

Senior bakes way through school; decorates cakes to earn her tuition

By Sallie Jo Simmons

Stephanie Kuhner, a UNL senior in home economics and special education, bakes and decorates cakes to pay her way through school.

"My parents thought I'd value an education more if I paid for it," Kuhner said.

Working and earning her own money has made her more responsible for the ways she spends her time and money, she said.

"Two of the strangest cakes I've made were a chocolate cake with black frosting, flowers and lettering for the 'mourning' of a 40th birthday, and a pelican sitting in a chair talking to a reporter for the *Lincoln Journal-Star*," Kuhner said.

Kuhner started decorating cakes at the age of 12 after her mother took a cake decorating class. Kuhner said she worked part-time at a bakery and, at 22, she's handled her steady business at home for four years.

The favorite cake is always chocolate, she said, and the most popular patterns are E.T. and Garfield.

With birthday cakes for \$7 and wedding cakes for as much as \$200, Kuhner said she profits from half her earnings.

Her orders don't come regularly by the month, but by the season, she said. She receives the most orders from April to October, especially for graduations and June weddings.

"I might do six or seven wedding cakes for the weekend and 20 birthday cakes during the week," she said.

Her customers live anywhere in Lincoln or surrounding areas, she said.

"UNL student just started ordering cakes last year, and the faculty started this year," Kuhner said.

Kuhner said she doesn't advertise, so all her business is by "word of mouth." She said she made some business cards to pass out among bakeries and bridal shops, too.

Kuhner attends bridal fairs and charity carnivals where she has given several cake-decorating demonstrations. She also taught a class for decorating cakes through UNL's free university classes.

"You have to spend money to make money," she said. "That's why you have to give away cakes to have the business come back to you."

There's more to do than just frost a cake, she said. "It's a lot of work that people don't realize."

The real time is spent getting supplies, baking the cakes, washing the dishes, making the frosting and roses ahead of time and freezing the cakes, Kuhner said.

Working with a cake that serves 150 people takes two and a half hours to ice and decorate, she said.

Her specialty is wedding cakes, Kuhner said. "I've never had a wedding cake fall down," she said.

She said cakes fall because they're too fresh. People don't like cakes that have been frozen like cakes from a bakery, Kuhner said. Bakeries freeze their cakes uncovered, so they dry out, she said. Kuhner said that when working with mass quantities, cakes must be frozen. Her trick is to wrap them twice in wax paper or in large trash bags.

"The most challenging things to do are coming up with different ideas and seeing how many wedding cakes you can do in a weekend," Kuhner said.

Kuhner is currently student-teaching at Northeast High School, and hopes to graduate in December. She said she will be looking for a teaching position after school and would continue decorating cakes only if she does not find a teaching job.

Wheelchair basketball tournament to raise money for charity

The fourth annual FarmHouse-Alpha Chi Omega wheelchair basketball tournament will be March 16-18 at the Men's Physical Education building.

The proceeds from the tournament will go to the American Cancer Society Lincoln Chapter.

The tournament will consist of 42 hours of basketball. Campus, community and Greek organizations are encouraged to enter teams to play against FarmHouse and Alpha Chi Omega teams in 30-minute games. The entry fee is \$25.

The Lincoln Police department, hospitals and several Lincoln radio stations will have teams entered in the tournament. Members of the FarmHouse and Alpha Chi Omega will also collect pledges for the amount of time they play.

Contact Mark Thornburg at FarmHouse for more information.

Correction

The article entitled "History week notes women's contributions" (Daily Nebraskan, March 1) incorrectly stated that Susette LaFlesche Tibbles married Standig Bear. She actually was his interpreter, and she married Thomas Tibbles, a newspaper man. Also, the marriage was in 1881, not the early 1900s as reported.

One item in Monday's Off The Wire column was deleted, and its headline, "U.S.: Iran used chemical weapons" was placed over an item about Walter Mondale and the democratic campaign.

In an article entitled "UNL speakers capture title" (Daily Nebraskan, March 6), Val Benton is from Malbeta, not Fairbury. She was third in informative, not poetry.

Lane Welsh of Fairbury was inadvertently left out of the article. Welsh was a finalist in oratory. The information came from a press release from the UNL speech team.

In a story titled "UNL weightlifters settle for second" (Daily Nebraskan, Feb. 27), the Omaha Athletic Club was incorrectly listed as finishing in third place. Sweep Left finished third. The story also contained several inaccurate weightlifting totals and several misspellings. The Daily Nebraskan apologizes to the competitors and sponsors of the tournament for the poor coverage.

Police Report

The following incidents were reported to the UNL Police Department between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. Monday:

8:05 a.m. — Parking permit reported stolen from a car in Parking Area 16 west of Selleck Quadrangle.

8:23 a.m. — Illness reported at 426 N. 16th St. Person refused medical attention.

9:28 a.m. — Track marker reported vandalized at the tractor test site on East Campus.

11:09 a.m. — Hit-and-run accident reported in Parking Area 23 near 14th and W streets. Report was found to be false. Investigation is continuing.

4:01 p.m. — Billfold reported lost or stolen on East Campus.

4:20 p.m. — Security alarm reported sounding at the Nebraska Union. Cause of alarm is unknown, but may have possibly been due to a malfunction.

5:04 p.m. — Two hubcaps reported stolen from a car in Parking Area 1 near 17th and R streets.

5:26 p.m. — Ninety pounds of Olympic brand weight equipment reported stolen from the Cather Hall weight room.

11:19 p.m. — Domestic disturbance reported at Harper Hall. Officers contacted those responsible.

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Monday thru Friday 10-6; Saturday 10-5:30; Sunday 12-5