

Joy of juggling inspires UNL student to begin club

By Mary Fastenau

Come one, come all, to the UNL big top!

Turn on your imagination and try to envision UNL as a circus.

You probably know a few people who would qualify as clowns. Some of your friends may fit the description of an elephant while others may have a closer resemblance to monkeys than Darwin ever imagined.

But no circus would be complete without jugglers, so Pete Nicolaus is trying to complete the show by organizing a UNL jugglers' club.

Nicolaus, a junior theater arts major, said juggling on campus is one of his "favorite things to do." He added that it "freaks people out" to see a man, who appears ordinary, begin to juggle.

There are many "ordinary" people who juggle, according to Nicolaus. He said he attended an International Jugglers Association convention in Eugene, Ore. where doctors, lawyers, university officials and others gathered to juggle.

Jugglers' convention

It was at this convention that Nicolaus got the idea for a jugglers' club. There is a similar club at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Oregon and the University of New York.

According to Nicolaus, "If MIT can do it, so can we."

He wants to organize the club just for the "joy of juggling." A few people have called, he said, but no real organization has taken place.

"I might appoint myself president so I can call a meeting," he said jokingly.

It is much easier to learn new juggling techniques by watching someone else, he said, which is one reason he wants to

organize the club. He added that interest is the only requirement for membership.

"It does not take any special talent. 'If I can do it, anybody can.'"

'Cutting' experience

Nicolaus said he has tried to juggle rings, clubs, hoops and knives. He admitted that the knives are not sharp since he has had 'cutting' experience with the sharp ones.

His most difficult act is juggling a bowling ball, a rubber ball and a ping pong ball.

When he practices, Nicolaus said, he normally uses three rubber balls. There is an "infinite number of patterns" that can be done using three balls.

Nicolaus said people can attempt to juggle behind their backs, under their chins, on their heads or anywhere they desire.

He admitted he has no desire to appear in a three ring circus, though he has performed at rest homes, cub scout meetings and other "freebies."

Relaxation

Relaxation is one reason Nicolaus juggles. He said after a long period of studying, juggling is the best way to stretch out stiffness and soreness. He does not have a specific time set aside for practice, but he likes to juggle one or two hours a day if possible.

Nicolaus is a self-taught juggler.

He began juggling at 13 when his brother taught him the basics, but he has concentrated on it for about three and a half years.

One of his inspirations was Jek Kelly, a professional juggler from Lincoln who performed at Walpurgisnacht, UNL's winter festival. Nicolaus said he decided he could learn to juggle after watching Kelly.



Photo by Mark Billingsly

Pete Nicolaus, a juggler since he was 13, is trying to organize a juggling club in the Lincoln area.

Jaycees...

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the national bylaws as well. He also said every Jaycee has his own personal reasons for keeping women out of the organization.

200 years behind

Carol Weisenkamp and Jan Chapman, both members of the Omaha Jaycees, agree that the Jaycees are behind the times. "About 200 years behind the times," according to Chapman.

Weisenkamp said she has to learn to manage men as well as women, and that the Jaycees should offer its programs equally.

"Having women in the organization provides the Jaycees with opportunity for growth and common knowledge," Weisen-

kamp said.

The Jaycees were missing an opportunity to fulfill their own creed, which says in part: "Economic justice can best be won by free men through free enterprise," Chapman said.

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