

Tempe bowls into plans for students' holiday travel

By Chad Lorenz
Senior Editor

Colorado and Florida have traditionally been the hot spots for college students going on winter break vacations, but this year students will add another destination to that list: Tempe, Ariz.

Lisa Jensen, a leisure-travel consultant for Omni Travel, said her agency sold in two hours all 45 travel packages it offered to the Fiesta Bowl in Tempe.

People bought packages so quickly because the hard-to-obtain bowl tickets were included, she said. The \$899 package also included lodging and air fare.

Kris Smith, a sophomore in pre-dentistry, said he and his family planned to cut costs of traveling to see the Husker football team in the Fiesta Bowl by staying with his grandparents.

But Smith doesn't need to be concerned about paying for the trip. It's a Christmas present from his parents.

"I guess it would be pretty expensive if I had to pay for it," Smith said. Smith said he was looking forward to the trip, especially reveling with fellow Husker fans.

"I just hope there's a lot of Nebraska fans there. Maybe we can tailgate before the game," Smith said.

Ann Trumble, a sophomore in landscape design, is planning a winter break trip to Colorado, she said.

She and a friend will drive to Boulder on Dec. 26 and stay a week with

friends who live there.

The whole trip will cost \$250 each, she said, because staying with friends will save on food and lodging expenses.

"They take good care of us while we're out there," Trumble said.

A bulk of Trumble's time will be spent on the ski slopes of Vail, Beaver Creek and Copper Mountain, she said.

Trumble said she didn't mind spending the holiday season away from her family at home.

"As long as I'm there for Christmas day, it doesn't really matter. Actually, it will probably be good to get away," Trumble said.

Students who don't have friends to stay with or family members to help pay the way can often arrange trips through travel agencies at reasonable prices.

Craig Deats, manager for Aardvark Travel, said the agency offered packages to Padre Island, Texas, and Cancun, Mexico, with various options: hotel, or condominium; on the beach or in town.

"There's so many places to stay down there, it depends on what you're looking for," Deats said.

Those packages range from \$600 to \$1,000 depending on land or air transportation.

But Deats said the best trip for the buck was a cruise, costing around \$500.

"It's just a good time. There's so much to do. Everything is taken care of for you."

"And the food's just incredible."

Sharing the Wonder

Gift-giving programs help those in need

By Ted Taylor
Staff Reporter

Three holiday gift-giving programs hope to make Christmas morning a little more bountiful this year for a number of Lincoln's underprivileged youth.

Radio stations KFOR and KLIN and Nebraska Bookstore are using the holiday season as a chance to lend a helping hand.

KFOR's "Operation Santa Claus" has been a Lincoln holiday tradition since 1948, when it began providing gifts to every orphan in the city.

"The idea is to provide a brand new gift for every underprivileged child in Lincoln," said Vicki Marker, executive assistant at KFOR and KFRX.

"It definitely gets a lot of attention," she said. "We've received approximately \$40,000 per year in donations for the past few years."

Marker said the children were designated underprivileged by caseworkers from social welfare agencies such as Lincoln Action Program, The Lincoln Indian Center, Catholic Social Services and others.

"We only take money donations," she said. "Then our staffers go and buy the toys."

National Guard volunteers take on the role of Santa when they gather and distribute the wrapped gifts to the social services agencies.

The children all receive their gifts in time for Christmas.

"We all just enjoy doing it," Marker said.

Taking a different gift-giving approach, Nebraska Bookstore offers new books to area children.

"The Angel Tree" was, for the second year in a row, unveiled the day after Thanksgiving and is decorated with stars containing names of more than 700 children — 400 more than last year.

Lana Austin, special events coordinator for Nebraska Bookstore, likes the idea of giving books and calls it a service to the community.

"By giving books, we are promoting literacy in the community," she said. "It's an opportunity to give children books they might not receive otherwise."

Part-time bookstore employee Trudy Marker also says the idea is educational.

"Books have a way of opening the imagination and teaching children things they wouldn't ordinarily learn through other resources," she said.

The stars inform shoppers of a child's interests and hobbies and what books they'd like to receive.



James Mehling/DN

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LANA AUSTIN

Nebraska Bookstore special events coordinator

"Anyone who wants to do it can pick a star," Austin said. "A lot of the store employees do it, and a lot of people do it to teach their own children to give."

KLIN radio station incorporates a number of area businesses in its "Giving Tree" program, now in its fifth year.

Pamela Ingram, promotions coordinator for KLIN, said the Christmas event was something that all the employees looked forward to.

"It gives everyone a real sense of accomplishment."

"Giving trees" are put up in more than 20 Lincoln locations. All three Super Saver locations, Super Kmart, Golden Carrot, FirstTier Banks and Albertson's supermarket are among those involved.

"They provide the tree, we provide the stars," Ingram said.

The back of the star is labeled with a gender and an age ranging from two to 15. Shoppers take the stars and purchase the gifts. They are asked to return the unwrapped gift back to that location.

Army National Guard volunteer Sgt. Jim Blazek then goes around to the locations collecting the gifts for the Salvation Army Toy Shop at 27th & Potter streets. Parents can pick out toys to give to their children on Christmas morning.

Ingram said giving the parents the opportunity to come to the store and choose the gifts was important.

"It really empowers the mother and father to be able to actually choose the toy for their child," Ingram said.

Making the holiday season what it should be; a joyous time for all.

Pacific Coast Chicken
Classic Chocolate Malt Cake
California Char-grilled Turkey Sandwich
Pie In The Sky
Loaded Potato Skins
Catonese Chicken Salad
Name Your Own Burger
Fettucini Alfredo
Steak on a Stick Dinner
Carrot Cake
Mushrooms, Chicken and Mushrooms
Cajun Angels
French Dip
Baby Back Ribs
Fresh Vegetable Medley
Spicy Cajun Chicken Pasta

Finally, Christmas dishes that makes you wish for leftovers.

But since we can't provide weeks of leftovers, we do have gift certificates that make it easier to come back for seconds.



48th & O

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