



Nebraska in the Summertime



From Indian leather dollmaking to Russian folk tales to dancing in the streets, Nebraskans celebrated their rich heritage in hot-August-night style at last weekend's Summertime Nebraska Festival.

Organizers focused the outdoor event on children's activities, fine art and Nebraska cultural history, said Carole Eddins, festival coordinator.

Throw in enough live music to keep the stillest of toes tapping from high noon to midnight moon, and the crowd of 60,000 proved they can take care of the rest.

"There was no lull in the action at any time," Eddins said.

Spinning raw wool and spinning old tales, oral historians like storyteller Sue Bad Moccasin, prairie blacksmith Bob Bigelow and moun-

tain man David Grantski put new life into old skills and legends.

While one outdoor stage shook with Hispanic, American Indian and old-time square dancers, the Mainstage rocked the streets with reggae and salsa, big band jazz, Chicago blues, country swing and good ol' rock 'n' roll. Balladeer Kevin Avey filled the Depot with more mellow folk tunes, along with John Walker's "prairie dog music" and Chris Sayre's unusual antique instruments.

And the silver screen brought a bit of film history to the festival with Betty Boop, Popeye and other early Fleischer Brothers' animation.

With 25 bands, 42 artists, 39 craft demonstrators, five storytellers and more than 25 food booths, who said history can't be fun?

Story and photos
by Robin Trimarchi



Counterclockwise from top right:
 ●Retired janitor Waldo Larsen jams to Southside Chicago blues with Magic Slim and the Teardrops on Saturday afternoon.
 ●Rock 'n' roll and romance was in the air at Friday night's street dance.
 ●Nine-year-old Eli Russell Barnes, 5106 West Benton, replaced horsepower with

sheer determination in the children's tractor pull.
 ●The sounds of a hot saxophone on a hot summer day is dancing music to former Lincolnite Kathleen Danker.
 ●Bert Callaway, director of the Black History Museum in Omaha, shared stories of black cowboys and pioneer women.