

Conference examines the impact of buffalo

By Lara Luchiaro

Staff writer

At one time, the buffalo permeated every aspect of Great Plains life.

They served as a spiritual force and as an important source of food. The buffalo also provided transportation and material for clothing.

The impact of buffalo as an active part in the history and ecology of the Great Plains will be examined at a conference that starts Thursday and runs through Saturday. It will be at the Cornhusker Hotel, 333 S. 13th St.

"It will be a event for the community and the academic section of UNL," said Charlene Porsild, an assistant professor of history and a symposium co-chairwoman.

Top scholars, American Indian leaders, buffalo producers, ecologists and artists are expected as presenters or attendees at the symposium.

"It is an opportunity for students to meet a variety of people and to learn about the history of the Great Plains by listening to people with different points of view," said Linda Ratcliffe, spokeswoman for the

Center for Great Plains Studies.

Session topics include: ecological issues, prehistory and archaeology, indigenous perspectives, preservation, Canadian and European buffalo, grazing and production, management and nutrition, and literary and artistic references.

The buffalo was considered an essential animal by American Indians because it provided them with everything they needed — meat, clothes and transportation, said Matt Jones, a storyteller who will be participating in the conference.

The buffalo also represents the story of the Great Plains because it is an example of transition, Porsild said. In the past, she said, buffalo could roam freely, while now they are confined.

Porsild said this process also happened with the human population of the Plains. The increase in the number of cities limits people's freedom, Porsild said.

Except for meals, registration is free for high school or college students. Pre-registration for the conference is \$60 and includes the luncheon.

Police: Woman arrested after taking 6-year-old son to bar

A Hickman woman was arrested for child neglect after taking her son to a bar Saturday.

Sheriff's deputies found Charlene K. Hardy, 33, intoxicated at a local bar, Trackside Offsale and Discount Tobacco, with her 6-year-old son Zachary at about 11 p.m., Chief Deputy Bill Jarrett said.

Deputies took Hardy to Detox and her son to a friend's house, Jarrett said.

Police continue to investigate case of stolen Chihuahua

Someone allegedly kicked in a back door Saturday and stole Kila, a brown Chihuahua.

Melissa Schafer, 711 Barrow Court, said her 1-year-old Chihuahua was taken from the garage, Lincoln Police Ofc. Katherine Finnell said.

Schafer said she suspected her ex-boyfriend — they bought the \$450 dog together — but police interviewed him and don't believe he is a suspect, Finnell said.

The investigation on the stolen Chihuahua continues.

Student receives disturbing calls

A woman in Neihardt Residence Center reported to University Police that she received disturbing phone calls.

On March 10, a man called the woman's room and identified himself as Larry, Asst. University Police Chief Mylo Bushing said.

The man then informed her he wanted to check the vents in her room for gerbils, Bushing said.

"Larry" then said he would shoot the gerbils for her if he found any, he said.

Dog bites second victim

By Michelle Starr

Staff writer

A dog bit its second victim in less than a year Saturday.

Roger Butts' dog, Mac, bit a 2-year-old boy at about 10:30 a.m.

Butts of Waverly was unavailable for comment.

The boy, Travis from Lincoln, was playing outside of a family friend's home in Waverly when he was bit in the face by Mac, Chief Deputy Bill Jarrett said. The dog was chained up at the time of the injury, he said.

The boy was transported to St. Elizabeth's Hospital with severe lacerations and puncture wounds on his face, Jarrett said.

A plastic surgeon was called. Travis was released from the hospital Sunday.

For now the dog has been confined in a kennel for 10 days.

Last August, the dog also bit a child in Lincoln.

Mac was given rabies shots five days after the first child was bitten, Jarrett said.

The owner is considering putting the dog to sleep but hasn't made a decision yet, he said.

Sgt. Robert Marker said Sheriff Terri Wagner issued a letter to Butts on Monday afternoon declaring his dog as dangerous.

If the dog bites another person, the state can petition to put the dog to sleep.

Trial starts in sexual assault of a Union College student

■ The accused has been connected with similar cases across the country.

By Michelle Starr

Staff writer

With jury selection completed Monday, a 1997 rape trial began with evidence that afternoon.

Vinson Champ, a 38-year-old former Los Angeles comedian, is charged with first-degree sexual assault of a Union College student, County Attorney Gary Lacey said.

Lancaster County Public Defender Shawn Elliott, representing Champ, was unavailable for comment.

According to court documents, Champ allegedly attacked a 27-year-

old student who was alone playing the piano in the basement auditorium of the college's E. Dick building on Feb. 2, 1997.

Champ has been connected to, charged with or convicted for attacks across the country.

Champ pleaded no contest in Omaha District Court to raping a University of Nebraska-Omaha faculty member a month after the attack at Union College.

The judge decided to wait to sentence Champ until his trial in Lincoln was over.

In other states, Champ was charged for sexual assault at St. Ambrose College in Davenport, Iowa, and for attempted assault at Pasadena, Calif., City College.

Attacks also were reported at Knox College in Galesburg, Ill., Carthage

College in Kenosha, Wis., and Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill. No charges have been made in connection with the three attacks.

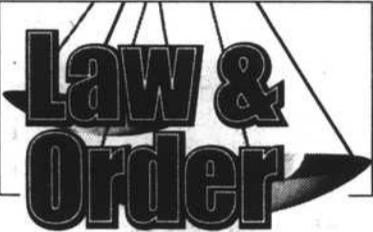
Each attack shows similarities in physical evidence and patterns during the rape.

Champ's blood type and DNA match with evidence found from the attacks, police said. His schedule also coincided with the attacks, police said.

In each rape the man asks about the victims' sexual histories, forces anal sex, uses his saliva for lubrication and asks the women to pray for him after he rapes them.

The trial is being heard in Lancaster County District Court Judge Paul Merritt's courtroom.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Later that same night a man called and identified himself as David, Bushing said.

"David" said he was in one of her classes and was her friend from high school, Bushing said. He also gave another name — Jim, Bushing said.

The third and final caller did not identify himself, but said he had a bowling ball and a gerbil in the lobby of the residence hall, Bushing said.

Police have no suspects, and the woman was advised to contact university police if she receives more calls.

Man arrested on warrant at Memorial Stadium

A man was arrested on a warrant after getting into Memorial Stadium on Saturday.

Lawrence N. Cribbs, 42, of Lincoln asked a community service officer and an officer at the stadium to let him in because he had to work, Bushing said.

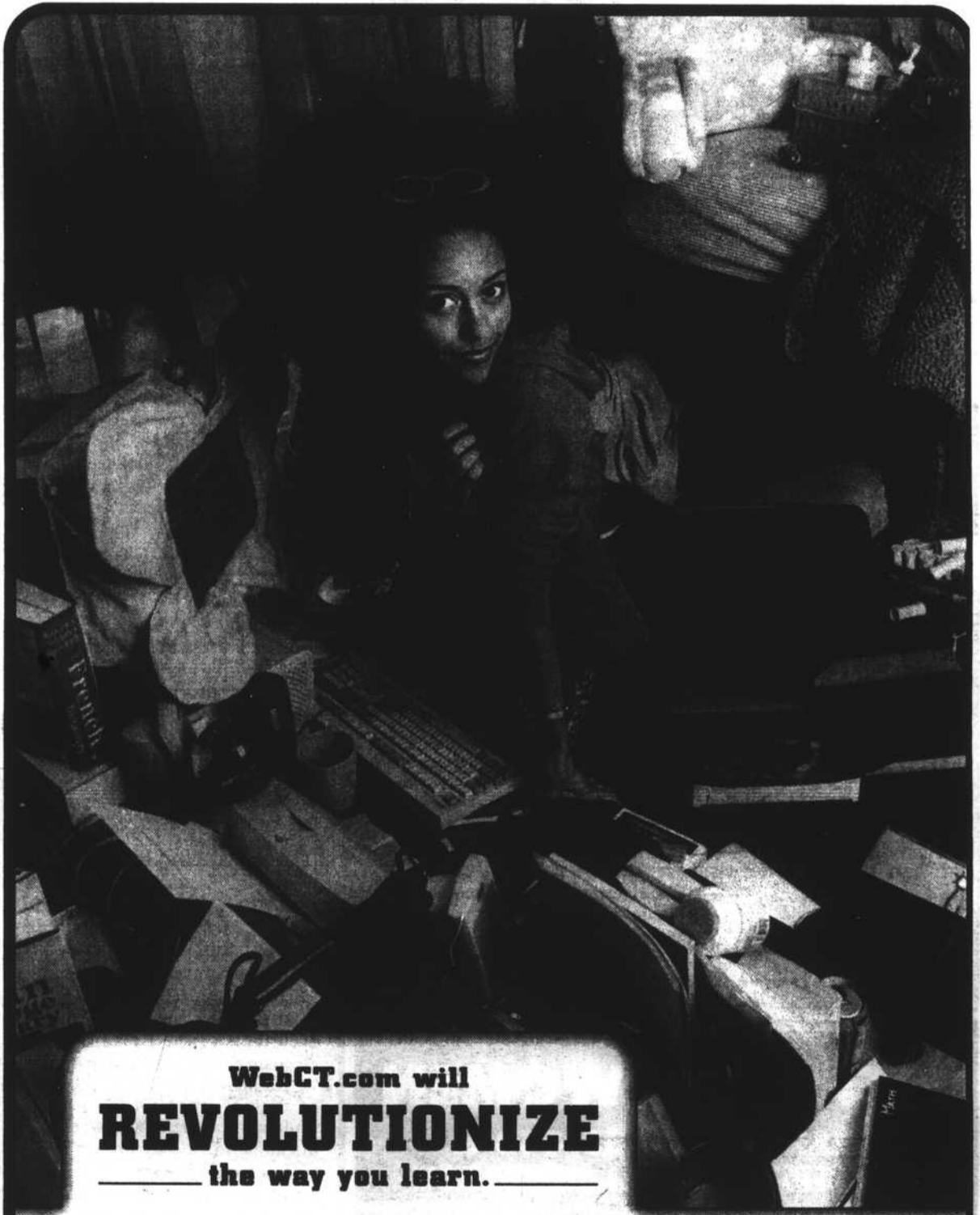
Cribbs, who had no identification on him, said he was working for Arcadia Chair Repair Company on the west stadium's fourth floor, Bushing said.

Once Cribbs was inside, officers checked his name for warrants, and one appeared for failure to appear in court, Bushing said.

What Cribbs was originally charged with is unknown.

Cribbs was taken into custody.

Compiled by staff writer Michelle Starr



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If I told you more ... I'd have to kill you