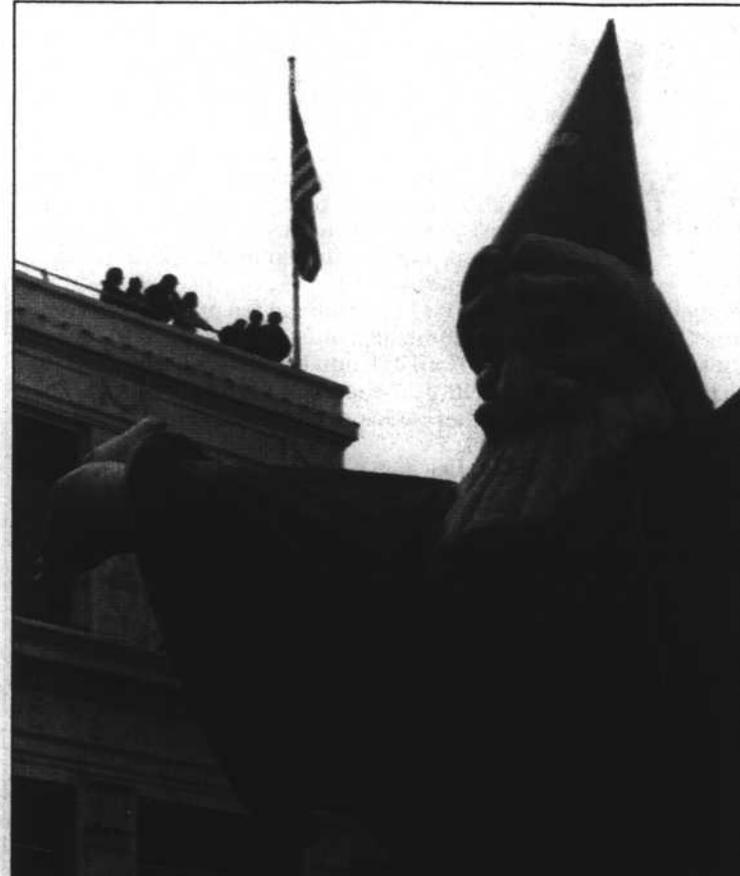


**TOP:** A giant inflatable wizard, sponsored by Bryan LGH hospital and guided by a group of Harry Potter characters, makes its way down O Street during the Star City Parade. Organizers estimated that a crowd of 36,000 to 40,000 was in attendance for the Saturday morning event.

**BOTTOM:** Elise Richard, 2, waves to the Golden Dancers from the O Street skywalk before the Star City Parade on Saturday morning. This was the 16th year of the parade.



Sharon Kolbet/DN



Nate Wagner/DN

# All for the Little Ones

*Eight youths chosen to judge this year's Star City Parade*

D r. Seuss would have been proud.

On Saturday morning a three-story tall "Cat in the Hat" made its way through downtown Lincoln. As the gusty winds made the storybook character bounce and bob, more than a dozen balloon handlers had their hands full guiding the large inflatable figure under O Street traffic lights.

The balloon, sponsored by the Experian company, was just one of the many attractions at the 16th annual Star City Parade.

This year's parade theme was "Kid Size" and included, for the first time, a judging panel of kids age 13 and younger. The panel was selected by a random drawing earlier in the week and included six youths from Lincoln and two youths selected from Fairbury, this year's featured Star Community.

Working at the corner of 10th and O streets, parade worker Cara Ramsay made sure marching bands didn't run into parade floats and that someone was around to clean up after the llamas. Ramsay said this was her fourth year helping with the parade.

With an estimated 36,000 to 40,000 parade-goers, spectators were three deep along the parade route. Some parade-watching veterans brought chairs to enjoy the hour-long event, and nearly everyone came with a blanket.

"The wind today is chilly, but we have seen much worse," Ramsay said.

Nearly 3,500 people participated in the parade, though not all of them marched on the street.

Along the sidewalk there was participation of a different kind. Lincoln resident, Pam Nelson, 40, wearing pointy ears and a festive hat held a placard that read "Elves of the World Unite".

Nelson said she arranged the small protest to encourage elfin solidarity and to raise awareness of Santa's helpers long hours during the holiday season. Nelson said she has attended the parade every year since she moved to Lincoln in 1988.

Back at the corner of 10th and O, Ramsay ushered a group of golden retrievers and their owners around the corner and onto the parade route. As a volunteer from the State Farm Insurance Agency, Ramsay has braved the elements every year since 1996 to assist with the event.

"I just love watching the kids and seeing their eyes light up," Ramsay said. "That's why I come back here every year."

Story by Sharon Kolbet

## HEY YOU!

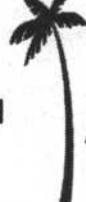
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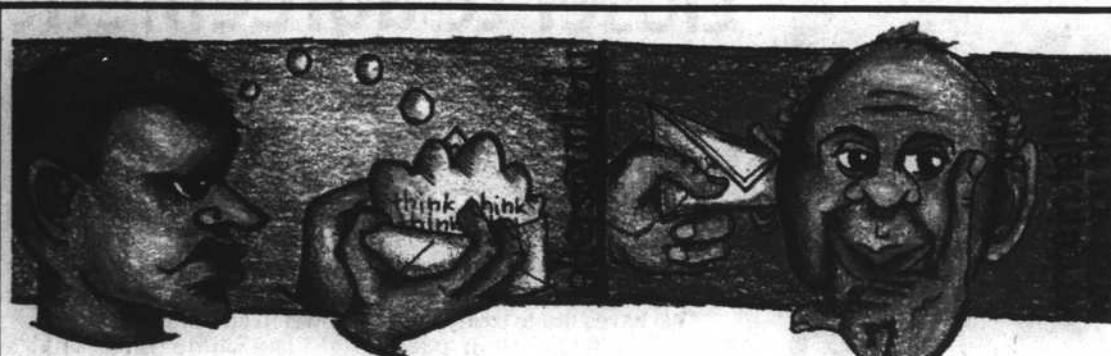
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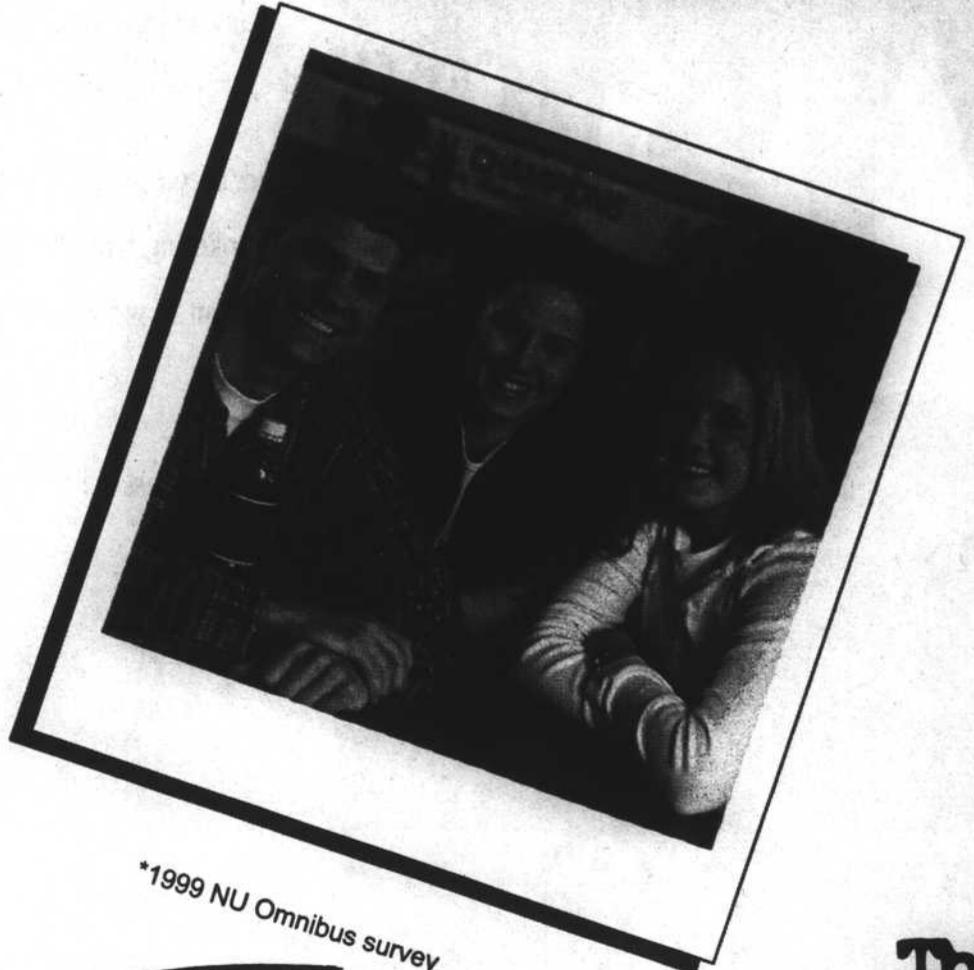
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**74% of those students are really smart.**



\*1999 NU Omnibus survey

**74%**

**The majority of NU students have 5 or fewer drinks when they party.\***



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