

Sexual assaults...

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Compared to other cities its size, Lincoln ranks fairly low in the number of rapes reported, Smith said.

In 1980, Lincoln (pop. 182,000) had 57 rapes reported to police. Des Moines, Iowa, (pop. 200,000) had 101 reported. Fort Wayne, Ind., (pop. 171,000) had 83 and Huntington Beach, Calif., (pop. 170,000) had 59.

Smith said women in Lincoln are probably more careful when they go out alone at night and more conscious of the city's rape problems. He said less violence in Lincoln is also a factor.

"It's kind of a midwestern community where people aren't as violent as they are in some areas," he said. "There's probably more respect, too."

Detective Don Kahler said education of the public accounts for Lincoln having fewer sexual assaults than some cities its size. Classes through agencies and schools have taught women and others to defend themselves against attackers, he said.

The court system also has helped, he said. "The courts have begun working with this a little more and given better convictions, more serious sentencing," Kahler said. He said courts gave minimum fines or sentences in the past, but frequently give maximum sentences now.

Kahler said about 95 percent of all sexual assaults in Lincoln still involve female victims.

"Occasionally a male reports one but not too often," Kahler said. "If we get a report like that it usually comes from a jail complex."

Kahler said first degree sexual assault is the most serious problem, but the city also has a lot of minor cases. Indecent exposure and people coming up to others on the street and touching them are frequent occurrences, he said.

Detective Linda Steinman works with child abuse cases for LPD and handles some sexual assault cases.

"The number of reports of child abuse have increased, especially those reports involving incest," Steinman said.

She said the number of sexual assaults on children may not have increased, but over the last two to three years, reports have increased. More open discussion of incest has a part in the increased number of reports, she said.

Usually, a third party reports the incest incident to police, Steinman said. Incest generally involves a father and daughter, or stepfather and stepdaughter, she said.

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UNL student dies of congenital sickness

Autopsy reports for UNL student Mitch Gruber have been released by the Lancaster County Attorney's office. Gruber died Sept. 18.

Ron Lahners, county attorney, said the autopsy results showed that hypertropic cardiomyopathy without obstruction caused Gruber's death.

Dr. Gerald Fleischli, medical director of the University Health Center, defined the disorder as a congenital enlargement of the heart.

Gruber died shortly after 7 a.m. at Lincoln General Hospital. He was given cardio-pulmonary resuscitation by Cather Residence Hall health aides and the Bryan Memorial Heart Team.

Gruber was eighteen.

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