

UNL campus not completely accessible to disabled—Munn

By Mary Louise Knapp

Difficulty with opening doors, getting into elevators and up ramps, a wheelchair, basketball game, head-on collisions with other "temporarily disabled" people, and smiles were all part of Disability Awareness Day, Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m.

The afternoon's activities began at Broyhill Fountain with opening remarks by Bradley Munn, director of the Affirmative Action Office. Munn referred to himself as "Coordinator of Services for the Handicapped."

Munn said that it would take more than 3 million dollars to make all three NU campuses completely accessible to the disabled.

"It is doubtful that enough funds will be available, at least not in the near future, to make all three campuses accessible," he said.

Munn also remarked that "The disabled, like minority groups, have had to fight to get equal treatment. We have tried to make UNL an equal opportunity university."

Munn estimated that there are about 225 handicapped students at UNL, most with disabilities that are not readily seen, including students who are blind, deaf, arthritic, and alcoholic.

"There is still a lot of improvement that could be made in UNL facilities," Munn said.

Simulation exercises, in which volunteers got in wheelchairs and were given instructions such as "Use a pay phone" or "go up the ramp at the student union," followed. Bill Rush and Susie Dahl, two disabled UNL students, Bruce Berggren, pastor of the Lutheran Student Chapel and Center, and Stuart Kolnick of the University Programming Council explained the exercises and gave information on the problems of handicapped students.

Rush showed some of the areas on campus that are difficult or impossible to get to. Teacher's College, he remarked, is totally inaccessible to the disabled, there is no railing on the ramp at the Business Administration Building, and the ramp at the Woods Music Building is steep.

After the simulation exercises, the group went to the Coliseum for a wheel chair basketball game between Lincoln's Wheelie-Poppers and volunteers from UNL fraternities.

Berggren made note of the fact that the Coliseum is inaccessible to the handicapped, but they chose that site for the basketball game to show that "handicapped people need recreational facilities too."

Lincoln Mayor Helen Boosalis threw in the game ball. Disability Awareness Day is sponsored by Campus Ministries and the University Programming Council.

Accuracy of radar disputed, reading discrepancies possible

By Michelle Carr

The "Fuzzbuster" versus the "fuzz" was one way to describe a legislative hearing on the reliability of radar use in speed detection Friday.

Members of the Nebraska State Patrol told the Legislature's Judiciary Committee that a trained officer can successfully use the radar units to accurately determine speeds. Col. Elmer Kohmetscher, superintendent of the state patrol, said radar is an effective tool in lowering speedings, thus lowering the state's death toll.

However, Rod Dornsife, a former police officer, who now serves as a consultant for Electroret Inc., the manufacturer of the "Fuzzbuster" detection device, told the committee that radar units give inaccurate readings and most of the final speed determination is up to the law enforcement officer.

"There is such a lot happening in a short period of time," he said, adding that officers must first guess the speed of a suspected violator, look at the speed of the patrol vehicle, look at the radar speed and listen for an audible sound emitted from the radar, which signals a speeder.

Dornsife testified earlier this summer in the nationally publicized Dade County, Fla. trial in which a Florida judge threw out 80 speeding cases based on radar readings.

The affect of stationary objects also throws off radar accuracy, Dornsife said. Overpasses, bridges and trees are known to disrupt radar readings, he said.

Sen. Ernest Chambers of Omaha, told the committee he noticed several discrepancies in radar use when he witnessed a state patrol demonstration Thursday. Two

radar units were demonstrated by the patrol, both on city streets and highways.

The two units often showed different speeds for one car, sometimes a 15 mile per hour difference, Chambers said. Also, the unit tended to read the speed of a larger vehicle, such as a truck, rather than a small car, which was following close behind the larger vehicle.

"From what we saw the units were unstable if you apply the change in read-outs for no reason," Chambers said.

Sgt. Steven Grosshans, of the state patrol, said the range of radar detection is from 300 feet to 2 miles. He admitted that it is possible not to detect a car following a truck, but only on the interstate.

Dornsife said the public fears radar and feels helpless when contesting radar determinations in court.

Kohmetscher said in 1978 the patrol received only 18 complaints against tickets issued through radar detection. More than 116,000 speeding tickets were issued by the patrol in the same year, he added.

Kohmetscher stressed the fact that radar provides evidence needed in the courts.

Dornsife said the discrepancies of radar use can be attributed to bad equipment and improper training.

Radar detection "is a difficult situation and mistakes do occur," he said.

Ed Sergeant, vice president of sales for MPH Industries, which manufactures the K55 radar unit used by the state patrol and other Nebraska law enforcement agencies, disagreed with Dornsife's testimony.

Sergeant, also a former police officer, said that the K55 unit works with proper training and has never been disproved in any court.

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