

# 'LOVE LETTERS'



Matt Miller/DN

Lt. Governor Kim Robak rehearses Tuesday afternoon with Sen. Don Wesley of Lincoln in Robak's office in the Capitol. The two will be performing the two-person act "Love Letters" Wednesday night at Huey's Downtown Dinner Theatre.

# New gels may help women fend off AIDS

BETHESDA, Md. (AP)—A cousin of the healthy bacteria found in yogurt helps women fight off vaginal infections naturally—and now doctors are trying to harness these bugs to protect against the AIDS virus.

They are trying to create a gel or cream that a woman could insert into her vagina before sexual intercourse to kill the HIV virus in case her partner had it. AIDS researchers said Tuesday the need for these "vaginal microbicides" is huge because AIDS is skyrocketing among heterosexual women worldwide.

"We are really trying to get the word out on microbicides," said Sharon Hillier of the University of Pittsburgh, who in about a month will begin testing a candidate made with the bacteria on 900 teen-agers.

AIDS is now the fourth leading killer of U.S. women ages 25-44, and two-thirds were infected through sex.

Doctors tell women to insist their sexual partners use condoms to block HIV. But many women either don't ask or their partners refuse, or they sometimes use the condoms wrong.

A cheap, easy-to-use microbicide would give women more control to protect themselves, explained Zeda Rosenberg of the National Institutes of Health, which is spending about \$12 million on microbicide research.

Within two years, NIH hopes to know if a spermicide ingredient already sold to help diaphragms and

other birth-control devices work also fights HIV. This ingredient, nonoxynol-9, kills HIV in the test tube but some studies suggest it actually increases women's risk because it irritates the vagina, creating footholds for HIV infection.

NIH now is funding a study of prostitutes in Cameroon and Kenya, where female HIV infection is epidemic, to settle the question.

Hillier told AIDS researchers she was trying to create a natural microbicide made from the beneficial bacteria already in the bodies of healthy women.

Lactobacilli are best known as bacteria eaten in yogurt, but a very different strain lives in the vagina. They're essentially little machines that constantly manufacture hydrogen peroxide and lactic acid, two chemicals that kill infections, including HIV, Hillier explained.

But creating microbicides is an uphill battle because the pharmaceutical industry isn't interested, the NIH's Rosenberg said Tuesday. Companies foresee little profit in microbicides because they will have to be cheap even here to gain women's interest, and sold at or below cost in poor, developing countries, she said.

"We're all very frustrated because we need a microbicide today," agreed Hillier, who said she unsuccessfully tried to convince some companies that "this isn't a crazy thing to do."

# Gramm to quit GOP race

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — Battered by back-to-back defeats in Iowa and Louisiana, Texas Sen. Phil Gramm called top supporters around the country Tuesday night and told them he would quit the Republican presidential race, GOP sources said.

Gramm planned an afternoon announcement Wednesday in Washington.

Gramm's departure would leave an eight-man GOP field, with one week to go before the New Hampshire primary. It also would remove from the race a dogged conservative campaigner who early on was viewed by Sen. Bob Dole's campaign as the biggest threat to his status as the GOP front-runner.

But Gramm's campaign never realized its promise, and he was facing dim prospects in New Hampshire after being stunned by Pat Buchanan in Louisiana last week and then placing a

distant fifth Monday in Iowa's caucuses.

Gramm gave no inkling of his impending decision during a speech earlier Tuesday at a Concord business luncheon, where he attacked Buchanan's protectionist stance on trade.

"We have let errant nonsense and second-rate thinking pass as real thinking and real policy on this topic," he said.

Campaign sources said Gramm looked at three options: quit, retreat from New Hampshire to concentrate on a few Southern states, or retreat and make one last-ditch effort in South Carolina, which holds the first Southern primary on March 2.

Gramm can't blame a lack of money for his poor showing. He had raised \$25 million coming into the campaign, but critics say he has not used his money wisely.

# MIP

Continued from Page 1

The committee members were visibly impressed with the young people's testimony.

Jeremy Randall, a member of the Nebraska Network of Drug-Free Youth, said the youth of today were on the downward spiral, and something needed to be done.

"The current MIP laws are weak," he said. "We need to make a stand now."

Randall told the committee that by advancing the bill, an idea would be planted in the heads of young people that alcohol could lead to serious problems.

"And we need to fix that problem for a better tomorrow," he said.

Denise McNeel, an adult member of the Nebraska Network of Drug-Free Youth, said solving the MIP problem needed to start with the youth.

"Hopefully it will put mom and dad in a predicament," she said. "But let's start with the kids and hold the kids responsible."

By Ted Taylor  
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska Legislature's Transportation Committee killed a bill Tuesday that would punish drivers "close but not beyond" the legal blood alcohol limit for intoxication.

Gretna Sen. Mike Avery's bill, LB1148, said a violation would occur when a driver's blood alcohol content is equal to or greater than .06 percent and below .10 percent.

Nebraska state law now only punishes those who are at or above the .10 percent level.

Avery cited eight other states including Colorado, California and Oklahoma, that have similar legislation.

Avery reminded the committee that legislation to reduce the legal blood

*"Through LB1148, Nebraska law would presume that anyone within the defined limits of .06 and .10 is, per se, driving while impaired."*

**MIKE AVERY**  
Gretna senator

alcohol limit to .08 was still on the table and was worthy of more discussion.

"Understanding this may not be accomplished, I bring to you another alternative which may serve equally well in its deterrence to driving under

the influence," Avery said.

Understanding the state's current limit is .10, Avery said .06 blood alcohol content level noticeably impairs one's ability to drive.

"Through LB1148, Nebraska law would presume that anyone within the defined limits of .06 and .10 is, per se, driving while impaired," he said.

Avery's bill would have levied a fine of \$100 for the first offense, and \$200 for each subsequent offense.

Mary Campbell of the Nebraska Beer Wholesalers Association testified against the measure and said the bill would have legislation working backward.

"People would be guilty before they reached the legal limit," she said.

"The best use of law enforcement is to get the high BAC offenders," she said.

# Fireworks explode in Love Library

The deafening silence of UNL's Love Library was broken by the deafening blasts of fireworks Tuesday afternoon.

Nearly 40 red, crayon-sized plastic tubes littered the foyer floor of Love Library after a box of fireworks went off at 4:25 p.m.

"They were sparkling and flying all across," said Michael Straatmann, a library assistant.

The mini-explosions, which lasted about two minutes, filled the library lobby with smoke and drew nearly 25 people to the scene, Straatmann said.

No one was injured in the incident, but some witnesses in the foyer were startled, he said.

"Most of them took off when they saw it," he said.

Campus police were still searching for the culprit Tuesday.

— Chad Lorenz

# Hockey

Continued from Page 1

UNL rodeo, that normally use the coliseum — Skold said.

The team, which would play in the same division as the Omaha Lancers, could be just as successful as that franchise.

"If Omaha can get into it to the extent they have, Lincoln certainly could too," Skold said.

The coliseum would be expanded to seat nearly 4,500 people, which Skold said wouldn't be hard to fill for

# Health fair provides free testings, condoms

By Patty Wewel  
Staff Reporter

UNL students, faculty and staff will get the chance to check up on their health at a fair sponsored by the University Health Center and the Office of Campus Recreation.

"To Your Health Fair" will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. today in the Nebraska Union and tomorrow in the East Union.

The fair will offer several tests, including cholesterol screenings, blood pressure testing, blood sugar testings, body composition testing and nutritional analyses.

The fair also kicks off National Condom Week.

A booth in the Nebraska Union's lounge will offer students activities, such as a chance to play sex trivia.

Free condoms will be available at the booth, which will move to the East Union Thursday.

Carol Ash, health educator with the University Health Center, said health fairs gave the university community members a chance to enhance their health.

The screenings are preventive measures that allow people to know if there may be a problem with their cholesterol or blood pressure, she said.

Most of the screenings are free, Ash said.

games. But, the team's success depends on another factor, he said.

"Nobody wants to go watch losers.

They have to be a good team and an interesting team before they'll earn people's dollars."

Jeff Althaus, who played in the USHL for two years, said the franchise would be a great asset to the community and players.

"From a player's aspect, it's a phenomenal experience to play on a team."

Althaus said hockey would be popular in Lincoln with the coming of the franchise.

Mark Quinn, president of the UNL

hockey club, said the trend would start with younger players.

"Kids go to the games, they see it, they like it and they want to play," said Quinn, an undeclared sophomore.

The city and Quinn's team desperately need the rink, he said. The club's 25 players now practice and play games at Hitchcock Park Ice Arena in Omaha.

"It really hampers our ability to put a team together. For our team to move forward, a rink is a must."

Dana wants to solve that problem and give something to the Lincoln community and the State Fair.

"I think this will give some life back to the fairgrounds."

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 FAX NUMBER 472-1761

The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during summer sessions.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-1763 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, contact Tim Hedegaard, 436-9253, 9 a.m.-11 p.m.

Subscription price is \$50 for one year.  
 Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Second-class postage paid at Lincoln, NE.  
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