



Dave Trouba/Daily Nebraskan

Ruth Michalecki and UNL's telecommunications system

UNL operators handle calls for students, government

By Judi Nygren

UNL's Telecommunications Center has changed from a horse and buggy to a Cadillac, the center's director said.

Ruth Michalecki said the advances were made by changing from manual cord telephone administrative authority from the physical plant to the business and finance department and moving from 14th and R streets to Nebraska Hall.

Since she began as a cord-board operator 26 years ago, Michalecki said, UNL's communication system has grown from 2,000 telephones to 10,000.

Much of the growth occurred eight years ago when UNL installed phones in every residence hall room, she said. Before this, Michalecki said, each hall floor shared a phone from which students could receive, but not make, calls.

The number of calls the center receives also has grown, she said. The center handles approximately 85,000 calls every month.

Government calls contribute to the load, she said. The state joined the center eight years ago, and the city and county linked up more than two years ago, Michalecki said.

"What are the hours of the city dump?" is the most common government-related question operators receive, Michalecki said.

Along with answering government calls, the operators monitor fire, security and temperature alarms throughout campus.

UNL's institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources depends on the operators to watch for lighting and temperature changes in its experimental plants.

Operators also assist an agriculture meteorologist to monitor water depth and quality through phone wires dropped into wells.

The center's teleconferencing enables top executives to talk to UNL classes over the phone, disabled students to hear lectures without visiting campus and UNL officials to attend meetings without leaving their desks, Michalecki said.

People outside Lincoln also benefit from the center's services, Michalecki said. Out-state people can call the center's toll-free number and get answers to questions about tuition,

registration, drop/add, grades or financial aid. Michalecki said the service brings "UNL as close as the phone" to all Nebraska residents.

Because technology is always advancing, Michalecki said she thinks the center will offer more services in the future. She said she hopes each residence hall room soon will be equipped with a computer linked to the center. The computers would enable students to attend

classes in their own rooms, she said.

For the immediate future, Michalecki said, the center has proposed connecting students' long distance services to the center's existing network, but the Department of Administrative Services said the link-up would be illegal. If the center is able to legally hook the two systems together, Michalecki said, students would save 20 to 25 percent on their long distance bills.

Voters now signing up

The League of Women Voters will conduct voter registration drives at the following sites today: the recreation center, 1225 F St., noon to 2:30 p.m. and the Centrum, downtown, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Registration drive sites on Wednesday will be the Goodyear plant, 4021 N. 56th St., 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and the Commodity Distribution building of the Naval Reserve Center, 1625 N. 10th St., 9 a.m. to noon.

The Naval Reserve Center also will be the site of a drive from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Thursday.

THE NEBRASKA UNION AND EAST UNION ARE NOW ACCEPTING OFFICE SPACE APPLICATIONS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1984-1985.

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