

Police lending mobile phones to crime victims

By Kara G. Morrison
Senior Reporter

The Lincoln Police Department is providing domestic violence and stalking victims with a new defense — cellular telephones.

At a press conference Wednesday, Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady, Deputy County Attorney Jodi Nelson and Lancaster County Sheriff Samuel Van Pelt announced a program in which cellular phones were lent to victims of stalking and domestic violence.

The department now has five phones specially programmed to call only 911 and general

numbers for the sheriff's office and police department.

Victims may fill out applications to check out the phones for up to 30 days. Phone users are then encouraged to check in with LPD's Victim/Witness Unit weekly.

Casady said the program began in January but was kept quiet because the program had not been tested and because the phones were limited in number.

The department decided to announce the program after it was commended by the Committee on Accreditation for Law Enforcement

and a national law enforcement magazine featured the program, Casady said.

Nelson said the program so far had proved valuable to people facing the threat of physical abuse.

"One (woman) even went so far as to say instead of having a gun, her weapon was this phone," Nelson said.

Van Pelt said the phones had another advantage.

"It's not the sort of thing a person can get a hold of and use against the victim," he said.

Casady said the phones had been issued 12

times. The department had received and responded to two calls from the phones, he said.

Nelson said there already was a greater demand for the phones than LPD was able to supply.

All five phones were in use Wednesday, Casady said.

Kit Boesch, coordinator of the justice council, said the idea developed from an inquiry about a "panic button" system for domestic violence victims.

Casady said he thought the program was the only one of its kind.

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Loudon sworn in as ASUN president

By Heather Lampe
Staff Reporter

After taking the oath of office to become the 30th president of ASUN Wednesday night, Andrew Loudon said he would continue his promise to work for the student body.

"We will work as hard as we can with the university committees and boards to accomplish our goals," Loudon said. "Let us not let the student body down."

"This is my challenge to myself and to the senators."

Loudon joined Britt Ehlers, first vice president, Judy Rishel, second vice president, and 34 senators as they were sworn in Wednesday night at the inauguration for the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska.

Outgoing president Keith Benes administered the oath of office to Loudon and urged the new senators to know the history of ASUN senators.

"Please have that sense of history," Benes said. "Be aware of what the senators ahead of you have done."

Quoting Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Benes said, "I am a part of all that I met."

"The work goes on and the cause endures and we leave it in your hands," Benes said.

Trent Steele, outgoing first vice president, called to order the last meeting of the 1993-94 ASUN. He later passed the gavel to Ehlers, who was sworn in as first vice president.

In his last speech to ASUN members, Steele said he was proud of the year's accomplishments and urged the new executives and senators to accomplish as much as they could.

"Different senators, different leaders, all doing what they can with the time they had," Steele said. "Tonight your time has begun."

Jill Anderson, outgoing second vice president, swore in Rishel. Anderson challenged next year's senators to implement ideas from the recently passed five-year projection plan.

"If you can put all the energy you put into the campaign into ASUN, it will be a tremendous year," Anderson said.

Retired U.S. Sen. Carl T. Curtis, administered to Loudon the oath of office for student regent.

Curtis commended Loudon and told the audience he believed in young people and that the future belonged to them.

"Andrew Loudon has earned this honor in scholarship, leadership, character and interest in government," Curtis said. "A student regent can look at things as only a student would see them."

"If people do not pay attention to government, nobody will."

Commission

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Wilson said he was pleased with the revised language.

"It gets it back on the track that it really should have been on in the first place," he said.

Wilson was the chairman of the commission before it was officially established as a board by the Nebraska Constitution. He said he advocated a

change in the commission's role after the group became official.

The language of the constitutional change was the source of the disagreements between the commission and the university system, Wilson said.

Commission members worked with legislators and university officials to further define the commission's role, Martin said.

"We can certainly live with the bill," Martin said.

Tickets

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student isn't an athlete.

"We find ourselves, without student fees, having to make money by raising ticket prices."

Even with the price jump, Bell isn't worried about a lack of demand for student tickets.

"Demand has gone down every year," she said. "It has gone down regardless of what we do. Being able to say that the decline is solely based on price is difficult because demand has gone down."

"Even when we haven't changed the prices, it has gone down."

Bell said demand for tickets had

not gone down because of the team on the field.

Nebraska is coming off an 11-1 season last fall, with its only loss coming in the Orange Bowl against eventual national champion Florida State.

Despite the Huskers' success on the field, complaints about the new ticket policy are expected, Bell said, but no more than in the past.

"Next week when the lottery starts, I'm sure we'll get calls about it," she said. "You figure there are 24,000 students here, and six, seven or 10 calls are not significant."

"There will be major complaints from those few that want their voices to be heard."

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