

# Autistic savant amazes students

By **DARREN IVY**  
Staff Reporter

It takes most people several minutes to read a page in a book.

Kim Peek can do it in 12 seconds. In fact, he can read two pages simultaneously in 12 seconds.

Peek, an autistic savant who was one of three people studied for the movie "Rain Man," paid a visit to Coach Tom Osborne and student athletes at Memorial Stadium on Wednesday afternoon.

Peek, 45, came to UNL because he likes interacting with children, his father, Fran Peek, said. Since "Rain Man" won four Oscars in 1989, Kim and Fran Peek have interacted with more than 670,000 people, including 490,000 students.

The student athletes who listened to Kim Peek at the west stadium training table were amazed by his ability to recall game scores, ZIP codes and other interesting facts.

"He is an unbelievable man," said Mike Brown, sophomore NU football player.

Freshman football player Joe Walker gave Kim Peek the five numbers in his ZIP code. It took Peek less than five seconds to tell Walker he was from Arlington, Texas, and that a certain highway ran through the middle of the town.

"How does he do that?" asked a stunned Walker.

Kim Peek knows the location by intersecting highways, area codes, ZIP codes, the counties, historical events that have taken place in that area and television stations by channel that can be seen in the town or city discussed, his father said.

Peek was born with brain damage and a neuromotor dysfunction. A comprehensive brain scan in 1988 confirmed he had a single brain, or a fused hemisphere, and a severely damaged right side cerebellum, which affects signals that govern motor skills.

He is also missing a corpus callosum, the part of the brain that filters out materials, his father said. He retains nearly everything he reads including information from more than 7,600 books.

"He is always reading," Fran Peek

said. In addition, he has a rare optical system that enables him to read right and left side pages at the same time with total recall.

Most autistic savants can recite information from two or three subjects, but Peek is able to recite information from some 15 categories, Fran Peek said.

Kim Peek met Barry Morrow, author of the original script and screenplay for the movie "Rain Man," in 1984.

Before meeting Morrow, Kim Peek was timid and nonsocial. He was diagnosed as autistic and severely mentally retarded. It was also determined that he would never be able to walk.

After meeting and studying Kim Peek before the production of "Rain Man," Dustin Hoffman and Morrow

told Fran Peek that he needed to take him out into the real world.

"Kim will grow," they said. "So will everyone who meets him."

Hoffman and Morrow were right because his autistic characteristics have mostly disappeared since he left the isolation and the protection of his home and ventured into the real world, Fran Peek said.

"He walks right up to everyone, takes their hand or places his hand on their shoulders and asks them their name, where they are from, and if he can find out their birthday he will tell them what day of the week they were born," Fran Peek said.

Kim Peek will speak at the Mahoney State Park Kiewit Lodge tonight at 7 and at Bryan Memorial Hospital Professional Building and Education Center on Saturday at 10 a.m.

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## Democratic fund-raisers: Wrongdoings began earlier

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two Democratic fund-raisers are prepared to testify that irregularities involving foreign money and straw donors began during the 1992 election that brought President Clinton to power, a House investigator said Wednesday as he began a new round of public hearings.

Opening the House's version of Congress' hearings on fund-raising abuses, Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., announced the cooperation offer from fund-raisers Gene and Nora Lum, who themselves pleaded guilty to fund-raising wrongdoing earlier this year.

"It appears ... the seeds of today's scandals may have been planted as early as 1991," Burton said.

Democratic Rep. Paul Kanjorski of Pennsylvania retorted that the Republicans were reaching conclusions "before the evidence is in."

Burton said the Lums were prepared to testify — in exchange for immunity from prosecution — that the Clinton campaign wrote a letter endorsing the candidacy of the leader of an Asian country in 1992 in exchange for a \$50,000 contribution — possibly foreign money — to a Democrat-affiliated group the Lums had formed. The country was not named.

The Lums will also disclose financial help offered by the Riady family of Indonesia and fund-raising irregularities committed with the knowledge of the Democratic

National Committee, Burton said.

The announcement capped a whirlwind day in the investigations during which a White House lawyer was questioned before a federal grand jury and Senate hearings turned even more rancorous than they had been.

Across the Capitol, former White House deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes gave a feisty defense of the Democratic fund raising he orchestrated from the White House.

And Democrats turned the tables on Senate committee chairman Fred Thompson, R-Tenn., prompting him to apologize for a line of questions that suggested Ickes and President Clinton may have know about an illegal fund-raising scheme involving the Teamsters union.

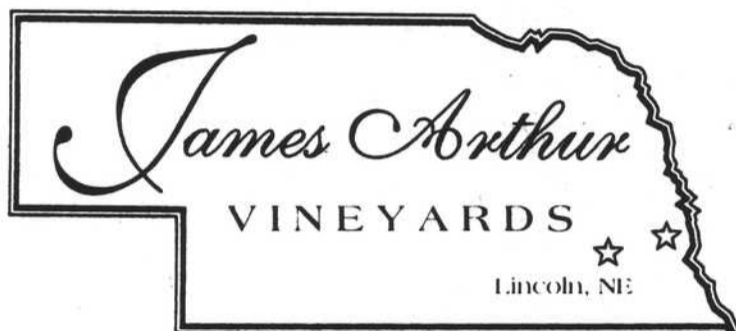
Thompson introduced records showing that a union consultant and two Clinton-Gore campaign fund-raisers implicated in the scheme had been to the White House for a meeting with Clinton in June 1996 — the month prosecutors allege the scheme was hatched.

But Democrats quickly disclosed it wasn't a private meeting but rather a luncheon for donors. Ickes said he couldn't recall the event, but emphatically denied that either he or Clinton knew of the illegal scheme.

"I left the wrong impression," Thompson said.

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