

Computer lab available for math department

By Michelle Wing
Staff Reporter

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln math department has used a federal grant normally awarded to physical science laboratories to install a new computer lab in Bessey Hall.

The new lab, housed in Room 105, contains 12 Next workstations and will serve students enrolled in post-calculus courses, said Thomas Shores, mathematics and statistics professor.

"The intent of the lab is to teach at intermediate levels and to use the workstation as a research tool," Shores said. "We are on the cutting edge of mathematical sciences."

He said the math department received the grant from a National Science Foundation program called Instructional Laboratory Improvement, which is generally granted for laboratory upgrades in physical sciences.

Despite that fact, the math department applied for a \$75,000 grant and received \$51,000. UNL had three years to match those funds, but has already

done so, Shores said. This has allowed the lab to get more computer equipment.

The department received another \$12,000 from UNL to install an air conditioner, a security system and several tables in the lab room.

The lab opened last year for about six weeks and was temporarily located in Room 308 of Burnett Hall until last fall, when the new, "permanent home" was provided, Shores said.

He said some sections of honors calculus, Differential Equations 221 and Linear Algebra 314 are using the lab.

To use the lab, students must take an orientation session or have a math course with a lab component, Shores said. Anthropology and math faculty members and graduate students also may use the lab.

The lab is staffed by math counselors and four lab attendants hired by the math department. The lab is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Historical objectivity questioned

Professors try to avoid bias

By Kim Spurlock
Staff Reporter

Grade-school children are taught that Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492, only to learn later that American Indians were on the continent long before Columbus.

But it is no monumental discovery that teachers interpret events based on society's prejudices and their own backgrounds, three University of Nebraska-Lincoln professors said.

Agreeing with some experts at the American Historical Association's annual meeting, history professors at UNL said historians can't truly be objective.

Professor Lloyd Ambrosius said he thinks scholarly ideals used to be objective, but in reality, objectivity is impossible.

"We strive to be definitive, but realize it's impossible," Ambrosius said.

Ambrosius said he presents his lectures with a variety of perspectives, including his own views.

"There is no way to avoid presenting your own views, but I don't

— " **You must always be aware and guard against bias.**

Ambrosius
UNL history professor

try to document my views. You must always be aware and guard against bias," Ambrosius said.

At the historical association's meeting in New York, professors and historians debated the question of objectivity during research, according to a story in the Jan. 16 Chronicle of Higher Education.

James McClelland, an associate professor of history, said historians can't be objective, but they should state if they have assumptions, questions, outlooks or political opinions about the history they write.

Historical writers "should state them (opinions) at the beginning, so that the reader can be aware," McClelland said.

McClelland said scholarly inter-

pretation is not objective and usually depends on the interpreter. Some interpretation is in accord with facts, he said, but interpreters have different conclusions — some are more objective than others.

McClelland said he begins his lectures with a few questions and then shows how they could have been resolved or answered. He said his interpretation comes out when he thinks his audience is confused.

"I try to explain by ad-libbing. I try to think as if I was in the minds of the people" being studied, McClelland said.

Professor Nels Forde agreed that no one really can be objective about history. There is always a personal element involved, he said.

When Ford lectures, his views and opinions also are discussed.

"I try to label my views as my opinion. 'This is what I believe,' I tell them," Ford said. He added that some of the greatest written history was one-sided.

"Historians were writing to prove something and to persuade. It wasn't objectivity and everyone knew that, but because it was so eloquent made it great history," Ford said.

Program to retain retirees

From Staff Reports

Faculty members whose careers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln have ended soon will find it easier to stay involved with the university.

Faculty members are creating a program that will organize volunteer services of retired staff members, said Bryan Van Deun, president of the

UNL Alumni Association.

"A lot of retirees have been offering their services in an unstructured way," he said. "They like to stay involved with the university."

Lyle Young, a retired UNL associate dean of engineering and technology, said the program will match retirees with services they are interested in providing.

Van Deun said participants in the program could volunteer in many areas, from academic advising to secretarial work. They could host visiting delegates or help design curricula for courses.

Van Deun said officials hope to have the program going this summer after a coordinator is hired and funding for paperwork is available.

Israeli

Continued from Page 1 remain in Tel Aviv. The students arrived in Israel on July 29, before the crisis in the gulf started.

Koos completed his studies before returning, but said about 40 percent of the foreign students left early. Koos said he thought most of the students wanted to stay, but left because their worried parents pressured them.

After the crisis in the gulf began, the program at Tel Aviv University continued unaffected, but students were

issued gas masks and trained in their use, Koos said. He said they weren't expected to carry their masks with them at all times, probably so they or their parents wouldn't get too frightened.

The Israeli media portrayed the situation as less dangerous than the American press did, he said.

He said the Israeli people were calm in the face of the crisis because of their experience with similar situations.

Several of Koos' American friends were scheduled to remain in Israel for the academic year and, though some

left at the end of the first semester, a few are still in Tel Aviv. He also left behind roommates who were Israelis.

From these sources, Koos has learned that missiles have fallen near areas he was familiar with during his stay in Israel.

Lainof, a sophomore elementary education major, said she, too, is familiar with the sites of Scud attacks.

"I was in all the places that are being bombed right now," she said. Lainof spent eight weeks in Israel during the summer after her junior year of high school.

Morrill

Continued from Page 1

gents' 13-item list of capital construction priority projects at the University of Nebraska.

"It would be nice to have them helping us instead of hurting us," Wesely said.

Regents Chairman Don Blank of McCook called the situation one of not enough funds and too many worthy projects.

He said prioritizing the projects was the "unfun part of being on the board and also administration."

Regent Margaret Robinson of Norfolk said the regents do support Morrill Hall.

But what Robinson said she wants to see is "some action on the part of the citizens of Nebraska" for Morrill Hall renovations.

LB828 is not the first legislation to appropriate money for Morrill Hall, but Wesely said \$4 million is needed to "finish the job" that began with Morrill Hall building renovations.

Hugh Genoways, Morrill Hall director, agreed.

"We've got a world-class museum facility here . . . We've got collections as good as anywhere in the United

States," he said. "What we don't have is something to bring it all together."

Legislative appropriations for Morrill Hall in 1987 paid for such things as a climate-controlled environment, handicap accessibility, paint, carpet, a new roof and windows, Genoways said.

However, Genoways said, 40 percent of Morrill Hall still is "sitting empty."

He said that if LB828 passes, the funds would pay for biological and natural history exhibits on the first floor, paleontological exhibits on the second floor and anthropological exhibits on the third floor.

DWI

Continued from Page 1

surprised to learn that Lancaster County's pre-trial diversion program doesn't apply to DWI cases. Under the program, those under a certain age can clear their record by performing community service.

Stall said the straight sentence for someone convicted of DWI is seven to 30 days in jail, a \$200 to \$500 fine and a six-month driver's license revocation.

Stall said students often will receive probation rather than time in jail. The type of probation people convicted of DWI receive depends on their performance on an alcohol evaluation test designed to measure their alcohol dependency, she said.

Stall said a typical probation usually includes either in-patient or outpatient treatment at a hospital, an alcohol education course, a two months' driver's license revocation and a requirement to stay drug and alcohol free for a year.

"The police have started to periodically urine test people on probation," she said. "Probation is really getting stricter."

Stall cautioned that Lincoln police officers are sensitive to driving violations in the downtown area.

"The police have to have a reasonable suspicion that the law is being violated. This can be anything from having a headlight out to weaving, even in your own lane," she said. "Particularly when you're driving after one o'clock — when the bars close — in the downtown area, you're going to be scrutinized."

Hand-held sirens to be sold next week

From Staff Reports

Hand-held sirens soon to be sold at the University Bookstore should alarm assailants and give victims extra time to find safety, said Kathryn Hindmand, a volunteer at the Women's Resource Center.

Dozens of hand-held alarms, which resemble key rings and emit a siren when a stopper is pulled, have been

ordered by the University Bookstore, said Gwen Plummer, general merchandise buyer.

Hindmand said she contacted bookstore officials in December and suggested they order the alarms for retail sale.

The alarms are needed to help anyone who feels threatened, she said. Gays, lesbians, Arab-Americans and women could use the alarm for extra

security, she said. "This is an effective means to help women from being attacked," Hindmand said. "And it's not just for women."

"People who are genuinely concerned about their safety on campus" will buy the alarms, Plummer said.

The alarms will cost about \$6, Plummer said, and will be available at the bookstore next week.

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