

## Paralyzed NU student in fair condition after wreck

By IEVA AUGSTUMS  
Senior staff writer

One day after his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, UNL junior music major Brian Linnell was listed in fair condition in the intensive care unit at Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, 12 days after he was paralyzed March 12 in a spring break car wreck.

"I talked to him and wished him a happy birthday," said Linnell's brother, Steve, who is a senior at Papillion LaVista High School. "Brian said he was very confident he would be walking again. I don't doubt his strong character."

Linnell, who sustained spinal cord injuries and a bruised lung, was thrown from the Chevrolet Suburban he was a passenger in after the vehicle slid on the ice on I-80 near Gothenburg, rolled six times and slid into a ditch.

The vehicle's driver, Jason Rose, a junior business administration major, was killed.

Five other University of Nebraska-Lincoln students, who were passengers in the vehicle, sustained minor injuries.

The students were on their way

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STEVE LINNELL  
victim's brother

to Jackson Hole, Wyo., when the accident occurred.

Linnell and four other passengers in the vehicle were not wearing seat belts.

Steve Linnell said he expected his brother to come home within the week.

Linnell would then begin additional treatment at Immanuel Medical Center in Omaha, he said.

"We have never stopped being strong," Steve Linnell said. "Though we are separated by a distance of 200 miles, we are closer than we have ever been."

## Interstate speeding fines will increase if bill passes

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the impoundment provision.

Bromm introduced a successful amendment modifying law enforcement's options for preventing repeat drunken-driving offenders from returning to the road. Rather than impounding the vehicle, law enforcement officials would revoke repeat drunken drivers' registrations and remove their vehicles' license plates.

Chambers said he appreciated Bromm's accommodation on the impoundment provision, but said the bill still strayed beyond its original intent of securing federal funds.

Chambers objected to LB585's changes in the point system for driving offenses and to increased fines for interstate speeding.

The bill would even out the driver's license point system. Currently, more points are lost when traffic violations are committed on the interstate than on state highways. Bromm said creating one point system would make the system fairer.

Fines for highway and interstate speeding currently are equal, but LB585 would penalize interstate speeding more than highway speed-

ing.

For example, the fines for driving one to five mph over the speed limit now are \$10 for both highways and interstates. The bill would increase the interstate fine to \$50.

Sen. George Coordsen of Hebron, who had sought the higher fines, said increased penalties caused less speeding. For example, doubled fines in construction and work zones have cut speeding and accidents in those areas, he said.

It is only logical to impose higher fines for those who speed on the interstate, where driving speeds are much higher, Coordsen said.

"Reaction time and stopping time are dramatically decreased as speed increases," he said.

Sen. Elaine Stuhr of Bradshaw, who introduced a bill this year that would lower the interstate speed limit between York and Omaha, agreed. She said the combination of increased traffic and faster driving in recent years had increased the danger of interstate driving.

"Statistics show it is deadly," she said.

But Chambers said he had fought to keep interstate speeding fines down

and would not take kindly to efforts to raise them.

He said higher fines for interstate speeding were illogical because accidents were more likely to occur on highways and city streets.

"Where the hazard is greater, the fine is lesser," he said.

Sen. John Hilgert of Omaha said the answer to the speeding problem was greater enforcement, not increased fines.

"You are not going to lower speeds by charging 20 or 30 or 50 more dollars," he said. "That's not the solution. The solution is enforcement."

Sen. Jerry Schmitt of Ord agreed. "Here we go again," he said. "This is one of those feel-good bills where we're putting in more penalties and not enforcing the law."

With debate on LB585 to continue, Chambers vowed to challenge supporters of higher fines, saying they would find the entire bill in jeopardy if they insisted on including the new interstate fines.

"I'm going to burn time off the clock," he said. "I promise to proceed in this fashion."

Staff writer Shane Anthony contributed to this report.

## Reeves' attorney files brief

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that chance to have his life spared, when it has been given to all others similarly situated," Hutchinson wrote.

Brown said this should not be an issue because the Court legally has the power to resentence.

"When you have two ways to resolve a problem, both legally appropriate, you don't violate rights by taking one or the other," Brown said.

Reeves was sentenced to death for two counts of felony murder for the March 1980 stabbings of Janet Mesner and Victoria Lamm in the Quaker meeting house in Lincoln where Mesner was living as caretaker.

Mesner and Reeves had been childhood friends in Central City where Reeves, who is American Indian, grew up with an adoptive family.

In Reeves' appeal, Hutchinson raised several other claims for relief including racial inequities in death penalty sentencing and implementation and that the electric chair is cruel and unusual punishment.

Previously, the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear arguments of racial discrimination in the death penalty, unless defendants could prove specific discrimination.

Brown said the issue should be what is the appropriate sentence for Reeves and his crimes, not what factors influ-

"Native Americans and African Americans are approximately five times more likely to be sentenced to death than whites."

PAULA HUTCHINSON  
Randy Reeves' attorney

enced the process.

"We don't offer discounts on punishment for race," he said.

But Hutchinson said the pattern of discrimination is clear when looking at the records of who has been sentenced to death and executed in Nebraska.

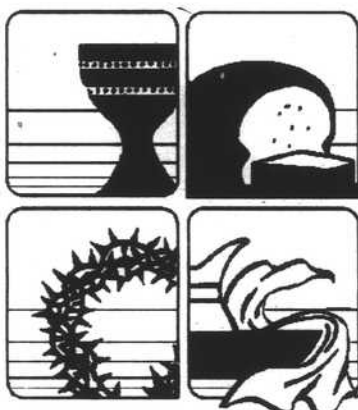
"Native Americans and African Americans are approximately five times more likely to be sentenced to death than whites," she said.

After the state files its brief later this month, Brown said, the appeal should be argued during the Court's May session.

Maundy Thursday Service

7:00 p.m.  
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## ASUN honors Griesen

By KIM SWEET  
Staff writer

During their last meeting of the year, the 1998-1999 ASUN senators passed a couple of pieces of legislation before turning over their offices to a new senate.

Outgoing ASUN president Sara Russell brought forward a bill of commendation for James Griesen, vice chancellor of student affairs and adviser to ASUN and the Committee for Fees Allocation.

"(Griesen) takes a lot of time out of his schedule, not only for ASUN and CFA, but to talk to students," Russell said. "He shows he really cares."

Along with commending Griesen, Russell and outgoing graduate studies senator Jeff Woodford brought forth a bill to add revisions to the UNL Student Code of Conduct.

The bill proposes adding a time frame in which the Judicial Officer, Charles Greene, must decide a course of action to deal with a violation. It also adds a limit on the number of days a student has to respond to a request for an informal meeting.

The bill states the Judicial Officer has 20 days to decide a course of action. A student must respond to a meeting request within 10 days.

There is also an amendment for the Appeals Board to complete its review of a written appeal within 20 school days.

Along with adding specific time frames to the code, the bill states that the administrative disposition issued about the student in violation of the code must list all code of conduct violations.

The bill also states that disciplinary proceedings can only be limited to code of conduct violations and cannot be added on arbitrarily.

The final amendment to the code states that sanctions imposed by the Judicial Board must fit the magnitude of the violation.

Woodford said he approached Russell about writing the bill after coming into conflict with Student Judicial Affairs and finding flaws in the code.

Griesen also stood up to support the bill. He said creating specific time frames to take action was a recommendation of the Federal Office of Civil Rights.

The office reviewed the code and recommended the changes, Griesen said.

ASUN passed the bill unanimously. It will now go on to the Academic Senate executive committee for approval. If it is approved, it will be up for approval by the NU Board of Regents.