



Staci McKee/Daily Nebraskan

Student assistants Toni Dike of Selleck Residence Hall and Nick Kincanon of Harper Residence Hall watch dance instructors Kirsten Bartels of Neihardt Residence Center and Chad Thornton of Harper. Bartels and Thornton have been teaching country dancing since January 1989.

Country swing spins S.A.s into winter whirl

By Heather Heinisch
Staff Reporter

Country music blared from the stereo as members of a wide-eyed audience watched the twirling, foot-stomping, two-stepping demonstration of country swing. Their turns were next.

As part of the student assistants' winter workshop, Chad Thornton, an S.A. in Harper Residence Hall, and Kirsten Bartels, an S.A. in Neihardt Residence Hall, showed five couples the basic steps of the country swing.

Dance steps with names like Pretzel, Suicide Dip, Double-Decker and Thread the Needle caused most of the participants to react with cynical disbelief that

they could ever twirl without getting tangled, much less remember the correct order of the steps.

Roger Miller, an S.A. in Selleck Residence Hall and a senior accounting major, said, "This was the first time I ever learned to dance in my life. I wasn't good."

Thornton and Bartels have been dancing together for two years and have given demonstrations to organizations like the Farmhouse Fraternity and presented a campuswide show, with each show drawing about 150 people last year, Thornton said.

A junior English and history major, Thornton said he first learned to dance at age 7 at the bar

See SWING on 13

Childhood bear wins approval from S.A.s

By Connie L. Sheehan
Senior Editor

On the third floor of Fedde, if someone calls you a Pooh, you can take it as a compliment.

The childhood character, Winnie-the-Pooh, has once again become a hero in the eyes of some students at Fedde with the publication of the book, "The Tao of Pooh" by Benjamin Hoff.

The book compares the entertaining accounts of Pooh with the

Chinese philosophy of Taoism that advocates simplicity and selflessness.

As part of her midyear Student Assistants' training session, Sue Richart, a law student and second-year S.A. at Fedde, demonstrated how to apply the Pooh-Tao philosophy to everyday life in the residence halls.

With the help of Winnie-the-Pooh animated videos, Richart

See POOH on 13

Programs guide students

By John A. Skretta
Staff Reporter

The residential education program offers students about 400 to 500 programs and workshops annually about a variety of topics, said Dr. Lyn Jakobsen, assistant director of housing for residential education.

"We assess student needs in relation to current issues and respond to these needs through programming," Jakobsen said. "We'll probably reach three-fourths of our students in any given year."

"We try to educate students and provide a supportive environment that simultaneously challenges students to broaden their thinking concerning these issues," Jakobsen said.

The programs and workshops are structured around the school year to meet student needs that research has shown follow an annual cycle, Jakobsen said. For instance, at the beginning of the semester, programs about financial aid and time management and study skills are more relevant than they might be at the end of the term, she said.

The programming schedule also includes passive programming, Jakobsen said, "which is merely posting items on bulletin boards encouraging students to get involved with different activities."

A number of issues are relevant year after year, Jakobsen said, and these topics include responsible alcohol consumption, responsible sexual behavior and others. These programs will continue in about the same path as they have previously, Jakobsen said, because every year they reach different audiences.

One current issue of overwhelm-

ing importance that the residential education program is attempting to respond to through programming is Operation Desert Storm, Jakobsen said.

"Keeping up with the Iraq situation is obviously of immediate relevance to our residents," she said. "We're approaching this in a variety of ways. For instance, we're encouraging students to attend teach-ins so that they can get a cognitive view of what to anticipate as the crisis continues."

"The anticipation is really what we're dealing with," she said. "Students have questions about their loved ones stationed in the middle east, questions about their country and the anticipation of how the war will affect it."

"One immediate problem is how to get the students to deal with the news coverage," Jakobsen said. "I mean, people are just glued to the television sets, and so you're looking at a situation quite detrimental to some of these students' grades."

Jakobsen feels quite confident about the ability of her staff to meet questions and concerns about any current event, however.

"The Nebraska housing program has a wonderful national reputation for this (programming)," she said. Jakobsen recalled one inter-collegiate housing conference where a colleague informed her that UNL's student assistants were the caliber of many other universities housing directors.

"We've got super, just super people working for us," Jakobsen said. "I couldn't ask for more from the people I'm working with. I mean, I love to come to work."

Jakobsen oversees the programming work at five complexes with

a total of 122 student assistants. The student assistants are required to program and deliver program summaries at the end of each term.

Statistics on student attendance at programs and the number and kinds of programs delivered are then compiled from these reports, she said.

Discovering relevant programming ideas is a matter of monitoring current media events as well as assessing the student population, Jakobsen said. The residential education program previously delivered the Life Skills Interest Survey to housing residents until

See SA on 12

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