LIGHTING THE WAY

Monday evening, students and faculty show support at Light The Way March

"This topic is close to my heart. I want people to know that they should pursue their dreams no matter what their circumstances are."/Egbert

Photo by Sydney Norris
Left: Community member and students joined in marching Monday night. Right: Patty Egbert graduated from UNK and was a teacher in Kearney for 42 years.

CAMPUS CALENDAR

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Discussing DeVos

Educator opinions on new Secretary of Education

If you tried to ignore all of the white noise and sound bites coming from Trump, including labeling the media as the enemy of the American people, you could see he has done next to nothing in his first month. This is surprising because usually the “first 100 days” are often seen as the time when the most legislation gets passed and the government enjoys a honeymoon phase. While it is clearly now anything but successful, what little he has accomplished is unsettling, especially his confirmation of Betsy DeVos as the new Secretary of Education.

As I am currently an education major and have aspirations of being a father one day, this perhaps has more impact on my future than the egotistical maniac in the Oval Office. While I could give my personal opinion on this individual, I have not been in the trenches of education and therefore don’t have real-life experience from which I can derive an opinion on this matter. Instead, I asked four local educators for their opinions on the matter. These individuals are active in education and have taught at multiple levels. To ensure anonymity, I will be using falsified names from educators in fiction: Miss Wormwood (from Calvin and Hobbes), Miss Nelson (from Miss Nelson is Missing), Mr. Skinner (of Simpson’s fame) and Professor X (no further explanation needed, I hope).

Opinions on the new Secretary of Education

The first question I asked was for their opinions on the new Secretary of Education. All four of them mentioned that DeVos is a political animal, though each to varying magnitudes. Mr. Skinner was perhaps the kindest, pointing out that DeVos has networks and connections to get the needed political clout to push for changes.

Professor X mentions that many have called DeVos dangerously unqualified and that she made about two million in the previous election cycle. X also pointed out that neither DeVos nor her children ever attended a public school. Why has she been placed in a position that oversees public schools?

Miss Nelson expressed similar worries about her lack of experience in the public realm of education. All DeVos has experience with is charter/private schools, and demonstrates a lack of knowledge when it comes to federal regulations such as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

Miss Wormwood voiced the same concerns X and Nelson, though she put it best in her own words, “But overall, I do see a small glimmer of positive in this controversy. At least the topic of education is being addressed by Americans. Usually, education takes a back seat to terrorism, immigration, budget cuts, etc. WE are discussing education … The bottom line is we are examining educational issues from many different perspectives.”

School vouchers, charter schools and private schools

The next question I asked the educators was “In the next 10-20 years, will the field of education shift considerably towards charter/private schools or not?”

DeVos is a big advocate for school vouchers, charter and private schools. In most of my conversations, the professionals pointed out that Nebraska does not allow charter schools within their state, though with this new Secretary that could change.

Professor X stated that those who wish to see the public school system dismantled won’t give up and the Nebraska Unicameral is pushing for funds to be allocated to private/parochial schools. That seems unusual to her, as Nebraska Public Schools are among some of the best in the nation.

Miss Nelson explained that she believes teachers need to be in the schools for the right reason and to make the teachers go through a variety of workshops and lessons each year. To her, the realm of education is dynamic and the teachers need to keep pace with the changes in education.

Mr. Skinner voiced similar issues, though he wants to see schools focus on ‘soft’ skills such as communication, working in groups and understanding the needs of high and low skilled students. Teachers, in his eyes, need to teach students because education reflects our

All four of my interview subjects are very active in education and some of them even teach future educators so this offered some insight as to what they think could be done to make the schools more effective.”

How to improve education

The final question was a bit broader than the other two but does play along with the future of education. “Given your recent experiences in the schools, what should the schools do to improve their education offered?” All four of my interview subjects are very active in education and some of them even teach future educators so this offered some insight as to what they think could be done to make the schools more effective.

Miss Nelson explained that the schools need to improve a few things, but saw them as a way to possibly bring new ideas to the table when it comes to education.

Mr. Skinner noted that this push would change public education from what we currently know, because there is always going to be a finite amount of money to go to education. If more of these limited funds are being sent to private schools, public schools will need to make some changes.

Miss Nelson sees that, despite the interest in the private sector of education, there will always be solid support for public education because there are great opportunities offered at public schools.
Enactus cupcake war declared

Competition draws students, community members for annual event

RACHEL OVERBY
Antelope Staff

Hundreds of cupcakes will be on display for your cupcake pleasure. You can look at cupcakes, purchase cupcakes and second-guess the judging of cupcakes at the Enactus Cupcake Extravaganza Feb. 26 in the Ponderosa Room of the student union.

Enactus has invited members of the public, professional bakers and students to participate in their cupcake competition.

Each baker is asked to submit six to eight dozen cupcakes to be judged with two cupcakes in each category.

Registration to participate in the event closed on Feb. 12, but Enactus is still looking for people to come to watch the event. For those not participating, a suggested donation of $5 can get you a choice of four cupcakes from the bakers.

The bakers have four categories to fulfill in order to win. They are being judged on best taste, best-decorated, Loper-themed and table decoration.

The top three contestants and the people’s choice will be awarded prizes. The judging will be from 1-3 p.m. but the event is open to the public from 3-5 p.m.

See photos from UNK’s Japanese Festival captured by Sydney Norris online @UNKANTELOPE.COM

Hey did you know?

You can follow the antelope on Instagram and Twitter @unkantelope

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Terri Diffenderfer
Contact for Antelope Advertising:
antelopeads@unk.edu
The Antelope
166 Mitchell Center
UNK – Kearney, NE 68849

STORY OR EVENT IDEA?
Contact for Antelope News:
Rachel Fangmeier
fangmeierre@lopers.unk.edu
maloleymr@lopers.unk.edu

TASTE OF CUPCAKES

- The first mention of a cupcake can be traced as far back as 1796, when a recipe notation of a “cake to be baked in small cups” was written in “American Cookery”
- Original cupcake recipes were not frosted, just flavored with spices or dried fruit
- The record for eating the most cupcakes in the shortest time is 29 cupcakes in 30 seconds
- The world’s largest cupcake weighed over 1,200 pounds and had over 2 million calories
- National Cupcake Day is Dec. 15
- Nearly 13% of brides decide to serve cupcakes at their wedding
- About 770,000,000 cupcakes were eaten in the US in 2012


Infographic by Rachael Fangmeier
MEGHAN WIEDEBURG
Antelope Staff

The third annual supply chain management (SCM) career fair was held Tuesday, Feb. 14 in the Nebraskan Student Union Ponderosa Room. If you didn’t go, you might make a plan for next year!

“Because the fair is offered to freshman -- seniors, there are a variety of goals at the career fair. Most are looking for an internship, whereas other are simply looking to connect with business representatives from around the state,” said Supply Chain Management major Nolan Harrington, a sophomore from Omaha.

The Supply Chain Management Organization (SCMO) puts this event on and it’s coordinated through Dr. Greg Benson, SCM program coordinator and asst. professor of marketing.

The event, held from 9:30 a.m. to noon with interviews following the event, had 20 different companies represented, which has increased year after year. SCM majors have the opportunity to network and meet professionals within their career field, as well as set up interviews with them for potential job opportunities through the yearly event.

Molly Sheehan, SCMO president, said “The goal of the SCM Fair is to present students with a more SCM directed setting to get to know possible future employers. The companies that are present are aware that we are all SCM majors and attune their recruiting techniques to fill upcoming internships and full time careers.”

Sheehan emphasized the importance of networking, and the opportunity to start building relationships with the companies represented. “My favorite part of the career fair is that usually the companies send the same recruiters to this event, so I have started to build rapport with the same people over the year, and conversations feel less forced because I know these people better.”

“I chose SCM because of the ample

A variety of supply chain management companies networked with UNK students at the career fair. The amount of companies represented has increased year after year and this year saw 20 present at the event. As a 21st century “hot job track”, many students were eager to meet with professionals in the field. The career fair ran through the morning, while interviews followed in the afternoon.
The choirs of the University of Nebraska at Kearney, under the direction of Dr. David Bauer, will perform Sunday, Feb. 26 at 3 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building Recital Hall. Admission will be free.

This concert will start with the men's choir, Loose Canons, performing “Captain Fate,” from “Three Pirate Songs” by Peter Schickele. The women's choir, Caelestis Voces, will follow the Loose Canons with Emma Lou Diemer’s “Two Madrigals” and “Pure Imagination,” from “Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory” by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley.

The Loose Canons will join Caelestis Voces to sing “Set Me as a Seal” by David Childs with Calvert Switzer performing on the trombone, followed by Daniel Gawthrop's “Sing Me to Heaven.”

After the performance of the Loose Canons and Caelestis Voces, the select chamber choir, Collegium, will perform “The Lone Wild Bird” by David Johnson, followed by Matays Seiber’s “Three Hungarian Folk Songs: The Handsome Butcher, Apple, apple and The Old Woman.” Following will be “Light of the Clear Blue Morning” written by Craig Hella Johnson with soprano soloist Tierney Casper and Collegium will end their portion of the concert surrounding the audience singing “All My Trials” by Norman Lubhoff with soprano soloist Jessica Gangstad.

The Choraleers will start their portion of the concert with a piece titled “Kua Rongo Mai Koe,” which is a New Zealand welcome song with the music written by Ngapo Wehi and arranged for choir by Eddie Quaid. Tenor Benjamin Hill and soprano Darien Meyers will start the beginning of “This House of Peace” by Ralph Johnson and the choir will be accompanied by several musicians from UNK. These musicians will include Dr. Ting-Lan Chen and Caleb Rohrer on violin, Dr. Noah Rogoff on cello and Heidi Farrell on the oboe.

After performing “This House of Peace,” the UNK Choraleers will perform the “Pie Jesu, from Requiem” by Andrew Lloyd Webber with soprano soloist Minori Yamauchi and mezzo-soprano soloist Jaime Mendenhall, before transitioning into Kim Andre Arnesen’s “Even When He is Silent.”

The concert will end with “O Clap Your Hands” by Ralph Vaughan Williams and have accompaniment from Dr. Tim Farrell and Giovanni Flores on the trumpet, Dr. Robert Benton on euphonium and Ann Bauer on the organ.

Go online to see choir members.
Bumpy road leads McCauley to UNK

After a successful college wrestling career, McCauley travels to Golden, Colorado, to punch his ticket to the national tournament

JD RADER
Antelope Sports

In just a few days, senior wrestler Destin McCauley plans to wrestle his final match as a UNK athlete in the 2017 Division II NCAA wrestling championship finals. It's been an unusually long and winding path that has led McCauley here, but he wouldn't have it any other way.

It all started for McCauley at the young age of 5. That's when his dad put him into wrestling to get rid of some of Destin's extra energy and restlessness. The Sioux City, Iowa, native immediately saw success. McCauley was a natural born athlete and had no problem picking up wrestling techniques.

McCauley became so good that he and his family made the decision to move from Sioux City to Apple Valley, Minnesota, to surround Destin with better resources that would allow him to succeed on the mat.

The success continued in Apple Valley, when McCauley won a state title in his first year there as a seventh grader. You can compete at the varsity level in seventh grade in Minnesota. He would go on to win four more state titles, making him one of only four people to win five state titles in the state of Minnesota.

McCauley was also winning at the national level, taking home a coveted Fargo national title his junior year. After the tournament, head USA Wrestling Coach Bill Zadick approached McCauley and asked him to spend the summer training in Colorado Springs at the Olympic Training Center with some of the nation's top athletes, an offer McCauley couldn't refuse.

Zadick wasn't the only coach after McCauley. Many Division I wrestling programs and coaches reached out and recruited him. McCauley ultimately decided to put off college for another year and train full time for the Olympics and Junior World Championships at the Olympic Training Center.

After competing at the Junior World Championships, but failing to make the Olympic team in the summer of 2012, it was time for college. McCauley chose to take his talents to the University of Nebraska at Lincoln for the 2013 fall semester. It seemed like a great fit, due to Lincoln's location and having three-time world and Olympic champion Jordan Burroughs, who McCauley met and trained with at the Olympic Training Center.

Things didn't work out and after just one semester at UNL, and McCauley decided to leave. "I wasn't seeing eye to eye with the coaches on some things. To be at that level you need everything to be according to plan and things just weren't," McCauley said.

For the first time in a long time, it was McCauley recruiting for a place to go instead being recruited by coaches and teams.

His first call was to former UNK wrestler Chase White. "I knew I wanted to stay close, I knew Kearney always had a good wrestling team and I already knew Chase White. So, that's who I contacted asking about the program and if I would be accepted."

Former head wrestling coach, Marc Bauer, welcomed McCauley with open arms, but once again, things didn't go as planned. McCauley was eligible to wrestle as soon as he arrived on UNK's campus in January 2014. However, after winning his first four matches, he finished the season just 6-4 and failed to qualify for the national tournament.

"Coming from the training center, to a DI, to here (UNK), I thought it was going to be easier, and I was going to be able to do what I normally do," McCauley said. "But there's still a lot of good wrestlers in DII obviously, and I had to learn that the hard way."

He knew it was still going to take a lot of hard work and dedication to succeed, but he learned fast. After a rough first season, McCauley bounced
WBB extends winning streak

After home and away wins over UCO and NEU, Loper basketball has won 4 in a row entering Tuesday night's game.

1. Junior guard McKenzie Brown drives to the lane past a defender from Northeastern State University during action on Feb. 11 at the Heath and Sports Center. UNK defeated the Riverhawks 54-36. Brown finished with nine points in 31 minutes.

2. Junior guard Michaela Barry slides around a screen set by junior forward Imani Kyser during action against the University of Central Oklahoma on Feb. 9. The Lopers defeated the Bronchos 55-52. Barry led the Lopers with 22 points in 36 minutes.

3. Alexa Hogberg uses a screen set by senior forward Kelsey Fitzgerald to break free from a Central Oklahoma defender. Hogberg recorded seven points and three assists against the Bronchos.

4. Sophomore forward Jaymie Bernbeck controls the ball in the game against the NSU Riverhawks.
Edem Sognon could not speak a single word of English when he arrived at the University of Nebraska at Kearney last fall.

He found himself more than 6,000 miles from his home in Togo, Africa, immersed in a much different culture at a place he knew almost nothing about.

But that isn’t keeping the 24-year-old freshman business administration major from chasing his dream of getting a UNK degree and making his family proud.

Thanks to UNK’s English Language Institute, Sognon learned to speak English – his fourth language – in just four months. He is taking general studies courses this semester while continuing ELI classes.

Most ELI students need at least one year before they are ready for standard courses at UNK, said ELI Coordinator Traci Gunderson. But Sognon dedicated himself to the program and adapted to the language and lifestyle faster than most.

The transition to Kearney and the United States is challenging, he said, and there were instances where stress gave him thoughts of quitting. But endless support from his family, especially the influence of his father, Emmanuel, kept his dream alive.

“I couldn’t give up. The first semester was kind of hard. Sometimes I wanted to go back to my country, but I think about how hard my father works, and everything he put on the table for me to be here. So I have to work hard for him to be proud. It’s why I’m here,” said Sognon.

Sognon’s cousin, a student at University of Nebraska Omaha, introduced him to the idea of attending college in the U.S. From there he learned about UNK and its English learning program.

ELI was developed in 1997 by Jerry Fox, former director of international education.

The Institute prepares international students for admission into a degree program at UNK – helping them transition into standard courses and everyday life in the U.S. There are currently 89 students enrolled in ELI – a significant jump from last year’s 49 enrollees.

Gunderson said a large majority of students come to the program from Japan, Korea and Oman.

Not all universities offer in-house language learning options such as ELI. But UNK’s affordability, lack of regional accent and overall safety make it a top program, according to Gunderson.

UNK’s experienced instructors – Sognon’s favorite part of the program – set the institute apart from others, Gunderson said.

“The feeling of comfort (students) have when they’re in a classroom trying to speak English, it’s all because of the teachers,” Gunderson said. “They...”
Explore, adventure during rock climbing trip

Deadline approaching for exciting spring break trip

BROCK MADSEN
Antelope Staff

Jacob McCann, Coordinator of Campus Recreation, Climbing Wall and Outdoor Adventures has high hopes for a spring break adventure featuring a rock climbing expedition in Arkansas's Ozark Mountains.

McCann encourages students to use adventure and exploration as tools to fight stress. He said, “We oftentimes, as students, get caught up in the stresses of our coursework. We forget that there is a whole world out there waiting to be explored. We forget that we all are explorers.”

The UNK Outdoor Adventure trip will give students the opportunity to experience rock climbing this spring break, March 18 – 25. The trip will take students to Horseshoe Canyon Ranch, a four-star dude ranch in northwestern Arkansas.

Staff have already reserved a bunkhouse 15 minutes away from the ranch if students want to overnight under a solid roof, but they can also bring camping equipment for the complete outdoor experience.

The expedition will feature rock climbing experiences fit for experts or complete newcomers. If you’ve never rock climbed before, the rock climbing staff at UNK can teach you everything you need to know in less than two hours at one of their weekly belay classes on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Food and equipment will be provided by UNK staff, but students may bring additional gear and snacks as they wish.

In addition to world-class rock-climbing opportunities, students will have the opportunity for hiking in the Ozarks as well as a free day to explore whatever activities are available to them at the Horseshoe Canyon Ranch, at their own cost.

Outdoors Adventure

Spring Break 2017

Where: Horseshoe Canyon Ranch in the Arkansas Ozark Mountains
What: Climbing, hiking and exploring
When: March 18-25
Cost: $330
Registration deadline: March 1
Register at: goo.gl/VnFZGA
Food and Equipment included
Email mccanjm@unk.edu for more information

Outdoors Adventure crew takes on Snowy Range in Wyoming

MICAELA KLASSEN
Antelope Staff

Over winter break, the UNK Outdoor Adventure Club went to Snowy Range Mountain in Centennial, Wyoming.

The adventure was timeless for wildlife biology senior Michael Buck who captured memories of the winter break adventure on video and still camera.

“One of my favorite things was to take pictures and videos of everyone and have them take some of me. Photos and videos are the few things that don’t change when everything else does, so I think capturing the moment is fairly important,” Buck said.

Jacob McCann had never done any of those activities before coming to UNK, but during his undergraduate years, he grabbed the opportunity through the Outdoor Adventure Club. He is now head of the Outdoor Adventure trips and in charge of the climbing wall inside the Rec. He will lead the spring trip.

In the past, the Outdoor Adventure crew has done its best to expose students to outdoor elements in states such as Arkansas, Colorado and Wyoming. They have offered many activities, including camping, hiking, skiing, climbing and white water rafting. For this winter trip, they decided that the Snowy Range is adaptable to all levels of skiers.

Typically, the Outdoor crew will rent a vehicle from Enterprise or UNL. However, this group only consisted of four students, so they made the six-hour car ride to Snowy Range together and didn’t rent a van or car.

The first day for the group was about getting to know the mountain and hotel and relaxing during their free time.

The ski group consisted of four people: director of the climbing wall and Outdoor Adventure Club, Jacob McCann; business administration senior, Jaime McCann; graduate assistant of Campus Recreation, Jake Barrett; and wildlife biology senior, Michael Buck.

Buck and Barrett went on harder runs and the McCanns stuck to the easier runs. Jacob said, “Jaime, my sister, started out skiing and was terrible at it. She just kept falling all the time. On the second day she switched to snowboarding and actually had a better time so; that was
Revelation on the Rocks

Casual conversation on current events with Catholic perspective

JESSICA TUREK
Antelope Staff

Tuesday nights are not slow at Baristas as students grab cups to warm them up as they meet for Revelation on the Rocks, one of the new programs formed by the Catholic Newman Center this academic year.

The program is a weekly meeting for anyone open to learning more about the Catholic faith. Each week, attendees casually discuss any topic they want to explore as a group. The topics can range from broad cultural issues or a current event to personal experiences on campus and in class.

“If anyone is wondering about the Catholic faith, it would be a great place to come to,” said Claire Swantek, a Genoa sophomore, majoring in early childhood education.

Revelation on the Rocks meetings began last August. Co-leaders Julia Daro and Houston Arnes of the faith formation committee organized the program.

Daro, sophomore majoring in pre-nursing from David City said, “It’s a good way to grow deeper in your faith by learning about different topics from a good source.”

“Yeah, cause Father’s there too like, if anyone says anything wrong or we have a specific question, Father knows. So, we get the real Catholic teaching on it,” Swantek said.

Revelation on the Rocks was envisioned by Fr. Neal Hock, chaplain and director of Newman Center and Vocations. The idea is to give students a place to hold a discussion in a more laid back setting flexible to students’ schedules.

“My favorite part about it is just having once a week. It’s like, I have so much homework—but after I go, it was good just to take a break. And even if it wasn’t anything earth-shattering, like conversation wise, it was good to just hang out with those people and just talk for an hour,” Daro said.

Revelation on the Rocks is scheduled to meet every Tuesday throughout the rest of the spring academic semester, 8 p.m. at Baristas.

“It’s reassuring to know that other students on campus, who are in your same shoes as you are, have the same feelings, and the same values, and outlook on things. Kind of like, be there for you. Like, you’re not alone,” Daro said.

Attendees are not alone as they leave around closing time, smiling, laughing and just enjoying their favorite coffee. Swantek said, “I like experimenting with new things, but my go-to thing is chai.”

CANcakes for V-Day

Centennial Towers East makes pancakes for their weekly Community Assembly Night

RACHEL SMITH
Antelope Staff

Coming to college as a freshman can be very nerve-racking at times. Meeting new people can be hard and having planned events in the dorm really helps to bring the community together.

Community Assembly Night, otherwise known as CAN, is a great way for the residents of the dorms on campus to meet new people and make friends.

Mallory Morrell, a freshman athletic training major from Arthur, is the president of Centennial Towers East and is the main coordinator for CAN. “I just like getting the residents together to have a good time” Morrell said.

CTE recently had a pancake and pajama CAN event that on Valentine’s Day. Unfortunately, no one ended up wearing pajamas so the name was shortened to CANcakes. Residents made chocolate chip and regular pancakes in the lounge of the building as everyone else gathered around the conference table filled with syrup and butter.

Rachel Shadley, a freshman nursing major from Columbus specialized in flipping heart-shaped pancakes on the griddle for the holiday.

Morrell said the biggest attendance turn out this year had been the Fall Ball because all of the CANs on campus did it together. She said there was a DJ, and a costume competition because it took place right around Halloween. "Everybody had a blast" she said.

Other CAN events include a karaoke night and a roommate game that was similar to the “Newly-wed Game.”

“A couple students didn’t have their roommates here so they ended up teaming up and beating everyone, but it was fun.” Morrell said.

Melissa Sellers, a freshman art education major from Aurora, is a regular at the Community Assembly Nights. “It’s nice to get out of your room on a Tuesday night.” Sellers said.

Community Assembly Night is all about meeting new people, and making friends. It also gives residents a reason to get out of the dorm room every once and a while. Morrell describes it as a stress free environment to relax and have fun. College can be hard, community make it easier.

TOP: "It’s nice to get out of your room on a Tuesday night," said Melissa Sellers.
BOTTOM: Fourteen CTE residents took part in this week’s Community Assembly Night (CAN) for CANcakes.
world and students need to be prepared to face the world.

Miss Wormwood repeated her focus on the fact that teachers are there for the students and need to base their decisions around them. Also, there need to be plans for high-performing students so they don't fall down to average levels, as well as combating boredom in school.

Professor X feels that, along with what was stated by the others, schools need to hire trained professionals with access to many facilities to educate students at all levels while forging a bond between the school and the community.

Four educators, four different opinions on the new Secretary of Education and the future of education. Hopefully things will turn out for the better and DeVos will realize that going to one extreme will not fix all the problems but instead, will just create more. Until one extreme will not fix all the problems better and DeVos will realize that going to

“opinions on the new Secretary of school and the community.

Sognon quickly recognized a common Sognon’s love for numbers directed his area of study to business administration. With prior experience as an accounting assistant for his father’s frozen food company in Togo, he enjoys learning more about business.

Sognon wants to visit Chicago and other locations to experience more of the United States. He’d like to work for his father’s company or another international organization upon graduating.

As an avid soccer fan, he participates in intramural and recreational events.

“I try to adapt myself to the American culture. It has meant a lot for my family,” he said.

The wrestler wears a reminder of this in the form of a Bible verse on his ribs: Ephesians 6:12. “It talks about how you’re going to have struggles. Not just people-to-people struggles, but other evils as well trying to bring you down. You have to rely on God a little bit to have your back and push you through those times.”

McCauley said he has relied on God throughout his whole life, a life that has included a lot of success, struggles and unconventional moves, but a life that has led him to his current home and place that has brought him happiness: Kearney, Nebraska.

The days were for exploring the mountain and the evenings were for relaxing. The group would hang out in their rooms until dinner. Dinner was a group decision, and the evening was filled with movies and the card game pitch.

Buck said, “I had a very good time, Jake M. did a great job planning out what needed to be planned out and then allowing us to make group decisions on some of the less more important things.”

The ELI program is centered around reading, writing, listening and speaking. Students are tested on the first day of the semester to determine their appropriate level of study.

Most importantly, ELI instructors try to instill students with confidence, Gunderson said.

Students are restricted from using their native language while in the classroom. They are also encouraged, and in some cases required, to attend Conversation Tables at the Nebraskan Student Union and other social events that enhance their English and teach them about other cultures.

Conversation partners are also assigned to ELI students from various departments to aid in their English development. It allows international students to experience the community in fun and engaging ways outside of campus.

Sognon quickly recognized a common theme among Kearney-area citizens. “Nebraska people are very kind. … When you go out (and) you see someone you don’t know, and he greets you and smiles at everybody. That’s pretty cool.”

by Mary Spencer
Megan Cherry and MacKenzie Mathews are two people who have never met but have a lot in common. They are both graduates who previously studied abroad through UNK.

Cherry is student teaching at Lincoln High School, while Mathews is working as a special education para at Horizon Middle School. Both would like to further their educations with master’s degrees and have dedicated their lives to mold the minds of tomorrow.

Cherry says studying abroad has impacted her teaching abilities. “I feel like I can relate to the exchange students better. I even taught some of them how to speak a little Czech lingo. My students love hearing about my European adventures.”

Cherry thinks Europeans live a healthier lifestyle than people here in the United States. “I’ve learned that I can live off less than what the typical American can. I’ve downsized my wardrobe, and I try to walk more often,” she said.

Mathews helps students study the Spanish language and credits her study abroad experience with helping her understand different cultures. “Study abroad forced me to step out of my comfort zone and do things that I normally would have never done. It also opened my eyes to all the things the world has to offer. Although I only studied in one country, the differences in culture were interesting to learn and forced me to take a step back and evaluate what is truly important in life. The people I shared my time with in Peru were truly the best!” Mathews said.

In Peru, the culture is different, according to Mathews. “One thing I remember most is how late everything was. It was actually super awesome. I didn’t worry so much about time and felt so less stressed.”

She said here in the United States, everything seems so strict, controlled or rushed. “Relationships are also very important in South American countries. Family comes first. It’s an amazing feeling being welcomed into someone else’s family and home,” Matthews said.

Waiting to study abroad is one of Mathew’s biggest regrets from college. “I wish I would have known earlier how much studying abroad would help shape me as a person. I’m so glad I finally took the leap of faith my senior year.”

The friendships she created while abroad are important to Mathews. “My favorite memories from Peru came from the landscape: the beaches, mountains, cities, but the relationships I formed were the most unforgettable.” Mathew’s biggest regrets from college. “I wish I would have known earlier how much studying abroad would help shape me as a person. I’m so glad I finally took the leap of faith my senior year.”

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Mathews said from sharing experiences abroad, she grew close to those who eventually became best friends. “We left UNK not knowing each other and still spent time with each other every day. I know they will be lifelong friends. I also enjoyed meeting new people abroad. Those friends I could never forget.”

Keeping in touch through social media is nice, though Mathews would love to be able to spend time with them again. “While I would go back to Peru in a heartbeat to see my friends and family there, I have quite the bucket list, and I know there is still so much to see and experience in this world.”

Traveling may be expensive at times, but to Cherry it’s all worth it in the end. She said there are many festivities that do not cost an arm and a leg if you keep your eyes open.

Cherry fondly recalls her time in Germany. “We did this thing called Stokotoberfest where we paid $250 for the weekend to stay at a campsite outside of Munich. It got us transportation, seven meals, free Wi-Fi, tent with a sleeping bag and mattress, showers and all-we-could-drink beer and sangria for three days. The only thing we paid extra for was transport into Munich.”

Cherry said, “I also liked the culture the Czech Republic had to offer. Everything was super cheap.”

Mathews wants to continue traveling and hopes to visit new places. “It’s important to experience new people and their different cultures,” said Mathews, “You learn more about how the world works as a whole.”

After going overseas, Cherry believes she has overcome a fear of traveling. “It made me even more fearless than before. I’m at ease, especially in regards to traveling.”

Cherry advises: “Keep an open mind and don’t be afraid to travel.”

Currently, Cherry is focusing on writing and hopes to have one of her works published. In addition to a master’s degree, she would like to receive a doctorate in psychology. Mathews wants to work with children and families in a social work setting, as well as being a mental health counselor at a school.