



## Midwest offers vacation fun on a budget

By JULIE SOBCZYK  
Senior Editor

Many UNL students dream of leaving cold, gray Nebraska during spring break for a week of care-free fun.

But who has the money to afford an expensive trip when students are still paying off Christmas gifts and the semester's book bill?

Some travel agents say students on a budget can get away and still have some money left in their wallets for souvenirs.

Vicki Grieser, an office manager with Travel and Transport, said some destinations near the Midwest make for an inexpensive, yet fun, spring break.

"Some kids like to drive to the Ozarks, or Bransen, Mo.," Grieser said. "It's not warm like it is in the summertime, but it's still fun."

A trip to the Ozarks could cost about \$200, she said.

Estes Park, Colo., Denver, Minneapolis, Chicago and Kansas City, Mo., are other popular vacation sites for the student on a budget, Grieser said. Most trips could be made for less than \$200, she said.

Joe Dierks, a freshman business major, said he planned on heading to Kansas City with his mother, 15-year-old sister and 17-year-old brother for a few days during break.

"My brother and sister live in Columbus, and I don't see them very often," Dierks said. "My mom lives in Washington state, so I'm lucky if I see her twice a year."

Coming to college has made it hard to save money, he said, so taking a trip with his family was an easy way to get out of Nebraska.

Many of his friends are planning trips to warmer, more expensive places like Florida and Mexico, Dierks said, but he'd rather go to Kansas City.

"My family comes first," he said.

Kristin Wittmann, a sophomore horticulture major, said she is saving money by traveling with friends to St. Louis. Once in St. Louis, Wittmann plans to avoid hotel costs by staying with a friend who attends Washington University.

But St. Louis wasn't her first choice for a spring break getaway.

"I had really wanted to go on a cruise, but I just can't afford it," Wittmann said. "Going to St. Louis will be fairly inexpensive."

She plans to spend a few days there, she said, and the rest of her break will be spent having her wisdom teeth pulled out.

Andrea Wuethrick, a travel agent with Four Seasons, said students could spend as little as \$200 to more than \$1,000 on spring break trips.

"Students can basically spend as much as they want to on spring break," she said.

But the amount spent on the trip isn't as important as taking a break, Wuethrick said.

"The important thing is that they get away and have fun."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MATTHEW WAITE/DN

## Staying safe Responsibilities linger at home

By TASHA E. KELTER  
Staff Reporter

Whether you're planning to spend your spring break in South Padre Island, Texas, the South Pacific, or Canton, South Dakota, there are a few things you should do to ensure your home stays secure and structurally sound while you're away.

Vacationers should try to get a friend to pick up their newspapers and mail. This makes homes less inviting to burglars by eliminating the tell-tale stack of week-old newspapers.

Anyone coming to pick up your newspapers and mail can also take care of some other things, like occasionally turning the lights on and off, watering your plants, turning each faucet on and off and checking to make sure that the home stays a reasonable temperature — within five degrees of the temperature your home is kept at night.

Leaving your home for vacation can provide time for the chores to do themselves. For instance, put bleach in your toilet bowls (make sure there are no pets loose) or turn your oven on the automatic clean setting.

However, if nobody is available to take care of the house or apartment, there are ways to keep your home secure.

### Preserving print

To suspend newspaper delivery, customers may call their newspaper and request a hold on their service. The Lincoln Journal Star offers three options for vacationing customers. They may have the delivery stopped for the duration of the absence and receive credit toward future Journal Star services; have the newspapers donated to the Lincoln City Mission or the Lancaster Manor; or the office can hold the papers and they may be picked up when the customer returns.

Karina Greenlee, Journal Star customer service representative, said customers should call at least one day

before they want the deliveries healthy.

stopped. To hold mail delivery for a period longer than a day, vacationers may go to any Lincoln post office and fill out a "hold mail" card, said Kim McKinney, post office customer service representative.

The hold mail cards are yellow and located on the service counters.

Although the cards can be filled out and processed at any Lincoln post office, McKinney said when customers return, they need to pick up their mail from their post office.

### Water woes

To ensure that pipes don't freeze during cold weather, vacationers should leave their furnaces on and their thermostats no lower than 60 degrees, said Sarah Siefkes, property manager of Claremont Park apartments.

Marty Conradt of MC Plumbing advises vacationers who live in houses not to turn their water control off without leaving the water heater on the pilot setting if they have a gas water heater. The water control should be located next to the water meter.

If the water heater is electric, it can just be shut off, he said.

Conradt said all the faucets in the house should be opened slightly, which won't cause a drip if the water control is off.

"If you take the pressure off the water pipes, they won't burst," he said.

Conradt also advises keeping the thermostat around its usual setting to prevent freezing pipes. If the house is warm, there will be enough heat going through the walls to keep the pipes from freezing.

Another method to prevent freezing pipes is to wrap outside faucets with styrofoam can holders if freezing temperatures are expected.

### Flora follies

For vacationers with plants, there are several measures that can be taken to ensure the plants stay alive and

Some plant owners put plants in an inch of water in the bathtub, but this is only advisable if the bathroom has a window.

Beth Vanecek, salesperson with Gaga's Greenery and Flowers, suggests watering the plants heavily before you leave, so that the plants are left sitting in one-half inch of water in the saucer. To keep plants from freezing, she suggests leaving the heater set to at least 60 degrees.

### Pet peeves

Vacationers who will be gone for more than two days and own dogs, cats, birds or rodents should either take the pet to a kennel, someone's house, or have a friend feed, water and visit with the animal once a day.

Cookie Wittler, co-owner of Pampered Pets, suggests having someone visit a dog twice a day because dogs are used to that schedule of being fed, watered and let out or exercised. Whether to leave a dog in the backyard during the day depends on the weather, she said.

Wittler said cats will generally be OK with one visit a day.

Heather Zimmerman, Pet Ark supervisor, said birds and rodents also need to be fed and watered once a day, and have their cages cleaned every couple of days or as often as the owner usually cleans it.

"If (animals) get neglected, it could result in health problems for them," she said.

If finding a sitter for pets is a problem, some pet stores offer boarding at reasonable rates.

Fish owners can leave their fish for up to seven days with a seven-day fish feeder, which is a block of food that disperses food into the water on an even schedule for a week. These can be purchased for about \$3 in pet stores.

Kyle Haeffner, owner of The Fish Store, suggests leaving the light off in the aquarium, but leaving the rest of the equipment, such as the heater, on.

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