

Two charged with robberies

Juveniles also could face other allegations

Daily Nebraskan

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Fax number: (402) 472-1761
 World Wide Web: www.unl.edu/DailyNeb
 The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-060) 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 the summer sessions. The public has access to the Publications Board.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.

Subscriptions are \$55 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.

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By **JOSH FUNK**
 Senior Reporter

Two Lincoln juveniles were charged with attempted murder and nine other crimes in connection with two April 5 shooting robberies and other crimes.



Phillippi



Gonzales

Eric Phillippi, 17, and Justin Gonzales, 16, were arrested over the weekend on multiple charges, including two convenience store robberies, one in which a clerk was shot.

Both Phillippi and Gonzales were charged with attempted murder, attempted robbery, robbery and three counts of the use of a weapon to commit a felony for the two April 5 robberies.

Gonzales also was charged with two counts of discharging a weapon at an occupied dwelling and the accompany-

ing use-of-a-weapon-to-commit-a-felony charges for drive-by shootings.

Phillippi faces similar charges of shooting into an occupied house and criminal mischief for two other drive-by shootings and the two accompanying use-of-a-weapon charges.

Police believe Gonzales and Phillippi may have been involved in several other crimes; additional charges could be filed.

A ballistics examiner with the Nebraska State Patrol Crime Lab matched shell casings from the two robberies.

One robbery, at the Kwik Shop, 33rd and Holdredge streets, included shots fired into the ceiling, Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady said. No one was injured in the robbery, which occurred just before midnight on April 5.

About a half-hour later, another robbery occurred at the Gas 'N Shop, 5560 S. 48th St., at 12:29 a.m. on April 6.

Angela Bellew, 22, the clerk during the Gas 'N Shop robbery, was shot twice, once in the lower back and once in the cheek during the robbery.

She was released from the hospital last week.

Additional ballistics examinations linked shell casings from the robberies to those found at a March 14 drive-by

shooting at 1340 N. 26th St.

Casady said Gonzales and Phillippi were suspects in the drive-by shooting, which connected them to the robberies.

Once Phillippi and Gonzales were identified as suspects, Casady said approximately 25 officers and detectives, including the SWAT team, were used to locate the suspects.

With the assistance of the State Patrol helicopter, officers located Gonzales Thursday after he left a friend's house around midnight. The house is four houses away from the scene of the March drive-by shooting.

Gonzales and another juvenile left in a car with stolen license plates, which were taken during in an April 6 Lincoln theft.

When surveillance officers called marked police units to stop the vehicle near 27th and Holdredge streets, Gonzales, the driver, fled.

During the pursuit, speeds reached 60 to 70 mph before police ended the chase near 16th and K streets because of public risk.

One of the people in the car Gonzales was driving threw a .22-caliber pistol out of the window during the pursuit, and the pistol was later recovered, Casady said.

Gonzales was arrested shortly after

midnight Friday morning when he returned to another house under surveillance by the police.

While police were pursuing Gonzales, other officers were called to the scene of a drive-by shooting on the 1200 block of Arapahoe Street where a car belonging to an associate of Phillippi was shot several times.

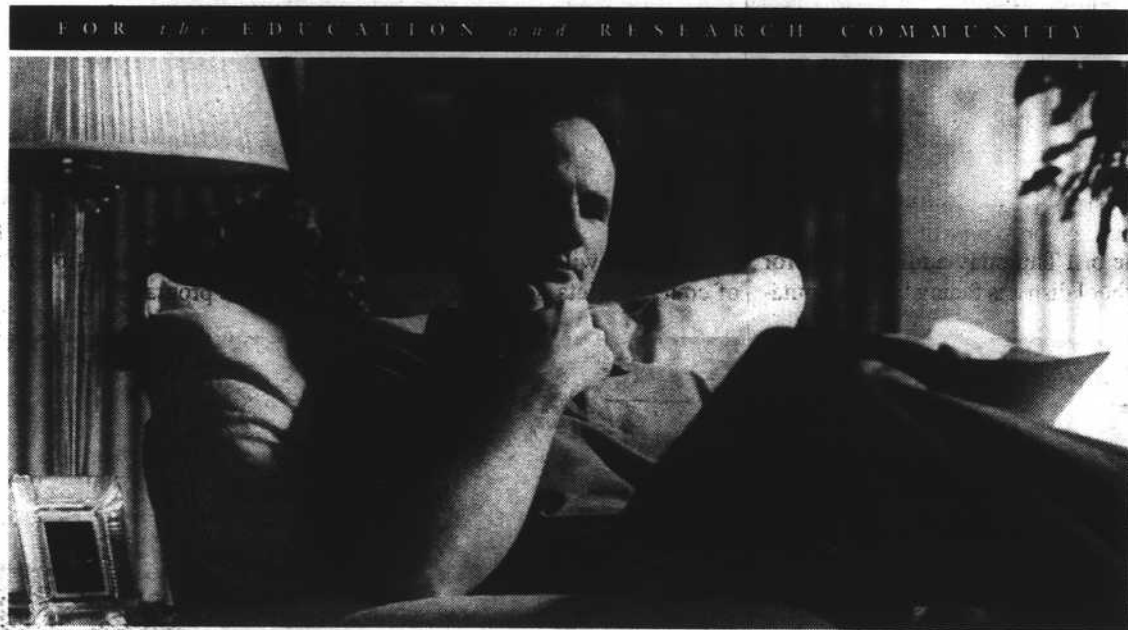
Through ballistics research on Friday, police linked the 9 mm shells from Thursday's drive-by shooting to the attempted robbery and attempted murder at the Gas 'N Shop.

Shells from the recovered .22-caliber pistol matched casings from the Kwik Shop robbery where shots were fired into the ceiling.

Early Saturday, surveillance officers watching a house on the 3600 block of Diablo Drive determined Phillippi was there and surrounded the house.

Phillippi apparently realized he was surrounded, called the police and agreed to give himself up peacefully, Casady said.

Phillippi and Gonzales are being held on \$500,000 bonds. Preliminary hearings have been scheduled for May 19 for Phillippi and May 20 for Gonzales.



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