

Legislature

# Osborne lists benefits of mentoring program

■ The former football coach spoke before the Education Committee, lending his support to a bill supporting youth guidance.

BY JESSICA FARGEN  
Senior staff writer

Former NU Football Coach Tom Osborne told senators that youth mentoring programs could save troubled youth from prison, welfare and teen pregnancy at a hearing Tuesday.

UNL senior marketing major Eddie Brown told senators how a mentor elevated him from an uncertain future as a 15-year-old to the ASUN second vice president at UNL.

Osborne and Brown joined middle-school students and former mentors Tuesday in front of the Education Committee to show support for LB653.

The bill, sponsored by Omaha Sen. Jon Bruning, asks for \$2 million a year to set up a statewide youth mentoring program for at-risk students.

If the bill is advanced, Bruning will make it his priority bill.

Osborne started such a program in 1991 with 25 NU football players. Through the program, athletes partially take the place of parents and help kids who are struggling in school, have single-parent homes or are at risk of joining a gang.

"A mentor is one who affirms, one who supports, one who has a vision of what that young person

"All of the research we reviewed showed the greatest wound kids fear and face and experience is isolation."

DR. ANDREW MECCA  
mentoring proponent

might become," Osborne said.

"Born to lose" is the most common tattoo Osborne sees on Nebraska prison inmates because that's how they see themselves. Youth mentoring corrects that view, he said.

The problem will be convincing a fiscally tight Legislature, Osborne said. He pointed out that, at \$22,000 a year to keep someone incarcerated, this bill was a cost-effective prevention measure.

Dr. Andrew Mecca of California urged senators to spend a small sum of money now instead of a large amount later when forgotten kids get pregnant, use drugs, join gangs and drop out of school.

"All of the research we reviewed showed the greatest wound kids fear and face and experience is isolation," Mecca said.

California is a gleaming example of a successful mentoring program, he said, jumping from 70,000 volunteers four years ago to 300,000 now.

Support from the state in the program's beginning helped spark the interest of private industry, which brought in more funds.

Lyndsey Clewell, an eighth grader at Irving Middle School, said her mentor was instrumental in helping

improve her self-esteem and grades. She brought her report card as proof.

Perhaps the most striking testimony came from UNL's Brown, who reflected on how surprised he is when he looks back on his accomplishments.

"If you told this young man he would be (second) vice president of UNL's student government, he would be excited, but wonder, 'Why him?'" Brown said.

Brown listed his accomplishments at UNL such as being chosen to study in the Nebraska at Oxford (University in England) program and being selected as a member of the Chancellor's Leadership Class.

When Brown, his four siblings and mother moved from Detroit to Lincoln, Brown saw his brothers, who were already involved with drugs in Detroit, succumb to drugs here.

Brown chose a different path. Along with his mother, his mentor was a guiding force in that choice.

"It would have been very easy for myself to go down that road of crime and wrongdoings," he said.

"Without this mentoring program, I really don't know where I'd be today."

## Council helps pave way for soccer complex

BY JOSH KNAUB  
Staff writer

The Lincoln City Council voted 5-2 Tuesday to give the YMCA permission to build an outdoor soccer complex near 84th and O streets, despite last-minute objections from area property owners.

A neighborhood association representative cited unanswered questions about drainage and asked for a week to work out a better compromise before a final vote.

He said at least one more face-to-face meeting between neighbors and YMCA officials was needed before any decisions could be made.

Council member Jerry Shoecraft pressed for a quick decision.

### City Council

"I respect the views of the neighborhood and the YMCA, but there will never be a consensus," Shoecraft said. "We need to move forward."

A motion to delay final vote on the measure was defeated 4-3.

A YMCA representative told the council that both sides worked closely to come up with a compromise. He said the YMCA was confused by the late request for a delay.

The council amended the resolution to reflect compromises made by the two groups. The final resolution provided for four soccer fields, instead of five, maintenance of an existing tree row and no lights on the fields.

Council member Cindy Johnson

spoke in support of the measure.

"I trust that the YMCA will do what it has promised," she said.

Council member Linda Wilson said she could not support the measure as proposed.

"I cannot vote for this measure at this time," she said.

"Questions still need to be answered."

Coleen Seng, another council member, joined Wilson in voting against the measure.

In other business, the council heard comments from the public on widening east O Street.

Current plans call for improvements between 52nd Street and Wedgewood Drive, including improving two intersections at Cotner Boulevard and 56th Street.

Debate focused on the plan's impact on businesses in the area.

## Women's conference to be held next week

BY VERONICA DAEHN  
Staff writer

Not only will women be given the opportunity to learn more about their leadership abilities next week, but men will benefit as well.

The sixth annual Women's Leadership Conference, which will be held Feb. 27 in the Nebraska Union, will focus on issues surrounding women in politics, the workplace and their communities.

"It's a good experience that offers men and women the chance to see how their leadership affects people," said Scott Peterson, co-coordinator of the Conference.

Lincoln's first female mayor, Helen Boosalis, will be the keynote speaker at the conference.

Boosalis, who served as mayor from 1975-1983, also was a gubernatorial candidate in 1986 and now serves on several organizations, including the Nebraska Community Foundation and the Consumer Advisory Council.

Six workshops will take place during the conference, which runs from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The workshops will focus on gender and other diversity issues, Peterson said.

Jan Deeds, assistant director of Student Involvement for Gender Related Programs, said women should take advantage of the conference, titled "Brick by Brick: Women Building a Community of Empowerment."

"This is really an opportunity for women to think about themselves as leaders and focus on themselves," Deeds said.

Several student organizations and academic departments contributed to the event, Peterson said.

Jill Matlock, president of Allies

"It's hard as a woman to be a leader. A lot of women feel alone, and by learning from each other, they could do better."

JILL MATLOCK  
Registration and Recognition committee member

and a member of the Registration and Recognition committee for the conference, said it was important for women to address leadership issues.

"It's hard as a woman to be a leader," the junior University of Nebraska-Lincoln student said. "A lot of women feel alone, and by learning from each other, they could do better."

Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m., but students and faculty can register in advance for \$3 at Student Involvement, 200 Nebraska Union.

Registration the day of the event is \$5 for students and faculty, and \$7 for nonstudents.

Jeff Nicolaisen, chairman of the conference planning committee, said this conference was unlike most others.

"Traditionally, (conferences) focus on leadership styles of men," he said. "But this one gives women the opportunity to learn more about their own leadership styles."



### Lincoln man, 48, arrested for stripping in restaurant

Police arrested a 48-year-old Lincoln man Monday after he stripped in a restaurant in the 1300 block of L Street.

Officer Katherine Finnell said a waitress approached the man to take his order about 11 a.m. when she noticed he had removed all his clothing. The waitress called police, and the man left the restaurant nude, Finnell said.

The man returned to the restaurant, she said, and the owner asked him to leave. After putting on his underwear, he did.

A police officer later noticed the man standing on the steps outside his home in his underwear, Finnell said. The rest of his clothes and the keys to his apartment were still in the restaurant booth.

Finnell said the man was cited and jailed for indecent exposure and disturbing the peace.

### Man nearly runs down officer, hits 2 vehicles

Lincoln police arrested a 23-year-old Lincoln man Monday after the man nearly ran over an officer.

Finnell said the officer was stopped on Capitol Parkway just west of Ninth Street about 12:30 p.m. when he clocked a 1979 Chevy Caprice Classic traveling faster than the posted speed limit of 35 mph.

When the officer tried to wave the vehicle over, she said, the driver sped up and swerved, forcing the officer to dive out of the way to avoid being hit.

The driver continued to the stoplight at Ninth and K streets, police said, where his car struck a stopped vehicle, a light pole on the intersection's southeast corner, a pickup truck and another pole on the north side of the street.

The suspect's car finally came to rest when it crashed into the south side of a business on the corner of 10th and K streets, police said.

The man then fled on foot, she said, and the officer - who arrived on the scene after the series of collisions - apprehended him on L Street between 10th and 11th streets.

Finnell said the man was cited and jailed for second-degree assault on an officer, numerous traffic offenses and driving under a suspended license.

The collisions caused \$2,000 damage to the first vehicle, \$600 damage to the pickup and \$7,000 damage to the arrested man's vehicle, she said. No one was injured.

Compiled by staff writer Shane Anthony

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