

Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

Name-changing brings change-overs

By Diane Brayton
Staff Reporter

A graduate student in speech communications at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln gave his wife a wedding present that was a little out-of-the-ordinary.

Chas Koermer, formerly Chas McAiley, broke tradition by taking his wife's surname when they were married, instead of the other way around.

"I really did it for two reasons," Koermer said. "Her (Koermer's wife) mother dared me to do it. I guess it was a challenge."

Koermer said he also did it to give his wife, Janice, a break.

"Why should women always have to be the ones to go through the hassle?"

"It didn't really make any difference to me," said Janice, a senior accounting major at UNL. "But it made it a lot easier on me."

The Koermers said they looked at different options, such as hyphenating their two names or keeping their original names.

"We canned the hyphenating idea pretty quick," Koermer said. "It would be too hard on the kids."

He said they also agreed not to keep their own names.

"We wanted to be one in our names when we got married," he said.

Although it is becoming increasingly common for women to keep their maiden names when they get married, it is unusual for a man to take his wife's surname, said Paul

Amato, assistant professor of sociology.

Most of the women who keep their own surnames are career-oriented or have a non-traditional attitude, Amato said.

He said it is exceedingly rare for men to change their names.

Hyphenating the names of the wife and the husband is also becoming more common, according to Michelle Leddon, appointment clerk at the Social Security Administration.

"Of the women who change their names, I would say about 10 to 20 percent hyphenate them," Leddon said.

It is a lot less prevalent for men to change their names to their wife's surname, she said.

"I've worked here seven years and I think I've seen it happen twice."

Koermer said he was glad he changed his name, but he wouldn't do it over again because of the hassles it caused.

UNL offices can help with financial questions

By Julie Naughton
Staff Reporter

Aid for financial newlywed woes and questions can be found by contacting specific offices at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Deb Wismer, office supervisor for the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, urges newlywed students not to worry about financial aid.

"Married students can keep any financial aid that they were awarded before their marriage, including grants, loans and scholarships," Wismer said.

She said student financial aid is based on the student's status as a dependent or an independent student. "If the student's parents claimed them on their last tax return, they are a dependent student. If they were not entered on their parents' form, they are independent."

Wismer said that each half of the new couple can qualify for their own package, which might consist of grants, loans and scholarships.

"Their award will be based on combined income and assets," Wismer said.

She said if one half of the couple has certain benefits -- perhaps a GI bill or a disability allowance -- that person might be awarded a different amount of aid, but independently each person also still would be eligible for aid.

"The fact that you're married does not make you ineligible for financial aid. We look at your FAF (financial aid form) to determine your award," Wismer said.

For married students looking for affordable living quarters, UNL also maintains an option of married student housing units on East Campus, said Dee Borg, representative for the Housing Department's Division of Student Family/Faculty Housing.

"In order to be eligible, at least one member of the couple must be a full-time student," Borg said, adding that couples where both spouses are

full-time students, full-time student couples with children and single spouses with children are also eligible.


UNL maintains 63 units, including 25 one-bedroom units, 34 two-bedroom units and four three-bedroom units. Waiting times vary for the units, Borg said, but with waits varying between "a few months" to two years, she said it would be wise to place your name on the waiting list about the same time that you reserve the church for your vows.

She said that the most demand at the present time is for the one-bedroom units, which are "very reasonable" at \$264 per month, including utilities. The prices vary for each unit, Borg said, but the most expensive are the 3-bedroom units, "which rent for \$305, plus gas and utilities."

Contact the Housing Office at 472-3753 for more information on married student housing options.

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