

Hate crime victims receive help

Hot line creators promise anonymity

By Melanie Brandert
Staff Reporter

Victims of hate crimes have a new method of reporting violence.

The Lincoln Police Department recently has implemented a Hate Crimes Hot Line that will allow victims of gay bashing, domestic violence, rape or other crimes to report incidents on their own terms.

Joanna Koba-Svoboda, an administrator of the LPD's Victim/Witness Unit, said the hot line was designed to create a safe environment for a victim to call in.

When victims call to report crimes, they are given identification numbers to protect their anonymity, she said. Victims are asked to call the hot line again in 10 days so the police department can follow up if necessary.

Koba-Svoboda said there was no pressure on a victim to disclose information. They tell only as much as they

want.

"We won't judge people based on right or wrong," Koba-Svoboda said. "We're here to help with their victimization."

In the first month of service, though, no calls have come in.

The caller's information is recorded on an informal report, which is sent to the commanding officer in the Crime Analysis Unit. The team captain for the area where the crime occurred may be notified and may assign additional patrols.

"The more information we gather, we can (better) identify problem areas in the community and groups who are targets of hate crimes," Koba-Svoboda said.

The concept for the hot line developed from concerns voiced by Lincoln residents after the summer 1993 homicide of Lincoln resident Harold Grover. Law enforcement officials have said that Grover's death could have been linked to gay bashing.

Neva Carter-Brown, public information specialist for the Lincoln-

Lancaster Commission on the Status of Women, assisted the police department in organizing the hot line.

Koba-Svoboda said there was a definite need for the service.

"Over the years, I know there have been crimes that haven't been reported from talking to victims who have had these crimes happen to their friends," she said.

Koba-Svoboda said she was unaware if the hot line would prevent hate crimes, but it could be the first step.

"As it becomes more well-known, we'll be able to educate the public that (hate crimes are) a serious crime and that we are taking it very seriously," she said.

"We have to try everything possible. If we can prevent a couple of assaults because we identified a location (where a previous assault occurred), we've done our job and the hotline is working."

The number for the hot line is 441-7181. Calls are taken Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Ban leaves smokers in the cold

By Heather Lampe
Staff Reporter

Nearly a year has passed since the University of Nebraska-Lincoln initiated its Clean Air Policy, but smoke from the debate still hasn't cleared.

Jack Goebel, vice chancellor of business and finance who led the formation of the policy, said there had been few complaints so far.

"We've had a very favorable reply," he said. "I'd like to say that it was our expectation that the campus community would pull together and, in fact, that's what happened."

The resolution, which took effect last summer, put a ban on smoking in all university buildings and in the immediate 10 feet surrounding the buildings.

Because of campus cooperation and little negative reaction to the ban, Goebel said he foresaw no immediate policy changes.

However, John Snelling, university staff member and former chairman for Smokers Against the New Smoking Policy, said the current policy was not fair to smokers because state taxes on cigarettes were used to pay for some buildings and maintenance on UNL's campus.

"We feel that because we're putting money to build and maintain these buildings, there ought to be

something for us," Snelling said.

Snelling's group collected more than 1,000 signatures on a petition, but has since disbanded. Yet Snelling has not given up the fight.

John Beacon, director of admissions, scholarships and financial aid, initiated a petition in November 1993 for Administration Building employees to support a smoking ban in their building.

He said he used to have a problem with secondhand smoke from the employee break room flowing out into his work area, but the ban had helped his situation.

"The Administration Building is smoke free," he said. "Now, going in and out of the room is pleasant for the non-smoking employees."

Beacon said it was hard to find a compromise between smokers and non-smokers and that designated areas did not seem to work.

"My personal opinion is that if they need to smoke, just smoke outside. It's hard to smoke in a contained area and not have some impact on air quality."

UNL students, smokers and non-smokers also are in disagreement about the policy.

Jennie Price, a freshman general studies major, said the policy was discriminatory.

"It's unfair," she said. "It's another way of segregating people into different little groups."

Laura Hohbein, a sophomore business finance major, said being subjected to second-hand smoke wasn't fair, but maybe a compromise could be found.

"I think it's unfair for people who don't smoke to have to inhale the nauseating fumes of those who do smoke," she said. "But maybe smokers could have their own private lounge where they could feel free to smoke."

Denice Carlin, a freshman general studies major who smokes, said she understood non-smokers' concerns.

"I think the smoking ban is fair," she said. "If I didn't smoke, I wouldn't want to be around it."

Mark Byars, general studies senator for the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, said the winter months could bring more complaints from smokers who are left out in the cold.

"I think that as we move into the winter and things get colder, people will like it less," Byars said. "It's convenient and some smokers think that smoking bans are made to make them quit, but I don't think that's the main focus of smoking bans."

"It's to protect non-smokers," he said.

Reaction

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quakes. Mike Adolphus said he and his brothers had experienced at least two earthquakes in their 17 years living in California.

"It wasn't nice, I can tell you that," he said. "I'm kind of glad I'm out here."

Mark Wright, a junior consumer science major from San Diego, said earthquakes were a way of life for Californians.

"I think people take it for granted," said Wright, whose parents live about 100 miles away from where the quake hit.

Just as Midwesterners are trained from grade school to seek shelter in the basement during tornadoes, Wright said, Californians were drilled to take cover in doorways and under desks.

Mike Adolphus said he and his brothers also had been taught safety procedures for earthquakes at school. The earthquake he remembers the best hit when the triplets were in grade school.

Mike Adolphus, then 13 years old, said he and his classmates didn't remember what they had been taught that day.

"We pretty much panicked," he said.

"... (The ground) just starts shaking," Mike Adolphus said, recalling the last earthquake he had experienced.

"Everything shakes ... you don't think it's an earthquake, you just get up and run. It's nothing you want to experience."

Wright said Californians either learned to love the experience or lived with the hate.

Muhammad, for one, said he had no love for the shaking streets and falling pictures that accompanied each quake.

An earthquake struck one morning as his sister and brothers were walking to the car with him on their way to school.

Despite the panic he felt, Muhammad said he could only stand still and try to keep his balance.

Wright, who lived in California for about eight years, said he didn't share

that feeling of panic.

"Most (earthquakes) are fun because they're not big," he said.

Wright said although he was glad to have missed this most recent quake, he liked watching the streets wave and signs shake.

"If you live out there, you learn to enjoy your earthquakes," he said.

Wright, who has lived through about 10 earthquakes, still remembers his first taste of a California quake. The chair he was sitting in began to recline, and the whole room shook, he said.

Wright said all he felt was surprise.

"Earthquakes don't scare me," he said.

Compared to the scare Muhammad felt Monday, waiting for word from home, he said he would rather have been in California during the quake.

"I was going to stay (by the phone) all day," he said.

Senior Reporter Kara G. Morrison contributed to this report.

King

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lized nation," Garrison said.

He said educators needed to keep King's dreams alive by supporting his ideas and not to be satisfied by simply celebrating his birthday.

Linda Morgan, president of the Afrikan People's Union, said King's

"I Have a Dream" speech still had bearing today.

"Don't walk away from the problem because then you become the problem, not the solution," Morgan said. "A dream cannot work if you are not doing something to aid it."

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Graham Spanier said the university should focus on education to eliminate the ignorance that breeds fear, prejudice, hate and violence.

Spanier said there was no fast track to the solution to these problems.

"There are no elevators to the top," he said. "You have to take the stairs."

Spanier responded to criticisms that the university was making too many changes too fast towards racial equality.

"I reject that notion," Spanier said. "We have so much ground to make up that we must act quickly."

Friends

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four social events for all the families and students to attend each year.

Stadler, whose family pairs with 10 or 12 students each semester, said the events allowed the students who weren't matched with families to get in on the fun too.

Like the Piesters, Stadler has found her experience with foreign students rewarding.

"I have a friend in practically every corner of the world."

But learning about one another's culture isn't the only benefit. The students also can feel secure they have someone to call for advice.

Cindy Piester said Guillard called her one night because she had a plumbing problem.

"I feel good about being here if any of the kids have questions or problems," she said.

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There are some changes this year in the procedure for enrollment that will be affecting International Students. Immigration laws state that non-resident students must be financially responsible to reside in this country. The UNL policy requires mandatory insurance for International Students. These students are required to show proof of adequate private coverage or be billed automatically. Private policies must be approved and waivers signed by 1/19/94 to avoid being billed on your tuition statement for the Student Insurance.

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