

News Briefs

LES budget approved

The City Council voted 6-0 Monday to approve the Lincoln Electric System's budget after LES cut \$54,000 worth of billboard advertising.

The council had decided to move voting from Nov. 8 to Monday because it questioned the LES advertising budget. LES is a public utility.

"My problem has been the feel-good (ads) that don't talk about what LES does," said Councilman Jonathan Cook. "Overall, the LES board does a fantastic job. I hate to see controversy."

Council Chairwoman Coleen Seng said a lot of people called the City Council office about an LES commercial they said was stereotypical. It featured two women baking pies during a storm for male LES workers.

Marilyn Borchardt, vice chairwoman of the LES administrative board, said the commercial was taken from a real-life situation.

The women had made the pies because they were glad the power was coming back on.

"I had no objection to OK'ing and agreeing with that ad," Borchardt said.

The commercial is no longer running.

Council asked to examine conservation area drainage

About eight Lancaster County residents asked the council not to approve a conservation area near S.W. 40th and West Van Dorn streets because they were worried about sewage drainage.

"We're requesting that the EPA get involved," said Jeanne Gaston, a fourth-grade teacher at Belmont Elementary School.

The 82.5-acre area would be part of a 50-home development by Long View Estates Inc.

Long View Estates gets to build 20 more homes because it is setting aside acreage for woodlands, prairie, open space and wetlands, said Nicole Fleck-Tooze, a Lincoln-Lancaster County planner.

However, neighbors were worried that sewage from the new homes would overflow into the wetland area if it rained a lot. They asked the council to drive out and look at the land.

"The soil does not perk," Gaston said. "It's all clay; it doesn't drain."

Council members decided to delay voting on the agreement until Dec. 8.

Garage-hotel skywalks OK'd

When it is completed, visitors at the Embassy Suites Hotel won't have to walk in the rain to a parking garage.

The council voted 6-0 Monday to approve an operating permit to build two skywalks to two parking garages from Embassy Suites. The permit is between the city of Lincoln and John Q. Hammons Revocable Trust, which manages the Embassy Suites.

The two skywalks will go over North 10th Street and North 11th Street. They will cost \$1.27 million together, said Linda Hershberger, parking manager for the city of Lincoln.

At the council meeting, Richard Halvorsen of Lincoln told the council he didn't like the idea.

"I do not see why we should use taxpayer money to pay for the skywalk and the garage," Halvorsen said.

Hershberger said the \$1.27 million is coming from downtown redevelopment bond money.

Compiled by staff writer Sarah Fox

Student arrested on sexual assault charge

From staff reports

University police arrested a 19-year-old male student Friday on a sexual assault charge, University Police Sgt. Mylo Bushing said.

The student, who lives in Cather Residence Hall, was arrested on first-degree sexual assault charges for being sexually involved with a 14-year-old girl he met over the Internet, Bushing said.

"He's charged with first-degree sexual assault, but I think he'll end up getting charged with sexual assault on a child," Bushing said.

The student and the girl met on the Internet, and the student invited the girl to come to his residence hall room. They watched television in the room and eventually had consensual sexual contact, Bushing said.

On a different occasion, the student picked up the girl at her home in

Lincoln around 2 or 3 a.m., took her to his room and had sexual contact again, Bushing said.

The girl's mother found out about the sexual activity and called Lincoln Police, who performed an initial investigation before turning the case over to University Police, Bushing said.

"We don't know the actual dates that this happened," Bushing said. "It's hard to get straightened out because we picked it up mid-stream from LPD."

Bushing said he thought the events could have happened sometime last month, but the belated reporting of the event makes the sexual contact hard to prove.

"It's kind of a he-said-she-said type of thing because we have no physical evidence," he said. "Once we have more time to sort things out, we'll have a better understanding of what went on."

World and Nation
Devellnes

London

British minister to suspend new province administration

LONDON (AP) - Seeking to build Protestant support for the latest compromise plan, Britain's minister for Northern Ireland pledged Monday to suspend a new Protestant-Catholic administration for the province if the Irish Republican Army refuses to begin disarmament.

Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Mandelson appealed to the Ulster Unionists, the major Protestant party, to back leader David Trimble in a crucial vote Saturday.

The vote will determine whether plans mediated by American diplomat George Mitchell - to establish the new provincial government next week, and for the IRA to gradually disarm in response - can proceed.

The Cabinet would include two members of the IRA-linked Sinn Fein party.

Mandelson said if the IRA didn't cooperate fully with a disarmament commission, "the two governments, British and Irish, will take the steps necessary to cease immediately the operation of the institutions."

Washington

Report shows decline of crime in first half of 1999

WASHINGTON (AP) - Serious reported crime showed an unusually large 10 percent decline during the first half of 1999, prompting one expert to conclude that lawfulness is becoming contagious.

Led by drops of 13 percent in murders, 14 percent in burglaries and 12 percent in auto thefts, the

FBI's preliminary report released Sunday extended the nationwide crime decline to 7 1/2 years.

The report surprised experts used to seeing single-digit declines during the 1990s. The overall crime figure had declined by only 5 percent, 4 percent and 3 percent in the preceding three first-half-year reports.

And criminologists said the lone discordant note - a 1 percent rise in murders among cities of more than a million residents - did not foreshadow a future rise in crime, but rather that there probably is some irreducible minimum level of crime.

Washington

Government proposes aids to repetitive motion

WASHINGTON (AP) - Employers would have to correct injury-causing workplace conditions that require repetitive motion, overexertion or awkward posture under proposed regulations, the Labor Department announced Monday.

The proposal would affect about 1.9 million work sites and more than 27 million workers. The department estimated the cost to employers at \$4.2 billion a year.

Each year, 1.8 million workers have musculoskeletal injuries related to ergonomic factors, and 600,000 people miss some work because of them, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

New York

Survey finds more teens reject 'drugs are cool' notion

NEW YORK (AP) - The latest survey from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America finds that drug use among teen-agers is leveling off, with more teens rejecting the notion

that drugs are cool.

"This trend means we have to keep up our efforts," said Barry McCaffrey, director of the White House drug control policy office. "The teen-age notion that everyone is doing drugs and that there must be something wrong with me has to be dispelled."

The 12th annual survey, released Monday, shows that 40 percent of teens questioned felt "really cool" kids did not use drugs. By comparison, 35 percent of those surveyed in 1998 agreed with that statement, indicating more kids are turned off by drugs now than before.

Among 13- to 15-year-olds, 8 percent believed marijuana smokers were popular, down from 13 percent last year and 17 percent in 1997, the survey found.

Russia

Russian forces surround Chechnya, continues bombs

SLEPTSOVSKAYA, Russia (AP) - Russian forces are moving steadily to encircle Chechnya's capital and believe civilians will encourage Chechen militants to abandon the city rather than wage an all-out battle, Russia's top army officer said Monday.

Russia pounded parts of Chechnya from the air and ground, with warplanes running about 50 combat missions in a 24-hour period, the Interfax news agency said. Fearful civilians kept up their exodus from Chechnya.

So far, Russia's march across Chechnya, which began two months ago, has not produced major battles reminiscent of the 1994-96 war in the breakaway territory. The outgunned Chechens have regularly retreated rather than confront the larger and more heavily armed Russian formations.

3-year-old fires gun; no injuries sustained

A 3-year-old boy discharged a handgun at his baby sitter's home on Sunday, Ofc. Katherine Finnell said.

Police were called to 3635 Cleveland St. at 7:25 p.m. to investigate the circumstances surrounding the gunshot. The bullet lodged in the wall.

The boy's mother left him at a house of two 22-year-old adults while she went to work, police said.

While the boy and the adults were watching television, the boy stood up, and the adults assumed he was going to the bathroom, Finnell said.

Instead, the boy went into a bedroom and found a loaded gun on the nightstand.

The boy picked up the Colt .380 semi-automatic handgun and fired the shot, Finnell said.

The slide of the gun pinched and tore the boy's finger. The adults took him to St. Elizabeth's Hospital, where the boy was treated and released.

No tickets were issued, but the case is being forwarded to the county attorney for further review, Finnell said.

Young girl taken to hospital, treated for drugs in system

An 18-month-old girl was taken to BryanLGH West by her mother on Saturday night because she had lost control of her muscles.

Initial testing revealed that the child had cocaine and benzodiazepine in her system, Finnell said.

No arrests have been made, but the mother of the child has been cooperating to help Lincoln Police determine how the child ingested drugs, Finnell said.

The mother indicated that the child had been at a baby sitter's residence earlier in the day and may have found the drugs in a closet, Finnell said.

The child was taken into protective custody by the state. As of Monday afternoon, the girl's condition was unknown.

Intoxicated student found by police in Sandoz lot

University police were called to the northwest corner of the Sandoz Residence Hall parking lot at 6:40 a.m. on Saturday to attend to an intoxicated student, University Police Sgt. Mylo Bushing said.

A community service officer reported an unconscious person sitting in a car in the lot. When police arrived, the student was conscious, and his car smelled heavily of alcohol, Bushing said.

The student said he had been drinking beer all night, and he wanted to see his girlfriend, who lived in Sandoz.

The student lost his balance and had slowed speech, police said, so he was taken to the detoxification center, where his blood alcohol level was found to be .145.

Compiled by staff writer Dane Stickney

Texas universities honor accident victims

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) - The usual pre-Thanksgiving frenzy of school spirit and football mania that sweeps the University of Texas was put aside Monday as the mourning continued for the 12 people killed in the bonfire collapse at archival Texas A&M.

Across Texas, thousands of mourners crowded into one church after another, many wearing the maroon-and-white colors of the Aggies, to bid farewell to five of those who died.

At UT, a candlelight vigil Monday night took the place of the annual "hex rally," when Longhorns traditionally put a curse on the Aggies' football team before the annual day-after-Thanksgiving game.

Traditions were put on hold at Texas A&M, too. Officials postponed today's annual Elephant Walk - when seniors turn over school-spirit leadership duties

to juniors in a slow, symbolic walk around campus - to Nov. 30.

In the Fort Worth suburb of Watauga, about 2,200 people gathered at Harvest Baptist Church to mourn Chad Anthony Powell, 19, a high school valedictorian and Eagle Scout whose casket was draped with a Texas A&M flag.

"I personally believe that God was looking for a leader, and after searching far and wide, he found Chad," said Cody Austin, among 100 uniformed Boy Scouts.

In Carrollton, outside Dallas, more than 1,100 people overflowed St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church to mourn 19-year-old Michael Stephen Ebanks, whose desire to attend the university was magnified after his older brother, a Texas A&M graduate, died in a traffic accident in 1994.

Daily Nebraskan

Questions? Comments? Ask for the appropriate section editor at (402) 472-2588 or e-mail dn@unl.edu.

Fax number: (402) 472-1761

World Wide Web: www.dailynebraskan.com

The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 20, 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 \$60 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 20, 1400 R St., Lincoln NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.

ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1999

THE DAILY NEBRASKAN

- Editor: Josh Funk
- Managing Editor: Sarah Baker
- Associate News Editor: Lindsay Young
- Associate News Editor: Jessica Fargen
- Opinion Editor: Mark Baldridge
- Sports Editor: Sam McKewon
- A&E Editor: Liza Holtmeier
- Copy Desk Chief: Diane Broderick
- Photo Chief: Lane Hickenbottom
- Design Chief: Melanie Falk
- Art Director: Matt Haney
- Web Editor: Gregg Stearns
- Asst. Web Editor: Jennifer Walker
- General Manager: Daniel Shattil
- Publications Board: Jessica Hoffmann, (402) 477-0527
- Chairwoman: Don Walton, (402) 473-7248
- Professional Adviser: Nick Partsch, (402) 472-2589
- Advertising Manager: Jamie Yeager
- Classified Ad Manager: Mary Johnson