

## Daily Nebraskan

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## Many militia members 'plain folks'

WASHINGTON — The militia movement draws much of its strength from economically struggling white men, many of them veterans, prone to believe in conspiracies, often living in rural areas and fervently defending the right to bear arms.

Some members are former college professors; others never made it through high school. Some insist they are not bigots; others see Jews, blacks and foreigners as the perpetrators of a huge, anti-American conspiracy.

Clark McCauley, a psychology professor at Bryn Mawr College, Pa., and an expert on terrorism, said that what is remarkable about militia members is that they are so unremarkable.

"We're not talking about crazies here. We're not talking about people who are no longer human. We're talking about people like you and me who feel that they've been pushed too far," McCauley said.

Political science professor Michael Barkun of Syracuse University agrees. He says, "We make a substantial mistake and eventually underestimate the danger if we simply assume that everyone engaged in such organizations is ignorant or disordered or pathological."

Barkun spoke of a "profound sense that there is nothing meaningful that can be accomplished through existing political institutions." He said many militia members are plain folks, "to an extent that might surprise us."

A series of incidents has fueled membership: the federal raid on separatist Randy Weaver's Idaho compound in 1992; the burning of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, in 1993; passage of the Brady gun registration bill in 1993 and of an assault weapons ban last year.

Several of the figures who have emerged in the bombing investigation seem to fit the description.

For example, Timothy McVeigh, charged in the bombing, was an Army veteran who became a drifter. Authorities say he had ties to two brothers now charged with conspiracy in connection with bomb-making in Michigan — James Nichols, the owner of a small farm, and his younger brother Terry, an Army veteran who became an independent military surplus dealer.

Norman Olson, head of the Michigan Militia, an organization that says it kicked out McVeigh, is the pastor of a Baptist church and owner of a gun shop.

## The militia movement

Armed anti-government groups have sprung up in most states. Often dubbed "militias," their size and philosophy varies considerably. Here, states with confirmed, organized militias:

A typical member:  
■ White male  
■ Between 18 and 46  
■ Formerly served in the military  
■ Christian  
■ Unemployed or struggling financially  
■ Gun owner

States in bold type have laws banning paramilitary training



Source: AP research, Center for Democratic Renewal

AP

## New electronic artificial limbs give amputees sense of touch

NEW YORK — When Chuck Tiemann lost his right leg and left arm in an accident 15 years ago, he thought many of life's simple joys were forever lost to him.

Now the 39-year-old Braman, Okla., man has regained some of those lost sensations as part of the first group of amputees to test a new generation of artificial limbs that return the sense of touch.

"The first time I could reach out and touch my wife's hand and feel the warmth after more than a decade — that was a very emotional moment," he said.

The sensory system is being developed by the Sabolich Prosthetic Research Center in Oklahoma City, a division of Novacare Inc., a large physical rehabilitation company based in King of Prussia, Pa.

Sabolich planned to formally unveil the system Thursday.

The system uses pressure and temperature sensors and electronic circuits embedded in false arms and legs. These circuits are connected to electrodes inside a prosthesis' socket which touch the skin of the truncated limb.

The electrodes transfer pressure pulses, or sensations of heat or cold, to surviving nerve endings.

John Sabolich, Novacare's national prosthetics director, said two years of tests began this spring that ultimately will involve 120 amputees nationwide. The research is partly funded by roughly \$500,000 from the National Institutes of Health. The products could be on the market in under a year.

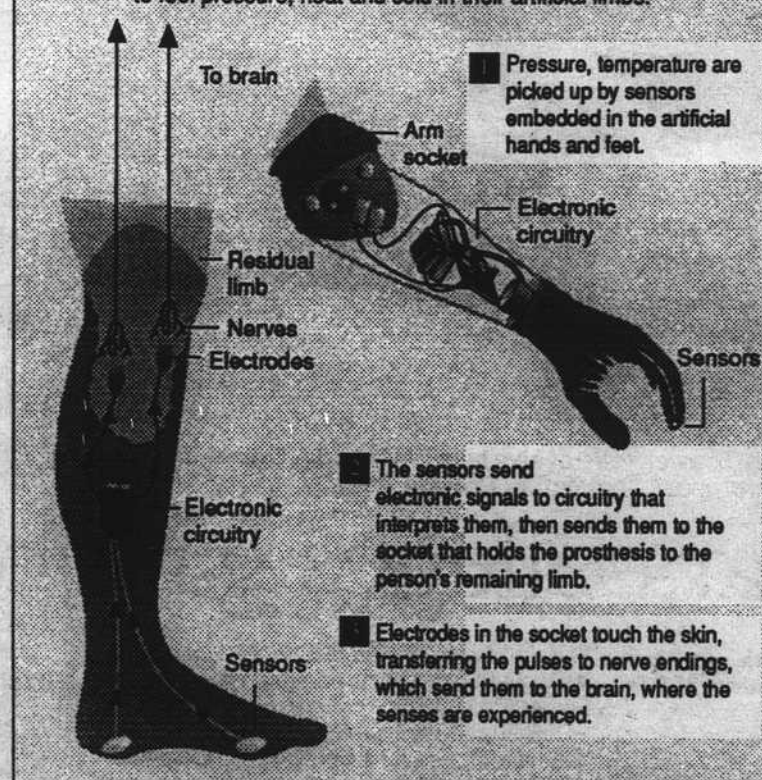
Researchers have been testing these sensory systems on one or two people at a time since the 1950s, said Clayton Van Doren, a professor who does such work at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. But he said Sabolich's work is the first commercial application.

"The single thing we most need right now is exactly what Sabolich is doing — putting something on the market."

Patients have described the sense of touch they get as a tin-

### Artificial limbs that "feel"

A system under development by the Sabolich Prosthetic Research Center in Oklahoma City, Okla., allows amputees to feel pressure, heat and cold in their artificial limbs.



Source: Sabolich Prosthetic Center

AP

"The first time I could reach out and touch my wife's hand and feel the warmth after more than a decade — that was a very emotional moment."

**CHUCK TIEMANN**  
lost right leg, left arm

gling, "like the feeling you get when your foot's asleep," Sabolich said.

Tiemann, a former utility lineman who lost his leg and arm in an accident atop an electrical pole, said he likes feeling the clutch of his pickup truck, or knowing the temperature of a cup of coffee he's

about to grab with his prosthetic hand.

He said the sensory system and other innovations help amputees regain a sense of normalcy.

"When I woke up from my amputations, I felt mutilated. I said 'How can I ever live a regular life again?' Fifteen years later, the answer is 'Yes, without a doubt.'"

## News... in a Minute

### Woman ordered to cut bird feed

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — There's still a free lunch for the blue jays, cardinals, sparrows, chickadees, pigeons and doves flocking to eat in Mary Lane's back yard. But it's been cut in half by a judge's order.

"It's the case of feeding to excess," Environmental Court Judge Larry Potter said Tuesday.

Lane has been feeding birds for five years to give her 88-year-old mother something to watch.

But neighbors complained that 10 pounds of feed daily posed a public health problem by attracting too many birds and rats.

The Health Department ordered Lane several weeks ago to take down eight of nine bird feeders to cut down spillage.

Potter let her keep the ninth feeder, but then she spread the seeds on a table. In March, he visited the yard and ordered her to sweep the spilled seeds regularly and use only half the table.

More neighbor complaints brought her back to court, and a special judge sitting in for Potter found Lane in contempt after a health inspector found piles of bird seed on the ground.

Potter set aside the contempt order Tuesday.

The judge conferred with inspectors, lawyers and Lane before compromising on the cut in feed to five pounds.

Lane agreed reluctantly. "It's better than jail," she said.

## Court kills school gun ban

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court struck down a federal law banning gun possession within 1,000 feet of schools Wednesday, saying the states — not Congress — have the authority to enact such criminal laws.

The 5-4 decision throwing out the 1990 Gun-Free School Zones Act stood in sharp contrast to a longstanding court trend of deference to congressional power to regulate interstate commerce.

Congress stole power reserved to the states when it enacted the law, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist wrote as the court refused to reinstate a former Texas high school student's conviction for taking a gun to school.

The school gun law "is a criminal statute that by its terms has nothing to do with 'commerce' or any sort of economic enterprise, however broadly one might define those terms," Rehnquist wrote.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy noted in a concurring opinion that most states already outlaw gun possession on or near school grounds.

But Justice Stephen G. Breyer wrote in dissent that the ruling cre-

ates a legal uncertainty that "will restrict Congress' ability to enact criminal laws aimed at criminal behavior that ... seriously threatens the economic, as well as social, well-being of Americans."

"The problem of guns in and around schools is widespread and extremely serious," Breyer said.

Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., who sponsored the school gun law, said, "I'm astonished that the Supreme Court has said that Congress cannot protect our children from guns." He said the ruling "ignores children's safety for the sake of legal nitpicking."

Sixty-five students and six school employees were shot and killed at U.S. schools during the five years before the law was enacted, according to the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence.

The government had asked the court to reinstate Alfonso Lopez Jr.'s conviction for taking a handgun and five bullets to school in San Antonio in 1992. He said he was given the gun to deliver to someone else for \$40 to use in what Lopez described as a "gang war."