

arts/entertainment

Local company films people in unique occupations

By Carl Sjulín

For students ambitious enough to be up at 6:55 a.m., there is a short television magazine during Channel 7's "Good Morning America," produced by a company right here in Lincoln.

Smeloff Teleproductions, 2637 O St., is the company responsible for this show known as "The American Trail." It may be familiar to those who remember when it was called "The Nebraska Trail" some five years ago. It was carried only by Channel 10 in Lincoln, but it has since gone national. Don Jacks, host of the show, talked about the astronomical growth of the production.

"We started out doing commercials for local firms and a variety of video-taping for area companies," Jacks said.

"After two years of local work on "The Nebraska Trail," we decided to expand and began filming throughout the Midwest and eventually the entire United States," he said.

"The American Trail" is a 3½ minute video short story that deals with a kaleidoscope of human-interest topics. It is similar in style to prime time's "Real People," and has been on the air three years longer. As one watches, a distinct parallel can be drawn to a scaled-down version of Charles Kuralt's "On The Road" travels.

Staff search

Smeloff Teleproductions has a staff that follows newspapers, mayor reports, television and radio information to sort through the myriad of possible leads to an interesting story.

When they find one that shows promise, they take it to their sponsor. Upon his approval, Don Jacks and his technical crew take off after the story.

A typical show begins by identifying a person and the unique job or hobby of interest to the audience. "The American Trail" centers around people in their natural environment who tell about their lives and how they got interested in particular occupations.

"During our shows, we try to let the person tell his own story," Jacks said.

"Our stories range from a black woman who is an air-traffic controller in Brooklyn to an old couple who sells



Don Jacks

Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

ice cream in Arizona. Our camera films them in their habitat, giving the viewer an intense feeling of actually being there," he said.

This sense of "naturalness" is evident, and Jacks' easy-going narration adds a personal touch to the episodes as he searches for the inner drive that has spawned these unusual jobs.

Still growing

The series is still growing. Smeloff Teleproductions recently started a 30-minute show that premiered Jan. 9 on Channel 10. These half-hour shows eventually will become part of their national syndication and Jacks hopes they may soon become weekly.

"We hope these 30-minute productions will evolve into a regular weekly series. It requires four or five episodes for

the half-hour segment, so we will have to be on the road even longer," Jacks said.

"The American Trail" is carried by 73 stations in 23 states including Channel 7 in Omaha and Channel 10 in Lincoln. The show runs Monday through Friday and is sponsored by agri-business companies like Farmland and Agway.

"The American Trail" will be showed in March at the National Conference of TV Programmers in New York. Jacks said that with a little luck, the show might become a nationwide syndication.

"Most people think shows they see on TV come from the coasts, but when you see "The American Trail," you can say it was produced right here in Lincoln," Jacks said.

douglas 3
13th & P 475 2222

5:25-7:30-9:40
Ends Thursday
GEORGE C. SCOTT
MARLON BRANDO
THE FORMULA
United Artists

5:20-7:25-9:30
JANE FONDA
LIV ULLMANN
9 TO 5
Columbia Pictures

5:15-7:15
-9:15
FLASH GORDON

University Program Council-East
is taking applications for
Second Vice-President
and
Main Events Chairperson

For application and information
Contact CAP-East East Union,
Third Floor or call 472-1780
DEADLINE JANUARY 21

Dinner-dance is planned

The Lincoln Community Playhouse Guild will present "The Glamour Years," a fund-raising dinner-dance Feb. 14 at the NBC Center.

It features a 6 p.m. social hour followed by dinner at 7 and a special appearance by the Playhouse Cabaret. Dancing to "Kick in Bird," an Omaha dance band, begins at 8:30.

Linda Herman, event chairman, said tickets, which are \$25 per person, are 85 percent tax deductible and can be obtained by contacting Buffie Smith at 435-3080. Donations are also welcome.

The reservation deadline is Feb. 12. No tickets will be sold at the door.

The dinner table centerpieces, which are for sale, will be displayed at the Lincoln Community Playhouse.

Additional information can be obtained by calling the Playhouse at 489-9609.

Herman said this event is the first of its kind sponsored by the Playhouse Guild. Penny Bradley is assistant chairman for the event and Ginny Hand is president of the Lincoln Community Playhouse Guild. Terry Faulkner is president of the LCP Board of Directors.

take one *The American Film Classics Series*

- THE MALTESE FALCON
January 22
- DINNER AT 8
February 5
- 7 BRIDES FOR 7 BROTHERS
February 19
- MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN
March 5
- WHAT'S UP, TIGER LILLY
March 19
- A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
April 9



Series tickets are on sale at the Nebraska Union South Desk;

\$6.00 for UNL students
\$9.00 general

Films are shown at the Sheldon Film Theatre, 12th & R Sts.



SHOWING QUALITY
XXX
FEATURE FILMS

Sugar Britches

EXTRA SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS!

EASY

OPEN 10 A.M.
CONTINUOUS SHOWINGS

EMBASSY

For your sweet tooth

ICE CREAM IN THE DELI!

This ad worth 10¢ off on a double dip ice cream cone.

Good through Friday, Jan. 23.

COUPON