

Speaker tells garbage 'truth'

Many have misconceptions about landfill contents, he says

By Ann Stack
Staff Reporter

Garbage is a pretty dirty business, one archaeologist says.

Dr. William Rathje of the University of Arizona spoke Wednesday as part of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Environmental Studies seminars. His topic was "Digging Up Garbage: The Archaeology of Us."

"Garbage is the truth," Rathje said.

So, in 1987, Rathje set out to uncover that truth — literally. He began to dig up landfills.

What he found may surprise some people.

"There are two realities — the one that's in our heads about the way we think things are going, and the reality of what's going on every day. Those two realities are often very different from each other," he said.

The reality, he said, is that Styrofoam, fast-food containers and disposable diapers make up less than 3 percent of the space in land-

“**Garbage is the truth.**”
—Rathje
archaeologist

fills. Even plastics make up only about 16 percent, Rathje said.

Paper products, however, make up 40 to 50 percent of landfills, while construction demolition debris makes up 20 to 30 percent.

Rathje said among his main concerns were misconceptions and ignorance about the composition of a landfill.

"What worries me the most is the misunderstanding of what's in a landfill — not that we won't be able to deal with it," Rathje said.

"We need to use the fact that people believe there's a garbage 'crisis' as efficiently as we can. As long as there have been humans, there's been the problem of too much garbage," he said.

Rathje said that while recycling

was a valiant effort, it was sometimes in vain.

"Most people are not recycling. It isn't taking stuff out to the curb. You collect and separate, but you don't recycle.

"Companies are not willing to buy a recycling plant until they know they'll make money from it. In the United States of America, it's politics and economics as usual," Rathje said.

Rathje said the term "recycled" was misleading, as most products were composed of reused materials. He said the percentage of recycled material in a product should be at least 15 percent.

Rathje said the most practical solution to cutting down on garbage was to create less from the beginning.

Rathje is scheduled to speak again Thursday on the "History of the Garbage Project" and Friday on "Landfill Archaeology and Groundwater Contamination."

Both seminars are sponsored by Environmental Studies and will be in the Bessey Hall auditorium.

Bike opposition withdrawn

By Heather Lampe
Staff Reporter

ASUN senators decided Wednesday to withdraw a resolution that opposed a proposed bicycle dismount zone within the core of campus.

Ryan Hughes, student representative to the Parking Advisory Committee, fielded questions about the proposal during open forum and asked for opinions and ideas.

Deb Silhacek, senator for the College of Arts and Sciences, said the students she had talked to said the bicycle issue was just a matter of courtesy.

"They think it should be a courtesy type of thing, an understanding. Watch out for the other guy, and things would be fine," she said.

J.B. Howell, RESUME presidential candidate for ASUN, said in open forum that ASUN needed to take a strong stand against the proposed dis-

mount zone because, for the most part, bicyclists tended to be courteous.

Howell also suggested that lines be painted on the larger campus sidewalks for bicycle paths.

In other action, ASUN passed a bill suggesting the evaluation of teaching practices for first-year graduate assistants.

The bill calls for studying current practices of evaluating first-year graduate students, conducting evaluations by students, and requiring formal training for first-year graduate students and faculty who have received little formal training in the past.

Silhacek said she wrote the bill because during her years in college she had been focusing on the teaching quality at the university.

"There needs to be some sort of class to prepare a first-year graduate student to teach. This prepares a person to enter a classroom," Silhacek said.

Jolly

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think about minority issues, Jolly said.

"I can't be the only person that holds responsibility," he said. "If someone else will take it, too, we're moving forward as a university."

The Affirmative Action and Diversity Office has two responsibilities, Jolly said. The office must first make sure that Affirmative Action laws are followed — that qualified people are given the opportunity to compete for positions. The Multicultural Affairs Office did this, Jolly said.

He said the percentage of Hispanic applicants for a recent opening in the

office was higher than the national and regional average. Of the five applicants who were interviewed, one was a Mexican American.

The Affirmative Action and Diversity Office's second responsibility is to make sure Equal Opportunity laws are followed, Jolly said.

These laws require that no applicant be discriminated on the basis of sex, age, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, veteran's status, national or ethnic origin or sexual orientation.

Fair hiring, Jolly said, is only the beginning to creating a better environment at the university. But focusing only on hiring detracted from more important issues, he said.

NU Press moves to campus hub

From Staff Reports

The University of Nebraska Press has a new home.

After five years in the planning, the University News Service reported the press finally relocated its operations to the former Union Insurance Building, 14th and Q streets.

The press had been located in Nebraska Hall.

Despite the hassles of moving, press Director Willis Regier said he and his staff couldn't be happier with their new home.

"The location is much better. After being on the fringes of campus for so many years, we finally feel like we're a part of the university," he said. "We're delighted to be just a block away from the State Historical Soci-

ety, a block away from the library and a block away from the largest bookstore in Lincoln."

University Press employs more than 50 regular personnel and more than 50 students — far too many people for the press's old site, Regier said.

"We were so cramped, we literally had people working in closets," he said. "The new location is so much more spacious."

Renovations at the new press headquarters will be complete as soon as a women's rest room is finished, Regier said. And, although parking has become a challenge for some, Regier has heard few other complaints.

The University of Nebraska Computing Network will move into the area vacated by the press.

Employees may get tax break

From Staff Reports

Employees who receive tuition help from their employers may not have to pay taxes on it, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

Employees may exclude up to \$5,250 worth of qualifying employer-provided educational assistance they received.

This program is retroactive to July 1, 1992 and extends, currently, until Dec. 31, 1994.

An amended return, Form 1040X, for 1992 can be filed by employees who were required to include in income the value of educational assistance provided by the employer beginning July 1, 1992.

An educational assistance program is a written plan an employer establishes for employees. The employer may provide courses directly, pay for

courses directly or reimburse employees for their educational expenses. Graduate-level courses also may qualify for the exclusion.

Employers and employees do not pay employment taxes on qualifying amounts and the value of the qualifying assistance is not included in the employee's W-2 form. Employers may claim the value of the educational assistance they provide under a qualified plan as an ordinary and necessary business expense.

IRS Publication 535, Business Expenses, gives more information on educational assistance programs for employers. Employees can refer to Publications 508, Educational Expenses, and 525, Taxable and Nontaxable Income.

All are available at no cost by calling the IRS at 1-800-829-3676.

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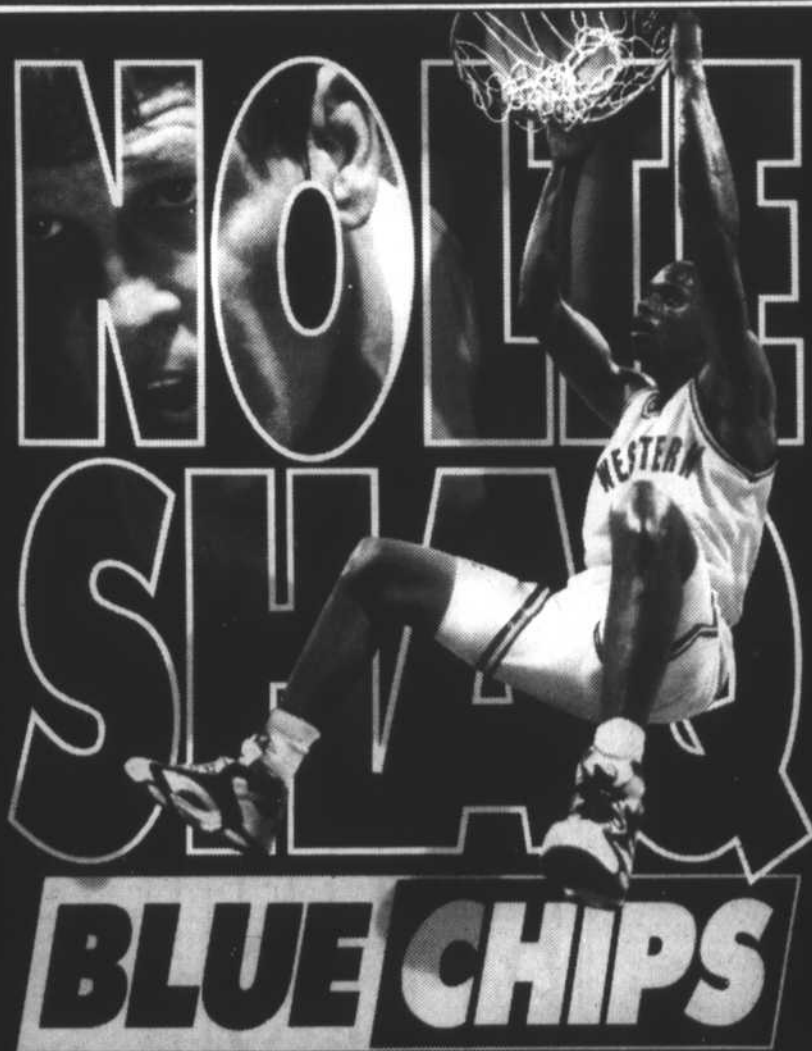
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POLICE REPORT

Beginning midnight Monday

- 10:54 a.m. — Two-vehicle accident, Area 20 lot at 14th and W streets, \$450 damage.
- 12:38 p.m. — Vandalism to vehicle, west Memorial Stadium meters, \$75 damage.
- 1:37 p.m. — Wallet stolen, Selleck Quadrangle, \$22 loss.
- 1:46 p.m. — Accident, Stadium Drive, \$1,000 damage.
- 1:58 p.m. — Supplies stolen, Architecture Hall, \$584 loss.
- 8:41 p.m. — Purse stolen, Nebraska Union, \$140 loss.
- 10:16 p.m. — Phone calls, Selleck Quad-

range.

Beginning midnight Tuesday

- 7:49 a.m. — Radar detector stolen, Area 6 lot near Burr Residence Hall, \$60 loss.
- 12:46 p.m. — Wallet stolen, University Health Center, \$90 loss.
- 4:32 p.m. — Hit-and-run accident, S Street between 15th and 16th streets, \$200 damage.
- 6:50 p.m. — Burglary, Abel Residence Hall, \$100 cash stolen.
- 6:52 p.m. — Phone calls, Smith Residence Hall.