

Program teaches responsible driving

■ **The Youth Driver Training Program drives home the consequences poor driving can bring.**

BY DAVID KOESTERS
Staff writer

A program aimed at teaching new drivers to cruise the streets safely is starting its second year.

The Youth Driver Training Program is geared for both new drivers and their parents. The eight-hour program consists of four two-hour sessions in which it tries to address dangers associated with high-risk driving.

The program, provided by the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, was awarded money by the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety to fund eight more classes for the rest of 1999 and into 2000.

The Youth Driver Training Program is just one of many programs the \$44,500 grant will fund through the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety.

To help get the message across, the fast-paced program incorporates presenters from different sectors of the city.

Presenters include Lancaster County Sheriff Terry Wagner, Judge James Foster, trauma workers, insurance agents, police officers, Mothers

Against Drunken Driving members and accident victims.

The program covers issues such as seat-belt use, impaired driving, speed and the consequences involved with poor driving.

People who have gone through the sessions said the program left a mark on them.

"It was unbelievable," said Lincoln parent Cheryl Ober. "The two hours went by so fast, and the statistics they told you were unbelievable. I think it should be a requirement for all 15-year-olds planning on driving."

As of January 1999, in order for 16-year-olds to obtain a provisional operator's permit, they must either complete a state-approved driver's safety course or log 50 hours of super-

vised driving with an adult.

The Youth Driver Training Program is not certified by the state but is instead designed to aid those choosing to log 50 hours.

Patte Newman, traffic safety program coordinator at the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department and chief instigator of the program, said the sessions tended to "blow kids away" and were "real eye-openers," especially the session on societal costs of bad driving.

In that session, students learn about insurance rates, damages and rehabilitation costs.

"It's kind of a communication experience," Newman said.

Lincoln Southeast High School junior Joel Sookram said the program

made him think.

"I thought it was a really good program for kids. ... It makes me think about what I'm doing (when driving)," said Sookram, who turned 16 last July.

The program is not in competition with other Lincoln driver education programs, Newman said. It is focused on getting parents in the car with their children so they learn to drive safely.

So far, the response to the program has been huge, Newman said.

Class sizes already have been expanded because of the program's popularity.

"One dad pulled me over and said, 'You know, I've never had to remind my son to buckle up once since we've taken this program,'" she said.

Hurricane Floyd heads north

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. (AP)—A weakened but still terrifying Hurricane Floyd churned its way up the Atlantic coast on Wednesday, heading on a collision course with the Carolinas after delivering only a glancing blow to Florida.

Its winds howling at 115 mph, Floyd moved north toward the mostly evacuated area between Myrtle Beach and Wilmington, N.C., its tremendous size and power chasing tens of thousands of coastal residents inland in the biggest evacuation in U.S. history.

Altogether, authorities have urged more than 2.6 million people along the southern Atlantic coast to clear out.

The storm was expected to roll ashore around daybreak today.

In northern and central Florida, Floyd snapped power lines, smashed piers into driftwood and knocked out electricity to 300,000 people.

But Floyd made a northward turn Wednesday that spared the state the catastrophic damage many had feared. NASA's Kennedy Space Center and its four shuttles were largely unscathed.

The Carolinas, however, are directly in the storm's path.

"I know that Florida and Georgia at this point feel like they've dodged a real bullet," said North Carolina's public safety secretary, Richard Moore.

"They talk like this one is going to be pretty mean. It's got everybody shook up."

TERRY HURLEY
North Carolina resident

"This thing is not going to miss us."

Myrtle Beach, a usually bustling resort, was a virtual ghost town as people fled or stayed indoors. Highways were jammed around Wilmington.

Terry Hurley, checking into a Wilmington shelter with his wife and two children, said his family stayed home for Hurricanes Fran and Bertha in 1996, but not for Floyd.

"They talk like this one is going to be pretty mean," he said. "It's got everybody shook up."

South Carolina Gov. Jim Hodges banned price gouging on essential items, threatening fines up to \$100 or 30 days in jail.

The last time South Carolina took a direct hit from a major hurricane was almost exactly 10 years ago, when Hugo struck near Charleston with 135 mph winds. The storm killed 29 people and caused \$5.9 billion in damage, the most costly hurricane to hit the

U.S. mainland until Hurricane Andrew hit Florida in 1992.

Floyd weakened slightly Wednesday to a Category 3 storm, its winds down from a peak of nearly 155 mph when it battered the Bahamas. The storm, with hurricane-force winds extending 140 miles from its center, dumped rain along the coast from Florida to Connecticut, and kicked up surf up and down the East Coast.

Floyd's expected track takes its wind and rain up through the mid-Atlantic states and into New England and Canada by Saturday night. Forecasters said Floyd could still have winds over 50 mph when it hits Maine.

President Clinton pre-emptively declared federal disaster areas in South Carolina and North Carolina. He had issued similar declarations Tuesday for Florida and Georgia to allow a rapid start to any recovery efforts.

UNL student spends summer in Siberia

SIBERIA from page 1

group that sponsors the program, has been working for the past 10 years to strengthen Siberia's economy.

It sends American students with strong agricultural backgrounds to teach Buryat farmers to operate independently and generate a sufficient income on their own.

Long, a 22-year-old psychology and economics major, shelled out a relatively meager \$1,800 to spend a month helping Reap in Buryatia, a republic in Siberia.

"There was no office. This was a 110 percent hands-on experience," Long said.

Long received no money or college credit for his time in Buryatia.

"I believe he is the right kind of young person to help Russia: Very tolerant, good sense of humor, flexible and also concerned about the people there," said Reap's director Bill Mueller.

Long worked closely with rural Buryats to promote tourism in the Lake Baikal area.

For the less geographically savvy, Lake Baikal is to Russia what the Grand Canyon is to the United States.

Russians call it "The Blue Eye of Siberia" — the Sacred Sea. Baikal holds 20 percent of the world's fresh water supply and is the world's deepest and oldest lake.

Long introduced himself to administrators, shop keepers and other local workers in the area where he lived, despite the language barrier.

"I really was hampered by the communication barrier. ... My Russian was extremely basic," Long said.

Despite its dismal economic situation and lack of running water, Buryatia left an unforgettable mark on Long.

"I was finally able to get in touch

"I was finally able to get in touch with my humanity."

KYLE LONG
UNL senior

with my humanity. You see how transfixed we can get on things that really aren't important in life," Long said.

Mueller and Long said they hoped the information gathered through Reap's programs would nurture the creation of an economy where one barely exists.

Mueller said tourism is one way to help the economy, but he warns against large-scale tourism and focuses more on environmentally-friendly tourism.

Reap plans to promote this "safe" tourism through activities such as group trekking and village-home stays.

American tourists participating in home stays live and work with a Buryat family and experience life in Russia first-hand.

Long, who will continue working with Reap in some capacity, said living and working in Siberia furthered his education beyond the classroom.

"You learn gratitude to an extent you can never experience (in the United States)," Long said.

UNL associate Russian professor Mila Saskova-Pierce, one of Long's former instructors and the woman who introduced him to the program, said she believed the internship enabled Long to positively influence world events.

"He discovered his talents," she said. "And he discovered that they're rare and that they're needed."

NO.

IF YOU'RE A COP, THEN YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT A STUDENT, AND IF YOU'RE NOT A STUDENT, THEN YOU CAN'T BUY AT WWW.EDU.COM.

Introducing edu.com, the first store on the web where only students can save up to 70% on name brand computers, software, textbooks, and more, every day. Sorry flatfoot.

edu.com
students get it

© 1999 edu.com

Think Deep!

Deep dish pizza, that is. Here's some food for thought. When you show your student I.D. we'll give you a **LARGE 2-TOPPING PIZZA FOR ONLY \$10.99**. Now that's brain food. Plus, get a free order of Nacho Magnificos when you purchase 2 entrees. And take a break from the books at our awesome late-night happy hour featuring drink and appetizer specials.

Green Mill
MILWAUKEE PIZZA & MORE

141 NORTH 9TH ST. & P • LINCOLN • 475-4844