

Daily Nebraskan

October 22, 1992

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Vol. 92 No. 43



THURSDAY

80/51
Warm today and a chance of rain tonight. Tomorrow, partly sunny and cooler.

Officials hope Baldwin probe reveals truth

By Susie Arth
Senior Reporter

Two Nebraska officials hope a federal investigation of the incidents leading up to the shooting of former Nebraska football player Andrew Scott Baldwin will find one thing: the truth.

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne and Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha said they supported a U.S. Justice Department investigation and hoped it would reveal the truth about the shooting of Baldwin.

The investigation, which was requested by U.S. Sens. Bob Kerrey and Jim Exon and 1st District Rep. Peter Hoagland, aims to determine the exact sequence of events on Sept. 5, the night Baldwin was shot.

"We believe that the interests of Mr. Baldwin personally and the public concerns about this incident both warrant further attention," stated a

"If you fail to treat a mentally ill person the way you should, then you've violated that person's civil rights."

Chambers
state senator

letter that Kerrey, Hoagland and Exon sent to the Justice Department.

Osborne said he hoped the investigation would resolve the conflicting reports that have surfaced since Baldwin's shooting.

"Maybe the innuendoes and rumors can finally be put to rest," he said.

Osborne said he had talked to Baldwin about his recollections of the night he was shot, but he refused to say what Baldwin remembered.

Chambers said he wanted to find out what really happened because he was dissatisfied with the reports the officers provided of the incident and the ensuing investigation.

The investigation thus far, he said, has been handled with "total incompetency."

Chambers said there were many inconsistencies in the reports.

The Omaha police officers, he said, claimed that Baldwin was reaching for officer Peggy Truckenbrod's gun, yet no fingerprints were found on her holster or gun.

An Omaha police spokesman could not be reached to comment.

Also, Chambers said, witness reports of the incident vary regarding whether the officers or Baldwin initiated the physical contact.

Furthermore, he said, witnesses

were not questioned in enough detail to get an accurate picture of what went on prior to the shooting.

"The aim for those investigations was not to get the truth," Chambers said, "but to find out as little as possible."

Chambers said he had contacted Kerrey, Exon and Hoagland and requested their help in getting a federal investigation of the case.

"I've said from the beginning that a federal investigation would be beneficial," he said.

Chambers said he believed Baldwin's civil rights were violated because officers Anna Doyle and Truckenbrod knew they were dealing

with a mentally ill person, and they did not act accordingly or responsibly.

"The fact that he was mentally ill warrants a different type of response," he said. "The response should have been geared to that designation, and it was not."

"If you fail to treat a mentally ill person the way you should, then you've violated that person's civil rights."

The letter issued by Exon, Kerrey and Hoagland states the reason for the request of an additional investigation was to use a "fully independent and objective" point of view to determine whether Baldwin's civil rights had been violated.

"There is concern in some quarters that Mr. Baldwin's civil rights may have been violated," the letter said. "We do not know or prejudice who is correct or what conclusion the U.S. Department of Justice may reach."

Blue-light telephones contribute to safety

By Corey Russman
Staff Reporter

New emergency phones crowned with bright blue lights will be more visible and more helpful to students than the old phones, a UNL official said.

Ruth Michalecki, director of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Telecommunications Center, said that

when installation was complete, 26 new units would be on City Campus and 10 would be on East Campus.

Twenty-one phones on City Campus and five on East Campus will be installed by the end of

October, she said.

The remaining phones will be installed as soon as possible, depending

See PHONES on 3

Environment group meets with Kerrey

By Jeremy Fitzpatrick
Staff Reporter

Sen. Bob Kerrey met with members of a newly formed UNL environmental studies center Wednesday and asked them to remember that their research efforts applied to all sectors of society as well as the environment.

Kerrey met with members of the Great Plains Regional Center for Global Environmental Change at the East Campus Union. GPRCGEC was officially formed Oct. 1 when President Bush signed legislation creating it.

The center is one of six that are part of the National Institute for Global Environmental Change. The other five centers are at the universities of Harvard, Alabama, California-Davis,

See KERREY on 6



Photo illustration by Robin Trimarchi/DN

Tristen Breitenfeldt, 6, sees a laser-image star formation underlined by her name on the Mueller Planetarium ceiling. Tristen has retinitis pigmentosa, a genetic disorder that causes progressive loss of sight.

Seeing stars

Planetarium sheds light for visually impaired with laser technology

By DeDra Janssen
Staff Reporter

Kay Konz contacted UNL's Mueller Planetarium with a simple request: She wanted to see the stars.

Konz has retinitis pigmentosa, an inherited eye disease that causes night blindness and loss of peripheral vision.

Jack Dunn, coordinator of the planetarium, met her request — and then some.

Dunn, a laser expert at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is developing a laser light program that will allow visually impaired people to see the stars.

Dunn said he discovered that regular star projections were not bright enough for Konz to see, but that she could see them in laser light.

Once Dunn discovered this, he had to determine what to do with his findings.

"We could teach the visually impaired about the stars," he said.

"But why stop at stars?"

Dunn found that laser technology could be used to allow visually impaired people to see not only stars, but also planets, maps, drawings, letters and words.

Lasers produce lightwaves

that are in sync with each other. The lightwaves, along with the contrast of projected images comprised of dots or lines, make laser projections more easily seen by people who have vision impairments but are not blind, he said.

The next step, Dunn said, is to study how much visually impaired persons can see.

Dunn contacted the International Laser Display Association, of which he is a member, and the National Retinitis Pigmentosa Foundation for Fighting Blindness for help.

The groups are working together on Project Light up the

Night, a program aimed at developing laser technology that will aid visually impaired people in their daily lives, he said.

Dunn is the technological coordinator for the project. Konz, vice president of public awareness for the Nebraska-Iowa Retinitis Pigmentosa Affiliate, also is a project coordinator.

"We just started the project last May; that's how close to the beginning we are," he said.

"We're just getting our feet wet. We're only starting to grasp the potential of what we might be able to do."

See LASER on 6