

Song offers unique gifts for 12 days of Christmas

GIFTS from page 1

Gave to me four calling birds ...

The Pet Ark defined finches and canaries as two types of calling birds. The price of four finches is \$40.

On the fifth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, five golden rings ...

The charge for five 14-karat gold rings at Sartor Hamann Jewelers in Gateway Mall is \$500.

On the sixth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, six geese a laying ...

David Stodala of Omaha sells domestic Pomeranian geese. Six of them will run you \$90.

On the seventh day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, seven swans a swimming ...

Gary Schneekloth of Bellevue raises four different kinds of swans. Seven trumpeter swans, the most expensive, would total \$7,000.

On the eighth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, eight maids a milking ...

Because modern technology has eliminated the jobs of most milk maids, people will have to settle for milk-machine operators. Eight milk machine-operators from Meadow Gold Dairies would cost \$576 for an 8-hour work day, based on an \$8.95 per hour wage.

On the ninth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, nine ladies dancing ...

Lincoln's Wagon Train Project can bring in nine dancers for \$576 per eight-hour day.

On the 10th day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, 10 lords a leaping ...

For \$1,000, 10 actors from the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival in Omaha will perform for eight hours.

On the 11th day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, 11 pipers piping ...

Pat McMillan, booking agent and drum sergeant for the Omaha Scottish Pipes and Drums, said 11 bagpipe players would cost \$700 per hour — about \$5,600 for an eight-hour performance.

On the 12th day of Christmas, my true love gave to me, 12 drummers drumming ...

Twelve drummers from the Lincoln East High School drum line can be hired for a bargain total of \$100 for eight hours of drumming — only \$12.50 an hour.

But even if Nebraskans can't afford to buy or rent the "Twelve Days of Christmas," they'll hopefully still have their true loves.

And the cost of a true love? Priceless, of course.



MARNI SPEER/DN

THERESA ANDERSON, a senior psychology major at Nebraska Wesleyan University, coaxes her rat, Percy, to walk the tightrope at Wesleyan's Olympiad Rattus Saturday morning.

Rats vie in 'Olympics' at Wesleyan

By KASEY KERBER
Senior Reporter

On Saturday morning, rats were lifting weights.

The weight lifting was just one part of the 1996 Olympiad Rattus at Nebraska Wesleyan University. The event featured 25 rats competing in seven variations of actual Olympic events.

The rats — trained by psychology students at Nebraska Wesleyan for the last six to eight weeks — competed in events such as the five-yard dash, weight lighting, five-yard hurdles and long jump.

Ken Keith, chairman of Wesleyan's psychology department, said the event has attracted attention from national talk shows, news organizations and even the "Tonight

Show" when Johnny Carson was host.

Keith said attention devoted to the Olympiad Rattus over the past 20 years was a "mixed blessing."

"It draws attention to the university," Keith said. "But I don't want what we are doing to be trivialized."

The students' rats results varied in each of the olympic events.

Jeremy Stick, a junior psychology major at Wesleyan, and his rat had success in the 5-yard hurdles event.

His rat broke the 1984 record by nearly a full second.

Stick said hard work was the key.

"For the last five days, we've been working primarily on this event," Stick said. "At first, she didn't even want to do the hurdles. She'd squeak every time I'd put her

in."

Kim Koelling, a junior business-psychology major, and her rat, Scooby, did well in the long jump.

Scooby jumped 31 inches from one platform to another.

"She's not breaking any records," Koelling said, "but she's competing — and I'm pleased with that."

At the conclusion of the Olympiad Rattus, students could adopt or donate their rats. Donations went to a classroom, the Nebraska Wesleyan psychology department or the Lincoln Children's Zoo "Raptor Rehab Project." Rats donated to the zoo become lunch for ailing eagles and hawks.

Koelling said she would donate Scooby to a classroom.

"She's not going to the birds," she said.

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