

Victim testifies in sexual assault trial of suspended Husker linebacker Mark Vedral
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The Husker volleyball squad moves to its next test: a Big 12 team
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Haydon director steps down to pursue a career in journalism
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Sharon Kolbet/DN

David Sellmyer, the director of the Center for Materials Research and Analysis, stands outside the physics offices at UNL's Brace Lab. Sellmyer has been instrumental in the growth and success of nanotechnology research.

Center making science fiction a reality

UNL is becoming a leader in nanotechnology research, which allows for the storage of large amounts of information in extremely tiny spaces.

BY SHARON KOLBET

Imagine robots so tiny that they could be injected into the human body and programmed to clean arteries or physically dismantle pathogens. Consider machines so small that their gears consist of single atoms. They have the ability to build a diamond — one atom at a time. Within the body of these robots, a single strand of carbon atoms could form a spring. The quantum spin of electrons could encode data. What sounds like science fiction may soon become a reality. David Sellmyer, the director of the Center for Materials Research and Analysis, or CMRA, at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is helping the university become a leader in nanotechnology. "We were working in nanoscale for a long time ... before it became quite so fashionable," Sellmyer said. Underscoring the popular interest in this field, President Clinton announced the U.S. National

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David Sellmyer

Center for Materials Research and Analysis director

Nanotechnology Initiative last spring. A total of \$497 million has been allotted for nanoscale research in 2000-01. "The government has realized that with the recent economic boom, so much of the growth has come from high-tech research and development," said Sellmyer. "The message has gotten through to politicians." With cutting-edge research and a dedicated staff, the CMRA has garnered \$8.1 million dollars in 92 separate grants with more funds to be allocated once the budget for the presidential initiative is finalized in October. These grants fund the interdisciplinary center with its various projects in the areas of chemistry, physics and engineering. Sellmyer's expertise, along with the quality of the center's faculty, has propelled UNL to the top of the

nanotechnology field. "The faculty gives talks around the world," said physics department chairman Roger Kirby. Sellmyer explained that such materials have the potential to increase information-storage abilities thousand-fold and would make it possible for the entire contents of the Library of Congress to be stored on a device the size of a sugar cube. "Nanotechnology is the driving force in new ideas," Kirby said. He said that Sellmyer is "a prime mover," and greatly responsible for CMRA's success. Sellmyer defers the limelight and notes that the CMRA has been fortunate enough to hire 28 new faculty members in the last 10 years. "The Center for Materials Research Analysis is functioning as an architect for new technologies," Sellmyer said.

Administrators work hard in interim

BY VERONICA DAEHN

Despite the temporary title, UNL administrators filling interim positions say they are not slacking off on the job. Because of a large number of administrative openings at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, it's not common to see interim replacements in vice chancellor's and dean's offices. Interim Chancellor Harvey Perlman said he was taking the position as seriously as a permanent chancellor would. "I'm acting as though I'm permanent because that's what I'm supposed to do," Perlman said. Perlman took over as interim chancellor in July when James Moeser left to take the reigns at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Perlman said having the interim title has not affected any decision he's made so far. The work of the university must continue, regardless of who is in the top leadership spot, Perlman said. "I'm trying to do the best for this institution," he said. Perlman was a law professor before he was chancellor and was dean of the NU College of Law from 1983 to 1998. He said his experience in the dean position was similar to his new interim chancellor position. "(How successful an interim person is) depends on a person's attitude in general," Perlman said. "I don't feel myself acting any differently now than I did as permanent law dean." David Brinkerhoff, acting senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, agreed with Perlman. He said not much difference existed between being an interim leader and a permanent one. "The business of the university is at hand," Brinkerhoff said. "You do the best you can and continue to work hard at what needs to get done. You don't pay much attention to the interim title."

Brinkerhoff took over for Richard Edwards this summer. Edwards, who is undergoing treatment for multiple myeloma — cancer of the blood plasma — is expected to be gone for six months. Brinkerhoff has been in academic affairs as an associate vice chancellor for the last 10 years. He said that has helped him with the work he is doing now as acting vice chancellor. Despite the "lame duck" label that some people place on administrators in interim positions, Brinkerhoff said it was a mute issue. It all depends on the way the interim administrator approaches the situation, he said. "If a person recognizes that there are things to be done and they accept that responsibility, there is no reason to be a lame duck," Brinkerhoff said. Scott Lewis, associate vice chancellor for business and finance, was the interim vice chancellor for business and finance from last October to the middle of August this year. He had taken over for Melvin Jones, who died in October. Lewis agreed that having an interim title did not affect an administrator's ability to lead the university. Administrators will continue to move the university forward and get things done regardless of their titles, he said. "People expect work to get done," Lewis said. "At that point in time when you become the interim leader, you are responsible for the things a permanent vice chancellor is." There is some concern that programs started by an interim leader are discontinued or forgotten about when the permanent leader takes over. Lewis said that could happen any time a position changes leadership, but he said it wasn't an issue in his case. Christine Jackson was hired as a permanent vice chancellor for business and finance in August, and Lewis went

Please see INTERIM on 3

Court rules lobbying bylaw is not clear

BY JILL ZEMAN

The student senate will have to do a little work if it chooses to speak out on an amendment that will appear on the November ballot, the ASUN Student Court has ruled. The student court ruled that a person running in an election is no different from an amendment or initiative on the ballot, according to the ruling the court released Tuesday. And this new clarification requires members of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska to jump through a few hoops before passing any legislation about ballot initiatives or amendments.

The court's decision is in response to a petition from Joel Schafer heard Aug. 31. Schafer asked the group to clarify one of ASUN's bylaws that prohibits the senate from using its resources to support or oppose candidates in national, state and local elections.

The court, led by Chief Justice Trent Steele, voted 6-1 on the case. Schafer said he was glad to see the clarification released by the court.

"That's the reason we went to them," he said. Schafer would not comment whether he would support a bill allowing the senate to lobby for or against ballot initiatives or amendments.

Schafer emphasized the court's decision was not based on the impending Defense of Marriage Amendment, which would ban same-sex marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships in the state.

Rather, the court's ruling was strictly based on the interpretation of the bylaws without any outside influence, Schafer said.

Schafer said he was not going to rewrite the bylaw himself and will leave it up to the senators.

"The bylaw is poorly written and needs to be revised," he said. "Now it's in the senate's hands."

If anyone in the senate wants to take action on the Defense of Marriage Amendment, or any other ballot initiative or amendment, the bylaw will need to be rewritten.

For the revised bylaw to go into effect, it needs to be approved by two-thirds of the senate.

Urrvano Gamez, ASUN Special Topics committee chairman, said his committee has passed a revised bylaw.

The revised bylaw specifically defines a candidate as a person, not an initiative.

But the committee's bill has a long way to go before making it through the senate.

Before it even goes before the senate, senators will have the opportunity to discuss it and offer changes, Gamez said.

When the committee receives enough feedback from the senators, the members will decide whether to introduce it to the full senate, he said.

Please see RESULTS on 6



A HOT TIME: Spewing flames and moving across the desert, this fire-breathing dragon was just one of the many art pieces and pyrotechnics on display during the Burning Man festival in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada in August. See story and photos on page 5.

Sharon Kolbet/DN