

Columnist Karen Brown explores the bonding of Girl Scouts and Gaia in Opinion/4



Nebraska volleyball ascends to No. 1 in the polls in Sports Tuesday/10



'Nurse Betty' stirs up mixed emotions and a few good laughs in Arts/8



Health center director quits for Illinois job

BY VERONICA DAEHN

Last week, Linda Herrmann added her name to the list of empty administrative spots at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Herrmann resigned her position as director of the University Health Center on Sept. 1, said James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs.

She has accepted a job as health center director at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, he said. Its student enrollment, about 23,000, is similar to UNL's.

"She was a very fine director," Griesen said. "We really appreciate her efforts, and we're sad to see her move on."

Griesen said Herrmann left for personal and financial reasons. She has family in Illinois that she wanted to be closer to, he said.

An employee at the health center confirmed she left to be closer to her family.

Herrmann could not be reached for comment Monday.

Griesen said he would meet with the health center today to update them on the search for Herrmann's replacement and future plans for the health center.

Herrmann took over the director's post at the health center in July 1997. Before that, she was the associate director of clinical services. She came to UNL in 1996.

She is a specialist in internal medicine and has worked at the University of Illinois at Rockford as the medical director and the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va.

Jim Yankech, associate director of business operations at the Health Center, said it was unfortunate Herrmann was leaving.

The administrative team at the Health Center, including Herrmann, had worked together only for a little more than a year, he said.

One of the largest projects Herrmann spearheaded was an evaluation program of Health Center activities.

The results were used to pinpoint areas that needed improvement, Yankech said.

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Josh Wolfe/DN

Pete Shoup, tire technician at T.O. Haas Tires, 2440 O St., works with one of the 6.5 million Firestone tires recalled on Aug. 9. Because replacement tires are scarce, many people have chosen to replace the recalled tires with other brands for a \$100 reimbursement from Firestone.

Dealers scramble to replace recalled tires

Lincoln-area customers will be reimbursed when they trade in faulty Firestones for other brands

BY JOSH FUNK

Lincoln tire dealers can hardly find enough tires to meet the demand created by the 6.5 million Firestone tire recall a month after its announcement.

Tiremakers cannot press the new tread quickly enough to re-equip car owners with the 15-inch Wilderness AT and ATX tires that may be linked to 88 deaths nationwide.

The recall of the popular tire, which came standard on many Ford Explorers, has stressed customer and dealer relations with Bridgestone/Firestone Inc.

To speed tire replacement, Firestone has allowed customers to

replace their tires with a different brand and then apply for a reimbursement up to \$100 for each tire.

"As soon as we get name-brand tires in, we call the customer (and change them)," said Paul Faughn, T.O. Haas tires Lincoln sales manager.

Firestone stepped up production of its 15-inch tires and asked other manufacturers to do the same.

"The problem is that everything is back-ordered and behind," said Mark McGinnis, downtown store manager for Walker Tire.

Instead of waiting for Firestone to step up production, some vehicle owners are looking at other brands.

"A lot of them are going for the

upgrades and waiting for their \$100 reimbursement from Firestone," McGinnis said.

Even those tires are in short supply. Some customers with older Firestone tires may be capitalizing on the recall, McGinnis said.

"I've seen a lot of people with 10-year-old bald tires taking advantage of the situation," McGinnis said.

Many other people who come into tire stores have simply decided they don't want to ride on Firestones, even if their tires weren't affected by the recall, McGinnis said.

Lincoln Firestone and Ford dealers referred recall-related questions to the tiremakers' national office.

McGinnis and Faughn said their stores have been swamped with recall replacement requests since the Aug. 9 announcement.

McGinnis said he had seen "quite a few of the Wilderness tires coming apart" when customers brought them in. But Faughn said he had never seen any major problems with the recalled tire in his stores.

"If you think you have them (the affected tires), stop down by any dealer, and we'll check them out," Faughn said.

Additional information is available on the Firestone Web site at <http://www.firestone.com> or by calling (800) 465-1904.

Stenberg touts lowering of out-of-pocket drug costs for elderly

The Republican candidate for Senate said the United States must protect senior citizens with limited economic means.

BY BRIAN CARLSON

Republican Senate candidate Don Stenberg on Monday endorsed a proposal to reduce prescription-drug costs for Medicare recipients and limit out-of-pocket prescription drug expenses for seniors with low incomes.

The five-year, \$40 billion plan would allow all Medicare beneficiaries to enroll in a prescription-drug discount card program, through which they could choose from competing drug-card plans to receive privately negotiated discounts on prescription drugs.

Also, Medicare would contract with private insurers to provide catastrophic

protection for seniors with certain income levels whose prescription drug bills exceeded set limits.

Stenberg endorsed the proposal, sponsored by Sen. Chuck Hagel, at a news conference in Lincoln.

"We need a Medicare prescription drug plan that will reduce prescription drug costs for all senior citizens and provide protection against large prescription drug costs for senior citizens of limited economic means," he said.

"At the same time, the government should not dictate which prescription drugs are covered under the program, and seniors should not be asked to pay premiums that for many seniors would exceed the cost of their prescription drugs."

Stenberg, the attorney general, is competing with former Gov. Ben Nelson, a Democrat, to replace retiring Democratic Sen. Bob Kerrey.

The Nelson campaign criticized Stenberg's proposal, saying it would not

provide prescription drug benefits for all seniors and would not provide enough help for seniors with limited incomes who are facing high prescription drug bills.

Under the plan Stenberg endorsed, all Medicare recipients would have the option of paying an annual \$35 enrollment fee to participate in the drug-card plan. After enrolling, they would not pay a monthly premium.

Market forces would help lower prescription-drug costs under this program, Stenberg said.

The plan would create a new Medicare agency, which would contract with private insurers and other entities to provide catastrophic coverage. Private insurers would not bear the risk.

Stenberg said the catastrophic coverage provisions would provide the most help for seniors with limited incomes. The insurance plan would set limits on the amount some seniors would pay for prescription drugs, then pay for any prescrip-

"...It will be much more cost-effective than a big government plan that provides taxpayer subsidies for people who don't need them."

Don Stenberg
GOP Senate candidate

tion drug costs beyond those limits.

For example, a person whose income was below 200 percent of the poverty level would pay a maximum of \$1,200 for prescription drugs, while someone with an income between 200 percent and 400 percent of the poverty level would pay no more than \$2,500.

Individuals with incomes below \$100,000 and couples with incomes below \$200,000 would pay a maximum of \$5,000.

"This proposal lowers prescription drug costs and provides greater security to seniors by ensuring a reasonable limit on

their out-of-pocket drug expenses," Stenberg said. "But it will be much more cost-effective than a big government plan that provides taxpayer subsidies for people who don't need them."

Stenberg said federal appropriations and enrollment fees would pay for the program.

Nelson spokeswoman Marcia Cady criticized Stenberg for waiting until fewer than two months before the election to make a prescription drug proposal.

Please see STENBERG on 3

ASUN anticipates court's ruling on lobbying for ballot initiatives

BY JILL ZEMAN

An ASUN Student Court decision that could influence the senate's role in lobbying for or against the Defense of Marriage Amendment is expected to be announced today.

The court heard a petition from Association of Students of the University of Nebraska President Joel Schafer on Aug. 31 asking for a clarification on one of ASUN's bylaws about elections.

In its current form, the bylaw prohibits the senate from lobbying for or against candidates in local, state and national elections.

The court's interpretation of the bylaw and final decision was prepared Monday and still needs some of the justices' signatures,

said Chief Justice Trent Steele.

The decision should be announced today, he said.

The court is required to submit a formal document with its judicial opinion, which is why the group didn't announce its decision the night of the hearing, he said.

"The court takes these opinions very seriously and wants to be precise in the language it uses," Steele said.

Schafer said the reason he asked for a clarification was to see if a ballot initiative or amendment could be classified as a candidate.

This influences ASUN because the Defense of Marriage Amendment will be a ballot initiative in November's election. The proposed amendment prohibits same-sex marriages, civil

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Trent Steele

Student Court chief justice

unions and domestic partnerships.

Schafer said there was a possibility that legislation could come through the senate supporting or opposing the amendment, and he wanted a clarification of ASUN's bylaw before this began.

Please see COURT on 3

Perlman: No dramatic cuts will come at UNL

The interim chancellor sent an e-mail to faculty, trying to alleviate worries over the ranking of academic programs.

BY VERONICA DAEHN

When the NU Board of Regents last month passed criteria for administrators to use in rating the programs on their campuses, some faculty members were concerned that programs important to them would be cut.

Because of that concern, Interim Chancellor Harvey Perlman sent out an e-mail last week to University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty and staff.

In the e-mail, Perlman said the university routinely established priorities. He said the board's criteria would serve as a "useful reality check on our planning efforts."

"We have all done strategic

planning," Perlman said. "Most units already have priorities—we ought to review those in light of the criteria."

Perlman said he sent the e-mail to all UNL faculty and staff members because of press coverage that suggested there would be dramatic cuts in programs. Many people were unnecessarily worried, he said.

"I can assure you that I have no such intention," Perlman wrote in his e-mail. "We will, as we continually do, move resources from some programs to others as opportunities arise."

The prioritization of academic programs is an ongoing process, Perlman said. While there is no exact plan in place yet, he said he has asked deans to rank the programs in their respective colleges.

Jim Lewis, chairman of the Academic Planning Committee, said his committee would play a role in looking at the academic programs and deciding what

priority each holds.

The committee is still waiting for instructions from the chancellor's office before they can officially begin, he said.

Lewis said he expected his committee would meet to start work on the prioritization in two weeks.

Perlman's e-mail outlined an academic ranking process that would build on past planning of the university and work through administrative offices, while involving the faculty as needed.

The letter also said Perlman hoped the prioritization would not significantly disrupt the campus.

"It is not in the best interest of this university to allow this exercise to drain our energy from the other important tasks that I set out in the State of the University address..." Perlman wrote in the e-mail.

Please see CUTS on 3