

Flame feeds freaky fireman

by Marsha Kahn

To look up and see someone putting out a cigarette on his tongue is a little bit shocking. The first thought that comes to mind is that either there's a trick to it or the person is pretty stupid.

According to Gary Boham, a UNL sophomore, putting out a cigarette on your tongue without burning it works on the same principle as fire-eating. "You don't have the heat in any one place long enough to burn."

BOHAM IS A part-time fire-eater. He does it whenever someone asks him. "You have to approach it logically and scientifically," he explained. "For example, the flame burns upward so you have to tilt your head up or burn yourself."

The first time Boham tried fire-eating back in 1967 he burned all the hair out of his nose. He said he learned from experience that you don't inhale through your nostrils while doing the trick.

"Most fire-eaters have no fear of fire at all," said Boham. "In my case though, I have almost too much respect for it...so I don't do it very often."

"I SUPPOSE I do it for the oddity of it. I only know one other person who's done it. I

just like to do freaky things." Boham says he has always been interested in magic and that he saw a few photographs of the trick and decided to try it.

The technique that he uses is all his own. He makes a torch out of a metal rod. Something that doesn't conduct heat is best. Then he wraps some type of absorbant material, cotton or terrycloth around it.

INSULATED WIRE is used to secure the cloth and gasoline is the substance with which he sets the torch on fire. "One thing that I did pick up from a book about fire-eating was using leadfree gasoline. It's safer because you can't help inhaling some of it."

Boham tilted his head back made one smooth, decisive motion and within 4 seconds the torch was in and out of his mouth and extinguished.

"The fire is only in your mouth for around two seconds at the most. One thing that you have to remember is not to suck in any air and to slightly exhale through your mouth."

BECAUSE BOHAM has a moustache, another thing he has to remember is to put on moustache wax. Otherwise there's always the danger of burning it.

When he first began the art

of fire-eating in 1967 he practiced for about two months. Then he didn't do it again until 1970. During that summer, Boham was in a performance of Oliver at Pinewood Bowl.

During one scene the director wanted Boham to juggle. He told the director he didn't know how to juggle so he suggested that he perform the fire-eating stunt.

SOMEONE SAW the performance and asked him to do it again for the State Fair Commission.

At Pinewood Bowl, the torch slipped down a little and he got a blister on his tongue from the hot rod. Boham feels, however, that most of the dangers can be eliminated by "just being careful."

"Some fire-eaters suck lemons in order to keep their mouths moist but other than that there are no special tricks to protect the person," said Boham. "If there were a special chemical, people would use it to paint their houses and there wouldn't be so many people dying from fires."

WHEN ASKED HOW his mouth felt after performing the stunt, he replied "Terrible. But it usually only lasts until I've had a couple of cigarettes or a beer or whatever."

Boham has tried to teach a few inquirers how to fire-eat and has had to save a few from disaster. "Most of them get scared and run out of breath right as the torch reaches their mouth. Then they almost start to inhale the fire."

WHEN HE WAS working with the Children's Theatre in Lincoln last summer all of the kids wanted to see the stunt. Several tried it and one succeeded after a couple of tries, according to Boham.

Recently, Boham has been approached and asked to help out a combination fire-eater and sword-swallower. "It takes a lot more time to learn to be a sword swallower, however. You have to work up to it more."



Gary Boham... "I suppose I do it for the oddity of it."

Bike Co-op advocates no street restrictions

Roger Kaye, organizer of the new Freebee Bike Co-op has taken issue with Lincoln's bicycle safety committee concerning the new city ordinance regulating bicycles on Lincoln's streets.

"Why would the council pass enabling legislation if they weren't going to use it," Kaye said concerning a provision where city streets could be closed to bike traffic.

MIKE RAGLIN, a student member of the Mayor's Bicycle Safety Committee, had said he and several other committee members felt the option to prohibit bikes from some streets would never be used.

The new ordinance says the city traffic engineer may close an arterial street to bike traffic during peak rush periods after conducting a public hearing and finding a suitable alternative route.

"It's fine to have recreation but why pass enabling legislation against the serious bicyclist," Kaye said.

RAGLIN SAID the committee is awaiting delivery of signs to post special bike routes throughout the city. Kaye said he feels the "serious bicyclist" was being ignored by the mayor's committee and money for the signs could be better spent.

"What do I need bicycle route signs for? Kaye said. "I want to use all the streets."

According to Kaye, the bicycle co-op was opened last Monday to "serve the bicyclist" and provide a place to repair bikes.

"The object is to teach people about their bikes," Kaye said. "A bike can be repaired by its owner. All you need is time, patience and a little know-how."

THE CO-OP will provide the equipment for a person to repair his own bike. Someone will be there to help show him what repair needs to be done and how to go about it, Kaye said.

One of the most common incorrect adjustments on a bike is the seat height, Kaye said. The seat should be at a height where the leg will be straight when fully extended at the bottom of the stroke.

"I see people every day with their seats all the way down, hitting their chin with their knee," Kaye said. Toe clips, which he strongly recommends, and correct seat adjustment will reduce muscle strain in the legs.

KAYE SAID sufficient tools have been loaned by individuals to do almost any repair work. There still is a need for a vice, bike stand and wheel turning device.

"People are most important here though," Kaye said. He wants to get a volunteer schedule so that no one works over three or four hours per week at the co-op.

THE CO-OP is presently located behind Blue Sky Books at 1017 Q St. If costs can be kept down Kaye anticipates the services will remain free.

According to Kaye, ASUN has shown some interest in taking over the bicycle co-op idea.

READ NEBRASKAN WANT ADS



Makes listeners out of insomniacs and insomniacs out of listeners

STEREO 95 FM

KFMQ

The History of Rock & Roll

OCTOBER 3-7

Sun thru Thurs 3 P.M.-1 A.M. Daily

Calvert-Beyer Dist. Co. 800 S. Street Lincoln, Nebraska

When you're out of Schlitz, you're out of beer.

