

UNL students come to the rescue

By Jane Johnson

The dispatcher at a Lincoln ambulance company takes the incoming emergency call. With the flash of bright red lights and a moan of the siren, UNL business majors John Schafer and John Hibberd are off to work.

"We put our lives on the line constantly," Schafer said. "One never knows what the situation will be. It is different every time."

Schafer and Hibberd, who each work 40 to 50 hours per week, began their jobs as radio dispatchers. They now are ambulance attendants.

To qualify for the job Schafer had ambulance training in Scottsbluff, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training and all offered Red Cross courses. Hibberd had all the basic Red Cross courses. Both have had Emergency Medical Technician Ambulance (EMTA) training, an 81-hour course.

"No matter how much training you have, you've got to experience a real situation for yourself to learn," Schafer said.

Basic duties of the two are to check all equipment on the ambulances upon their arrival at work. They then wait for a call to come through the dispatcher.

"The more we know about a call the better prepared we are to handle it," Hibberd said. "It is dangerous to go

out on a call totally blind as to what they call is about."

There are two types of calls. Trauma calls include accidents, shootings, heart attack victims, and strokes. Transfer calls involve taking a patient from one location to another.

Schafer said a hard part of his job is to decide if he can save a life.

"The victim may be breathing very little and dying," he said. "Maybe they could be saved. You have to make the decision to work on them (give oxygen) or not to."

"There are a lot of psychotics and other unusual situations we are called to. You have to learn how to save your own neck," Schafer said.

"Sometimes we don't even go to the door until the police are there to assist," Hibberd said.

"It is a high risk job, especially when we have to go through red light intersections at 70-miles-per-hour. You don't know if people will stop," Schafer said.

Schafer, a senior, said the main reason he started the job was to prepare himself for anything that might happen to himself or a family member.

Hibberd, a junior, said he would like to be a paramedic some day.

Schafer said he intended to go to medical school but does not regret staying in business.

"I enjoy meeting people. I like calls where the people aren't hurt, such as transfer calls," Schafer said. "Some of the elderly people really have a lot to say, you can learn from them."

Schafer said the numerous stories about full moons seem to hold true with his work.

"It isn't a fallacy. I guess more people are out and active because it is lighter," he said.

Schafer said suicide calls bother him the most, along with campus and local bar calls.

"I'm always afraid I will know the victim," he said.

Schafer said he has hardened since he began driving the ambulance.

"I want to keep learning about helping and meeting people," he said. "I want to learn about living and dying."

Husker jail-bound

Percy Eichelberger, former UNL football player, will begin serving a 20-day jail term tonight for a misdemeanor assault and battery conviction, according to county court records.

Eichelberger's attorney, Brad W. Burden, said the sentence may be appealed.

The jail term and a \$100 fine result from the January assault of a UNL woman student in Schramm Residence Hall, according to the records.

Eichelberger originally was charged with second-degree sexual assault, but a district judge ruled there was insufficient evidence to support the charge, the records said.

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