

# City Council to vote on bar permits

By SARAH FOX  
Staff writer

Lincoln residents may be able to appreciate the year 2000 — but not only because it's a new century.

They may be able to dance at bars and dance clubs for two extra hours into Jan. 1, 2000.

The City Council held a public hearing Monday about giving dance permits that would last until 3 a.m. on Jan. 1. The council will vote next Monday on the ordinance.

Demetrios and Kimbe Meares, owners of Yiayia's Pizza Beer & Wine, 1423 O St., said they were planning a party with \$80 tickets on New Year's Eve.

They said the extended dance permit would let their customers eat a special meal before they left Yiayia's.

"That will give our customers two hours to relax and dance before they go out on the streets," the Meareses said. "We're not going to let anyone in after 1 a.m."

Richard Hoppe, a friend of the Meareses, told the council that Yiayia's was a responsible restaurant. For example, he said he and his wife had come to eat pizza at Yiayia's, but his wife had forgotten her ID. They wouldn't serve her alcohol, he said.

Hoppe also said the permits could only be given to applicants who already had regular dance permits, and the applicants could not have any liquor violations during 1998 and 1999.

Applicants would also have to pay \$100 for the permit.

Council chairwoman Coleen Seng asked John Becket, assistant chief of police for the Lincoln Police Department, how extended dance permits would affect the number of police officers on duty on New Year's Eve.

Becket said he didn't think the extended dance hours would affect the police much; the police department had been planning to triple the officers on duty compared to last year's New Year's Eve.

"We're preparing for just about anything," Becket said. "The last New

Year's Eve, we were still taking wild party calls at 6 a.m."

Becket said about 100 police officers will be working on New Year's Eve.

The police department plans to hold its second shift later, bring in its third shift early and keep its first shift on standby.

In other business, the council also voted 7-0 to approve a conservation area near S.W. 40th and West Van Dorn streets.

The 82.5-acre conservation area would be near a 50-home site built by Long View Estates Inc.

Lynn Darling said the area would preserve farmland and that building conservation areas near homes is becoming more common.

Darling is the president of the Audobon Society in southeast Nebraska.

"It's easier to do business as usual — level (the land) and put up Lego houses," she said. "I strongly advise you to take this as the venture that is being done all over the country. We're just a little slow."

## City Council

Darling said many developers plant a few trees to replace the land they've used for houses.

"A tree — a bird doesn't say, 'Oh, wow, guys, there's a tree. Let's go build a nest.' Birds need dead trees, high trees, low trees," she said.

The conservation area would include space for woodlands, prairie, open space and wetlands, said Nicole Fleck-Tooze, a Lincoln-Lancaster County planner.

However, other neighbors were worried about sewage drainage from the wetland.

Irma Sarata lives north of the proposed development. She said she thought the wetland would drain onto her property because she already receives a 3- to 4-inch runoff during heavy rains.

Sarata was also worried that the new houses' wells would strain the area's aquifer.

# System to inform victims of releases

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track an inmate's whereabouts without VINE. For example, state employees contact victims when certain inmates are released.

But others, like police officers, judges, neighbors and the media, find it difficult to obtain information about prisoners.

The VINE system will ensure any person can have accurate information about the location of state prisoners.

"This is an improvement over the current situation, even for victims we would normally notify," Clarke said. "Using VINE, victims are notified when an inmate is moved within the prison system. Otherwise, they would not be notified until an inmate's release."

Clarke said people using the system could remain anonymous. Victims do not even need to provide their names, only a phone number where they can be reached.

The VINE call center will call victims every time an inmate is moved. Staff at the call center, in Louisville, Ky., will call every half hour until the victim answers and provides an identification number.

The system cost \$500,000 to implement, Clarke said. Money to maintain the service will come from state funds.

But, Clarke said, the system will free state corrections officers from the time-consuming task of recording who to notify when an inmate is released.

Allen Curtis, director of the Nebraska Crime Commission, said VINE was an essential tool in protecting victims.

"Having this type of information readily available and accessible, day or night, is critical not only for the victim's peace of mind, but also personal safety," he said. "(VINE) allows for necessary precautions to be taken by law enforcement and the victim."

# Not all bar owners sure about year-end permits

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pop and water from 1 a.m. to 3 a.m.

"The older people will be tired by 1, and if they can't consume alcohol, they'll leave," she said. "Young people will continue to party until 3, (but) I'll lose a big part of my crowd."

Vanek also said people might leave the downtown bars when they stop serving alcohol at 1 a.m. She said they could come to her sports bar if it were still open until 3 a.m. Then she would have intoxicated people in her bar.

Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady said he didn't think many dance clubs and bars would apply for the special permits because not many would want to pay \$100. And most have had at least one liquor violation in the past two years.

"If it passes the way it's written, it will have little or no impact on us," Casady said.

Casady said the police department would be affected if the council ever allowed a dance club that served alcohol to be open after the bars closed. He said these clubs would be used by peo-

*"Young people will continue to party until 3, (but) I'll lose a big part of my crowd."*

**SHERRY VANEK**  
Sherry's Dining Dancing & Sports Bar owner

ple who were irresponsible.

"When you get that kind of group together, it's going to have a higher percentage of people who are ill-behaved, with too much alcohol, too much testosterone and too much bad judgment," Casady said.

Shaun Williams, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln sophomore finance major, said he thought the special dance permits could decrease drunken driving. Williams is the vice president of Party Smart.

"If you stop drinking at 1 and stay up until 3, it gives you a little more time to sober up," Williams said.

Joyce Durand, owner of The Sidetrack, 935 O St., said she wasn't sure if she'd apply for the permit if she couldn't serve alcohol during that extra time.

But she might use the extra time for her employees, Durand said.

She said some of her employees were grumbling because they didn't want to spend New Year's Eve working.

"Maybe I should keep it open so they can dance afterwards," she said.

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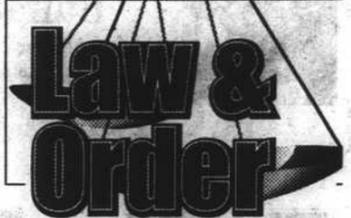
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## Two boys robbed of drugs; police looking for seller

A pair of teen-age boys reported being robbed in south Lincoln on Saturday evening, telling Lincoln police two men showed them a knife and took the 15 hits of LSD the teens had just bought.

The boys, 14 and 15 years old, told police they were robbed at 5631 S. 48th St. at about 7:30 p.m. by two white men wearing black clothing and bandannas over their faces, Ofc. Katherine Finnell said.

The boys said the men showed them a knife, then took the drugs and a jack-knife. Losses totaled \$25.

Finnell said police are looking for the man who sold the boys the LSD.

## Man arrested for trying to shoplift steaks

Lincoln police arrested a shoplifter Saturday evening, charging him with felony shoplifting after he tried to steal five packaged steaks, Finnell said.

Police arrested Stanley Smith, 50, in the Albertson's Supermarket, 4615 Vine St., after he was seen stuffing the steaks in his pants, Finnell said.

Finnell said police arrested Smith for the felony charge because he had been convicted of similar crimes in the past and had recently finished a term in prison for shoplifting.

## Man arrested for burglary

Lincoln police arrested a burglar early Monday morning after finding him inside Priscilla's, an adult novelty store at 2029 O St., with a bag of pornography and sexual toys.

Police arrested Mark E. Neal, 30, 2903 Randolph St., for burglary at 1:13 a.m., Finnell said.

Finnell said Neal was found with a bag containing 12 magazines, 18 miscellaneous pornographic videotapes, two inflatable sex dolls and a plastic vibrating vagina, all apparently stolen from inside the store.

The goods were worth \$748.80. Break-in damages were \$150.

## Clerk arrested for theft, four patrons cited for theft

A checker at Russ's IGA, 66th and O streets, was arrested for theft early Monday morning after her roommate and three men tried to walk out of the supermarket with \$937.40 in food they did not pay for.

Finnell said Melissa Ohlman, 21, told her roommate, Ashley Hammond, 22, she could bring food items through her check-out line and not have to pay for them.

Hammond and three men, Jerry Norris, 28, Jonathan Slaga, 22, and Joshua Swan, 21, brought four shopping carts of food and other items through Ohlman's check-out line at 2:29 a.m., Finnell said. Ohlman pretended to scan the items, Finnell said.

Hammond and the men were stopped and could not show store employees a receipt for the food. All four were cited for theft by deception.

Compiled by senior staff writer Jake Bleed