

Neighborhoods cleaning up; program swept by self-pride

By Kent Warneke

The City-County Health Department is beginning a neighborhood approach to cleaning up residential areas which, according to its administrator, will be more effective than any other program.

Dennis Grams, environmental health administrator, said, "If we would go out and write up citations for safety or health hazards we won't gain anything. They'll just go pay the fine and do it again."

"However, if we go right into the neighborhoods and try to develop some pride in the individual neighborhoods then that would have a lasting effect," he said.

Health Department employees will go into the targeted neighborhood and spend 100 percent of their time with

the neighborhood organizations and the residents, he said. "We're going to try and help improve the neighborhood environment through the use of education, telling the residents what the health ordinances are and making the people feel like they are a part of the community," Grams said.

Bruce Baugh, one of the employees involved with the program, first started the neighborhood approach when he began spending time in the Clinton-Malone area, east of Vine Street to 27th Street.

"It turned out to be a very successful first experience," Grams said. "The neighborhood is now in pretty good shape and the people are interested in keeping it that way."

Grams said the program was originally financed by the federal Housing and Urban Development Agency for an

environmental program. The program was so successful that when federal funds ran out, the city took over the financing.

Grams said neighborhoods primarily filled with renters rather than homeowners can cause problems.

"Any kind of population that rotates is going to cause problems," Grams said. "It's hard to develop a sense of neighborhood pride when the residents don't know how long they will be living there."

Grams said officials often found new owners living in apartments at first, but the problem is dwindling.

"It's hard to measure success in a program like this, but if you go to the neighborhoods that have started programs, you can visually see the results," Grams said. "We've heard nothing but good comments from the neighborhoods."

Council approves liquor license for Lincoln Exchange

By Debbie Hemminger

Approval of a liquor license for a proposed downtown restaurant passed Monday at the City Council meeting.

The site of the proposed restaurant, The Lincoln Exchange, originally housed the Bell Telephone Company and has been listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The restaurant intends to be a first class, full service restaurant, offering a tidbit menu and a specialty menu, along with a full bar, according to representatives of the restaurant.

The council has a horrible liquor policy, said Jim Haberlan, a Haberlan and Associates architect and owner of Barrymore's, 124 No. 13th, adding there is no rhyme or

reason for the basis of the council's decisions. He said he gave a similar presentation four years ago.

Sphinx, Inc. which is investing in the restaurant presented complex architectural designs to the Council and had three representatives speak to the Council today. Tam Allan, president of Sphinx, Inc. and executive vice-president of Tews Investment Company, said he has visited council members to get advice on what the council would like to see at the meeting.

Haberlan said there are no other guidelines except for the architectural rendering or the prettiness of a presentation. He said he calls it discrimination, adding there is no guarantee that Sphinx will live up to their

present guidelines. However, he said the license can be "taken away at any time."

When Haberlan's request for a liquor license was refused, he had to buy a business that had an existing license, the Penthouse, 19th and O Streets, and then returned to the council to ask for a relocation of the license. It was granted.

Allan, a senior in UNL Law College, said there was no legal way to insure that the company followed through with its presentations. However, there was an "obligation based on faith" to live up to the council's expectations.

He said his understanding of the council's liquor license policy indicated a preference of unique and different businesses.

The restaurant is expected to open Feb. 1, 1980. The State Historical Society will work closely to insure the correct preservation of the building which was built before the turn of the century. According to the presentation, "costs for the rehabilitation will exceed the amount needed for the initial purchase of the buildings."

Two other liquor license questions went before the council, Monday. A request by Far West Services for CoCo's Famous Hamburgers, 120 N. 66th St., was denied approval, with Councilman Joe Hampton declaring a conflict of interest. Approval of a liquor license for Wallbangers Racquetball Club, 330 West P St., was postponed.

Lincoln's criminal institution emphasizes extensive testing

By Kathy Stokebrand

Homosexual assaults by prisoners is one of the most disruptive forces Lincoln's Diagnostic and Evaluations Center is faced with, according to its superintendent.

Gary Grammer said the homosexuality problem is dealt with at the center daily and some of the most serious assaults are homosexually related.

The center, the result of a \$5 million legislative package, opened Aug. 1. Grammer said it has a population of 106 inmates with a capacity of 176.

The center employs about 110 people, but other professionals and specialists work there part time.

The center is located on West Van Dorn Street adjacent to the Lincoln Correctional Center. Both centers are two of the three major adult male criminal institutions in Nebraska. The State Penitentiary is the third.

All offenders in the state are sent to the Diagnostic and Evaluation Center, a short term facility. The regular length of stay for an inmate is 30 days.

However, the courts can send an offender to the center for 90 days evaluation and then sentence him, based on the information gathered there.

THE CENTER, GRAMMER said, is different from many other diagnostic and evaluation centers in the country because it emphasizes a more complete, detailed med-

ical examination of the inmates than most do.

The center contains extensive examination equipment including an X-ray machine, optical testing equipment and a fully equipped dental office.

The major control center of the institution, Grammer said, is operated 24 hours a day by correctional staff members.

WHEN A NEW inmate comes to the center, he is legally received with his commitment papers. Then he is photographed, fingerprinted, showered, de-loused and given a uniform.

The inmate is taken to the medical support people to be screened for immediate medical needs. A case manager supervisor interviews the inmate to orientate him to the facility and to give the supervisor an idea of the offender's emotional stability.

In the next three to four weeks the inmate is examined more thoroughly sociologically, medically and psychologically.

After this examination, Grammer said, the inmate, a psychologist and the case manager review the strengths and weaknesses of the offender. Together they develop a personal plan for the inmate.

A final classification document, which gives a complete history of the offender, evaluation results and recommendations, is signed by each individual who evaluated the inmate. The inmate is not allowed to see this document.

Simants...

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"Is it legally sane for a person to fondle sexually a dead person?" Schroeder asked. "He was a sick man. He played with dead women."

During a taped interview with police, which the jury was allowed to hear, Simants admitted fondling Mrs. Kellie, though he didn't know whether she was dead or alive.

In his rebuttal, Holscher criticized Schroeder for calling the defendant "dumb."

"It has terrible connotations," he said. But Holscher said Simants, even with his low IQ, was capable of a normal life.

"At this level, this defendant could perform normally, conduct a good life and get along fine in this world," Holscher said.

Both attorneys accused the other's expert witnesses of botching their interviews with Simants.

Six doctors, both psychiatrists and

psychologists, three hired by each side, interviewed Simants and testified during the trial concerning their findings.

Schroeder also accused Holscher of playing on the emotions of the jury. He said Holscher needlessly introduced police and FBI witnesses to describe details of the murder when the murder itself was not being questioned by the defense.

"Mr. Holscher is not concerned with the real sanity of this case," Schroeder said. "His concern is with waving the bloody sheet in front of you."

Simants was originally convicted by a Lincoln County jury in 1976, and sentenced to death. But Lincoln County Sheriff Gordon Gilster was accused of playing cards with sequestered jurors during the trial, and the Nebraska Supreme Court overturned the conviction.

The retrial was moved to Lancaster County after District Judge Hugh Stuart ruled that Simants' could not get a fair trial in North Platte.

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