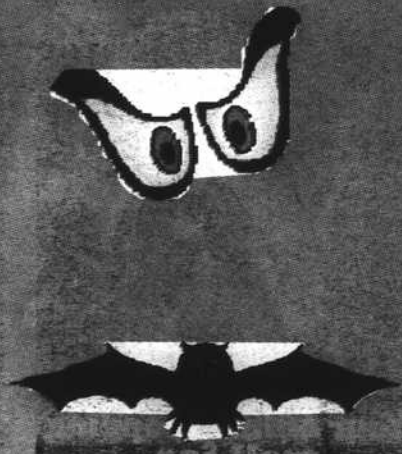
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