

Students entertain at Disneyland

By Brad Gifford

At least once in your college career, you are likely to be tempted by someone else to skip an exam and take off for a few days just to get away from school and have some fun. Most students somehow find the strength to fend off their desires and the person who is doing the persuading.

But Steve Mendyk fell prey to Joan Mundie when she proposed that he join her and two friends in Kansas City to audition for a summer band job at Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif.

So Mendyk skipped his test last January and joined Mundie and two friends on their excursion.

In March, after she had all but forgotten about the audition, Mundie's phone rang. Art Bartner, director of the University of Southern California Marching Band, had just informed her that she and Mendyk had been chosen, out of the 1,000 musicians who auditioned, to perform and receive instruction in a unique music education program known as the Disney Entertainment Work Experience Program.

"I was very excited and practiced like crazy in the time after the call until we left on June 1," said Mundie, a senior majoring in music, specializing in the french horn.

Two weeks of intense practice with 18 other musicians also selected was followed by a three-day drive to Disneyland. In two weeks, the group memorized 45 songs, six different sets or programs and their choreography.

"It was pretty physical," Mendyk said of the choreography, "but it's difficult to entertain a crowd and keep their attention when they can go see 'Pirates on the Caribbean Sea' ride or see 'Magic Mountain.'"

In a few shows, the musicians were decked out as animated Disney characters. Mundie was Captain Hook's sidekick, Mr. Smee, and Mendyk was dressed as Goofy. When they were performing in these costumes, children would approach them, hug them and want their pictures taken with them, Mendyk said.

Performing was only half of the program, however. Special classroom instruction, designed to help the group prepare for a career in professional entertainment, was the highlight of Mendyk's summer, he said. Leading professionals in such fields as movie and TV music writing, TV producing, and jazz and symphony music instructed the college students, giving them knowledge of many career areas.

These clinics were conducted from noon to 4 p.m. and the students performed from 4 to 9 p.m. in Disneyland



Staff photo by Craig Andresen

Steve Mendyk and Joan Mundie

park. They practiced on their own from about 8 to 10:30 a.m., so there was not much free time.

Mendyk said that he remembers most the solo he played during the song "By the time I get to Phoenix."

"Every day I would have to get out in front of the band, get down on one knee and play it," Mendyk said. "One day Dr. Bartner grabbed about six teen-age tourists and had them kiss me and run their fingers through my hair while I played." He was used to it, though because before that Bartner had always picked just one girl from the crowd for the effect, he said.

Each student in the group received a \$180 per week stipend, ate with the other performing professionals at a discount and were given free housing in an apartment complex. The most valuable thing they gained, however, was career insight, they said.

"I realized what it was like to play in a band five days a week," Mundie said. She has also come to the conclusion that "if you want to get a good job or a respectable job, you have to have that piece of paper," referring to the graduate degree she plans to earn at UNL.

Mendyk said his career visions changed very little after his summer job, but he is now sure that he can "work a music job five days a week as a job and not just for enjoyment."

Homecoming hopefuls must apply by Sept. 10

Deadline for Homecoming royalty applications is Friday, Sept. 10 at noon, said Sara Boatman, director of Campus Activities and Programs.

The theme of this year's Oct. 10 through 16 Homecoming Week, co-sponsored by Dr Pepper, is "Wouldn't You Like to Be a Husker, Too," Boatman said.

Activities for Homecoming Week will include a 10 kilometer run, a sports trivia contest, a volleyball tournament and the Oct. 15 Diana Ross concert. The royalty will be crowned at halftime during the Oct. 16 Nebraska-Kansas State football game.

You, too, can still get a booth at Lincolnfest

A special meeting for individuals, clubs, or organizations that have reserved booths for Lincolnfest, scheduled for the middle of this month, will be Wednesday. The meeting will start at 7 p.m. in the fifth floor auditorium of the Lincoln Center Building, 215 Centennial Mall S.

The Lincolnfest booths, located between N and O streets along 15th Street, will feature food and information on Lincoln organizations and activities. Of the 106 booth spaces available, 68 have been reserved.

Individuals, clubs or organizations wanting to reserve a booth can still do so. Exhibitors should contact the Lincoln Center Association or attend the meeting Wednesday.

Correction

In an article about The Attention Center for Youth, the Daily Nebraskan incorrectly reported that Lori Delay, volunteer coordinator at the center, was a UNL criminal justice major. She actually is a third year undeclared student.

The article also stated that volunteers work about 16 hours a week. The article should have said that volunteers work three to five hours per week.

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