

Corrections ignored repeated warnings

By TODD COOPER
AND ALISSA SKELTON

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITERS

It was the second high court ruling in 10 years expressly telling prison officials the proper way to calculate release dates for some of Nebraska's worst offenders. And it essentially informed prison leaders they were violat-

Emails show that Nebraska prison officials knew that inmate release dates were flawed but failed to act

ing the law by releasing inmates anywhere from six months to 15 years early.

Yet it was met with doubt, even defiance, from the prison records manager charged with setting inmates' release dates, according

to emails obtained exclusively by The World-Herald.

The emails to her supervisors — combined with memos and legal briefs — paint a picture of a Nebraska Department of Correctional Services that ignored

the law despite two Nebraska Supreme Court rulings, a lower court decision and prosecutors' alarms that two prisoners were on the streets early.

On Feb. 8, 2013, just five hours after the Nebraska Supreme Court spelled out the state's sentencing law in no uncertain terms, the longtime Corrections records manager fired off an

email to her supervisors.

Prison officials were "asked if we would ... go with what the Supreme Court says," wrote Jeannene Douglass. "I said ... we would do what is in the inmate's best interest, that being, continue calculating the sentences the way we have always done it."

Douglass gave a few explana-

See Prisons: Page 6

Sunday World-Herald

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INSIDE

Ex-Husker Rimington finds solace through the lens of his camera

Now based in New York City, and with a hectic schedule that involves world travel, the former football player finds peace and calm in his photography. **Outdoors in Sports, Pages 10&11C**

IED kills 2, including Nebraska soldier

For the first time since June 2012, a Nebraskan — 30-year-old Staff Sgt. Benjamin Prange — has been killed while serving in Afghanistan. **Midlands**

Closing a church, keeping a memory

It wasn't about raising money at the recent auction at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, it was all about remembrances. **Living**

Do the Huskers need Pelini's bark back?

Nebraska football coach Bo Pelini's image has seen a dramatic overhaul in the last year. Tom Shatel examines what that means for the now off-the-radar Huskers. **Sports**

Comic-Con salutes Omaha comics store

Legend Comics & Coffee shares the award for best comic book shop in the world with an Australian store. **Living, Page 2E**

NEXT SUNDAY

Metro Guide 2014: Art of the city

Discover the iconic works of art in the metropolitan area in our annual guide to Omaha and surrounding communities.

Omaha forecast

Today's forecast
High: 82 **Low:** 61
Full report: Page 10B
On Omaha.com: Find the latest weather updates

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SEX TRAFFICKING: A BELLEVUE TEEN IS PULLED INTO PROSTITUTION OVERNIGHT

HER FIRST JOHN LOOKED LIKE SANTA CLAUS.

HE WAS HEAVYSET, BALDING, BEARDED AND, IN A FACT LOST ON NEITHER OF THEM, OLD.

“I’M OLD ENOUGH TO BE YOUR GRANDPA,” HE TOLD DAWN, WHO HAD JUST TURNED 15.

DAWN WAS DISGUSTED AND SCARED. AND SHE WAS TRAPPED.

THE DOOR WAS LOCKED. THE WINDOWS BARELY OPENED.

NEARBY WERE THE PIMPS WHO FORCED HER INTO THIS JUST HOURS AFTER DAWN HAD LANDED AT THEIR HOUSE THINKING IT WOULD BE AN ESCAPE FROM HOME.

THE TWO-PART SERIES: Traditionally seen as criminals, prostitutes often are viewed now as victims, held against their will and forced to do as they are told. Law enforcement and community groups are stepping in to help.

COMING MONDAY: A new mother struggles to break free from her pimp.

ERIN GRACE



COLUMNIST

They told her she owed them because they had given her a spot to crash.

The pimps made her put on lingerie. They made her pose for suggestive online ads. And after Dawn had spent a terrifying night job-shadowing a prostitute named Montana and bawling with a fellow runaway who was just 13, the pimps brought her to this apartment near Hanscom Park.

They told her it was go time.

...

We are starting to hear more about people like Dawn who are trapped in an underground sex market.

Once called prostitutes, they are now considered victims of sex trafficking if they are forced, coerced or tricked into providing sex for money — money they often don't see.

Technology facilitates “the world's oldest profession,” pushing prostitutes off street corners and into perfectly legal online classifieds where, on a recent weekday, some 30 “escorts” in Omaha were awaiting your text message.

These victims are hidden in plain sight whether online or squirreled away in an apartment on the quiet street where Dawn and her 13-year-old friend were held captive.

Yet the victims are hard to help and the traffickers hard to catch.

Dawn got lucky and got out rather quickly. But it was not quite fast enough.

The story continues on Page 4



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