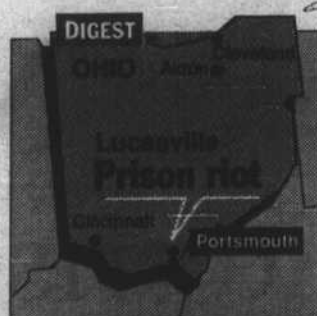


Daily Nebraskan

April 13, 1993

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Vol. 92 No. 139



Interest in UNL's code-blue phones growing

By Steve Smith

Senior Editor

There's a blue-light special on safety at UNL, and it seems everyone wants to follow suit, University Telecommunications Director Ruth Michalecki said.

Since UNL's code-blue emergency phone system was implemented on campus in September, Michalecki said, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Hastings College and Doane College have inquired about the code-blue phones.

The University of Nebraska at Kearney has also bought two emergency phone units, following UNL's lead.

Outside interest in the phones, Michalecki said, was spurred from their effectiveness on campus.

City, colleges may buy similar emergency equipment

"The reason (the phones) are working is because most students take them seriously," she said.

Michalecki said UNL was a groundbreaker with the new system, and one of the first campuses to experience the effectiveness of the code-blue phones, which are placed in 36 locations at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"UNL is one of the first campuses in the area to have this type of system," she said. "It's definitely the first in the state. They've worked well so far."

The City of Lincoln also wants to implement an emergency telephone system downtown similar to the code-blue phones.

Representatives from the city contacted Michalecki in December to ask about where the university bought the phones and for other information about them, she said.

Michalecki said there were big differences between the emergency phones at UNL and the proposed city units.

When activated, the university emergency phones dial straight to the campus operator, she said. The operator then dispatches the appropriate assistance to the location.

However, Michalecki said, phones on Lincoln city streets would be more troublesome than the UNL blue light phones, partly because

the emergency calls on the proposed city emergency phones would go directly to 911.

"For a person to use those phones, it would have to be a real emergency," she said. "Our code blues are often used for less life-threatening emergencies."

Michalecki said the effectiveness of the city's emergency phones could be hampered with the direct connection to 911.

"I think the phones would be highly abused in that respect," Michalecki said.

But the system could be a lifesaver for those who actually needed help, she said.

"There are plenty of places in town where they could be used," she said. "They would be dynamite on bike paths."

Night lights ruin view of star-lit sky, official says

By Mark Baldrige

Senior Editor

The sky may not be falling, but it is getting smaller, Erik Hubl, a Lincoln amateur astronomer, said.

Hubl, who heads the committee that operates the Hyde Observatory in Holmes Park, estimated that the visible night sky, as seen from the observatory, has diminished 15 to 20 percent in recent years.

The shrinking-sky phenomenon is caused by light pollution from housing and retail developments south of the observatory. Light pollution, sometimes called light trespass, is caused when light from one property encroaches on another.

"We first began to notice (the problem) when Edgewood Center was being built," he said. "What we could see last year we couldn't see this year."

Light pollution usually is a result of unshielded or improperly designed lights, Hubl said.

"It's basically wasted light," he said. "If you can fly above a city and see the actual pinpoints of light filaments, that is light that is being directed out into the air."

"You have to ask yourself, 'Why did that person want to illuminate the airplane?' because that's all they're doing. It's basically a waste of energy," Hubl said.

Hubl said anyone who had driven into Lincoln at night had seen the dome of "sky glow."

That light interferes with astronomical observations just as the sun does. City lights obscure the night sky by competing with the dimmer light from stars.

"A hundred years ago, everyone could look up and see the Milky Way from anywhere on Earth, even downtown Paris," he said.

"The skies our grandparents saw were very different from the ones we see."

Don Taylor, director of the University of Nebraska's Behlen Observatory at McAd Field station, agreed that light pollution can be a problem.

"To find the best observation sights, you have to find a place where the atmosphere is relatively calm," he said. "The West Coast has a lot of good places."

What happens is that observatories are built and then made obsolete by light from rapidly developing cities, he said.

Taylor said that from Behlen Ob-

See LIGHT on 3



Staci McKee/DN

Getting into shape

Amy Eskridge, a junior at Lincoln Southeast High School, rests after completing 10 sets of running the Memorial Stadium stairs. She was working out to prepare herself for mountain climbing this summer.

Solution to space shortage suggested

By Chuck Green

Senior Reporter

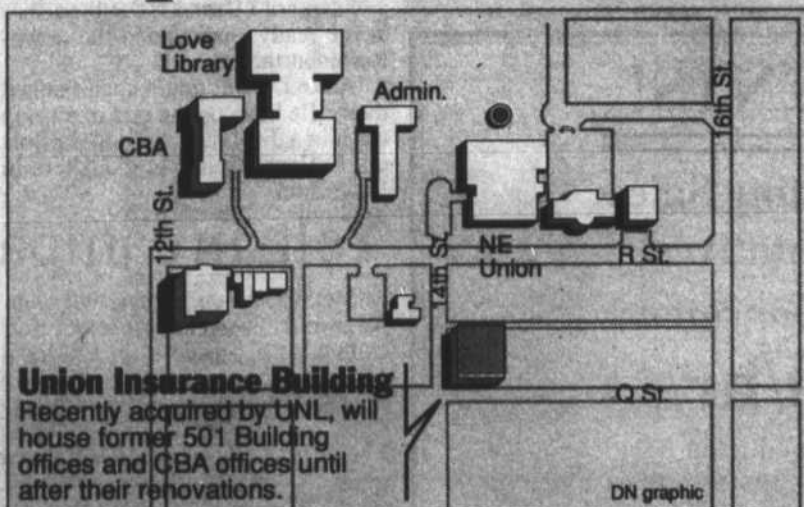
With various construction projects devouring campus classroom and office space, at least one University of Nebraska-Lincoln official is hoping an off-campus building will ensure a little room to work.

In a letter to the NU Board of Regents, John Goebel, vice chancellor for business and finance, recommended approval of a plan to renovate the UNL-owned Union Insurance Company Building at 14th and Q streets to accommodate offices currently housed in the 501 Building, 501 N. 10th St., and elsewhere.

Goebel's plan called for \$600,000 generated by a contract with the City of Lincoln to prepay a portion of the cost of the Union Insurance Company Building. The newly acquired space would enable relocation of office space affected by construction projects, most notably from the 501 Building and the College of Business Administration.

On Feb. 13, the regents approved a right-of-way contract with the City of Lincoln for \$600,000, enabling the partial taking of the 501 Building, which would be torn down to make way for construction of the 10th Street overpass.

In November 1991, the regents



authorized the purchase of the Union Insurance Company property for \$1.45 million, which was to be paid for by a contract with the University of Nebraska Foundation.

Goebel said the payments for the property would be made over several years.

Goebel said other UNL officials agreed with him that the purchase would eliminate much of UNL's office-space shortage.

"This is the most efficient way to replace lost space," he said. "And we are working with people at the state—legislators and gubernatorial analysts—to get their approval on the project,

too."

The building's first floor and mezzanine section, sprawling over 23,450 square feet, would become the new home of the University of Nebraska Press, which currently is housed in a smaller space in Nebraska Hall.

The building's eastern end has 11,250 square feet and would temporarily house CBA faculty and graduate assistants.

Goebel said UNL student services and support functions would be among the potential permanent occupants of the east-end office space once the CBA renovation was completed.

He said replacing the 501 Building

space with new construction would cost almost double the amount necessary to acquire the Union Insurance Company Building.

Some renovation of the building would be required, Goebel said, including the connection of the building to UNL utilities, modification and repair of the restrooms, electrical and mechanical systems and damaged building finishes, the installation of a passenger elevator and the addition of university signs.

Sinclair, Hille & Associates Inc. was selected to provide the architectural and engineering services for the project, Goebel said.

The total cost of the renovation project, including a \$26,900 fee from Sinclair, Hille & Associates, would be about \$350,000, he said.

The University of Nebraska Press would pay for the renovation, operation and maintenance of the western portion of the building, while the operations and maintenance costs for the eastern half would be funded from UNL's operating budget.

The regents are expected to discuss Goebel's plan at their meeting Saturday morning.

Goebel said he was optimistic the board would approve the proposal.

"We've been working on this for a number of years and I think this will just be business as usual," he said.