



Nickette Allen and Hiroshi Nakama
Robin Trimarchi/Daily Nebraskan

Japan

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mountainside, Allen said.

"But it sure seems large when you're working it," she said.

Allen and Nakama went to Japan so she could meet Nakama's parents, and they could help harvest the green tea crop. The two spent about a month picking tea leaves for his parents and three other island families.

Nakama said he and Allen picked about 40 sacks of tea from the four fields, each sack weighing 20 kilograms. The tea then was sold by the sack to a nearby mill for processing. The two students helped Nakama's parents earn about \$400 from the sale of the tea they picked.

She and Nakama worked in the tea fields about five hours each day, Allen said. They worked for about two hours in the cool of the morning, then took a long break for lunch. During lunch, they took showers to rid themselves of the tea residue and to cool down. They returned to the fields in the late afternoon after the temperature dropped.

During the harvest season, activity picked up. Nakama said his mother worked about 19 hours a day picking tea and processing the leaves at the mill.

The mill is privately owned,

and the owner helped Nakama's mother with the processing. In return, they helped the mill owner pick his tea.

Working on a Japanese farm differs in some ways from working on an American farm, Allen said.

The harvest season for tea is only about two weeks long, she said, but there are four harvest seasons annually.

Nakama said the tea must be picked during that period for the leaves to be good. If the leaves are not harvested in time, the plants must be cut back to ensure a good regrowth for the next season.

The clothing worn by the Japanese field workers is different from that worn by American farmhands, Allen said. While they wear layers of clothing to be removed during the heat, tea pickers in Japan also wear special protective clothing. These clothes make quick removal of tea residue easier, Allen said.

The workers wear boots, aprons that resemble surgical gowns, and long protective gloves which cover their arms, Allen said.

"We called them ninja gloves," she said, "because they had elastic at the top to hold them up and no fingers in them."

The women wear sunbonnets similar to those worn by the American pioneer women to shade them from the sun, and the men wear handannas or caps, Allen said.

The weather was hot and sunny every day during the tea harvest, which was why the workers took a break during the hottest part of the afternoon, Allen said.

"It feels like the sun over in Japan is right over the top of you, not off to one side like here in Nebraska," she said. "When you're out (in the fields), you cast no shadow."

Working in the fields was fun, Allen said, because the workers talked, laughed and joked while they worked. Neighbors, workers and field owners worked side by side.

"The unity of the community is so different there," Allen said. "They all help each other, sometimes bringing food to each other where they're working. If they've grown extra vegetables in their gardens, they give them to the neighbors."

"Everybody saves money by helping each other," Nakama said, "so no one has to hire extra help in the fields."

When it was time to return to the United States, Allen said the island people were sorry to see her leave. Even though she and Nakama had already visited the townspeople before getting ready to go, everyone came down to the ferry dock to see them off.

"They were crying and that started me crying," she said.

Student develops recycling plan for Selleck

By Sara Bauder Schott
Senior Reporter

Jeff Riggert is a man on a recycling mission. The junior biology major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has developed a plan to recycle aluminum, paper, glass and plastics in Selleck Quadrangle.

With his program already operating on one floor of Selleck, Riggert now is trying to get enough financial support to start programs on the other floors. He said he needs money to buy trash cans to hold the aluminum and paper.

His first step to getting the money is to ask

the Selleck Hall government, which he plans to do Sunday.

Riggert said the trash cans would cost about \$200 and the hall government would get that money back from the sale of the aluminum cans. After the trash cans are paid for, the hall government could decide what to do with any money from sales.

If the hall government doesn't help Riggert buy the trash cans, he said he may try to get funds from individual floor governments or housing.

Riggert, who is considering a career in ecological consulting or environmental engi-

neering, said recycling is one area of the environment he can focus on.

"It's something everyone can do, and it's not controversial at all," he said. "There's no reason you shouldn't be doing it, unless you're lazy."

Riggert has been recycling since high school and has tried to convince his family to recycle. But his proposal for the residence halls is the first time he has tried to "institutionalize" recycling.

For now, Riggert's program recycles only aluminum and paper, but he said he would be ready for glass and plastic recycling later this

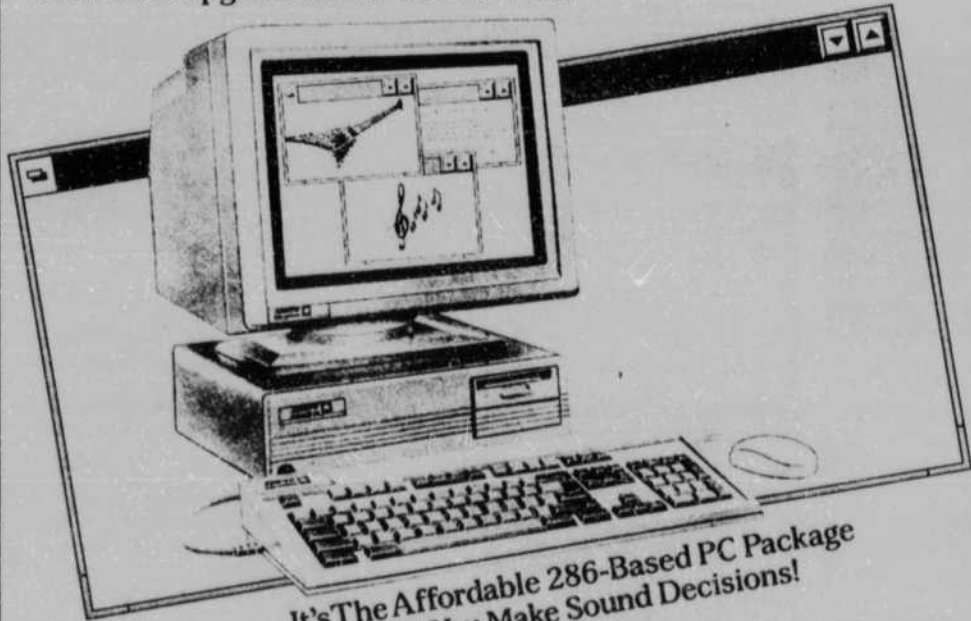
semester.

Riggert has four volunteers to help with sorting the recyclable materials and taking them out of the building each day and plans to get more.

Riggert said some recycling programs in residence halls have failed, but he thinks his program is different.

"Most of the others failed because of sanitary problems or because students just gave up on it," he said. "But this program has really been thought out ahead of time, and we coordinated what we're doing with maintenance and I know I won't lose interest in it."

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